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Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 8 September 2025 at 7pm in West Cornforth Community Centre, Station Road, Cornforth, DL17 9LA.

Present: Councillors J Snowball (in the Chair), J Beetham-Yelland, N Coombs, P Crathorne, M Cunningham, H Gibson, S Metcalfe, V Parnaby & R Vaughan.

In attendance: Mr R Ormerod (Parish Clerk), County Councillor J Blakey and four members of the public.

1	Apologies Apologies were received from Councillors J Grafton and P Metcalfe. <i>Resolved: To receive and accept the apologies.</i>
2	Declarations of interest The Chair invited members who wished to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting. <i>None were declared.</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 not having been installed at the site of the former bus shelter. The Clerk would liaise with SE Landscaping to take action.
5	Minutes Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 7 July 2025 It was proposed by Cllr H Gibson and seconded by Cllr V Parnaby, and it was <i>Resolved: That the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 7 July 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair at this meeting.</i>
6	County Councillor's report County Councillor J Blakey gave a verbal report. Topics included PACT meetings and fencing on Station Road. It was noted that posters were available to go in noticeboards informing residents of the contact details of county councillors.
7	Chair's Report The Chair welcomed the Clerk to his first meeting since his illness, though it was noted that he had still been working in the interim. The Chair congratulated all involved in the Village Show, which had been a great success. It was noted that the Thrislington Banner Group Committee had expressed thanks to the

	parish council for the donation towards their presence at the Durham Miners' Gala. It was noted that notice was served on the travellers at Laburnum Road, and that they had left the area. A small amount of damage had been done to play equipment and trees in the park. Livin were considering fencing off the land and boulders would be installed around the perimeter in the next few weeks. A discussion took place on whether Livin could build additional social housing on the land or whether subsidence would prevent this. It was noted that the sinkhole on Middleham Road was still there and the Clerk was in discussions with DCC about whether it can simply be filled in.
8	Police And Communities Together (PACT) Councillor N Coombs reported on the August meeting. No crimes had been reported but incidents of concern included a dead deer, horses on Station Road, quad bikes in the scrapyard area (some were seized by police), altercations with youths and a white van being driven erratically. A discussion took place on police CCTV in the village and whether it was effective. <i>Resolved: That the Clerk attempt to find out from the police whether the cameras are working, where they are monitored, and the standard of pictures supplied.</i>
9	Local Networks Cllr J Snowball informed members that there was nothing to report due to the transition between AAPs and Local Networks. <i>It was agreed to remove this topic from council agenda as a standing item until the Local Networks become active.</i>
10	Clerk's update The Clerk had circulated a written report and thanked members for their good wishes and support during his illness. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland, and it was <i>Resolved: That the council receive the report.</i>
11	Planning No issues were raised.
12	Financial matters Members had received the Receipts and Payments Analysis for August 2025, the bank reconciliation at 31 August 2025, the expenditure against budget analysis from 1 April 2025 to 31 August 2025 and the list of pending payments. It was noted that the council had £151,038.79 in its current account and £ 191,609.76 in the reserve account. It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor H Gibson and it was; <i>Resolved: To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Analysis for August 2025.</i> It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor V Parnaby and it was; <i>Resolved: To receive and approve the bank reconciliation at 31 August 2025 and for it to be signed by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland (in the absence of Cllr P Drew).</i> It was proposed by Councillor V Parnaby and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe and it was; <i>Resolved: To receive and approve the expenditure against budget analysis for the</i>

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	period 1 April to 31 August 2025. It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe and it was; <i>Resolved: To receive and approve the pending payments.</i>
13	Meeting of the Recreation & Amenities Committee held on 8 September 2025 The committee met on 8 September and made the following recommendations to council: Goalposts – Bill Wilson Memorial Park • That it be recommended to council that it purchase 5x12ft goal posts for the Bill Wilson Memorial Park. • That the Clerk request an additional quote for goalposts of the same specification from It's A Goal (Sheffield-based). A discussion took place. It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor H Gibson and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council purchase two 5x12ft goal posts for the Bill Wilson Memorial Park.</i> <i>Resolved: That the Clerk request an additional quote for goalposts of the same specification from It's A Goal (Sheffield-based).</i> <i>Resolved: That a contribution towards the costs be sought from Livin Housing.</i> Christmas lights • That the Christmas lighting be installed on 27 November 2025 and removed on 6 January 2026. • That the Christmas tree at the community centre be decorated with coloured lights (non-flashing). • That the following lighting column decorations be ordered from the Lumalite Elite catalogue: MS009 Santa (by school); MS002 Pudding (by school); MS010 Rudolph (by school); MS001 Stocking; MS015 Angel; MS050 Tree plus 3 Stars; MS034 Candle; MS029 Shooting Star; MS037 Bell; MS031 Bauble; MS013 Lantern. • That the Clerk approach West Cornforth Primary School to enquire about the possibility of siting a Christmas tree in their grounds, installing lights on the beech tree (as in the past) and bring a report back to council in October 2025. It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor H Gibson and it was; <i>Resolved: That the recommendations of the committee be agreed (Cllr N Coombs abstained).</i>
14	Grants & Donations Policy The Clerk and Chair had drawn up a revised policy which requires recipients of council funding to provide copies of invoices to the council within three months, rather than just a list of expenditure. The new policy also reiterates that the council will take steps to recover any funding granted if the conditions of support are not adhered to. It was proposed by Councillor R Vaughan and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe and it was;

	<i>Resolved: That the council adopt the revised Grants & Donations policy with immediate effect.</i>
15	Financial Regulations The Clerk had drawn up a revised set of Financial Regulations based on model regulations supplied by the National Association of Local Councils. It was noted that the issue had been deferred in March 2025 so that the new council (post-May 2025 elections) could agree the new regulations It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council adopt the revised Financial Regulations with immediate effect and review at each annual meeting of the council.</i>
16	Memorials to former Councillor Dr Stephen Drew It was noted that West Cornforth Medical Centre was happy for a memorial plaque to be situated in the waiting room and/or for a planter to be located in their grounds. It was noted that Dr Drew was photographed with Tony Blair (Prime Minister and local Member of Parliament at the time) at the opening of the medical centre and members wondered if a copy of this photograph could be incorporated. It was noted that Durham County Council and the Woodland Trust were amenable to the idea of a memorial stone in the woodland area off the bypass, as long as certain criteria were met. A discussion took place. Councillor P Crathorne asked if a tree could be planted as a memorial in the woodland area, as well as the memorial stone. It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor P Crathorne, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council liaise with the medical centre to have a plaque erected in the waiting room.</i> It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor N Coombs, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council liaise with the medical centre to have a planter installed in the grounds.</i> It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor P Crathorne, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council liaise with DCC and the Woodland Trust to have a memorial stone plaque erected in the woodland area, along with a tree dedicated to the memory of Dr Drew, if possible.</i>
17	Security at Bill Wilson Memorial Park A discussion took place which included the possibility of converting the area south of the playground into a dog walking park. It was proposed by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland and seconded by Councillor S Metcalfe, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the issue be deferred to the October 2025 meeting of the council.</i>
18	Donation to MS Society It was noted that Cllr P Metcalfe had completed a sponsored event to raise funds for the

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	charity. It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor V Parnaby, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council donate £100 to the MS Society.</i>
19	Recruitment of parish/town councillors to Durham County Council's Standards Committee It was noted that DCC was seeking two parish/town councillors from the county to serve until 2029 on its Standards Committee as non-voting members. A discussion took place. It was proposed by Councillor J Snowball and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland, and it was; <i>Resolved: That the council make no nominations.</i>
20	Motions on notice None.
