

Cornforth Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 9 June 2025.

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

In attendance: Mr D Snowball (Acting Clerk)

County Councillors: G Hutchinson, J Blakey

The Parish Council observed a minute's silence in memory of Dr Stephen Drew who had been a Parish Councillor for many years, and the Parish Council recognises his contribution, passion, support and help to the community of Cornforth.

1	Apologies Were received from Councillor P. Drew. Resolved: To receive and accept the apologies.
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. There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.
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: None There were no members of public present
5	Minutes Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2025 It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr V Parnaby, and it was Resolved: That the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at this meeting.

6	<p>Chairs Announcements</p> <p>The chair updated the meeting on the clerk's illness progress and that it was hoped that he would return to work in the next week or two.</p> <p>She thanked those members that attended the recent Annual Parish meeting and that the meeting was very positive and that fundraising would be assessed towards some of the possible projects that may emerge from these discussions.</p> <p>Cornforth parish Council are working closely with the Cornforth Partnership and other organisations tackling the ongoing issues with off road bikes and quad bikes. It is hoped that the police will also be involved in this task and all possible is completed to stop this anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>An update was provided on the traveller encampment on the old scrap yard in station road. Durham County Council are currently progressing this issue and due to the current legal position, there is no more information available at this moment.</p> <p>There is also a traveller encampment on the land in Laburnum Road and the chair has had several conversations with Livin who own this piece of land. Livin have said there is very little that they can do, and contact should be made with Durham County Council to identify what can be done to resolve this issue. Members discussed possible work to further protect the park from being accessed illegally by the travellers and the chair will further discuss this with the clerk. The possible installation of posts and/or fencing will be part of these discussions.</p>
7	<p>County Councillors report</p> <p>Councillors G Hutchinson and J Blakely explained that they had attended the Cornforth Annual Parish meeting and had positive interaction with both parish councillors and residents. Attended the recent PACT meeting and held meetings with Livin, including discussions on the illegal traveller encampment on the old scrapyard. Meetings have also been held with the Chief Executive Officer of Cornforth Partnership.</p> <p>One problem raised was a rat issue and after contacting the relevant department at Durham County Council it had been explained that there is currently a back log on this pest control that was being worked on to improve.</p> <p>Due to the recent boundary changes County Councillor funds for grants etc, are no further forward and it is hoped that this is resolved soon.</p> <p>The grass cutting service provided should improve with the new equipment purchased by the companies and the cuts should be every eleven days. If residents have any issues they should report this directly to the County Council. The County Councillors are also in the process of arranging meetings with the various area team leaders from the works department.</p> <p>Parish Councillor P Crathorne informed the County Councillors on a previous file that had been prepared and discussed with a County Council officer on some works that were required in Cornforth – in relation to overgrown hedges and public footpaths.</p>

8	<p>Police and Communities Together (PACT)</p> <p>Cllr N Coombs reported on the most recent meeting. There has been more anti-social behaviour with the off-road bikes and an individual using an air rifle on the allotment site. Two off-road bikes had been seized by the police and crushed. There was a reported incident with two horses loose in the village and they were eventually caught and returned to their rightful place.</p> <p>A temporary speed camera had been sited in Garmondsway Road recently and problems with parking on the double yellow lines outside of Cornforth Primary School. Police had attended and advised parents to remove their vehicles from this area. The two county councillors informed the meeting that they would take the double yellow line issue further when they attend upcoming meetings planned with County Council officers.</p> <p>Concerns were also again raised on the old scrap yard illegal encampment and the meeting was informed that due to the legal position matters were still ongoing and being treated confidentially.</p>
9	<p>Local Networks</p> <p>There is no progress to report to date.</p>
10	<p>Clerk's Updates</p> <p>No updates for this meeting</p>
11	<p>Planning</p> <p>No issues raised</p> <p>County Councillor G Hutchinson informed the meeting that he was aware that Amazon were planning a huge mast, and objections had been received from Teesside airport and others.</p>
12	<p>Financial matters</p> <p>Members had received the Receipts and Payments Analysis for April 2025, the bank reconciliation at 30 April 2025, and the list of pending payments</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor V Parnaby, and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Analysis for April 2025.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor J Beetham – Yelland and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and approve the bank reconciliation at 30 April 2025 and for it to be signed by Cllr P Metcalfe.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor J Beetham-Yelland, and it was;</p>

	<p>Resolved: To receive and approve the expenditure against budget analysis for the financial year-end (period 1 April to 30 April 2025).</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor P Crathorne and seconded by Councillor J Grafton, and it was;</p> <p>Resolved: To receive and approve the pending payments</p>
13	<p>Internal audit Report 2024 - 25</p> <p>Members considered the Internal Audit report provided by G Fletcher, internal Auditor, and it was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by V Parnaby;</p> <p>Resolved: That the Annual Internal Audit report for 2024 – 25 be approved.</p>
14	<p>Approval of the Annual Governance statement 2024 - 25</p> <p>Members considered the Annual Governance Statement prepared by the Clerk and it was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by J Beetham-Yelland to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024 - 25 and be signed off by the Clerk and Chairman of the Council.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) That the Annual Governance Statement in respect of the 2024 - 25 financial year, as set out in Section 1 of the 2024 - 25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return, be approved. (ii) That the Annual Governance Statement for the 2024 - 25 financial year be signed off by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council
15	<p>Approval of the Annual Accounting Statements 2024 - 25</p> <p>Members considered the Annual Accounting statements for 2024 – 25 prepared by the Clerk and it was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by J Beetham-Yelland to approve the Annual Accounting Statement for 2024/25.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the 2024/2025 Accounting Statements set out in Section 2 of the Annual Return are approved.</p>
16	<p>Freedom of the Parish Award</p> <p>This item was removed from discussions due to the sad passing of Dr S Drew</p>

17	<p>General Power of Competence</p> <p>The chair explained the background of the G.P.C. and the Council's eligibility to meet the criteria set by the Secretary of State (Localism Act 2011 – Section 8) for the Council to adopt and use the 'General Power of Competence' for the period of this Council. She confirmed that the Council meets the two required criteria for eligibility, at the time of this meeting to exercise the General Power of Competence.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr P Metcalfe and seconded by V Parnaby, and it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) That the Council confirms that it meets the two required criteria for eligibility, at the time of this meeting to exercise the General Power of Competence. (ii) That the Council resolves to adopt to use the General Power of Competence
18	<p>Cobbles/Tiles on the Green</p> <p>The condition of the cobbles/tiles is continually degrading and Cllr V Parnaby informed the meeting of the ongoing issues with the risk of trips and falls. The chair explained that the Recreation and Amenities had recently also discussed this issue.</p> <p>The chair informed the meeting that she would discuss and progress this with the clerk upon his return to work. (To get clarity on which of the roads on the Green are the responsibility of the Parish Council).</p> <p>At this point County Councillor G Hutchinson explained that he was due to have meetings with officers from the County Council Highways department and he would also mention this at these meetings to determine what support may be available for the Parish Council to help move this issue forward.</p>
19	<p>Motions</p> <p>There were no motions on notice for this meeting.</p>

Signed

Date