

CORNSAY PARISH COUNCIL

At a Meeting of Cornsay Parish Council held on Wednesday, 21st January, 2026, at 7.00pm, in Hamsteels Community Centre, Esh Winning.

Present: Councillor D Robb (in the Chair)
and Councillors D Bottoms, R Makepeace, L McKendrick, H Pegum and A Scott

75. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor A Neil.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Councillor R Makepeace declared an interest in Minute 81(c) and took no part in the discussion or decision thereon.

77. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

County Councillor A Neil had submitted apologies for absence but had provided a report.

- The dangerous crossroads junctions at Cornsay Colliery and Cornsay Village had been raised by a number of residents and these concerns had been raised with the County Council in an attempt to tackle the issues.
- Lighting issues at Low Row Cottages were also being pursued with County Council officers.
- The planning application for a children's home in Cornsay Colliery had now been approved.
- Councillor Neil had been honoured to take part in TRACC's Christmas tree lighting ceremony and would be happy to support other events in the parish.

Items raised to be reported included:

- State of roads around Cornsay Village which were covered in mud and slurry as a result of farming activities
- Development taking place at the slagheaps between Esh Winning and Cornsay Colliery
- Issues with the conditions and welfare of sheep and time taken to remove dead sheep near Cornsay.

Resolved: *That the report be noted.*

78. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26 November, 2025, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

79. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

80. FINANCIAL REPORT

(a) Agreement was given for the payment of:

- (i) £334.48 in respect of Clerk's wages for the month of January
- (ii) £83.76 to HMRC in respect of PAYE for the month of January

(b) Cheques issued:

(i)	10 th Dec 2025	£	252.00	Mazars LLP	No.1416
(ii)	26 th Nov 2025	£	334.48	Clerk's wages	No.1417

(iii)	26 th Nov 2025	£	167.52	HMRC	No.1418
(iv)	26 th Nov 2025	£	584.00	Makepeace Landscapes	No.1419
(v)	31 st Dec 2025	£	334.48	Clerk's wages	No.1420

81. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Durham County Council – details of this year's Big Spring Clean

Resolved: *That the information be noted.*

(b) Cornsay Village Residents' Association – correspondence received regarding damage to the Village Green.

Resolved: *That a letter be sent to the person involved detailing the statutory protections for village greens and requiring the damage to be repair immediately.*

(c) Makepeace Landscapes – information regarding pricing for the forthcoming year

Resolved: *That Members be minded to accept the quoted pricing for the forthcoming year, subject to formal approval at the next meeting.*

82. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications for consideration.

83. PRECEPT & BUDGET SETTING

Consideration was given to the report of the Clerk which set out the Council's current financial position, spending against budget headings during the current year and suggestions for the forthcoming year.

Discussion took place regarding the various budget headings and the Council's requirements for the coming year in order to meet priorities.

There had been a reduction in the Tax Base and Durham County Council had advised that the LCTRS grant which had previously been passed to parish and town councils would be withdrawn with immediate effect. This would result in a further reduction in income for the forthcoming year.

Increased costs, however, were predicted across all budgets next year and careful consideration was given to the amount required in order to ensure that the Council continued to be able to provide the facilities and services it currently did while minimising the increase that would be required.

Resolved: (i) *That the Council's financial position be noted.*

(ii) *That the precept be set at £20,000, which resulted in an increase of 10.69%*

(iii) *That the contingency fund balance remaining at the year end be carried forward as a contingency fund.*

84. HAMSTEELS COMMUNITY CENTRE – LEASE TO HAMSTEELS COMMUNITY HALL ASSOCIATION

Hamsteels Community Hall Association had indicated it's willingness to enter into a new Lease on the same terms as the existing.

Resolved: *That the Lease with Hamsteels Community Hall Association be signed on behalf of the Council.*

85. ASSET REGISTER

The Council was required to keep its Asset Register under regular review to ensure that it remained up-to-date. Copies of the Register had been circulated

Resolved: *That the Asset Register be approved.*

86. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council's risk assessment identified risks faced by the Council and measures in place to control and mitigate against them. The risk assessment had to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it covered all relevant situations.

Resolved: *That the Risk Assessment be approved subject to the amendment of a number of the likelihood and risk scores as discussed.*

87. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Consideration was given to the report of the Clerk in respect of the review of the effectiveness of the Council's internal audit procedures.

The report set out the matters to be considered and how these could be evidenced.

Resolved: *That the Council is satisfied with its internal audit arrangements.*

88. FIDELITY GUARANTEE INSURANCE

Fidelity guarantee insurance protected the Council's funds in the event of misappropriation by staff or members. The level of cover should be high enough to cover all funds held by the Council.

Cover was in the sum of £150,000.

Resolved: *That the Council is satisfied with the level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover.*

89. HAMSTEELS COMMUNITY CENTRE – UPDATE REPORT

While most groups had taken a break over the Christmas and New Year period, the community centre had been used by an organisation that had offered food and activities to children over the Christmas period.

All the regular groups had now returned and a range of events was planned including Fools Gold Acoustic Due and a children's K-Pop disco in April.

Resolved: *That the report be noted*

The Meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed as a correct record:

Chairperson Date

Clerk Date

