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| Present: **Councillors:**  Mrs P. Crathorne **(Chairman);** Dr. S. Drew **(Vice Chairman);** Mrs M. Walker; Mr P. Mayhew; Mr T. Hall;  Mrs. P. Drew; Mrs J. Grafton; Mr P. Metcalfe; Mr R. Vaughan; Mrs V. Parnaby; Mrs J. Snowball;  *In attendance: Mr D. Snowball* ***(Parish Clerk)***  *Mrs Elaine Peeke* ***(County Councillor)*** *not in attendance (apologies received)* |

**85\_****23/24** **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies to record.

*and council noted this.*

**86\_23/24** **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

* Councillor Mrs P Crathorne declared an interest in agenda item 20, and she was going to leave the room for the discussion of this item.

* Councillor Mrs P Drew declared an interest in agenda items 20 and 21 and she was going to leave the room for the discussion of these items.
* Councillor Mrs V Parnaby declared an interest in agenda item 23, and she was going to leave the room for the discussion of this item.

***Members noted and accepted the declaration of interests.***

**87\_23/24** **MEMBERS DISPENSATION**

The Clerk informed the meeting that there were no dispensations for this meeting.

***It was noted that there were no dispensations.***

**88\_23/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no public questions.

***Members noted this.***

**89\_23/24** **MINUTES**

1. ORDINARY meeting held on; Monday 11th September 2023

It was proposed by Councillor Dr S Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr T Hall and it was;

***RESOLVED:***

***That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 11th September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at this meeting.***

**90\_23/24** **MOTION**

Councillor Trevor Hall moved the following motion:

I ask the council to consider the purchase of solar panel smart, matrix board vehicle activated sign (speed notification signs) for the three main routes into Cornforth and outside the school. The route in from Thrislington does not fit the criteria for installation of such a sign which must be 100 meters inside the speed restriction sign of the village speed restriction zone. Cornforth already has one fixed post in Garmondsway Road, that will be no cost. The county council signs are charged at £17,000 per sign installed, and are not smart signs, also requiring studies on speeding to be agreed. The smart traffic signs allow for a laptop to be plugged into the sign with all information downloaded to identify the optimum speeds more than the limits at which times on any given day across all locations. This would empower the Parish Council to better direct Police intervention without wasting their valuable time, while the Parish Council is proactively still responding to constant reported dangers regarding speeding throughout the parish. The cost of a smart sign, installed with maintenance contracts and guarantees (£5,500 x 5-years) is less than one third of the DCC non-smart signs. The manufacturer provides signs of all types to Highways England, costs are available via the parish Clerk. (Grants may or may not be available from DCC).

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne and seconded by Councillor Dr S. Drew and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That contact is made with Durham County Council Highways and the Police to meet with the Clerk and Councillor Hall to discuss the installation and locations for speed watch signs and for the Clerk to prepare and include an update report to the November 2023 meeting of council including installation and any other associated costs.***

91\_23/24 **COUNCIL NEWSLETTER**

Following discussion and concerns with the readability and depth of information contained within the newsletter the report recommendations were discussed individually.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

1. ***That the draft details of the newsletter are revisited and Councillor***

***Mr T. Hall re submits the revised newsletter to the November 2023 meeting of council for further consideration.***

*Proposer Dr S. Drew and Ms J. Snowball*

***2 That a copy is delivered to every household and the Clerk identifies the number of properties in Cornforth to determine the number of newsletter copies to be printed.***

Proposer Mr P. Metcalfe, Seconder Mrs J. Grafton

***3 the Clerk investigates ways of identifying delivery people for the newsletter, including advertising that the council is looking for deliverers for the newsletter.***

Proposer Mr P. Metcalfe, Seconder Mrs J. Grafton

***4 No decision as the newsletter is being revisited.***

**92\_23/24** **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

County Councillor Mrs E. Peeke was not present at this meeting.

***Members noted this.***

**93\_23/24** **CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed the meeting that there was nothing to report to this meeting.

***Members noted this.***

**94\_23/24** **POLICE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (pact)**

Councillor Mr T. Hall informed the meeting of three new appointments/contacts;

PC David Ditchburn (David.ditchburn@durham.police.uk) has been appointed as the Police officer dedicated to and specifically responsible for Cornforth, a new PCSO (Dylan Kestle – David.kestle@durham.police.uk) has also been appointed and is currently in training to cover Cornforth with PC Ditchburn. The street warden supervisor, Sarah Robinson ([sarah.robinson@durham.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.robinson@durham.gov.uk)) will begin to work with the Police to report street warden activity in the Parish.

Since the last PACT meeting there has been 63 reports to the police ranging between anti-social behaviour, burglaries riding motorbikes with no helmets and lorries entering the old Scarlet Band compound raising concern on weight restrictions.

The use of the old scrap yard and legality was questioned but this something that DCC are already involved in and off-road bikes and scooters are also creating a nuisance.

The parking and speeding in the school zone continue to be an issue and this issue was being raised at the October meeting of the Parish Council.

***Members received and noted the updates.***

**95\_23/24** **AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Mrs P Crathorne informed the meeting that there had been no meeting to attend and there was nothing to report on this item.

***Members noted this.***

**96\_23/24** **CLERKS UPDATES**

The clerk provided the following updates for information only: -

1. The clerk informed members that CCLA had sent notification of important changes to the council’s deposit account about changes to the company that processes transactions in the accounts has been made.
2. ‘Livin’, have programmed in works for the old stone wall and adjacent land in Station Road that will include removal and cutting back of bushes, removal of redundant garages, erection of a security fence and tidying and covering the stone wall top with mesh.

1. The cleaning and refurbishment of the war memorials in the high street and Tursdale has been completed.
2. The Clerk and Councillor Mr T Hall had attended the CDALC AGM on Saturday 7th October at County Hall and copies of relevant presentations will be forwarded to members via email when received.
3. Following contact by two residents, one very elderly, in connection with trees
4. in the churchyard and the lack of a vicar to contact I am in the process of writing to the diocese to arrange an urgent meeting at the churchyard with an appropriate representative to look at the issues and take appropriate action. This is not something the Parish Council can enforce but is something that must be resolved before someone is injured and/or property damaged.

***Members received and noted the updates.***

**97\_23/24** **PLANNING**

There were no planning matters for consideration at this meeting.

***Members noted this.***

**98\_23/24** **FACEBOOK POLICY**

Members considered the proposed Facebook policy and following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Facebook Policy is agreed and adopted.***

**99\_23/24** **PARISH COUNCIL WEB SITE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT**

Members considered a report which was previously circulated and the clerk presented this report to the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Mr T. Hall and seconded by Councillor Mrs J. Grafton and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the web site accessibility statement is adopted and added to the council’s website at the earliest opportunity.***

**100\_23/24** **OUTCOME OF THE ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT (AGAR)**

The Clerk informed the meeting that the Council had received a clean bill of health and that an unqualified opinion has been received and that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements has not been met.

Matters not affecting the opinion but are to be drawn to the attention of the council are;

* that the Council should earmark some of its reserves to reduce the balance
* The AGAR was returned to enable Fixed Assets box 9 to be restated to ensure evaluations are correct and in future the AGAR is accurate and complete.
* The council is to create a generic email address by the 31st March, ideally a

.gov.uk or org.uk address would be acceptable.

* Mazars are aware that the Accounts and Audit Regulations requirement for a physical ‘wet ink’ signature on the original AGAR, does not allow parish council’s to fully comply with the Accessibility Regulations. The National Audit Office are aware that the two pieces of legislation are not compatible, therefore smaller authorities are advised to make it clear on their website that the document is a scan and will not be fully compliant with the Accessibility Regulations.

And it was proposed by Councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe and it was;

***RESOLVED:***

***To accept the report recommendations as follows:***

1. ***receive the external auditor’s Audit Completion Letter, External Audit Report and Certificate in respect of the 2022/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.***
2. ***note the unqualified external audit opinion highlighting that “the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met”***
3. ***note the arrangements made by the Clerk to publish public notice of the completion of the audit and the audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return on the Council website.***
4. ***That the matters drawn to the council’s attention are actioned.***

**101\_23/24** **FINANCIAL YEAR 2023 / 2024 - QUARTERS 1 and 2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

Members received the Budget Monitoring Report as prepared by the Parish Clerk.

Councillor Mr T. Hall asked who the internal auditor is for the council and the clerk informed him it was Mr Gordon Fletcher.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mr T. Hall and seconded by Councillor Dr S. Drew and it was;

***RESOLVED:***

***To receive the quarterly budget monitoring update for quarters one and two.***

**102\_23/24 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS (August 2023)**

Members received the Income and Expenditure Analysis for August 2023 as prepared by the Parish Clerk

It was proposed by councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by councillor Mrs J. Grafton and it was;

***RESOLVED***

***To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Analysis for August 2023 and for it to be signed by the Chairman Councillor Mrs. P. Crathorne.***

**103\_23/24** **BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT (August 2023)**

Members received the Bank Reconciliation Statement for August 2023 as prepared by the Parish Clerk.

The chairman informed the meeting that as the second signatory was no longer a councillor that a replacement should be agreed at this meeting.

Councillor Mrs P. Drew offered to be the second signatory.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs J. Grafton and seconded by Councillor Dr S. Drew and it was;

***RESOLVED***

***To;***

1. ***receive and approve the Bank Reconciliation statement for August 2023***

***and***

1. ***appoint councillor Mrs P. Drew to replace Mrs M. Poole as the second signatory for the bank reconciliation statement***

***and***

1. ***for it be signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. P. Crathorne and Councillor Mrs P. Drew.***

Councillor Mr R Vaughna indicated a declaration of interest at this point for agenda item 20.

Councillor Mrs P. Drew withdrew from the room for items 20 and 21

Mr R. Vaughan withdrew from the room for the discussion of item 20 only.

**104\_22/23 CORNFORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION grant funding request**

The grant funding request from the community association was considered.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne and seconded by Councillor Ms V. Parnaby and it was;

**RESOLVED**

***That a grant for £700 was agreed for the Community Association.***

Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne left the room for the discussion of this item only and

Councillor Dr S. Drew took over the chair for this item only.

Councillor Mr R. Vaughan returned to the meeting

**105\_22/23 YOUTH 66 grant funding request**

The grant funding request from the Youth 66 was considered.

Councillor Mrs M Walker informed the meeting that the previous clerk had used some kind of form for grants and the clerk said he would investigate this.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Ms J. Snowball and it was;

**RESOLVED**

***That a grant for £500 was agreed in principle for the Youth 66 but the funds were only to be released when it was confirmed that the remaining funding had been raised and the trip would go ahead.***

*Councillors Mrs P. Drew and Mrs P. Crathorne returned to the room*

**106\_22/23** **CORNFORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION**

**grant funding request**

The grant funding request from Cornforth Primary School Early Years Foundation was considered.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne and it was;

**RESOLVED**

***That a grant for £1,500 was agreed for Cornforth Primary School Early Years Foundation.***

*Councillor Mrs V. Parnaby left the room for the discussion of this item only.*

**107\_22/23** **OBSOLETE BUS SHELTERS**

Members considered a report which was previously circulated and the clerk presented this report to the meeting.

During discussions councillor Mr P. Mayhew suggested that the bus shelter in Cornforth Lane be part knocked down and made into a bench.

It was proposed by Councillor Mr P. Mayhew and seconded by Councillor Dr S. Drew and it was;

**RESOLVED**

***That the bus shelter that is located near to the railway bridge is demolished and the contractor is asked if it will be possible to take the other bus shelter down to a level and make it into a bench.***

***Meeting closed at 8.3-0pm***

Signed (Chairman):

Date: