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Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 14 April 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 Drew, S Metcalfe, V Parnaby, J Snowball & R Vaughan.

In attendance: Mr R Ormerod (Parish Clerk) and four members of the public.

1	Apologies Apologies were received from Councillor J Ratcliff. <i>Resolved: To receive and accept the apologies.</i>
2	Declarations 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. <i>It was noted that Cllr P Drew declared an interest in item 13 as a member of the board of the Cornforth Partnership.</i> <i>It was noted that Cllrs S Drew and R Vaughan declared an interest in item 20 as members of the committee of the Cornforth Village Show.</i>
3	Members' dispensation The Clerk informed the meeting that there were no dispensations for this meeting. It was noted that there were no dispensations.
4	Public participation: Concerns were raised about the fencing on Station Road tilting towards the road and the state of the graveyard. The Chairman and Clerk would liaise to take action.
5	Minutes Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 10 March 2025 It was proposed by Cllr S Drew and seconded by Cllr J Snowball, and it was <i>Resolved: That the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 10 March 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at this meeting.</i> Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 26 March 2025 It was proposed by Cllr J Snowball and seconded by Cllr P Drew, and it was <i>Resolved: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 26 March 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at this meeting. The council formally thanked the Clerk and Vice-Chair for their work on resolving the issues around the encampment on the Memorial Park.</i>
6	County Councillor's report

	None received.
8	Police And Communities Together (PACT) Councillor N Coombs reported that the recent scheduled meeting of PACT had been postponed.
9	Area Action Partnership Cllr J Snowball informed members that there was nothing to report due to the transition between AAPs and Local Networks.
10	Clerk's update The Clerk had circulated a written report. It was noted that there would be no contested election for the parish council in May and that 12 people had been validly nominated. It was proposed by Cllr S Metcalfe and seconded by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland, and it was Resolved: That the council receive the report.
11	Planning No issues were raised.
12	Financial matters Members had received the Receipts and Payments Analysis for March 2025, the bank reconciliation at 31 March 2025 (the end of year position), the expenditure against budget analysis from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and the list of pending payments. It was noted that the council had 83,577.83 in its current account and £188,147.13 in the reserve account. It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and it was; Resolved: To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Analysis for March 2025. It was proposed by Councillor S Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor S Drew and it was; Resolved: To receive and approve the bank reconciliation at 31 March 2025 and for it to be signed by Cllr P Drew. It was proposed by Councillor M Cunningham and seconded by Councillor V Parnaby and it was; Resolved: To receive and approve the expenditure against budget analysis for the financial year-end (period 1 April to 31 March 2025). It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor S Drew and it was; Resolved: To receive and approve the pending payments, with the exception of the invoice from DGS, which will be paid when works are amended to the satisfaction of the council.
13	Renewal of lease for Cornforth House Members had received the revised lease following comments on previous drafts. A discussion took place. It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan

Signed

Date

	<p>and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council agree to the content of the lease and that it be presented to the Cornforth Partnership for their signature. It was noted that Cllr P Drew abstained on the vote.</i></p>
14	<p>Site of former petrol station, Station Road</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the owners of the land had been identified. Members were concerned that the site had become a dumping ground and needed to be tidied up. Concern was expressed that the wall looked dangerous and was encroaching onto the pavement.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor V Parnaby and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the Clerk write to the landowner to request that the area be tidied up and the safety of the wall addressed.</i></p> <p><i>Resolved: That the Clerk write to Durham County Council's Highways section to enquire as to whether enforcement action could be taken in respect of the wall and highway safety.</i></p>
15	<p>VE Day commemorations</p> <p>A discussion took place on the commemorations of the 80th anniversary of VE Day in the parish. It was noted that the Legion was holding an event.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor N Coombs and seconded by Councillor S Drew and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council use its noticeboards, website and social media to promote the events happening in the parish to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day.</i></p>
16	<p>Proposed electric vehicle charging point, West Cornforth Medical Centre</p> <p>It was noted that Durham County Council was looking to install an electric vehicle charging point in the car park outside West Cornforth Medical Centre.</p> <p>A discussion took place. Councillor S Drew pointed out that the car park does not belong to the medical centre.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor S Drew, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council make representations to Durham County Council saying that it is broadly in favour of the proposal, as long as it can have reassurances that the new facility will not impinge on disability access at the medical centre, and that the facility will not attract vandalism.</i></p>
17	<p>Policy on the keeping of bees on parish council allotments</p> <p>Councillor J Beetham-Yelland had prepared a report to council on the matter.</p> <p>A discussion took place.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the Clerk clarify the position on how any ballot of allotment holders should be carried out.</i></p> <p><i>Resolved: To accept the policy, subject to the proviso that Cllr Beetham-Yelland amend the policy to include reference to keeping an emergency medical kit in a locked box on-site.</i></p>
18	<p>Quotes for provision of fencing, former bus shelter</p>

Signed

Date

	<p>One quote had been received for provision of the fence, from SE Landscaping, for £270. It was proposed by Councillor N Coombs and seconded by Councillor J Snowball, and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council accept the quote and request that SE Landscaping carry out the work as soon as possible.</i></p>
19	<p>Security of parish council boundary</p> <p>It was noted that Thrislington Quarry had agreed to provide boulders to restrict vehicular access to the memorial park. Councillor R Vaughan suggested chicanes in order to further secure the land.</p> <p>A discussion took place.</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 carry out an assessment of vehicular access to all areas of land owned by the parish council.</i></p>
20	<p>Request for financial assistance toward Cornforth Village Show</p> <p>A request had been received for £1000 towards the costs of the show.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council donate £1000 to the 2025 Cornforth Village Show.</i></p>
21	<p>Request for financial assistance towards the provision of easter eggs for local school children</p> <p>This had been verbally requested by the Cornforth Partnership but no application form had been received.</p>
22	<p>Motions on notice</p> <p>1. The following motion was moved by Cllr J Snowball:</p> <p>Cornforth Parish Council undertakes to adopt a policy of issuing a legal notice to any trespasser unlawfully occupying parish council land within 48 hours of the trespasser occupying the land. The council undertakes to earmark reserves to cover the potential costs of enforcement and eviction of trespassers.</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor R Vaughan.</p> <p>Councillor P Metcalfe moved the following amendment (seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe):</p> <p>To insert the words “of £5,000” after “reserves”.</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the amendment be accepted. The amended motion therefore became the substantive motion.</i></p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor R Vaughan and it was;</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the substantive motion be accepted.</i></p> <p>2. The following motion was moved by Cllr R Vaughan:</p> <p>Cornforth Parish Council shall dedicate the replacement tree on the Village Green (agreed at its meeting in March 2025) to residents of the parish whose lives were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 to 2022.</p>

Signed

Date

	<p>The motion was seconded by Councillor P Drew.</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the motion be accepted.</i></p>
7	<p>Chairman's announcements</p> <p>The Chairman gave thanks to all members for their work over the past four years and wished all members not seeking re-election well.</p> <p>The Chairman paid an additional tribute to the work and commitment of Councillor S Drew over many years of service on the parish council.</p> <p><i>Resolved: That the council formally record its gratitude to the members not seeking re-election.</i></p>
