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Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held Monday 20 July 2026 at 7pm in West Cornforth Community Centre, Station Road, Cornforth, DL17 9LA.

Present: Councillors Joanne Beetham-Yelland (in the Chair), Nick Coombs, Pauline Crathorne, Pat Drew, Paul Metcalfe, Susan Metcalfe, Linden Parkins, Michaela Thompson, Rasheed Vaughan & Malcolm Williams.

In attendance: Mr Richard Ormerod (Parish Clerk), County Councillors Jan Blakey & Gary Hutchinson and several members of the public.

1	Apologies Apologies were received from Councillor V Parnaby who was away on holiday. <i>Resolved: To receive and accept the apologies.</i>
	<i>Standing Orders were suspended to receive a presentation from Mr Gary Stokoe on the council website and email system.</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>Cllrs J Beetham-Yelland, P Metcalfe, S Metcalfe and M Thompson declared an interest in item 12.</i> <i>Cllr M Thompson declared an interest in item 14.</i> <i>Cllrs P Drew and R Vaughan declared an interest in item 15.</i> <i>The Clerk declared an interest in item 17.</i>
3	Members' dispensation None.
4	Public participation A member of the public drew the council's attention to the state of the fence on Station Road owned by Durham County Council (DCC). It was noted that the issue was now with DCC's Corporate Property & Land section and was for sale. <i>Resolved: That the Clerk raise the issue with the Chief Executive of DCC.</i> It was pointed out by a resident that there was a large amount of litter at the rear of Hawthorn Terrace.
5	Minutes Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 8 June 2026. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr M Thompson, and it was <i>Resolved: That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 8 June</i>

	2026 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair at this meeting.
6	Chair's Announcements The Chair drew members' attention to the draft County Durham Plan issued by DCC. It was noted that there was only a short time in which to comment. The event on the eve of Durham Miners' Gala featuring the Ripon City Band had gone very well. The Chair congratulated the Cornforth Partnership on becoming 30 years old. It was noted that correspondence had been received from the new church wardens at Holy Trinity Church in Cornforth wishing to know if the council was holding a Remembrance service as normal in November 2026.
7	County Councillor's report County Councillors Blakey and Hutchinson reminded the meeting that there was a Cornforth stakeholder meeting on Wednesday 22 July at 4pm. Plans were being made to replace the older CCTV cameras in the village, to which the parish council may be asked to make a financial contribution. A discussion took place on traveller sites in the parish. A resident requested that a dog waste bin be relocated nearer to the churchyard.
8	Police And Communities Together (PACT) Cllr N Coombs had attended a recent meeting. Topics included: • Break-ins at various locations. • Parking issues exacerbated by overgrown hedges. • Traveller encampment. Livin Housing are ready for the travellers to move on at which point boulders will be introduced to the edges of the land. Resolved: To receive the report.
9	Clerk's update The Clerk had circulated a written report. It was noted that the new toddler play area at the Bill Wilson Memorial Park was now in use. It was noted that a reply from Greenbarnes was still awaited on whether the noticeboard on the High Street can be repaired cost-effectively. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr , and it was Resolved: That the council receive the report.
10	Planning No issues were raised.
11	Financial matters Members had received the Receipts and Payments Analysis for June 2026, the bank reconciliation at 30 June 2026, the expenditure against budget analysis from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026 and the list of pending payments. It was noted that the council had £78,701.47 in its current account and £274,163.96 in the reserve account. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr R Vaughan, and it was Resolved: To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Analysis for June

Signed

Date

	2026. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr R Vaughan, and it was Resolved: To receive and approve the bank reconciliation at 30 June 2026 and for it to be signed by Cllr P Drew. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr R Vaughan, and it was Resolved: To receive and approve the expenditure against budget analysis for the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr R Vaughan, and it was Resolved: To approve the pending payments.
12	Allotments Committee The committee had recommended using VT Signs for the supply and installation of a new sign on the allotment gate. Resolved: To accept the quote from VT Signs for the work of supplying and installing a new sign on the allotment gate.
13	Parish Council Newsletter It was noted that a resident had approached the parish council asking to place a small advertisement in the next edition of the parish council newsletter. A discussion took place. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr P Drew that the council not allow advertising in its publications. A vote took place with two in favour, five against and one abstention. Resolved: That the council allow local business to advertise in its publications with the Clerk to draw up a draft policy for approval in September 2026.
14	Request for financial assistance: Cornforth Wombles Members considered the request. It was proposed by Cllr P Drew and seconded by Cllr J Beetham-Yelland that the council donate £624.60 to pay for litter picking equipment. Resolved: That the council donate £624.60 to Cornforth Wombles to pay for litter picking equipment.
15	Request for financial assistance: West Cornforth Community Association Members considered the request. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr P Metcalfe that the council donate £400 towards the summer children's party. Resolved: That the council donate £400 to West Cornforth Community Association towards the summer children's party.
16	Co-option to Cornforth Parish Council The Clerk had circulated a report to members. A discussion took place. It was proposed by Cllr P Drew and seconded by Cllr P Metcalfe and it was: Resolved: That the council go ahead with the co-option process in line with policy but to offer a period longer than the usual two weeks for applications, lasting until two weeks before the September meeting of the council.

Signed

Date

17	Disability Confident Employer Scheme The Clerk left the meeting. The Chair explained the situation to members. It was proposed by Cllr R Vaughan and seconded by Cllr S Metcalfe that the council apply to become a level two Disability Confident Employer. A vote took place with eight votes for, two against and one abstention. <i>Resolved: That the council work toward gaining level 1, 2 and 3 to become a Disability Confident Employer.</i>
18	The Green, Cornforth (road surface) A discussion took place on the state of the council owned roads at The Green. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr P Metcalfe and it was <i>Resolved: That the council undertake the repair of the road surface (the Clerk to obtain three quotes for the September meeting of the council).</i>
19	The Green, Cornforth (benches) A discussion took place. It was proposed by Cllr P Crathorne and seconded by Cllr P Metcalfe and it was <i>Resolved: That the council obtain quotes for two additional granite benches on The Green, to be paid for by those wishing to add memorial inscriptions.</i>
20	Play equipment for older children, Bill Wilson Memorial Park A discussion took place. It was noted that the paint on the fences needed re-applying and that some of the older play equipment needed to be washed. <i>Resolved: That the Chair investigate the possibility of the Probation Service carrying out the work. If this is not possible then the Clerk to organise for the work to be carried out within existing budgets.</i>
21	Defibrillator, West Cornforth Medical Centre Members had received a report containing a list of prices from different suppliers. <i>Resolved: That the council lease a defibrillator and cabinet from Defib Machines.</i>
22	Replacement of salt bins in the parish It was noted that the price for replacing all of the 30 salt bins in the parish with new ones in the "Victoriana" style was £21,865.20. <i>Resolved: That the council replace six salt bins in the current financial year with six more per year thereafter, beginning with those in the most prominent areas.</i>
23	Motions on notice: None.