CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 12th April 2010.

Present: Councillor: Dr. Stephen C. Drew and

Councillors: Mr. K. Clasper, Mrs. R. Clewes, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Mr. A Hodgson, Mr. S. M. Pennick, Mr. R. Poole, Mr. M. Simpson, Mrs. S. Traynor, Mrs. P.M. Walker, Mr. W.R.Wilson and Mr. W. J. Woodhall.

Apologies:

Councillors: Mr. M. J. Pennick.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mr. S. M. Pennick declared a personal interest with regard to item 15 on the agenda.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2010 were agreed as a true copy and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that did not appear on this agenda.

4. POLICE LIAISON

The Clerk had not received a Beat Report or any indication of when the police might attend a Parish Council meeting. The Chairman reported that at the PACT meeting, the priority for Cornforth had been altered to activities on the Green. The next meeting of the PACT will be held on 22nd April 2010. The Clerk was instructed to write to the new sergeant and invite him to Parish Council meetings.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

6. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had attended the Civic Dinner at Chilton. There was to be a charity night to be held at Chilton on 15th April and Ferryhill Town Band would be playing on 22nd April 2010.

The Chairman announced the calling of a Special Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 26th April 2010 to discuss the creation of a freewoman of Cornforth.

Signed ....................................................... Date .............................................

7. PLANNING MATTERS ARISING FROM MARCH’S WEEKLY LISTS

Members noted that here were no planning applications relevant to this Council notified by the Spennymoor Office at the time of this meeting.

There were two planning applications relevant to this Council notified by Durham County Council:

i) 928/7/182(6) – Cornforth Primary School - The erection of a hexagonal timber parents waiting shelter. Members resolved to make no representations with regard to this proposal.

ii) Thrislington Quarry West Cornforth: Lafarge Aggregates: Request to alter Planning Permission No. MRA/7/1. Cornforth Parish Council resolved to object to the current working arrangements for the quarry being amended to resume extraction of stone on the north face by reason of noise and disturbance, particularly blasting. The Clerk was also asked to write to the planning office and express the Council’s concerns that this application had been submitted during the Easter holidays, effectively shortening the consultation period.

8. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT – POSITION AT 31st MARCH 2010.

The Clerk circulated the current bank reconciliation statement and a comparison of this year’s budget to actual expenditure for this period at the meeting. The statement was received.

9. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS MARCH 2010.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Receipts** |  | **£** |
|  |  |  |
| Nil |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Payments** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| HMRC | Tax and NIC to year end | 2144.92 |
| Durham County council | CCTV | 14,481.95 |
| Cornforth Enterprise | Donation to Meals franchise | 5,000.00 |
| R. A. Sunman | Salary | 594.62 |
|  |  |  |
|  | TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE | 22,221.49 |
|  |  |  |

The schedule was approved.

Signed ....................................................... Date .............................................

10. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

i) Christmas lights – The Clerk reported that he had received the agreement of the Governors of the school to put Christmas lights on the trees in the High Street. He had contacted our suppliers and sought their assistance to fill in the County Council’s forms to ensure a display this year. A meeting is to be held with John Lyttle about this and other sites.

ii) The Green – The Clerk reported that the seat in the Garden of Remembrance had been installed as had the new paving around the Church. The commemorative tree had been planted and the plaque is in place. Mr. Kataky’s offer to contribute to the pointing of the graveyard wall has been passed to Rev. Keith Lumsden and thence to the architects for the diocese. Following a site meeting it has been suggested that no further action be taken to alter the surfacing outside No’s 1-5 The Green.

iii) The Scrap Yard – following the digging of the trench at the entrance no further material has been deposited but the site is still an eyesore. The Clerk was instructed to write to Durham County Council on this matter. In addition, the site is being used by under-age drinkers and a letter should also be sent to the Environment Agency about he dangerous materials on this site.

11. AAP ISSUES

The Vice Chairman advised the meeting that a presentation had been made to the last AAP about the closure of homes. The meeting confirmed that requests to County Councillors to use monies allocated to them had to be submitted on a pro-forma, which would be filled in by the applying body with the help of the AAP Co-ordinator.

12. PARISH PATHS

The Clerk reported that an invitation had been received to bid for grants under this programme. Members agreed that Councillors Mr. S.M. Pennick and Mr. M. J. Pennick and Mrs. P. M. Walker would liaise with the Clerk on this matter.

13. QUALITY PARISH STATUS

i) Members agreed that having had time to examine the policy on freedom of information the version as circulated at the last meeting be adopted.

ii) Members noted that Durham County Council’s offer to set up Local Council websites free of charge was being progressed and approved the draft of a Cornforth Parish Council Digest as circulated by the Clerk as suitable for inclusion on the website. Members asked that the website include details of the Clerk’s “surgery” arrangements.

Signed ....................................................... Date .............................................

14. RESIGNATIONS OF COUNCILLORS

i) The Clerk advised Members that following the resignations of Councillors Mrs. Pat Pennick and Miss Janet Snowball the Returning Officer has advised the Parish Council that no request had been received for an election. The Council agreed to invite nominations for co-opted membership and hold a meeting on 26th April 2010 to consider those received.

ii) The Clerk advised Members that pursuant to Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, Parish Councils have the power to create honorary freeman/freewomen. In order to do so, it must pass a resolution at a special meeting where notice of the object has been given by no less than two-thirds of the members. Thereafter, the Council is allowed to spend such reasonable amount as it sees fit to present an address to the person on whom the Council has conferred the title. The title does not confer any rights or privileges, and is purely honorary. Members agreed to hold a special meeting on 26th April 2010 for the purpose of creating Mrs. Pat Pennick as a freewoman of Cornforth.

15. THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE

Members noted that the Parish Council, having written to the Boundary Committee in support of Option 2 was supported by local groups and that Durham County Council had been reported in the local press as supporting this arrangement.

16. FINANCIAL ISSUES.

i) Sedgefield and District CAB – The Clerk advised Members that the CAB intended to continue with local sessions in Cornforth despite cut-backs elsewhere, and that six percent of its case load of around 38,000 a year came from the village. Members resolved to approve a request received for financial assistance towards running costs as detailed in the budget.

ii) Cornforth Awards for All application – The Clerk advised Members that he and the Chief Executive of Cornforth Partnership had drafted an application for a Healthy Cornforth project. However, following success in the youth and employment fields, the Partnership no longer has the capacity to deliver additional schemes and as a consequence Members agreed that this project be held in abeyance.

iii) Cornforth Primary School – Members agreed to a request from the Governors for a donation towards materials to create planting boxes at the front of the school. A sum of £150 was agreed and the Clerk was instructed to advise the head-teacher that our County Councillors may also wish to support the proposal.

Signed ....................................................... Date .............................................

17. HOLY TRINITY CHURCHYARD

Members were advised on the current position on this issue. The letter of complaint about the funeral service and the condition of the churchyard which was reported to the last Council meeting has been sent to The Rev. Keith Lumsden. He has discussed the matter with Clerk and as the funeral was conducted by the Salvation Army, he will ask that body to deal with the matter of the funeral arrangements.

On the issue of the condition of the churchyard and following site visits by the Clerk and Members the Council has sought the Rev. Lumsden’s co-operation to remove spoil from the site, repair/replace the flower “bin” at the west end, re-point the southern boundary wall and address the issue of gravel and headstone usage contrary to the regulations which govern the maintenance of graves. A site meeting has been requested. At this time the Clerk to the Church Council is on holiday, but the Rev. Keith Lumsden will be in touch to arrange a meeting when she has returned.

18. CORNFORTH COMMUNITY PARK

Members noted that following routine inspections, the Clerk had been advised that the slide in the junior area had been damaged and that the safety surfacing on the large slide adjoining the toddlers play area was in need of a small amount of patching. The Clerk had advised the Chairman and Durham County Council has carried out the work in the interests of safety and liability. ROSPA carried out its annual inspection in week ending 27th March. The report is awaited, but work will be required at least with regard to the burnt out litter bins and missing hand-holds from the climbing wall. Unless there is an urgent need for action, the Clerk will advise the Council of likely costs prior to the work being carried out.

19. REQUEST FOR A BUS STOP

The Council was advised that a letter had been received on behalf of the Senior Citizens’ Group of Cornforth for a bus stop to be created on Station Road, immediately south of Hawthorn Terrace on the east side of the street. The stop would better serve the elderly living in the single storey accommodation behind Hawthorn Terrace and who currently have to travel to the top of the street and walk back some considerable distance. Members agreed that the request be forwarded to the County Council.

20. ANY FURTHER BUSINESS

i) Replacement school – following a question by a Member the Council was advised that there were at least two schools ahead of Cornforth in the County’s schedule for replacement signalling a delay of at least two years.

ii) Allotments – The Clerk was asked to research the position with regard to public liability insurance on the Council’s allotments.

Signed ....................................................... Date .............................................

R. A. Sunman/Clerk: 14th April 2010.