

Cornsay Parish Council

Explanation of Significant Variances

Box No.	Last Year	This Year	Difference (£)	Difference (%)
2	17,435	18,183	703	4
3	9,038	2,627	-6,411	-71
4	5,045	5,214	169	3
6	16,913	13,750	3,163	-18
7	13,140	14,986	1,846	14
9	592,645	592,645		

Box No.2

Increase to Precept of 3% following budget setting process together with small increase in Tax Base.

Band D in 2024/2025 = £62.27	Tax Base 280.0	= 17,435
Band D in 2025/2026 = £64.14	Tax Base 283.5	= 18,183

Box No.3

In the year 2024/2025 the amount of £4,750 was received toward the cost of environmental improvement works. This was not repeated during the year 2025/2026.

There was a reduction in the VAT reclaim which was higher in the previous year due to specific projects being carried out, in particular sustainability improvement works undertaken to the community centre including new LED lighting.

A receipt of £100 was received from the bank during the year 2025/2026 as a goodwill payment following service issues.

The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme support grant received from Durham County Council was reduced in the year 2025/2026 following DCC's decision to reduce the amount passed on to parish and town councils as a result of pressures on it's own finances.

(The £1 difference between the table below and Box 3 is due to rounding)

	2024/2025	2025/2026	Difference
S106 funding (environmental improvements)	4,750	-	-4,750
VAT Reclaim	3,671	2,178	-1,493
Bank Interest	20	23	3
Bank Goodwill Payment		100	100
LCTRS Grant	597	325	-272
			-6,412

Box No.4

Change due to NJC pay award for the year.

Box No.6

During the year 2024/2025 a one-off project was undertaken to deliver a scheme of environmental improvements.

The variance between the two years is £34,742. The table below details the main figures involved with the small remainder being due to small variations across other budgets.

	2024/2025	2025/2026	Difference
<i>One-off projects</i>			
Environmental Improvements (s106)	5,700		-5,700
<i>Main budget variations</i>			
Community Centre (1)	3,038	4,849	1,811
Grounds Maintenance (2)	5,272	4,964	-308
Website (3)	0	932	932
	14,010	10,745	-3,265

Notes

- (1) New cleaning contract in place for the year 2025/2026 resulted in increased cost.
- (2) Minor variation due to grounds maintenance work undertaken
- (3) The website is on a 2-year renewal which fell due during 2025/2026.

The remainder of the difference is due to small variations across other budgets

Box No.7

£13,140 was held at the end of 2024/2025 compared to £14,986 at the end of 2025/2026, a difference of £1,846.

This is mainly due to expenditure incurred during the year having not been invoiced for payment by the end of the year, including repairs to park fencing and gates. The remainder is due to smaller variations across budgets during the year.

Reserves

Box 2	Precept	18,183	x 1.15 =	20,910
Box 4	Staff costs	5,214		
Box 5	Loan interest / capital repayments	0		
Box 6	Other payments	13,750		
		18,964	x 1.15 =	21,809
	Max level of reserves			21,809
Box 7	Balances carried forward			14,986
	Explanation required?			No

Cornsay Parish Council

Bank Reconciliation

Bank Reconciliation - Year ended 31 March 2026

Balances as bank statements at 31 March 2026

Virgin Money Current	14,893.92	
Barclays Current	60.00	
Barclays Saving	27.10	
		14,981.02

Petty Cash 4.82

Less uncleared cheques 0

-

Add unbanked cash

-

0

Balance at 31 March 2026 14,985.84

Cash book

Opening balance on 1 April 2025 13,140.41

Add Receipts during year 20,809.57

Less Payments during year 18,964.14

Closing balance on 31 March 2025 14,985.84

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Annual Governance Statement – Box 4

Box 4 of the Annual Governance Statement states:

“We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.”

The Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25 was approved by the Council on 19 May 2025.

The period for the exercise of public rights must comprise 30 working days, including the first 10 working days of July. This period must commence on the working day immediately following publication of the statutory notice and the unaudited AGAR on the Council’s website. Publication must take place as soon as practicable following Council approval and in accordance with the statutory inspection period.

For 2024/25, the earliest date on which publication could have taken place, whilst still complying with the requirement for the first 10 working days in July to fall within the inspection period, was 3 June 2025.

Due to the Clerk’s sudden and serious illness, the statutory notice and unaudited AGAR were published on 6 June 2025. In accordance with the Regulations, the period for the exercise of public rights commenced on the next working day, 9 June 2025, and concluded on 18 July 2025.

In carrying out the review of the 2024/25 AGAR, the Auditor commented:

“In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2025 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to start the period of 30 working days for the public to inspect the accounts the day after the AGAR was published and to do so as soon as possible after it was approved. The Council should ensure that in 2025/26 they comply with the Regulations.”

Whilst the period for the exercise of public rights commenced four working days later than the earliest possible date, the Council did provide a full 30-working-day inspection period, including the first 10 working days in July, in accordance with statutory requirements.

Given the circumstances of the Clerk’s illness, the Council considers that publication took place as soon as reasonably practicable and that electors were afforded the opportunity to exercise their rights in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations.