



*Delivering Quality Services to  
Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill*

### Coxhoe Parish Council

**Meeting:** Council Meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
**Time:** 6.30pm  
**Venue:** Parish Room, Coxhoe Village Hall

Councillors Present: S Dunn (Chair); K Simpson; A Appleby; B Hepplewhite and W Lavelle.

Also present: County Councillors M McKeon and J Blakey; C Llewelyn, Parish Clerk and K Williams, Administration Assistant.

Two members of the public were present for the first part of the meeting.

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The Chair welcomed Karen Williams, the Council's Administration Assistant who took up the position in May.

The Chair announced that with regret he has accepted the resignation of Sue Downham. The Clerk has advertised the vacancy and the Council will need to discuss the vacancies.

At the request of the Clerk and Cllr Hedley, the Chair asked the members to agree an urgent item be added to the agenda to discuss a private and confidential report into staffing levels, human resources and recruitment which had not been able to be discussed at the HR Committee the night before, as the meeting became inquorate before the agenda item was discussed. The item will be discussed in private and at this point of the agenda all members of the press and the public will be asked to leave the meeting room due to an item classified as being of a confidential nature in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The members **RESOLVED** to add this to the meeting's agenda.

Members of the public were invited to address the meeting.

The members of the public raised general maintenance, appearance and cleanliness in Quarrington Hill. The Chair said that the Council had resolved to weed and seed the planter on the front street. The members of the public said the fruit trees on the allotment road are being choked by weeds along the fence to the back of the green behind the planter and that Kingswood is a mess. The residents had been involved with the Kingswood maintenance previously and were asked if they know where the maintenance equipment is; they advised it had been collected but did not know who arranged this. The members **RESOLVED** to ask the Clerk to contact a previous Clerk to ask if they know what happened to the equipment. The Council is aware that Kingswood needs attention and the Clerk is meeting with the grounds maintenance contractor to discuss maintenance. One of the residents asked about a query they had brought to the Clerk about allotments, the Clerk advised that the Council is aware there are outstanding allotment queries and she

will be responding to the queries soon but that other council activities had had to take priority.

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### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Pounder, E Cutter, C Thirlaway, A Hedley, and I Thompson, Youth Worker.

**RESOLVED** apologies received and accepted.

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### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs Dunn and Lavelle in respect of Active Life in Coxhoe; from Cllr Simpson as a Governor of Coxhoe Primary School and Cllr Hepplewhite in respect of Coxhoe History Group.

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### **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2018**

A draft copy of the minutes for the above meeting had been issued with the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that with amendments to the format suggested by the Chair the minutes be approved, confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

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### **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCILLORS' UPDATE**

County Councillors gave verbal reports on a number of issues as below.

County Councillors said there have been reports of anti-social behaviour in Coxhoe including someone impersonating a Police officer. Cllr McKeon and Cllr Blakey have taken action to ensure problems are acted on. Cllrs McKeon and Dunn had provided funding for Coxhoe United Fun Day and attended to give out medals. Cllr McKeon has been working on measures to tackle teenage pregnancy. The County Durham Plan is going to Cabinet in the next week. A number of footpath improvements have been approved.

Cllr Blakey is working to ensure improvements to the villages are being implemented including dropped kerbs at Linden Grove. Issues with the car wash have been sent to planning enforcement. The new window in St Mary's Church was installed in time for the 150-year celebration and they are working on WW1 commemoration activities. The Half Moon has been advised it is of historical interest and Cllr Blakey has discussed this with the planning officer. She has met with quarry operators about wagon speed and rubbish falling off wagons.

County Councillors are waiting for confirmation of highways officers visiting Cornforth Lane after the incidents reported including the car hit by a bus.

Two planning applications have been submitted for Integra 61 which include a four/five storey distribution warehouse. The equivalent to 2000 full time jobs are expected to be created by the development. Traffic measures including more lanes, full signal operations and new roundabouts, one of which will be for the Services, are to be included in the design which is to be agreed by September by Durham County Council. County Councillors are pressing for a potential safe walking and cycling route. Parish Council members **RESOLVED** to record their request for County Councillors ensure the case is made for traffic being considered carefully and ensuring that our villages are not disproportionately affected.

**RESOLVED** the information be received and noted.

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## **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS OF THEIR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS/EVENTS ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

No reports received.

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### **YOUTH PROVISION**

The Youth Worker had sent a written report. The Clerk said two young people had been subject to a ban by staff and that staff would be working again to decrease behaviour issues at clubs. **RESOLVED (A)** the information is received and noted.

Cllr Hepplewhite said parents have complained that there is not enough provision for birth to school age children in the village and this was in the Parish Plan; she would like to see more pre-school activities and the Parish Council had resolved to improve activities for children from birth upwards, and said the playgroup at Coxhoe Village Hall does not now run in school holidays. The Chair confirmed this playgroup is provided by Coxhoe Village Hall and asked that the Administration Assistant asks the Village Hall for regular reports and feedback on the playgroup; this was **RESOLVED (B)** by members. The Council **RESOLVED (C)** Cllr Lavelle and the Administration Assistant to report on potential funding opportunities; Cllr Blakey recommended a contact in Bowburn.

Cllr Blakey left the meeting at this point.

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### **MATTERS OF INFORMATION REPORT**

The Clerk had distributed a report for consideration.

**1c RESOLVED** decision on a lead Councillor on allotments will be deferred until Councillor vacancies are discussed.

**1f** A query from a husband and wife who have an allotment each and one wants to be on the waiting list for a further allotment, should one be available. The tenancy agreement states allotment holders are able to place their names on the waiting list though they would only be allocated a plot if no one else wanted it. The Council had decided that third plots would not be offered however the Council has been asked to look at the query again as the couple are two individuals and not one person. The Clerk had taken advice and said that this is not an allotment issue but is about fairness and as an individual should be able to go on the waiting list for a second plot, the recommendation is that the request for a place on the waiting list is agreed. The Clerk advised that the Council would benefit from an allotment policy and that she intends to look at this as soon as possible. The Council **RESOLVED (A)** the Clerk to put forward an allotment policy as soon as she is able and **RESOLVED (B)** that not to prejudice the outcome of an allotment policy that the resident concerned be placed on the waiting list for the time being, until an allotment policy is agreed and then whatever is agreed in the policy would be followed.

**8** The defibrillators are now registered and weekly checks being carried out by the Administration Assistant. A photograph was taken as a small launch and circulated on the website and social media.

**9** Cllr Dunn had spoken to St Joseph's about electricity on the green and is awaiting a response. County Councillors are discussing electricity for Christmas trees and will update the Council.

**14a** The Clerk is meeting the grounds maintenance contractor this week to discuss the maintenance schedule and get quotes. Cllr Dunn said the Woodlands Group meeting he attended has resources including contractor lists and potential funding sources.

**14m** Members **RESOLVED** to pay the quoted amount for removal of tree stumps by

St Joseph's Church wall.

**15b** Members **RESOLVED** staff to contact a local window cleaner to remove the clock cover on Coxhoe Village Hall which is discoloured.

**24a** Members **RESOLVED** to discuss a seating policy at the July meeting, if the Clerk is able to submit one alongside other priorities.

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### **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS SECTION 5j AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE**

**A** Draft Minutes of the Human Resources Committee and the Youth Strategy Group latest meetings were received and approved. The Clerk advised that the Human Resources Committee has agreed draft terms of reference which will be brought to the Council's July meeting for agreement.

**B RESOLVED** Cllrs Dunn, Hepplewhite and Simpson are appointed to the Environment Committee and the meeting proposed that Cllrs Pounder and Thirlaway be requested to join; the Committee not to have delegated powers.

**C** A copy of the Council's Asset Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 was sent to Councillors with the agenda. **RESOLVED** the Asset Register is noted and received.

**D** The Clerk had circulated the Standing Orders with amendments in line with NALC recommendations. The meeting asked that Chairman be changed to Chair, 'his' be amended to 'his/her', 'he' to 's/he' and use 'they' where appropriate; **RESOLVED** the Standing Orders are agreed and will be reviewed in April 2019.

**E** The Clerk had circulated Financial Regulations in line with NALC recommendations. **RESOLVED** the Financial Regulations are approved with suggested amendments and to be reviewed in April 2019.

**F** The Clerk had circulated a report on insurance cover including the Fidelity guarantee against staff or volunteer fraud or dishonesty and Employer Liability Insurance. The Council **RESOLVED** the report is approved and that the Clerk undertake a review of insurance when she is able.

**G** The Council **RESOLVED** the Complaints Procedure adopted March 2018 is still relevant and agreed its current review date of March 2020.

**H** The Clerk had circulated two samples of Parish Council policies for dealing with the press and media which were exactly the same wording and advised that other sample policies had the same wording. The members **RESOLVED** to adopt the sample policy.

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### **FINANCIAL MATTERS INCLUDING ANNUAL GOVERNANCE**

**A** The Internal Auditor's report had been circulated and the Clerk advised she will be acting on its recommendations. Cllr Dunn noted that capital reserves can be set aside. The auditor had completed and signed the relevant section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. **RESOLVED** the report was accepted and noted by the Council.

**B.** The Statement of Accounts 2017/18 was approved at the previous meeting; the Clerk had circulated a report on the effectiveness of internal control with this meeting's agenda, which included the eight points below from Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement. The Clerk read through each section of the report to ensure Councillors could ask questions on each item. The Council confirmed the following:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices

that could have significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.

4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal control and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

The Council **RESOLVED** that Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 was received and approved.

The report included current banking mandates. The Council **FURTHER RESOLVED** the report on banking mandates is accepted and the current mandates approved with the Administration Assistant to be added to the authorised users.

**C** The Clerk had circulated a report on Council and staff subscriptions; the members **RESOLVED** the following subscriptions are approved: CDALC and NALC – paid annually (already paid for 2018/19 at £597.66); SLCC Full Membership (for Council) paid until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 at £185.

**D** Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Accounting Statement 2017/18 had been circulated with the Statement of Variances and the bank reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. It was **RESOLVED** these were received and approved.

## E Schedule of Payments

The following payments were submitted for approval:

Amendments/Additions from May Schedule:

No	Date of Invoice	Method of Payment	Date Payment Due	Payee	Description	Amount
1	24.04.18	Direct Debit	28.05.18	Mastercopy	Photocopier Usage	£117.02
2	N/A	Bank Payment	29.05.18	Clerk (Reimbursement already received)	2 x Laptops with Business Microsoft Office	£1,513.78
3	N/A	Direct Debit	25.05.18	Vodafone	Mobile Phones	£71.49
4	03.05.18	Direct Debit	N/A	GE Capital	Photocopier Lease	£162.00

June Payments Due:

No	Date of Invoice	Method of Payment	Date Payment Due	Payee	Description	Amount
1	N/A	Bank Payment	31.05.18	Staff	Salaries	£3,027.48
2	N/A	Direct debit	N/A	NEST	Employer Pension Contribution	£40.45  Total Payment: £88.99
3	N/A	Bank Payment	N/A	HMRC	Employer's Liabilities	£807.81
4	31.03.18	Bank Payment	N/A	East Durham Trust	DBS Checks	£64.00
5	11.05.18	Bank Payment	Immediate	Durham County Council	HR Advice and Policy Preparation	£648.00
6	05.04.18	Bank Payment	N/A	Quarrington Hill Community Centre	Monday Youth Club 10 sessions Jan-March	£150
7	15.05.18	Bank Payment	30 days	Phase Electrical	2 x Defibrillator Installation	£160.00
8	18.05.18	Bank Payment	01.06.2018	Plantscape	Hanging basket brackets	£1,024.02
9	18.05.18	Bank Payment	N/A	Clerk	Toshiba Laptop Battery	£25.99
10	04.05.18	Bank Payment	N/A	Cllr Dunn	Yellow paint for dog foul stencil	£10.73
11	21.05.18	Bank Payment	N/A	Clerk	Stamps	£64.70
12	20.05.18	Bank Payment	N/A	Gordon Fletcher	Internal Audit	£300.00
13	Invoice sent 21.05.18	Bank Payment	30 days	Roch NDT Services	Structural Testing and Analysis of Lighting Column	£2,100.00
14	29.05.18	Bank Payment	By 27.05.18	Altogether Greener	Grounds Maintenance Contract May 2018	£952.50
15	23.05.18	Bank Payment	N/A	NEREO	Advertising Invoice for Administration Assistant post	£180.00
16	30.05.18	Bank Payment	27.06.18	Boston Seeds	1kg Poppy Seeds	£98.40
17	05.06.18	Bank Payment	30 days	Viking	Stationery supplies (of which £34.46 to be recharged to Coxhoe Village Hall)	£167.59
18	05.06.18	Bank Payment	By 06.07.18	Altogether Greener	2 x flail cuts of Coxhoe Cricket Ground	£630.00

Approval of Direct debits and staff payments for FY 2018/19:

No	Provider	Purpose	Frequency	Projected cost (each payment)
1	GE Capital	Photocopier Lease	Quarterly	£162.00 01.06.18 then 3 x pyts £132.00
2	Mastercopy	Photocopier Usage	Monthly	Variable but at least £36.00
3	BT	Office landline & internet	Monthly	£34.68
4	Scottish Power	Memorial Garden Lighting	Monthly	£10.50
5	Vodafone	3 mobile phones for Clerk and Youth Workers	Monthly	At least £69.01
6	Staff payments	Wages, NEST pension contributions and PAYE Tax & NI Liabilities	Monthly	As appropriate

**RESOLVED (i)** that the above payments be received and approved.

**RESOLVED (ii)** that the Clerk can research cheaper photocopying facilities ensuring any replacement can do the same as the current machine.

**RESOLVED (iii)** the Clerk and Administration Assistant to discuss with Coxhoe Village Hall sharing where possible landline and broadband provision to save costs.

**F** Bank Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 was included in the Schedule of Payments report above and was thus approved by the Council.

**G RESOLVED** the budget circulated by the Clerk was approved. Members asked the Clerk to present the budget in a format where budget headings are together so for example the youth budget can be viewed under one heading.

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**GDPR**

The Clerk had circulated an updated report which was noted; members

**RESOLVED (A)** youth service staff to ensure GDPR form completed after first attendance, acknowledging that young people may attend without a parent, meaning that a form cannot be completed on their first visit. The Council

**RESOLVED (B)** to propose Cllr Hedley as a lead for GDPR.

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**REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Cllrs Dunn and Lavelle left the room for this item and took no part in the discussion. Cllr Simpson as Vice Chair took the Chair. Future Leisure in Coxhoe (Trustees of Active Life in Coxhoe) had requested that the £4,000 funding and the £2,000 which is paid for youth service rent of facilities for 2018/19 and the same for the financial year 2019/20 be provided as equipment instead of funding.

Cllr Simpson summarised discussion that the Councillors had no issue with allocating the funding but as the request includes next year's budget they need to consider the impact on the budget.

The Clerk advised that the internal audit report had advised the Council that reserves are low and this request would mean spending some money in advance of the next financial year. Councillors asked about VAT reclamation and the Clerk

advised this is not included in the budget and the VAT for FY 2017/18 has already been reclaimed and is in the bank. The Clerk advised that the budget for 2019/20 has not yet been considered by the Council and the Council should also consider the allocation as part of its discussion when setting the budget for that financial year.

**RESOLVED** the Council will provide equipment rather than funding as per the request from Future Leisure in Coxhoe.

Cllrs Dunn and Lavelle were invited to return to the room. Cllr Dunn took the Chair again.

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## **PLANNING & CORRESPONDENCE REPORTS**

### Planning notices received by Durham County Council

	<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Electoral Ward and Parish</b>
<b>1</b>	DM/18/01225/FPA	Integra 61 (Durham) Ltd	Land On Both Sides Of A688 Tursdale DH6 5NR	Proposed three arm roundabout on A688 and associated works to serve adjacent Integra 61 mixed use development. Forwarded to Cllrs 23.05.18; comments should be received before 7 <sup>th</sup> June 2018 but there is leeway on this deadline.	(Neighbour Notification)

### Planning applications approved by Durham County Council

None.

### Planning applications refused by Durham County Council

None.

**RESOLVED (A)** the Parish Council has no comment to make on the planning matter.

### Correspondence

	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Received From</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>1</b>	21.05.18	Internal Auditor	Internal Audit Report, Action Plan & Queries List
<b>2</b>	23.05.18	Kieran Reed, Coxhoe United	Thanks for help with Village Hall car parking to enable Coxhoe United's fun weekend to go smoothly
<b>3</b>	29.05.18	Police	Details of new PCSO
<b>4</b>	30.05.18	Active Life in Coxhoe	Request for financial assistance to be put towards gym equipment

The Council **RESOLVED (B)** the correspondence is noted.

## Bulletins

	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Received From</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>1</b>	25.04.18	CDALC	Nominations for President and Vice President
<b>2</b>	03.05.18	AAP	Holiday Hunger Funding Available
<b>3</b>	10.05.18	CDALC	Newcastle Airport Master Plan Consultation
<b>4</b>	13.05.18	SLCC Local Branch	Regional Training Seminar 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
<b>5</b>	19.05.18	CPRE	Spring Newsletter
<b>6</b>	22.05.18	NALC	Chief Executive's Bulletin week ending 11.05.18
<b>7</b>	22.05.18	CDALC	Armed Forces Outreach
<b>8</b>	22.05.18	CDALC	Details of S106 funds available
<b>9</b>	29.05.18	NALC	Chief Executive's Bulletin 21 - 25 May 2018
<b>10</b>	30.05.18	CDALC	NE Community-led Housing Conference - booking now open

**RESOLVED (C)** the Clerk to purchase a Red Ensign flag at the appropriate size.  
**RESOLVED (D)** the information is received and noted.

At 8.30pm the Chair requested members' agreement, as per Standing Order 3(w), to extend the meeting beyond the standard 2-hour period.

**RESOLVED** that Standing Order 3(w) be invoked and the meeting continue.

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### **VILLAGE APPEARANCE AND CLEANLINESS**

**RESOLVED** to defer this item to later in the meeting.

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### **PARKING**

The Clerk said a further email has been received about problems with people parking on Cornforth Lane. Cllr Dunn said a meeting is being arranged with highways officers before a public meeting is held.

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### **EVENTS**

**A** No update on a Jo Cox Foundation event.

**B** Arrangements for beacon events are underway.

**C** Cllr Hepplewhite provided information about the History Group's Suffragette Event and proposed a joint event which would be covered by Parish Council insurance. The Council **RESOLVED (A)** to host a joint event and subject to receipt of the small grant application form, they would provide funding up to the small grant limit for the group's Suffragette event.

**D** Cllr Dunn advised that the Active Life Centre has been assessed as a suitable site for an event by the contact at the fireworks company and the Police though traffic issues would need to be addressed, potentially by issuing tickets to residents only. A site between Quarrington Hill and Kelloe would not be suitable as no lighting and sites in Quarrington Hill were too close to houses or the nature reserve. Cllr Dunn advised that fireworks were a Parish Plan 2 priority. The Council **RESOLVED (B)** a SAG form to be completed and charges would be considered at a future meeting. An Events Working Group is still to be arranged by the Clerk.

Cllr Dunn proposed that due to the time, the meeting discuss the Cricket Ground and the H R/Staffing/Recruitment item and defer all other agenda items to the next meeting. The Council **RESOLVED (C)** to do this.

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**COXHOE CRICKET GROUND**

After agreement at the Council’s June meeting, two cuts have been completed on the cricket ground. Cllr Dunn updated members that the Cricket Club has suggested a ten-year lease with the possibility of extension; potential funding possibilities have been discussed as well as fencing and the pedestrian gate down the lane from the Active Life Centre. Members present said they felt funding should be sought. **RESOLVED (A)** Clerk to ask grounds maintenance contractor for ongoing costs for cutting the grass. **RESOLVED (B)** to proceed with a ten-year lease with possibility of extension.

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**EXCLUSIONS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

At this point of the agenda all members of the press and the public were asked to leave the meeting room due to an item classified as being of a confidential nature in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Cllr McKeon and K Williams left the room.

**RESOLVED (A)** the next meeting of the H R Committee to take place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June at 6pm at Coxhoe Village Hall. **RESOLVED (B)** that the Council wishes to recruit a further Youth Worker and agrees that job descriptions should be agreed by the HR Committee in order for recruitment to take place; recruitment materials will be similar to the last recruitment process. **RESOLVED (C)** recommendation 1 of the report is considered and recommendation 3 is agreed.

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**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018, 6.30pm at **The Parish Room, Coxhoe Village Hall.**

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD**

**CHAIR** .....

**DATE** .....