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Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 10 February 2025 at 7pm in West Cornforth Community Centre, Station Road, Cornforth, DL17 9LA.

Present: Councillors P Metcalfe (in the Chair), J Beetham-Yelland, N Coombs, M Cunningham, P Drew, S Metcalfe, J Ratcliff, J Snowball, R Vaughan & M Walker.

In attendance: Mr R Ormerod (Parish Clerk) and one member of the public.

1	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillors S Drew & V Parnaby.</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and accept the apologies.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr J Snowball declared a personal interest in item 14 due to involvement in the Thrislington Banner Group.</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr P Drew declared an interest in items 16 and 17 as a member of the board of the Cornforth Partnership.</p>
3	<p>Members' dispensation</p> <p>The Clerk informed the meeting that there were no dispensations for this meeting. It was noted that there were no dispensations.</p>
4	<p>Public participation: The Reverend Lindsey Southern wished to speak about the future of Holy Trinity Church.</p> <p>In view of this the Chairman agreed that Item 20 be brought forward.</p>
20	<p>Holy Trinity Church – future plans</p> <p>Revd. Southern spoke about the possible future options for the church. It was noted that there would be a public event to discuss this on Friday 21 February.</p>
5	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 20 January 2025</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr J Snowball and seconded by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland, and it was</p> <p>Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the council held on 20 January 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at this meeting.</p>
6	<p>County Councillor's report</p> <p>None received.</p>
7	<p>Chairman's announcements</p> <p>The Chairman wished members a happy new year, having given apologies at the previous</p>

Signed

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	meeting of the council.
8	<p>Police And Communities Together (PACT)</p> <p>Councillor N Coombs reported on a recent meeting of PACT.</p> <p>The meeting had been well attended and lively.</p> <p>Problems identified included the theft of a vehicle in Coronation Terrace, the theft of a bicycle and an issue with a loose power cable in Metal Bridge.</p> <p>It was noted that Durham Constabulary was willing to lend equipment to residents wishing to carry out their own speed assessments and pass the information on to them.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr J Ratcliff and seconded by Cllr S Metcalfe, and it was</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council receive the report.</i></p>
9	<p>Area Action Partnership</p> <p>Cllr J Snowball informed members that the February meeting of the AAP would probably be its last, in advance of its replacement by the Local Network in April (though its first meeting was likely to be in September 2025). The meeting had included a presentation from Durham Key Options.</p> <p>Durham Constabulary was realigning some resources so that the level of neighbourhood policing would be increased.</p> <p>Posters were available to members as part of the off-road bikes campaign.</p> <p>There was likely to be an underspend on Neighbourhood Budget, and it was hoped that this could be carried over to the Local Network.</p> <p>It was noted that Fun & Food funding was going ahead.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Cllr S Metcalfe, and it was</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council receive the report.</i></p>
10	<p>Clerk's update</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated a written report. The Clerk informed the meeting of his further progress towards attaining the Certificate in Local Council Administration.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr J Snowball and seconded by Cllr J Ratcliff, and it was</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council receive the report.</i></p>
11	<p>Planning</p> <p>No issues were raised.</p>
12	<p>Financial matters</p> <p>Members had received the Receipts and Payments Analysis for January 2025, the bank reconciliation at 31 January 2025, the expenditure against budget analysis from 1 April 2024 to 31 January 2025 and the list of pending payments. It was noted that the council had £100,208.42 in its current account and £186,742.79 in the reserve account.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Analysis for January 2025. There was one abstention.</i></p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan and it was;</p>

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	<p>Resolved: To receive and approve the bank reconciliation at 31 January 2025 and for it to be signed by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland. There was one abstention.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Ratcliff and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and approve the expenditure against budget analysis for the period 1 April to 31 January 2025. There was one abstention.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and approve the pending payments. There was one abstention.</p>
13	<p>Grounds Maintenance Contract 2025-2028</p> <p>The council had received two sealed tenders through its bidding process. These were opened by the Chairman in the presence of the Clerk on 27 January 2025. Both were found to meet the council's requirements and were presented to the council as Tender 1 and Tender 2, with identifying information redacted.</p> <p>Having seen the identities of the companies tendering, the Chairman took no further part in the decision.</p> <p>The prices quoted per annum for the whole contract were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender 1: £24,740.00 • Tender 2: £31,701.52 <p>The Clerk reminded members that the council is not obliged to accept the lowest bid and that other factors can be taken into account in achieving best value.</p> <p>A discussion took place.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor M Cunningham and seconded by Councillor J Snowball and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: That Tender 1 be accepted to provide grounds maintenance services to the council for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, with the option to extend for a further year if agreed by both parties. There was one abstention.</p>
14	<p>Thrislington Banner Group</p> <p>A request had been received from the Thrislington Banner Group for £1000 towards its presence at the 2025 Durham Miners' Gala and their "Eve of Gala" event.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor M Cunningham and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To donate £1000 towards the events.</p>
15	<p>West Cornforth Miners FC</p> <p>A request had been received from the new West Cornforth Miners FC for £300 towards football training equipment. No constitution or accounts had been provided.</p> <p>Resolved: To defer the matter until it can be established that the club meets all necessary criteria.</p>
16	<p>Renewal of lease for Cornforth House</p> <p>It was noted that the Cornforth Partnership had approved the draft lease, subject to some small changes.</p> <p>Resolved: That the issue be deferred to the March meeting of the council at which the final document be presented to members.</p>

Signed

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17	<p>64 High Street, Cornforth</p> <p>It was noted that the Cornforth Partnership had expressed interest in the proposal for the parish council to purchase 64 High Street and for the partnership to use it.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor R Vaughan and seconded by Councillor J Ratcliff, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the Clerk contact the current owners of 64 High Street to ask if they would be interested in selling the property.</i></p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council continue to liaise with the Cornforth Partnership on the matter.</i></p>
18	<p>The Big Spring Clean 2025</p> <p>A discussion took place. It was noted that the Cornforth Partnership was taking part in the event and it was thought better that the two organisations pool their efforts in order to avoid duplication.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the Clerk liaise with Cornforth Partnership and offer parish council resources in support of their litter picking events.</i></p>
19	<p>Council newsletter for March 2025</p> <p>A discussion took place. It was noted that the Cornforth Partnership was due to produce its newsletter at around the same time. Stories were needed on the precept, the Christmas pantomime, the annual Parish Meeting (once the date is decided) and elections.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council amalgamate its newsletter with that of the Cornforth Partnership on this occasion, with the council paying a contribution towards printing and distribution costs.</i></p> <p><i>Resolved: That Councillor Beetham-Yelland present a design of the council's contribution to the council for approval at its meeting on 10 March 2025.</i></p>
21	<p>Representative on the Board of Sedgefield Charities</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr Dr S Drew had stepped down as the parish council's representative on the board after many years of service.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor J Snowball, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That Councillor J Beetham-Yelland be nominated as the council's Trustee on the Board of Sedgefield Charities.</i></p>
22	<p>Storage of parish council archives</p> <p>A discussion took place on the possibility of transferring some of the parish council's archive items to The Story @ Mount Oswald (formerly the Durham County Council County Archive) in Durham City.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor M Cunningham, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council store any items considered appropriate from before 2021 at The Story @ Mount Oswald.</i></p>

Signed

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23	Improvements to allotments site Quotes had been received by the council for provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A drainage channel by the railway bridge• Construction and installation of two bridges over the beck It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor J Snowball, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council go ahead with the quote from DGS for drainage (£910+VAT) subject to the Chairman receiving satisfactory assurances from the company that the method to be used is appropriate to the site.</i> <i>Resolved: That the council defer a decision on the bridges whilst more options are investigated.</i>
24	Motions on notice None received.

Signed

Date