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| Present: **Councillors:**  Mrs P. Crathorne **(Chair)** Dr. S. Drew **(Vice Chair)** Mrs M. Walker Mr P. Mayhew Mr T. Hall  Mrs. P. Drew Mr P. Metcalfe Mr R. Vaughan Mrs V. Parnaby Ms J. Snowball  *In attendance: Mr D. Snowball* ***(Parish Clerk)*** |

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting the chair informed the meeting that Mr Andy Denholm, remembrance parade marshal wished to address the council, and this was agreed. Mr Denholm explained the honour he felt to represent the Parish as the Parade Marshall for the remembrance events of Cornforth and providing the crosses and wreaths that enabled him to visit local graves and place these in the Holy Trinity Churchyard, Metal Bridge with 48 crosses laid.*

*Mr Denholm also informed the meeting on how well attended the remembrance events held on Friday 10th, Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th November had been, and he said he was pleased with the attendance especially the 200 schoolchildren who attended the Friday event to show their respects and place crosses at the war memorial. He also thanked the chairman for attending the events and the council for the support provide to continue remembering those that sacrificed so much for us. Mr Denholm said he would be proud to carry on as the parade Marshall and the council fully supported this and thanked Mr Denholm for all their time and efforts, he and others had carried out in connection with the remembrance events. He also wanted the council to consider that next year is one hundred years since the war memorial was unveiled, November 1924.*

*The chair thanked Mr Denholm for all he had carried out and that the council will continue to support the Royal British Legion. Mr Denholm left the meeting at this point.*

**108\_****23/24** **APOLOGIES**

Were received from councillor Mrs J . Grafton

*and council agreed this.*

**109\_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 Mr T Hall declared an interest in his first motion, Agenda 6.1 CCTV motion and left the meeting for the discussion and decision on this motion.
* Councillor Mrs P. Drew declared an interest in Agenda 6.2 Motion on the

ownership of 66 High Street and left the meeting for the discussion and

decision on this motion only.

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

**110\_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.***

**111\_23/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no public questions.

***Members noted this.***

**112\_23/24** **MINUTES**

1. ORDINARY meeting held on; Monday 9th October 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 9th October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair at this meeting.***

**113\_23/24** **MOTIONS**

1 Councillor Mr Trevor Hall proposed that as a result of meeting with the Durham County Police Commissioner and her deputy there is match funding available for the upgrading of CCTV in Cornforth via a pilot study being funded by the government to only two Police & Crime Commissioners in the country, Joy Allen being one of them. Cornforth currently has four CCTV towers, one has no camera at all, two have old and unusable PTZ cameras, and the last has been upgraded to a high-speed smoked dome camera with multiple presets. Our patrolling police officers within the county can remotely link into and manipulate the highspeed dome camera but cannot access the two unmonitored PTZ cameras. While Cornforth is not a recognised crime hotspot for automatic funding applications, we can still apply for match funding from the PCC and will be supported as long as Cornforth take over the insurance of the cameras. Each camera costs approximately £8,000 to upgrade. The proposal is that we apply for the upgrade to two existing cameras and install a fourth on the existing unused tower at the junction of Laburnum road and Station road. The goal would be to allow for interactive highspeed dome cameras for Police response management and have them aligned with intelligence from the proposed smart speed signs and information received by the Police generally, as well as from PACT meetings.

*Councillor Mr. T. Hall left the meeting at this point.*

Following discussion, the general concerns and queries raised by members were;

* How many times have the police used evidence from the current dome camera in the high street for actions against offenders, criminal, or other inappropriate behaviour?
* What will be the actual costs of the insurance per year?
* Who will be responsible for the insurance costs?
* Who will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep/repair costs?
* Who will own and be responsible for the cameras?
* Who will be monitoring the cameras?
* What cost will be for this monitoring?
* Who will be responsible for this cost?
* The Parish Council has no written assurance from either the police and Durham County Council on their involvement and support for the cameras.
* Is the £8,000 a total cost to upgrade cameras (£4,000 parish and £4,000 PCC)?
* What is the total cost to install the fourth camera on the existing unused tower?

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

**RESOLVED:**

***That the list of concerns / queries is provided to Councillor Mr T. Hall and that he brings the responses and associated information back to the December meeting of council if possible or at the earliest possible meeting opportunity.***

*Councillor Mr T. Hall returned to the meeting.*

*Councillor Mrs P. Drew left the meeting for the discussion of the following agenda item.*

2 Councillor Mr Trevor Hall proposed that the future ownership of 66 High Street be re considered by the council. At this moment in time, it is an oncost to parish funds that is about to increase due to building dilapidation, potentially rising insurance costs and continuous renovations. The proposal is that the Cornforth Partnership is given the opportunity to acquire 66 High St while they also pursue the unoccupied building (64) which is currently causing damp infiltration into No 66.

Following discussion Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne proposed that the current position on 66 high street and the lease with the Cornforth Partnership remains the same.

For 4

Against 4

Abstentions 1

Not present 2

Due to the vote being undecided the chair used her casting vote for the current position to remain the same and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

The motion **was not** carried.

*Councillor Mrs P. Drew returned to the meeting.*

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

The County Councillor was not in attendance for this meeting.

***Members noted this.***

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

The Chairman informed the meeting that she had attended the remembrance parade events and was very pleased to see a high turnout especially the school children from the Primary School. She had also attended the children’s Halloween party that had been held at the community centre, to which the parish council provided a grant towards, and there had been 81 tickets sold and all had a great time. Youth 66 had attended the event selling hot dogs, snacks, and drinks to help raise more funds towards their activities.

***Members noted this.***

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

Councillor Mr T. Hall informed the meeting that as a result of a rise in shoplifting the Police acted from CCTV footage. Three offenders were identified, two from Coxhoe and one local and have been dealt with out of court. The parents of all offenders have visited the business to make formal apologies.

Funding for the Section 59 signage has been approved and the signs will be fitted in due course by the Police and announce the ability of the Police to seize vehicles being used in anti-social activities or other lawful application in the Parish of Cornforth. Cannabis has been seized and enquiries are ongoing, and an uninsured driver was apprehended and dealt with. There were various issues raised by parishioners including the parking outside the school, and the boundary fence obstructing the footpath on land adjacent to the old methodist church. There was no update from street wardens promised to the PACT meeting. PC Ditchburn confirmed the wardens would like to conduct dual patrols with the Police twice per week as multi agency approach.

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

**117\_23/24** **SEDGEFIELD TRUSTEES**

Councillor Dr. S. Drew provided a detailed background on the Sedgefield trustees including how they had formed and the current finances as well as the financial support that had been provided this year for several Cornforth residents who were suffering financial hardship. This had included the provision of a bed, curtains, and blinds for several residents in need.

***Members noted this.***

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

Councillor Mrs P Crathorne informed the meeting that she had attended the meeting held on 1st November 2023 and the County Council had explained that they had to make savings of £16.5 million over the next four years and had commenced online consultations for the public to have their say. The closing date for this consultation was 30th December 2023.

The A.A.P budget is being reduced by £10,000 in 2024/2025 financial year and the locations of their offices is under review and alternative offices will have to be sourced. Two cases of harassment an entering private property was recorded and both have received custodial sentences, and Cornforth is never mentioned at the A.A.P. in connection with crime and is a very low crime area.

***Members noted this.***

**119\_23/24** **CLERKS UPDATES**

There were no updates to provide.

***Members noted this.***

**120**\_**23/24** **COUNCIL NEWSLETTER**

Members considered the revised newsletter contents and following discussion it was agreed that the newsletter is now more user friendly, and Councillor Mr T Hall said it would be rechecked and ensured that the information provided is still relevant and up to date. Councillor Dr S. Drew said it is an opportunity to try the newsletter and see how the process works and keep under review. The date for the issue for the first newsletter was discussed and it was agreed that it was best to wait for January/February 2024.

following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Mayhew, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That;***

1. ***Councillor Mr T. Hall and the Clerk have the delegated authority to agree the final newsletter and send to print for distributing in early 2024.***
2. ***1,400 copies are printed.***
3. ***Leaflets Direct are appointed to distribute the newsletters.***

**121\_23/24** **POLICIES**

The Council considered a report of the Parish Clerk which sought approval of the proposed policies for Grant Giving and Meeting Apologies.

During discussion on the Grant Giving Policy Councillor Ms. J. Snowball asked for the section (please attach up to date accounts for the organisation to support your grant request) to be removed. This was agreed and the application form will be amended accordingly.

During discussion on the meeting apologies policy Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe proposed an amendment to the apologies section;

change the deadline for apologies from 5.00pm on the day of the meeting to 12.00 noon.

In moving the policy and the amendment it was proposed by Councillor Dr. S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Ms. J. Snowball and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***To agree the Grants and Donations policy with the removal of the section,*** ***please attach up to date accounts for the organisation to support your grant request.***

***and***

***To agree the Meeting apologies policy with the amendment in the apologies for absence section, change the latest time for these to be submitted from 5.00p.m. on the day of the meeting to 12.00 noon.***

**122\_23/24** **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AT COUNCIL MEETINGS – GUIDANCE REVIEW**

Members considered review of the public question time guidance and following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Ms. J. Snowball and seconded by Councillor Mrs. V. Parnaby, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the revised Public Question Time at Council Meetings Guidance is agreed and implemented immediately for all council meetings.***

**123\_23/24** **D-DAY 80 6TH JUNE 2024 (Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy France)**

Members considered the request from the Pageant Master, Mr Bruno Peeke CVO OBE OPR for the Parish Council to consider the lighting of a beacon on 6th June 2024 to commemorate the anniversary of the D Day landings in Normandy.

Members considered and discussed this request, and it was proposed by Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Mayhew, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Council was not going to provide a beacon lighting for this occasion.***

**124\_23/24** **CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR CLOSURES**

Members considered the proposed closure dates for Christmas 2023 and New Year 2024, and it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Ms J. Snowball, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Christmas 2023 and New Year 2024 closure period of council was agreed to be closed from 4.00p.m. Friday 22nd December 2023 until 9.00am Tuesday 2nd January 2024.***

**125\_23/24** **ALLOTMENT DOCUMENTS**

Members considered the new Allotment Tenants Handbook and Allotment Charter as produced by the parish Clerk in consultation with the Allotment subcommittee members and following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Ms J. Snowball, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Allotment Handbook and Allotment Charter are adopted by the council.***

**126\_23/24** **CHRISTMAS MOTIFS**

The Parish Clerk provided members with an update on the position of the Christmas Motifs and the up lights and rope light in the green area and the work being carried out with the energy provider and Durham County Council to ensure that up to date inventories and relevant documentation is completed. This will also help with the assessment by the energy company to determine the energy consumption and costs for the unmetered supplies.

Members also considered the options contained in the report for the timing of the lights being on display.

The up lights and rope lights on the tree in green location options were considered and it was proposed by Councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr P. Mayhew for option 1 - the lights to be illuminated permanently, and voted on;

For 5

Against 4

Abstentions 1

Not present 1

**RESOLVED:**

***That the up and tree rope lights in the tree adjacent to the public house in the green area are illuminated permanently.***

The Christmas motifs in the high street were considered and it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr R. Vaughan for the lights to be illuminated 7.00am until 9.00am and 3.00pm until 11.00am. This was unanimously agreed, and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Christmas motifs in the high street will be illuminated between the periods 7.00a.m. until 9.00a.m. and 3.00p.m. until 11.00p.m.***

**127\_23/24** **PLANNING**

There was one planning matter for consideration;

Application Ref: DM/23/03172/FPA

Site Address: 22 Raisby Terrace Cornforth Ferryhill DL17 9PE

Proposal: Car port to side

***Members had no comments to make for submission on this application.***

**128\_23/24** **CHEQUE SIGNATORY AMENDMENT**

Members were informed that due to the resignation of Mr R. Poole as a Parish Councillor there was a requirement to have him removed as a signatory for signing council cheques and for a replacement councillor to be identified at this meeting.

Councillor Ms J. Snowball informed the meeting that she would do this if accepted.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Councillor Ms J. Snowball be appointed as the replacement signatory for council cheques and Mr R. Poole is removed from this list.***

**129\_23/24** **CDALC REPRESENTATION (OUTSIDE BODY)**

Members considered the appointment of two councillors to the CDALC outside Body Smaller Council Forum and following a show of hands it was unanimously agreed and;

**RESOLVED:**

***That councillor’s Mr J. Snowball and Mrs V. Parnaby be appointed to represent the council on the CDALC Smaller Council Forum.***

**130\_22/23 GRANT REQUEST – WEST CORNFORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The grant funding request from West Cornforth Primary School was considered.

Councillor Mr R. Vaughan informed the meeting that it was possible that the school were also obtaining funding via the TESCO scheme. The clerk will contact the headteacher and identify the position of this.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Mr R. Vaughan, and it was it was;

**RESOLVED**

***That a grant for the full amount, £2,700, would be provided subject to the outcome of the discussion between the clerk and head teacher and if there is additional funding obtained by the school towards the raised beds and sand pit, the amount to be provided would be the remaining balance amount.***

**131\_23/24 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS (September 2023)**

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

It was proposed by councillor Dr S. Drew and seconded by councillor Mr R. Vaughan, and it was;

***RESOLVED***

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

**132\_23/24** **BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT (September 2023)**

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

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

***RESOLVED***

***To receive and approve the Bank Reconciliation statement for August 2023 and for it be signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. P. Crathorne and Councillor Mrs P. Drew.***

**133\_23/24** **CONSIDERATION OF THE FEES, CHARGES AND BUDGET, FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024 - 2025**

The Clerk explained to members that the draft budget report had been held back as late as possible and then hand delivered, but the day after delivery he had received the decision on the reduction to the LCTRS grant and had hand delivered the amended details to all members well in advance of this meeting to ensure the most up to date financial information is considered.

Members considered the fees and charges as contained in the report and it was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Drew and seconded by Councillor Dr S. Drew, and it was;

***RESOLVED***

***To agree (a) the general fees and charges for 2024 / 2025 as detailed in the report.***

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Crathorne and following a vote;

For 6

Against 2

Abstentions 2

Not present 1

***RESOLVED***

***(b) the allotment rent for 2025/2026 will be £30.00.***

Members considered the draft budget as contained in the report and Councillor Mrs P. Drew requested that details of the costs for the different bands in provided, not just Band D. This information will be provided at the December meeting of council for information only. The draft budget was moved and voted on;

For 7

Against 2

Abstentions 1

Absent 1

***RESOLVED***

***That the draft budget 2024 / 2025 as contained within the report is provisionally agreed.***

Members considered the draft precept options as contained within the report and Option 2 – the £4,525.90 loss of LCTRS grant is funded from the council reserves was proposed by Councillor Mr P. Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor Mrs V. Parnaby

For 7

Against 2

Abstentions 1

Absent 1

***RESOLVED***

***That the draft precept will be no increase to the taxpayer of Cornforth and the balance is met from the council’s reserves.***

The proposed new reasons for ear marked reserves were considered and agreed as contained within the report.

***RESOLVED***

***That the following new items are earmarked reserves;***

* ***Election Reserve £2,000***
* ***Replacement Play Equipment and Surfacing £35,000***
* ***Speed Awareness Signs £20,000***
* ***C.C.T.V. in the High Street £10,000***

**134\_23/24** **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified.

***RESOLVED:***

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the last item on the agenda.

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION – details contained on a separate document.

NOTE:

Agenda item 6 motion number 3 Confidential item - personnel matter - was discussed and decided with the clerk leaving the room. The details and decision of this are contained in a separate document for confidentiality. Not for public release.

*The Clerk left the meeting for the discussion and decision of this item and returned after conclusion and decision.*

***Meeting closed at 9.00pm***

Signed (Chairman):

Date: