CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 7th March 2011.

Present: Councillor Mr. A. Hodgson and

Mr. K. Clasper, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Dr. S. C. Drew, Mrs. S. Neville, Mr. M. J. Pennick, Mr. R. Poole, Mr. M. Simpson, Mrs S. Traynor and Mrs. P.M. Walker, Mr. A. Walker and Mr. W.R.Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors: Mrs. R. Clewes and Mr. T. Cutmore.

1. FREEWOMAN OF THE PARISH OF CORNFORTH: MRS. PAT PENNICK.

The Members received with deep regret the news of the death of Mrs. Pat Pennick, former Councillor and the first Freewoman of Cornforth Parish. The Chairman led a minute’s silence in her memory.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest made with regard to any item to be transacted.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2011 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ON THE AGENDA

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

5. POLICE LIAISON

The Clerk gave the Beat Report and report of the PACT meeting. The reports were received.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

7. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

 i) The Chairman advised the meeting that he had received an invitation to the Civic Dinner of the Mayor of Chilton Town Council. It was agreed that the Vice Chairman would attend on behalf of the Parish and that the cost of the tickets would be met from the Chairman’s allowance.

Signed: .................................................................... Dated: ................................

7. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE CONT’D

ii) No Members expressed interest in the invitations to attend the organ recital on 23rd March or the Charity Band Concert on 9th April 2011.

8. AAP ISSUES

There were no matters to report.

9. PLANNING MATTERS ARISING FROM FEBRUARY’S WEEKLY LISTS

There were no planning applications falling within this Council’s area notified by the Spennymoor Office or Durham County.

10. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT – POSITION AT 28th FEBRUARY 2011.

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.

11. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FEBRUARY 2011.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Receipts** |  | **£** |
|  |  |  |
| Parish Paths Grant. |  | 1,190.00 |
|  |  |  |
| **Payments** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Local Clerks Association fee |  | 11.80 |
| R. A. Sunman | Salary | 620.49 |
|  | Allowances and postage | 74.20 |
| JWS Power-cleaningZurich InsuranceW. Cornforth & District Comm. Assoc. Coronation PressNorthumbrian WaterPremier Traffic ManagementCouncillor Wilson | Bus Shelter CleaningManagement FeeAffiliation feePrintingAllotment Water supplyRoad closuresMember’s allowance | 180.00114.0017.00170.38111.87211.5054.30 |
|  | TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE | 375.54 |
|  |  |  |

The schedule was approved.

Signed: ..................................................................... Dated: ..............................

12. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

 i) The Scrap Yard – The Clerk advised the Members that following a meeting held with Messrs Talbot and Bennet of Durham County Council, work would be carried out to remove material from the site and prevent further tipping.

13. QUALITY PARISH STATUS

The Clerk advised the meeting that he had completed his mentoring course and should be able to submit his portfolio of work in August.

14. NEW CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Prior to the meeting a representative of Blanchere had demonstrated his company’s products to Members and shown three options for the treatment of the High Street. The Clerk reported that he had received two quotes for new Christmas motifs and they have been considered by the Sub Committee at meetings held since the last Parish Council. Whilst it would be desirable to press on with this matter and reach an early decision, Members agreed that we must comply with our Financial Regulations and seek a third quote. The policy of the County Council with regard to external contractors erecting the motifs on lamp standards had yet to be finalised as had its views on putting a motif on the school. Members of the Sub-Committee were advised to go ahead with third quote and to make a recommendation to the next Parish Council meeting with regard to a preferred supplier.

With regard to the tree-wrapping work, the electrical contractor at the school had replaced the trip switch and payment had been made. Members agreed that once a quote had been obtained from the contractor for a timer in the school hall, the Clerk would authorise the work.

15. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

i) Members’ agreed to make a donation to the West Cornforth and District Community Association of £20 in keeping with the wishes of the family of Mrs. Pennick, in lieu of flowers.

16. SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH HOMES TENANT LED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS.

The Clerk advised the meeting that he had attended the “drop-in” organised by Sedgefield Borough Homes and asked that the proposal to provide parking bays in Palm Road be considered. He had made a formal application to this effect and this would be considered after 29th April 2011.

Signed: .................................................................. Dated: ...................................

17. CO-OPTED MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Returning Officer had advised the Parish Council that it could fill its vacancies by co-option. In accordance with the Minutes of the previous meeting, Mr. Alan Wilson had been asked to serve and was welcomed to the meeting. It was also agreed that Mr. Rashid Vaughan be asked to serve.

The meeting agreed that Councillor S. Neville would serve as a nominee from the Parish Council to the Management Board of Cornforth Partnership.

18. MAY’S SHOP IN THE HIGH STREET, CORNFORTH

The Chairman advised the Council that he and the Chief Executive of Cornforth Partnership had met Mr. Graham Wood of Durham County Council on the above matter. The LEGI monies totalling £100K had been withdrawn by the Government. However, there was still £46K of former Sedgefield Borough Council money available with which it could be acquired and demolished. Once probate had been resolved Mr. John Davies of Stowes Solicitors in Exeter acting on behalf of the owners was still willing to sell. Mr. Wood advised that he could use the available finance to buy and re-gable.

Members discussed the issue and considered seeking a demolition assessment. DCC was still liable if the building collapsed and caused damage. It was agreed that the Chairman would seek progress from Mr. Wood and that the Clerk would write to the Leader of DCC, setting out the problem and seeking early decisions and action.

19. CONSULTATION ON THE COUNTY DURHAM PLAN (MINERALS).

Members reported that these policies were well written and that quarrying on the east side would cease. The railway north of Barrett Way was to be retained as a strategic resource. Permian sand, once a waste product now had commercial iron making potential and could be extracted without blasting. Tarmac had sold its mining interests in the area to Lafarge.

20. PARISH PATHS

The Parish Council had been invited to apply for Parish Paths Grants for 2011/12, and could apply to clear paths 20 and 22 as we did last year. Members agreed to seek quotes and make an application to carry out the work and to meet with Mrs Field to discuss improving a difficult style close to the village.

21. IMPROVEMENT OF LAND AT STOBBS CROSS

The Clerk advised Members that the meeting held by Sedgefield Borough Homes included a discussion between the Clerk and Councillor Cutmore with young boys in the village about the inadequacy of areas for informal ball games. They fully appreciated that they could not use the football pitches behind the Community Centre and the reasons for that decision.

Signed: .......................................................................... Dated: ...........................

21. IMPROVEMENT OF LAND AT STOBBS CROSS (CONT’D)

The boys were also reluctant to use the village green, because of the reaction of some residents. The area at Stobbs Cross was considered useful but too small.

A site visit by the Chairman and the Clerk established that a small area of overgrown hedge was both restricting the ease of grass mowing and ball games. Councillor Cutmore agreed to discuss the use of the area with young people if the small trees were removed and the exposed area re-turfed over the summer. Members will be updated and their views sought on improving the land at Stobbs Cross.

22. IMPROVEMENTS TO ALLOTMENTS

The meeting was advised that prior to the collection of rents from allotment holders a meeting of the Allotment Sub Committee was held on site on 14th February 2011. The winter weather has clearly damaged the access from the south and works to resurface it are needed. It would be advisable to carry out this work and create a few parking areas alongside the improved access. Some allotment holders use the concrete access road to the north, put in by Northumbrian Water. It would be advisable for the Parish Council to use this road for access to a section of our track when we carry out the work, thereby avoiding the bridge. A letter had been sent to the Board seeking their agreement and advice on improving drainage. Members agreed to seeking quotes to surface the tracks and carry out drainage works once a meeting has been held with Northumbrian Water.

When rents were collected on 22nd February, all allotments having been let, a complaint was raised with regard to flooding of Mr. Metcalfe’s allotments from water claimed to come from a burst pipe. The Clerk discussed this with Northumbrian Water. The Board had come out to investigate the complaint in December and January. From tests they had established that the water was not drinking water or sewage, but surface water run-off and as such the responsibility of the riparian landowner, Mr. Martin. A site visit by the Chairman and the Clerk on 28th February established that the ditches had been cleared recently and no evidence of flooding attributable to this particular problem was apparent.

23. DAMAGE TO AND SAFETY OF THE THREE BRIDGES.

Members had requested that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. Photographs were circulated. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Network Rail and seek assurances about the bridge and also raise the issue of tipping along the track.

Signed: .................................................................. Dated: .....................................

24. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE GREEN

The Clerk advised that he had spoken to staff in Durham County Council. The paving work would be completed, but that no further work would be carried out. The Parish Council was under no obligation to carry any further work, despite the overall improvement plan showing additional phases of work. It was noted that Mr. Walters, a resident on the Green had removed cones before the recent work had time to set in order to facilitate access for his delivery of building materials.

**NOTE: At the close of business Members were asked if they have any items**

**of business to be included on the next agenda. The following matters were raised.**

 i) CCTV – following DCC’S invoice for this work, the Clerk would investigate the reasons behind some of the items on the bill and Members would discuss the issue.

 ii) Driving on the grass near Verdun Terrace – it was agreed that this was not a Parish Council issue but that the Clerk would bring it to the attention of Sedgefield Borough Homes.

Signed: ..................................................................... Dated: ......................

Ray Sunman/Clerk: 28th March 2011.