

City of Durham Parish Council

City of Durham Parish Council
Office 3 D4.01d
Clayport Library
8 Millennium Place
Durham
DH1 1WA

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83303661644>

Meeting ID: 833 0366 1644

2 June 2020

Dear Councillor,

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972

In accordance with both the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of local authority and Police and Crime Panel meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the **Finance Committee** will be held in via Zoom on **Thursday 11 June 2020** at **2pm** to transact the following business:

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7TH JANUARY 2020

4. TO RECEIVE ANY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS

5. GRANT FUNDING AWARDS 2020/21 - report included

6. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019/20 - report included

7. FINANCIAL POSITION AT THE END OF 2019/20 FINANCIAL YEAR – report included

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

And pursuant to the provisions of the above-named acts, I Hereby Summon You to attend the said meeting.

Adam Shanley
Clerk City of Durham Parish Council

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held in DCC meeting room, Clayport library building, Durham DH1 1WA on 7th January 2020 at 12:00pm

Present: Councillors A Doig (in the Chair), J Ashby, E Ashby, R Ormerod, V Ashfield & E Scott

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley and Cllr Roger Cornwell.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23rd OCTOBER 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

5. UPDATE ON PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE BUDGETS

The Clerk advised that there is an underspend in both the Environment Committee and the Planning Committee budgets for 2019-20. The Clerk advised that a request had been received from the Planning Committee to move the £5,000 saving from the Planning Enforcement SLA to the priority in the agreed Looking Forward document to produce a Design Guide for the Parish. The Committee **agreed** this should be allocated accordingly.

The Clerk also advised that the budget remaining on the HMO investigation priority – totalling £7,500 is unlikely to be spent this side of the financial year due to a lack of response on this from Durham University.

The Clerk also reported that it was likely that the approx. £11,000 remaining in the budget towards the priority relating to the County Council Headquarters would remain unspent this side of the financial year.

6. PARISH COUNCIL SPEND SINCE 23RD OCTOBER 2019

The Clerk provided a report to the Finance Committee and advised that the spend to date on the current financial year is just over £105,000 and the projected total spend by the end of the financial year would be approximately £125,000 - £130,000.

7. DRAFT PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2020-21

The following budget was **agreed** to be put forward for Full Council approval in January:

Planning Committee

Item of potential expenditure	Cost (£)	
	Item	Sub-total
PRIORITY 1: Enhanced planning enforcement service (£5,000 already agreed from January 2020 – January 2021) NB: for 1 Feb 2021 – 31 March 2021	1,800.00	
PRIORITY 2: Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan (printing costs for copies of Neighbourhood Plan)	500.00	
PRIORITY 3: Professional support in responding to planning applications	2,000.00	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2020-21 AGAINST PRIORITIES		4,300.00

Business Committee

Item of potential expenditure	Cost (£)	
	Item	Sub-total
PRIORITY 1: Professional support for independent businesses in Durham	10,000.00	
PRIORITY 2: Hosting Business Conferences	1,000.00	
PRIORITY 3: Marketing Durham	2,000.00	
PRIORITY 4: Professional support in responding to consultations on business/ economic development	1,000.00	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2020-21 AGAINST PRIORITIES		14,000.00

Licensing Committee

Item of Potential Expenditure	Cost (£)	
	Item	Sub-total
PRIORITY 1: Licensing training conference	1,000.00	
PRIORTIY 2: Award for best run licensed premises	500.00	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2020-21 AGAINST PRIORITIES		1,500.00

Environment Committee

Item of potential expenditure	Cost (£)	
	Item	Sub-total
PRIORITY 1: Clean and Green		
Supporting Durham in Bloom + additional planting	10,000.00	
Purchase of bins for plastic only recycling	£3,000	
Neighbourhood Warden	£10,000	
Tackling pollution in the city centre (air/noise)	£2,000	
Allotments	£2,000	
PRIORITY 2: Involving young people		
Terracycle project	£1,500	
Establishing a City-wide youth Environment Committee	£5,000	
PRIORITY 3: Heritage		
Development of Durham heritage app	£5,000	
PRIORITY 4: Business frontages		
Frontage awards + Christmas event	£3,000	
PRIORITY 5: Noise		
Developing the Quiet Zone proposal	£2,000	
PRIORITY 6: A167		
Developing project from 2019-20 on domesticating the A167	£3,500	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2020-21 AGAINST PRIORITIES		47,000

Full Council

Item of Expenditure	Cost (£)	
	Item	Sub-total
PRIORITY 1: Administration of Parish Council (rent, room hire, audit, insurance, printing and postage, other expenditure)	17,000	
PRIORITY 2: Training budget	3,000	
PRIORITY 3: Events (Remembrance Sunday, Battle of Britain Anniversary)	6,000.00	
PRIORITY 4: grants for local community and voluntary organisations	20,000.00	
PRIORITY 5: Staffing costs		
Staffing costs (including salary, National Insurance contributions and workplace pension) – Clerk	48,000.00	
Staffing costs (including salary, National Insurance contributions and workplace pension) – Part-time Finance support/ grant bid officer	15,000.00	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2020-21 AGAINST PRIORITIES		109,000

Committee	Proposed expenditure (2020/2021) against priorities (£)
Planning Committee	4,300.00
Business Committee	14,000.00
Licensing Committee	1,500.00
Environment Committee	47,000.00
Full Council	109,000.00
TOTAL POTENTIAL PROVISION IN 2020-2021 AGAINST PRIORITIES	175,800.00

8. PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT 2020-21

Members were asked to agree a recommended precept for the financial year 2020-21 for Full Council to approve on January 23rd. Members agreed that the precept charge ought to remain £34.87 for a Band D equivalent property for 2020-21. The Clerk advised that, as the tax base had increased slightly since the current financial year, the precept would therefore increase to £154,488.05

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair advised that the date of the next Finance Committee meeting would be advertised in due course.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Signed,

Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council Finance Committee

ITEM 5: GRANT FUNDING AWARDS 2020/21

Members are reminded that at the January meeting of the Full Parish Council 2020, Councillors formally agreed to allocate £20,000 of the budget for 2020/21 towards grants for local and voluntary organisations.

- The project to be funded meets the aims and objectives of the Parish Council.
- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community.
- Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in the Parish or will benefit the environment of our Parish.
- Any assistance given will be subject to on-going monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year to year basis.

In accordance with the Parish Council's current grant awards policy, the City of Durham Parish Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.
- To help the parishes' voluntary groups to improve their effectiveness.
- To ensure the provision of services, needed by the residents, via the voluntary sector.
- To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all parishioners of City of Durham to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.
- To achieve value for money.

The grant funding window opened on 1st April 2020 and this has been advertised on social media, the Parish Council's website, through the local press and through direct e-mails. Organisations were asked to apply by 29th May 2020 in order that the Finance Committee may consider this at its meeting in June and make a recommendation to Full Council in June. Once approved, all grant payments will be made at the end of June 2020.

Members have been provided with the full details of all applications. For ease of reference, the applicant, the amount requested from each applicant and a summary of each project is provided overleaf.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to consider each grant application and recommend an agreed sum for each to the June Full Council meeting.
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Organisation	Amount requested (£)	Project
The Woodman Community Project	5000	Improvement and separation of rear room space from bar area to allow social activities and basic kitchen facilities, as identified by the community and under any new social distancing regulations as such may come into force.
Sanctuary 21	1300	<p>We believe in the providing dignity for all our guests. This includes providing an environment which is welcoming and comfortable, this should be reflected in the décor and facilities we offer. Due to general financial demands and running costs Sanctuary 21 has not changed its furnishings or café tables and chairs since it opened in 2009 and they are beginning to look worn and shabby. We would appreciate funding to refurbish our café area to make it welcoming and to show that we value our vulnerable guests enough to make the environment a pleasant and comfortable place for them to be and to engage in the services offered.</p>
St Cuthberts Hospice	1750	In the present situation, one of the few psychological and spiritual comforts the Hospice can provide is the tranquil beauty of its gardens. The Parish Council supported enhancement of the gardens in 2019. Now, outdoor socialising is critical. We seek help to supply volunteers with the supplies needed to keep the gardens beautiful.
St Nicholas Community Forum	150	<p>We ask for a grant so that we may print and circulate flyers around our area to raise awareness of SNCF, to publicise and inform what we do, to notify re our AGM (September, room hire £50) and to include update information on our planned projects to enhance our area and encourage community participation (Campaign to create a community pub/hub – the Woodman Inn, significant planning and licensing applications, litter picking, greening of the area, awareness of our meetings and invitations to join us, future campaigns and communication with new student neighbours). Flyers 3 x a year.</p>

Harbour	1500	<p>The work we want to be able to fund would be to improve children's services within Durham Refuge. At present, we have no fixed children's worker in Durham refuge and are relying on a shared workload from the whole team. We would like to place Bank Workers in Durham refuge to offer play and motivational sessions for the children and mums in refuge; this could be a one to one (using social distancing).</p> <p>We would facilitate activities such as dressing up, singing, scavenger hunts, games, puzzles, cooking, crafts and any other suitable creative play sessions adapted for the individual children. As we would be working with both the mum and child/children this would help develop and strengthen confidence in parenting giving reassuring support to the parents, as they are finding this time particularly hard. For those with older children we can support with any school work, encouraging and motivating them.</p> <p>For this, we need resources such as paints, crafts, paper, pens, glue, and food for baking. We have 13 children residing within our service at present aged between 0-14 years so need to accommodate each age range accordingly. Due to the social distancing rules we need to put on one to one sessions with each family and unable to facilitate group sessions so this is taking more time and more staffing is needed therefore increased staffing costs.</p>
Durham Hospital Radio	2000	<p>A significant number of technology improvements have been undertaken over the last 12 months to increase the stability and quality of the service to the patients and their families. The current project requirement is for the provision of 1000 disposable headphone sets to patients whilst in hospital to enable a wider audience to more readily enjoy the DHR radio experience. This is particularly applicable to older patients who may not possess wi-fi equipment or younger patients who have forgotten their devices.</p>
Blind Life in Durham	783	<p>Help fund our venue hire on North Road Methodist Church, Durham. We normally hold two sessions per month. We do not expect to return before October due to the Coronavirus. Due to the Coronavirus we have started a number of skype chat groups and one to one phone calls, we also produce a monthly newsletter in various formats. These we will keep going after the Coronavirus.</p>
Alington House	785	<p>To purchase new flooring for our community café area. The flooring is approx. 10 years old and torn in areas. As the café is also used by the visually impaired members this is urgent.</p>
St. Margaret's Centre	1000	<p>To replenish consumable materials used in the craft room, woodworking and upholstery department and the horticultural section.</p>

Samaritans	2500	<p>Following on from changes we made last year to the lower floor of our Branch, we have been making additional maintenance changes to the building to improve facilities for volunteer's while they are at the Branch, an example of the work which has taken place is improving the dividing partitions between volunteer work stations. This bid would support the work we have already done. We would like to offer our volunteers a more comfortable and pleasant space in which to operate by refurbishing our upstairs operations area", the space in which our volunteers take telephone calls. Included in our application would be to replace faulty or old bulky furniture and replace it with smaller more compact furniture to make the area more accessible and easier for our disabled volunteers to manoeuvre in. It would also assist with our Mentor Training Programme; existing conditions make it uncomfortable with multiple volunteers in the room during essential training</p>
Lowes Barne Community Project	4980	<p>This Community Centre project has been developed over 3 years following granting of Section 106 funding linked to the construction of a Community Centre to benefit the inhabitants of Durham South West and neighbourhoods. The project has been developed since 2017, through extensive consultation with residents and potential users. The proposed Community Centre is currently at the planning permission stage and construction is aimed to start in Autumn 2020. Funding to date is not expected to cover the entirety of the cost of building, landscaping and equipping the centre and hence funding support is requested from the Parish Council to support a Site Preparation Project of initial activities that can be separated from the build of the project, whilst still providing community benefit. These are itemised below: _</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Removal of Cherry Trees (preparing site for build): £1,800 b) Planting of trees to replace those removed: £1,900 c) Purchase of Sheffield Cycle Hoops: £1,280 <p>Removal of the Cherry Trees within the Bowls Green boundary Fence closest to the children's play area would allow work to begin on the building of the Community Centre as soon as sufficient funds are available. This work can only be carried out at certain times of year and if not carried out within the next 6 months may cause delays to construction (due to nesting birds for example). In line with the planning application the trees will be replaced within the Bowls Green boundary. The LBCP has already worked with DCC on a draft Asset Transfer of the Bowls Green area and is applying to the National Coal Board for permission to build in line with a covenant relating to use of the land. The Sheffield Cycle hoops will be the first step in encouraging sustainable</p>

		transport in line with Durham City Sustainable Transport Delivery Plan 2019-2035. There are currently no secure cycle parking facilities at the park.
Merryoaks WI	300	To purchase a microphone and speaker system, allowing inclusivity for all members. At present some members do not always get the most out of the talks and activities which are an integral part of our monthly meetings.
Durham Markets Community Interest Company	900	To promote the new delivery service to be offered by Durham Markets Company traders to customers living in a 5m radius of the City Centre with delivery by zero emission e cargo bikes and electric vehicles – the project therefore helps both local traders and customers by delivery to the door and is environmentally friendly with zero emission transport
St Oswalds Institute	3700	To convert an existing toilet to a fully accessible, inclusive one, meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts and Equality Act 2010. It will provide a high level W.C., hand basin with lever taps and thermostatically controlled water supply, specified grab rails, alarm call system, appropriate fittings and a baby change unit as specified by Building regulation Document M. Appropriate wall and non-slip floor finishes for all users including people with a range of disabilities, including those with limited vision
Durham Community Association (Shakespeare Hall)	376.5	We rent the space we use, which runs over the shops in part of North Road, from the Shakespeare Temperance Trust. The Trust recently undertook major improvements to the exterior of the building, which included replacing three large windows at the front of the building, facing North Road. The design of the new windows meant that the old curtains, rails etc. could not be refitted in their previous position. The existing curtains are old, worn and faded and too short and narrow for where a new rail has to be fitted. We need curtains for privacy and to retain heat. We also need to have reasonable blackout facilities for use of this room by a film club and anybody that wants to use overhead projectors. This bid is for new blackout curtains, rails and all other fittings.

Durham City Woodcraft Folk	500	Annual camp - residential weekend to allow members to take part in activities otherwise not available.
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ITEM 6: INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019/20

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT – 2019/2020

1. Background

- 1.1. Following the abolition of the Audit Commission a new organisation has been established which is responsible for issuing proper practices in relation to the accounts of smaller authorities. It is called the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Board (SAPPB), and is made up of members of the SLCC, NALC, CIPFA, the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG), the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the National Audit Office and a representative of the external audit firms appointed to smaller authorities
- 1.2. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) at the end of each financial year. The AGAR is made of 3 sections along with an annual internal audit report. which is to be completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor, who is to give an opinion of the Parish Council's internal controls
- 1.3. CDALC have provided Councils with a checklist to be used, this annual audit uses this list as the minimum of the tests to be carried out.

2. Objectives of the Audit

- 2.1. To examine the system of internal controls to ensure that the Council may obtain an adequate level of assurance for its activities during the year.

3. Scope of the Work and the areas of Audit Work examined.

- 3.1 The Scope of Work covers the key control tests identified in the AGAR.
- 3.2. To properly complete the audit the following areas of activity have been examined and tested by the Internal Auditor:

- Payroll
- Creditors
- Risk Management
- Income collection and Banking arrangements
- Petty cash (none held)
- Assets
- Debtors
- Budgetary Control (including year-end procedures)
- Exercise of public rights

- 3.3. City of Durham Parish Council is a new Council formed 1st April 2018 with its first Council meeting on 10th May 2018. The accounts examined are for the year 2019/20.

4. Findings

4.1. Payroll

4.1.1 The City of Durham Parish Council has 1 employee a Parish Clerk who was appointed in November 2018.

4.1.3. DCC administered the salary and payroll deductions of the Clerk for the 2019/20, and produce payroll control reports, which is a good independent internal control for the Council, and payments are made for his salary by BACS from the Council's bank account. These were found to be correct.

4.2. Creditors (Accounts Payable)

4.2.1. For 2019/20 City of Durham purchased Rialtus finance system (used by most Town and Parish Councils). All payments and receipts are input into this system with adequate reports produced throughout the year and at the year end.

4.2.2. Financial Regulations state all payments are reported to the Finance Committee where all payments are made by electronic banking. The Clerk acts as administrator (is not a signatory) and 2 Members (from 5) authorize every payment using their own individual log in banking details.

4.2.3 The Council also has a debit card which the Clerk (having delegated authority) uses for various purchases with invoices kept on file. I understand that all payments are agreed with the Chair, and are included in the payments report to the Finance Committee.

4.2.4. Members see the invoices when payment is to be made and a report is produced every three months and presented to the Finance Committee.

4.2.2 The Cash book 1 report for 2019/20 was used to identify all payments and this was checked to the invoices

4.3. Risk Management

4.3.1. A Risk Register was agreed at the 25th July 2019 Council meeting.

4.4. Income collection and Banking arrangements

4.4.1. Only income for the Council is for the precept, Vat claim and any grant monies. The Council does not collect any income. For 2019/20 the vat claim was submitted and paid into the Council's bank account on 24th April 2020.

4.4.2. It was observed that the Council held a large sum of monies in one bank account which exceeded the threshold of the Finance Compensation Scheme of £85,000 therefore Council monies would not be protected if the bank ceases to trade.

4.4.3. Bank reconciliations are properly carried out to the bank reconciliation reports.

4.5. Accounting Records

4.5.1. The Accounting records for 2019/20 produced reports from the Rialtus finance systems and the completed statement of accounts as shown on the AGAR was confirmed to these reports.

4.6. Assets

4.6.1. The Council has completed an asset register which is to be approved with the statement of accounts.

4.7. Debtors

4.7.1. There are no accounts raised for debts.

4.8. Budgetary Control

4.8.1. The City of Durham Parish Council had formed a Finance Committee with responsibility of setting the budget and the precept. All Committees are asked for their budget requirements which are reported and discussed at the Finance Committee and agreed by Full Council.

4.8.2. The 2019/20 budget and precept were discussed and agreed at the 7th January Finance meeting and approved at Full Council on 23rd January 2020.

4.9. Governance arrangements

4.9.1. The Council has agreed its own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which is the backbone of good governance arrangements. The Annual Governance Report as part of the AGAR will highlight if any improvement in governance arrangements are needed along with my recommendations.

4.9.2. At 25th April 2019 Council meeting it was agreed that a working party be set up to review SOs, Fin regs risk register and terms of references for committees. These were approved at Council's Annual General Meeting on 23rd May 2019.

4.9.3. A report on the Parish Council's Internal Controls has been completed and is to be reported with the statement of accounts.

4.9.4. The announcement of the public rights for 2018/19 was dated 18th June 2019 with the inspection of the accounts available between 18th June 2019 and 29th July 2019 and placed on the Council's website

5. Conclusions/Recommendations

5.1. The Council has set up good Standing orders and Financial Regulations and has good governance arrangements in place.

5.2. It is important that the Governance documents are agreed with the statement of accounts.

5.3. Only recommendation is for Councillor's to initial the invoices when they approve payment to give evidence that they have agreed the invoice.

G. Fletcher

Gordon Fletcher (C.M.I.I.A.),

Internal Auditor for the Town Council

Date: 7th May 2020

**DECISION
REQUIRED**

For Members to consider the above report from the Internal Auditor and agree any action points arising from this report.