**COVID-19 AND CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL: BRIEFING PAPER FOR JULY 2020.**

1. It continues to prove impossible to hold Council meetings in person, but there is the likelihood of one being held in September. As the Council had to approve its Annual Return before 31st August 2020 and a virtual meeting was essential. As a result of Members’ response to holding virtual meetings, it was clear that a virtual meeting could be held and that the Council would be quorate. Accordingly, after training, a virtual meeting was called on Friday 10th July 2020. All Members received the invitation and the necessary papers and the return was duly approved and sent to Mazars. My thanks to the Members who took part. The papers are now open for public inspection in Cornforth House and the Return can be viewed on line until 21st August 2020.

At the same meeting, the Standing Orders were amended to allow for virtual meetings and the issue of dispensation to all Members who could not attend virtual meetings was agreed in accordance with the Government’s guidelines.

1. The Memorial Park Refurbishment – The applications to Tarmac for grant has been acknowledged. I am currently providing additional information and should other applications be approved before the end of September, then Tarmac will consider our application. Alternatively, the application will be held over to a later meeting. I have submitted applications to Banks and The Community Fund, with an initial approach to Amazon.

I have made arrangements with our ground maintenance contractor to replace the damaged fence in the park at a cost of £900 plus VAT. The playgrounds are now open and urgent action needed to be taken.

1. Grant-giving Policy – I have revised the draft policy based on that of Clipstone Parish Council, following Members’ comments. The final approval can wait upon a full meeting in person. We have not received any applications for support that would necessitate earlier action.
2. Planning applications - I will continue to monitor the applications received by the County Council and if necessary call on the views of Members of the Application Sub Committee by telephone. The only application of note has been the extension to the surgery to provide a chemist’s shop with a meeting area above. Members felt the proposal should resisted as it carried the potential to leave the present shop in the High Street vacant.
3. Year-end internal audit – Our internal auditor’s report has been passed to Mazars. Its main recommendation was that the Council should split its reserves across another bank account. Members have considered this issue before and I will undertake further research.
4. Blachere had written offering us an extension to our Christmas lights contract for another year. Members of the working group were split over the need to seek a new tender, but it as it seemed unlikely that we will have the time to meet and discuss with alternative providers, the consensus was that we took the current offer at a discounted price.
5. Should Members have any pressing issues requiring attention please let me know.

Ray Sunman

Parish Clerk: July 2020