

City of Durham Parish Council

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Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84274961533>
Meeting ID: 842 7496 1533

Dear Councillor,

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 **Full Council** will be held in **via Zoom** on **Thursday 10 December 2020 at 6:30pm** to transact the following business:

- 1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE (OR NOT) APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE FROM TODAY'S MEETING**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22ND OCTOBER 2020**
- 5. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- **Planning Committee minutes from meetings held on 2 October, 16 October, 30 October, 13 November**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/planning-committee/>

- Verbal update on the progress of the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan.
- Verbal update on the application to de-register the former coach park at the Sands as Common Land.

- **Environment Committee minutes from meetings held on 29 September and 29 October**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/environment-committee/>

- Proposal to gift a "tree of life" mosaic to the University Hospital of North Durham
- Best Business Christmas Frontage Awards 2020

- **Licensing Committee minutes from meeting held on 25 September and 6 November**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/licensing-committee/>

• **Business Committee minutes from meeting held on 22 October 2019**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/business-committee/>

- Report on the work carried out by Parish Council's retail consultant in Durham City.

• **Finance Committee minutes from meeting held on 11 June 2020**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/finance-committee/>

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 22 October 2020.

7. PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE A CHRISTMAS MEAL TO THE HOMELESS

8. REPORT ON PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL CONTROLS 2020-21

9. REQUEST TO SUPPORT DURHAM MAYOR'S CHARITY APPEAL

10. PRESENTATION OF GOOD CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2020 AWARDS

A video of each presentation will be shown at this point in the meeting.

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 the meeting of the City of Durham Full Parish Council held on Thursday 22nd October 2020 at 18:00 via Zoom.

1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE (OR NOT) APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Apologies were received from Cllr G Holland

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Cllr L Brown declared an interest in the item relating to the North End Allotments site.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

4. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 TH JUNE 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2020 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

● Planning Committee

Cllr R Cornwell presented the minutes from meetings held on 7 February, 21 February, 6 March, 17 April, 1 May, 15 May, 29 May, 12 June, 26 June, 10 July, 24 July, 7 August, 21 August, 4 September and 18 September to the Council. There being no questions from Members, Cllr R Cornwell moved on to Committee reports.

Update on the progress of the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr R Cornwell reminded the Council that the Neighbourhood Plan had now undergone an independent examination by the Parish Council's selected Examiner Mr Tony Burton. A number of recommended modifications to the Plan had been put forward by the Examiner and Cllr R Cornwell advised that both the Parish Council and the County Council have accepted all modifications. In order to make the necessary changes to the Plan, Cllr R Cornwell advised that the County Council has agreed that representatives of the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party may act as its agent and carry this out on their behalf. A clean version of the plan along with a version which includes tracked changes are to be submitted to the County Council for formal approval. Cllr R Cornwell advised that work is ongoing with this.

Cllr R Cornwell advised that the changes made will need to be approved by the County Council prior to clean versions of the Plan being printed and presented to the Full Parish Council.

That being the case, Cllr R Cornwell advised that, with the Decision Notice now published by the County Council, the Plan can now carry significant weight in the determination of pending and new planning applications within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. To meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, a referendum will be held in the area formally designated as the Durham City Neighbourhood Area and

this is expected to take place no earlier than May due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Cllr R Cornwell advised that, in the interests of ensuring that copies of the Referendum version of the Plan are available for inspection and for all Members of the Parish Council and Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, the Clerk has sought quotations from a local printing company to have 50 copies of the Plan produced. The total cost for this is £570 (ex VAT).

It was **agreed** that, once the County Council has confirmed that they are content with the modifications made to the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore a final version is prepared, the Parish Council should have 50 copies of the Neighbourhood Plan printed by the selected company for £570 (ex VAT).

Update on the progress of the County Durham Plan

Cllr R Cornwell advised that the Full County Council met yesterday (21st October) and had now decided to formally adopt the County Durham Plan.

Cllr R Cornwell reminded Members that the Plan has been through a number of stages of consultation from the start of preparation in 2009 and the Parish Council has taken an active role in responding to consultations on the prepared Plan.

Cllr R Cornwell reminded Members that, following consideration of the full responses to consultations, the Inspector published his final report on the local plan examination on 21 September 2020. The Inspector concluded that the County Durham Plan was sound subject to Main Modifications being made to the Plan prior to adoption. Some important Modifications for the City of Durham Parish included the deletion of proposals for northern and western relief roads around the City of Durham from policy 23 and changes to policy 3 relating to the strategic employment site at Aykley Heads in terms of the range of uses.

Cllr R Cornwell advised that the Plan now replaces all saved policies from the City of Durham Local Plan. The Parish Council's Planning Committee is aware of this and is considering new planning applications accordingly. With the Plan already carrying significant weight, Cllr R Cornwell advised that the Parish Council's Planning Committee has considered all pending planning applications over the last few weeks to assess whether additional comments are needed on applications which policies in the Plan may influence. Supplementary representations to all pending applications which require reference to specific policies within the Plan have been submitted to the County Council.

Cllr R Cornwell advised that the adoption of the plan is a most welcome outcome of a demanding and sometimes contentious process in which many groups and individuals, as well as County Council staff and Members, have invested much time and thought. Cllr R Cornwell advised that the City of Durham Parish Council has been able to engage in the latter stages and has played a constructive role, including representations alongside other organisations that have resulted in many of the Main Modifications required by the Inspector to make the Plan Sound. Cllr R Cornwell advised that this is one of the most significant benefits to date of having a Parish Council for Durham City.

The Council thanked Cllr R Cornwell for his reports and also expressed thanks to the Councillors and the many organisations and members of the public that have played a major part in helping to achieve a Sound County Durham Plan.

● Environment Committee

Cllr V Ashfield presented the minutes from meetings held on 12 February, 3 March, 3 June, 1 July, 29 July and 26 August to the Council. There being no questions from Members, Cllr V Ashfield moved on to Committee reports.

Proposal from Allotments Association for Parish Council's allotment site on Larches Road

Cllr V Ashfield reminded Members that, in February 2019, the Parish Council agreed to take over ownership and management of the Allotments site on Larches Road.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that the Parish Council has recently agreed funding for a legal representative to complete the legal transfer documentation and to have the land formally registered with the Parish Council at a total cost of £600 (ex VAT).

Since February 2019, Cllr V Ashfield advised that she and the Clerk have undertaken two separate visits to the site and the site is considered very well maintained. The site is currently managed by an Allotment Association and, in doing so, is self-financing and the upkeep of the site is funded through each tenant's annual fee. Cllr V Ashfield also advised that the Association hosts an annual fundraiser to support the maintenance of the site.

Cllr V Ashfield reminded Members that, in setting its budget for the current financial year, the Parish Council had agreed a fund of £2,000 towards a project to support this site. Early discussions with the Association originally indicated that there would be a bid for a compost toilet for the site, however this is now not being pursued.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that the Association has now put together a funding request, as set out in the papers of the meeting, to the Parish Council for the use of this agreed funding and the Environment Committee recently considered and agreed this to go forward as recommended for approval to Full Council.

Members **agreed** to the funding request of £2,000 as set out in the report provided.

Proposal to launch a challenge with local schools to eradicate single-use plastics

Cllr V Ashfield reminded Members that the Parish Council has agreed to the establishment of a Youth Environment Working Group involving all of the local schools in the Parish area. The primary goal of which is to ensure that young people are represented on important environmental issues going on in Durham and to also give young people a voice in the work of the Parish Council.

As part of establishing this group, the Parish Council also agreed a budget of £5,000 for the Environment Committee for a priority involving young people, with the intention that this be used to support the work of this Youth Environment Working Group.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this Working Group has not been able to meet and feedback from local schools suggests that a meeting of this Working Group is unlikely to take place before the end of the current financial year.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that, in addition to the health and economic impact of the virus, a real concern arising from the Covid-19 pandemic – with the increased use of face masks and the significant increase in plastic containers for hand sanitisers – is

that this has dramatically increased the use of single-use plastics. The Parish Council has already received complaints from members of the public regarding face masks being discarded in public places and this adding to an increased litter problem in the City.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that, at its last meeting, the Environment Committee agreed to propose to Full Council that a challenge be launched involving all of the local schools in the parish and for local school pupils to come up with proposals to tackle single-use plastics in the local area. Proposals could be put forward by local schools to the Parish Council with the total £5,000 being distributed equally between all schools.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that this use of Parish Council funds remains true to the original intention of involving young people in environmental issues whilst also educating young people about the need to recycle and the impact of waste on our environment. Cllr V Ashfield also reminded Members that tackling waste and involving young people in the work of the Parish Council are a major part of the Parish Council's agreed Strategy for 2020-21. The Parish Council has also signed up to the County Council's Pledge to eradicate single use plastics and such an undertaking would be consistent with this pledge.

Members **approved** the allocation of £5,000 for the challenge as set out in the report to Council.

Members **agreed** to delegating authority to the Parish Council's Environment Committee to manage this project and decide how funding is allocated.

Alternative proposals for Durham in Bloom fund

Cllr V Ashfield reminded Members that £10,000 towards Durham in Bloom was agreed by Full Council in January 2020 as part of the budget setting process.

However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this event has not been able to take place and therefore the Environment Committee has been considering alternative options for the use of this funding.

The Committee has agreed that this should still go towards projects which help to green the parish and improve the local environment. Cllr V Ashfield reminded Member that £1,000 towards a bulb planting project was agreed earlier this year as part of this funding and, since then, over 6,500 bulbs have been planted across the Parish area by local schools, community groups, resident volunteers, churches and St Cuthbert's Hospice. Cllr V Ashfield advised that these bulbs will hopefully bloom in Spring 2021 and this project was very well received by the local community.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that approximately £9,000 of this funding has yet to be allocated. Originally, the Environment Committee investigated the possibility of green roofing a number of the local bus shelters across the Parish area but this has not been possible.

As an alternative to the latter proposal, Cllr V Ashfield advised that the Environment Committee has been working with both the County Council's Clean and Green team and the Wear Rivers Trust group on alternative proposals for this funding and the following proposals were put forward to Members:

Wear Rivers Trust project - Funding of education and signage to the general public on the Wear River Trust's WINNs project and detail of invasive species and the

removal of invasive species in River Wear (together with possible tree planting on riverbanks in future, subject to Environment Agency approval) – cost £1,500.

Design out ASB on North Road roundabout - Planting and improvement of area by North Road roundabout to replace benches and "design out" ASB. This proposal comes from the Neighbourhood Warden team – cost £500.

Clean and Green Greening and Planting Up proposals –

Area adjoining North Road church – the removal of the concrete sewer pipes / tubes and providing planters filled with trees and sustainable planting, similar to those on display in Millennium Place, close to the Gala Theatre.

Southfield Way roundabout – the creation of new display in the central area, again using sustainable plants (expected to be made up from perennial herbaceous plants 21 and grasses, from the likes of Heucheras, Hardy Geraniums, Achillea, Stipa, Carex, etc. Flowering bulbs (Alliums, etc) could be another consideration).

A167 tree planting – preference expressed for planting near Mount Oswald's development as a means of replacing trees lost in recent months which act as an important barrier between housing and the A167.

Cost - £7,000.

Members **approved** the proposals and costs for the WINNS project and the Design out ASB on North Road roundabout. Members **agreed** to the project Clean and Green Greening and Planting Up proposals in principle but wished to have more precise costs for each proposal as set out in this proposal. It was **agreed** that authority should be delegated to the Chair of the Environment Committee and the Chair of the Finance Committee to approve the final costs for this part of the project.

• Licensing Committee

Cllr L Brown presented the minutes from meeting held on 14 February, 13 March, 5 June, 3 July, 14 August and 28 August to the Council. There being no questions from Members, the Chair thanked Cllr L Brown for her report. Cllr L Brown advised that the Licensing Committee is currently developing its response to the County Council's consultation on its draft Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles Policy.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 25 June 2020 as follows.

The Chair thanked the Clerk and all Members for their continued work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chair advised that these were difficult and unprecedented times and the public has seen that the Parish Council is here to continue as normally as possible and to provide support.

The Chair advised that the Clerk continues to work from home and is going into the office on a fortnightly basis to check post, etc. The Chair advised that, during the pandemic, the County Council has not charged the Parish Council rent for the office.

The Chair thanked Cllr A Doig for his work as part of the University's Covid-19 community group meeting and reminded Members that Cllr A Doig had decided to step down from this group.

The Chair reminded Members that the Parish Council had agreed to establish a Covid-19 emergency response group and thanked Cllrs E Ashby, L Brown, R Cornwell and A Doig for agreeing to be part of this group.

The Chair took the opportunity to publicly congratulate Colin Wilkes on the award of his MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. Colin has been awarded the MBE for his services to Business in North East England and the Full Council offered their congratulations. The Chair advised that the Clerk had already written to Colin to offer formal congratulations on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Chair reminded Members that there would be a public inquiry into the issue of the Common Land at the Sands deregistration application from the County Council. The Chair advised Members that the Parish Council continued to work with the Freeman and the Parish Council's chosen Barrister to ensure that there was a strong representation at the inquiry on this matter.

The Chair thanked Cllr R Cornwell for correcting the record publicly about the number of businesses which had closed in Durham City since the Covid-19 pandemic began. It appeared that the incorrect figure had been published by the Local Data Company. Recent stories in the press stated that 43 shops have closed down in Durham City. Whilst it is true that a number of shops have closed, the actual figure is 21.

The Chair reminded Members that the Parish Council had agreed to co-host a Virtual Christmas Market this year as an alternative to the Christmas Market in Durham City. This is due to be launched on 27th November.

7. MOTION BY CLLRS R ORMEROD AND L BROWN ON BUSKING IN DURHAM CITY

The following motion was agreed by Full Council on the issue of busking, following an amendment by Cllrs E Ashby and V Ashfield:

"This council calls on Durham County Council to develop a policy on busking in Durham City centre which prevents damage to business whilst allowing street music to be performed and enjoyed.

In formulating the policy Durham County Council is urged to take advice from the parish council at all stages.

Prior to undertaking to write to the Chief Executive of Durham County Council informing him of this resolution, it is agreed that this matter be considered by the Parish Council's Business Committee"

8. MOTION BY CLLRS R ORMEROD AND M ROSS ON DURHAM WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CLUB

The following motion was agreed by Full Council on the success of the Durham Women's Football Club:

"This council:

Notes the impressive start to the season made by Durham Women FC in the FA Women's Championship.

Notes with pleasure that home matches are now being played in our parish, at Maiden Castle.

Undertakes to support the club wholeheartedly”

9. PROPOSAL TO PROMOTE THE PARISH’S HERITAGE AND ITS PEOPLE

Cllr J Ashby reminded Members that promoting Durham City heritage is agreed as a key part of the Full Council’s Strategy for 2020-21. Promoting Durham City’s heritage and cultural assets is also a key component of the Parish Council’s formally adopted “Looking Forwards” document. As part of this work, the Parish Council has undertaken to create a Durham City Heritage Trail App – a system which provides the location and history of points of historical and cultural interest in Durham City. This app is currently live on the app store and is undergoing further works before being promoted to the public, with the first tranche of the app illustrating the works of Dr Fenwick Lawson.

Cllr J Ashby advised that, as a further tranche of this work, it is proposed that the Parish Council launches a scheme which aims to recognise important people who have lived in Durham City over the centuries. It appears that a number of plaques and dedications to people who have lived in the parish are in existence but that there is no one single point of information for their location and history – the Parish Council would be an appropriate body to collate and publish this information.

Cllr J Ashby advised that, one particular plaque in the parish, which was commissioned by the former City Council, is that which is dedicated to Ruth First on Providence Row. Cllr J Ashby advised that Ruth First was a South African anti-apartheid activist and scholar who lectured in development studies at Durham University between 1973 and 1978. Ruth was assassinated in Mozambique, where she was working in exile, by a parcel bomb built by South African police.

Cllr J Ashby advised that a member of the public has contacted the Parish Council expressing concern about the state of this plaque. The plaque is very heavily worn and is in need of replacing. The original designers and creators of the plaque have indicated that they would be able to recreate and reinstall this at a cost of £2,000. Cllr J Ashby advised that the County Council, as the inherent owner of the plaque, has indicated that they would support the Parish Council having the plaque recreated on a like-for-like basis, without the need for a planning application.

Furthermore, should the recreation of the plaque be approved by Full Council, Cllr J Ashby advised that the possibility of one of Ruth First's daughters being available to participate in an unveiling event when the artwork is reinstalled will be investigated.

On the matter of existing plaques, Cllr D Freeman advised that he felt that the Parish Council should also launch a competition for members of the public to nominate new plaques in the parish.

Cllr V Ashfield highlighted that, should this project be approved by Full Council, the Parish Council’s Environment Committee should take this forward as a project.

Members agreed to the proposal of launching a scheme to collate and publish information on all plaques dedicated to people who have lived in the parish and also to investigate further launching a competition for new plaques dedicated to people.

Members **agreed** in principle to the proposal of funding the replacement plaque dedicated to Ruth First at a cost of £2,000 but first **agreed** that a Section 106 application should be made from the funds available in this Division for this project.

10. REPORT ON PLANS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY EVENT AND REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Clerk advised that representatives of the Parish Council, the Armed Forces, the Police, Durham Cathedral and the DLI met on 11th August to discuss the arrangements for this year's Remembrance Sunday event in Durham City in light of the Covid-19 situation. At the meeting, all parties unanimously agreed that the service and the parade simply cannot take place in the same way as usual.

The Clerk advised that the parade is cancelled completely and the Cathedral agreed that a much reduced service should be arranged, involving one representative from all of the organisations who usually lay wreaths on the Day (i.e. DCC, Police, DLI, Fire Brigade, Lord Lieutenant, Armed Forces, Member of Parliament, etc - 30 max.) attending the service only (no public attendance) and the service could be live streamed via Facebook to ensure that members of the public are able to participate in some way.

Since that meeting took place, the Clerk advised that the Government has announced further restrictions in response to a growing number of confirmed Covid-19 cases and we are awaiting further guidance from the Cathedral on revised plans for the Day. It may be the case that a representative from just the Armed Forces, the DLI and the Lord Lieutenant attend and lay wreaths on behalf of everyone. The Parish Council awaits further guidance on this and the Clerk shall keep all Members informed of arrangements.

The Clerk advised that the decision to cancel the parade is consistent with national guidelines and action taken across the country for other Remembrance Day events.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council agreed a budget of £6,000 towards events for this financial year and a significant element of this was earmarked towards the Remembrance Day event. Approximately £2,000 of this fund has been spent on the Parish Council's Battle of Britain Anniversary event and a further £1,675 has been agreed towards the cost of hosting a virtual Christmas Market.

The Clerk reminded Members that he had been working with local WI groups and volunteer residents on the production of a knitted poppy display over the Remembrance period. To date, over 6,000 knitted poppies have been produced and Durham County Council has offered to have these cascading from the Town Hall balcony in Durham Market Place. It is hoped that this may become a fundraising project in itself with the launch of a "Sponsor a Poppy" appeal, with all funds going to the Royal British Legion. The Clerk advised Members that approximately 12,000 of the 40,000 poppy sellers nationally are unable to sell the poppies this year due to them being in a vulnerable category for Covid-19. This will undoubtedly have a financial impact on the charity.

Earlier this month, Members considered a proposal to fund the purchase and installation of 10 Unknown Tommy statues across the Parish. These can be purchased from the Royal British Legion directly and goes towards providing employment to ex-service personnel. The Clerk advised that this proposal did not receive full support from Members and the decision has been taken to cancel this proposal. Feedback has been received from some Members that they would like to see a project for Remembrance which also looked to the future. To that end, the Clerk advised that he had been in dialogue with the Finchale group to discuss possible proposals. The Finchale group is a local charity based in Belmont who do a lot of work with Veterans, Serving Soldiers, Families of Veterans and Serving

Soldiers, Alternative Education Learners (excluded or a risk of being excluded from main stream school) 27 and NEETs (17 to 24 year olds who are not in education, training or employment). Finchale offers education, training and wellbeing activities which can be accredited / qualification based courses or non-accredited.

The Clerk advised that Finchale is currently working with two local Veterans who would like to become Mentors and to work alongside Alternative Education and NEETs Learners. To support these two Veterans, Finchale is looking for funding to support them with the City & Guilds Level 2 Construction Multi-Skills course, TAQA (Training, Assessment & Qualification course), Teaching Qualification and a Mentor/Coaching Certificate.

Members **agreed** to note the information regarding the Remembrance Day event and to await further details on the service from the Clerk.

Members **agreed** to the launch of the "Sponsor a Poppy" appeal to run alongside the knitted poppy display.

Members **agreed** to the proposal to fund training for local Veterans as set out in the report provided and agreed to provide the project with £984.50 funding.

11. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The appointment of representatives on local organisations was agreed as follows:

Local organisation/ body	City of Durham Parish Council representative
Community Engagement Task Force	Alan Doig and John Ashby
Community Engagement Task Force sub group - Economic	Esther Ashby
Community Engagement Task Force sub group – Culture	Carole Reeves (Esther Ashby agreed as a substitute representative).
Community Engagement Task Force sub group – Citizenship	Victoria Ashfield
Community Engagement Task Force sub group - Lived Environment	John Ashby
Community Engagement Task Force sub group - Durham for All	Richard Ormerod
Durham University Covid-19 community engagement group	Esther Ashby, Liz Brown and Roger Cornwell
PBSA Liaison Group	Esther Ashby
Durham Access group	Liz Brown
CDALC Larger Councils Forum	Esther Ashby, Adam Shanley and Richard Ormerod
ASB sub-group task force	Adam Shanley

Due to the confidential nature of the following items, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the LGA 1972 Act and section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. At this point in time the press and the public were asked to leave the room.

12. GOOD CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD 2020

The following people were voted as this year's winners of the Good Citizen of the Year Award 2020:

Ms Janet George

Ms Sue Childs

Ms Kirsty Thomas

Mr Arthur Lockyear MBE

Dr Fenwick Lawson

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

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(10th December 2020)**

ITEM 5: PROPOSAL TO GIFT A "TREE OF LIFE" MOSAIC TO THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF NORTH DURHAM

The Environment Committee has been working for some months on a proposal to have a piece of public art produced within the parish area.

The agreed format for this piece of public art is a mosaic installation and the agreed specification is a "tree of life" concept. It is widely recognised that 2020 has been an exceptionally difficult year for everyone and it is hoped that this concept will provide a source of hope and inspiration.

The scheme was originally considered as part of a "designing out ASB" project and the original intention of the project was to have this installed in the stairway underneath Framwelgate Bridge; an area well known for attracting ASB. This was investigated by the Clerk and concerns were raised regarding the planning permission for such a proposal and its impact on a Grade I listed medieval building. The Environment Committee has also investigated alternative public spaces for this mosaic to be installed – including Riverwalk and Millennium Place – both options are considered unsuitable owing to the fact that there is insufficient and suitable wall space for this mosaic to be installed.

The Committee has been investigating the possibility of gifting the mosaic to the University Hospital of North Durham (UHND) and this project has further developed into the Parish Council's offer of thanks to our local NHS workers who have worked tirelessly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The Environment Committee agreed this at its meeting on 24th November 2020. The Clerk has discussed this with the Hospital and made it clear that this offer would be subject to Full Council approval of the project and the Hospital has confirmed that, should the Parish Council be minded to approve this project, they would be delighted to receive such a mosaic and would be able to install this in an area of the hospital where it could be enjoyed by as high a number of visitors as possible.

It is accepted that art can transform stark clinical environments into compassionate care spaces filled with inspiration. There is also a growing body of evidence showing that art improves health and wellbeing. The recent All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing report found that art can help meet challenges in health and social care around ageing, loneliness, long-term conditions and mental health. It also found that art can help save the care sector money.

Other key research has shown that:

- Art eases anxiety, stress and depression for both patients and care staff
- Art shortens patients' length of stay in hospital
- Art reduces patients' need for painkilling medication
- Art increases care staff morale
- Art improves communication between patients and carers
- Art improves the overall experience of healthcare and social care environment.

The Environment Committee requested artists to produce a brief for the tree of life concept and the following designs were produced:



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3

The Environment Committee's agreed preference is for Option 1.

In accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, the Clerk has sought three quotations for the work to be carried out. The following quotations and specifications were received from the same local Durham-based artist:

For whichever Option selected, the total cost would be: £2,748 (including materials and all labour).

The specification would be as follows:

Length: 2 metres
Height: 1.5 metres.

This is an average size for a work of this nature. The mosaic will also be made of glass and so is able to be cleaned easily – an important requirement for the hospital, particularly in light of the current pandemic.

It is expected that the mosaic will take approximately 2 months to produce and install.

The artist has worked on very many similar pieces previously, included an art installation at Wharton Park which the Parish Council supported with a grant to the Friends of Wharton Park in June 2020.

Should the Parish Council agree to this proposal, no planning application would be required to have the art work installed inside the hospital.

It is also proposed that this mosaic be gifted to the hospital and therefore this will not appear in the list of the Parish Council's Assets.

As this specific project was not included in the Parish Council's 2020/21 budget, the funding for this will need to be drawn from the Parish Council's contingency fund or another element of the Environment Committee's agreed budget.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For Members to agree to the production of this mosaic art work and its associated costs. 2) If 1) is agreed, for Members to approve this mosaic being gifted to the UHND. 3) If 1) is approved, for Members to approve the design proposal Option 1 as the agree design for this work.
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ITEM 5: REPORT ON THE WORK CARRIED OUT BY PARISH COUNCIL'S RETAIL CONSULTANT IN DURHAM CITY

As Members are aware, earlier this year the Parish Council agreed to contract the services of a retail consultant with the aim of providing independent and free-of-charge support to local businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.

In setting its budget in January 2020, the Parish Council agreed a total fund of £10,000 towards this priority and in May 2020 agreed to contract the services of award winning retail consultant Graham Soult. In agreeing this proposal, the Parish Council agreed to contract Graham's services for a provisional 6 months, with the option of extending this beyond this initial period.

Graham currently works 3 calendar days per month for Durham City at a total cost of £900 per month. Graham produces a monthly report on actions taken and these have been circulated to Members so that they are kept updated on the effectiveness of this service.

A copy of all of Graham's reports to date can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/2020/12/04/parish-councils-retail-consultant-continues-work-to-support-local-businesses-in-durham-city/>

Earlier this month the Parish Council's Business Committee met with Graham to discuss his work in more detail and were very satisfied with the work that Graham has undertaken to date. Some highlights from this work includes:

- One-to-one engagement with 25+ independent businesses so far – including market traders (plus many more promoted on social media).
- Regular conversations with other local stakeholders – e.g. landlords, agents, creatives, tourism businesses, Visit County Durham and Durham County Council.
- Seven social media "cover stars" so far promoted via social media.
- Total reach of 29,000 across Facebook and Twitter.
- 24,700 tweet impressions for @IndieDurhamCity in November.
- Facebook post reach of 15,719 in the last 28 days.
- Graham's work in Durham on behalf of the Parish Council has also received very positive news stories in the press including BBC Look North, the Evening Chronicle, the Northern Echo, Bdaily, Retail Week, the Financial Times and at events such as the Mid Ulster Enterprise Week.
- Supported Mr Bojangles which is opening in Saddler Street soon.
- Introduced a National retailer with a Durham requirement to Prince Bishops Shopping Centre last week.
- Supporting the Parish Council with its response to the Government's Business Rates consultation.

Graham has also been actively involved in supporting other aspects of the Parish Council's work. For instance, Graham secured the interview with BBC Look North to promote the Parish Council's Poppy Appeal project.

The Parish Council's Business Committee agreed to recommend to Full Council that Graham's contract be continued on the same basis. Sufficient funds for this were allocated for this financial year.

The Clerk has also written to all of the local businesses the Parish Council has supported throughout this year, either by way of the Covid-19 business resilience fund

or Graham's services, and the Parish Council has received some extremely positive feedback on this. A copy of this feedback is attached to this Agenda.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to agree to continuing the services of the Parish Council's retail consultant as set out in the above report until the end of the financial year 2020/21.
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ITEM 7: PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE A CHRISTMAS MEAL TO THE HOMELESS

Members are reminded that last year the Parish Council funded the Winter Night Shelter at Sanctuary 21 via a grant of £3,700. This was the largest grant awarded by the Parish Council last year and this service successfully supported a number of vulnerable individuals.

There were concerns at the beginning of this year that the Winter Night Shelter project would not happen again due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, DCC has worked in partnership with St Nic's PPC, the North East Mission and Sanctuary 21 in order to ensure that this facility is established again this year.

This project has recently been the subject of a planning application (DM/20/03276/FPA) for a temporary (4 months) change of use of what is currently St Nic's Youth Centre at the Sands to the Winter Night Shelter. This is an application which the Parish Council's Planning Committee supported. Full details of the project can be found here:

<https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

The Clerk was asked to investigate further the possibility of the Parish Council providing a Christmas meal to the homeless this year and he recently met with the organisers of the Winter Night Shelter project and DCC to scope this proposal.

Tackling rough sleeping and homelessness has been given an even greater priority in light of Covid-19 and, at present, the service is not aware of any rough sleepers in Durham. DCC and Sanctuary 21 are currently working with 25 individuals who have been provided with emergency accommodation and the Winter Night Shelter is also being made available on a referral basis in case of anyone in the City requiring emergency accommodation. These individuals are being provided with food from local food banks but will not have access to a traditional Christmas meal.

If the Parish Council agrees to this proposal, volunteers at both Sanctuary 21 and the North East Mission have offered to prepare a traditional Christmas meal at the Sanctuary 21 centre and to deliver this, along with a small gift from DCC (most likely chocolates and toiletry products), to these individuals on Christmas Day. The meal will be cooked and stored and delivered within 30 minutes in a sealed aluminium container. Both organisations understand that they have sufficient volunteers to ensure that each volunteer visits 1 individual only on Christmas Day and therefore has sufficient time to spend with each individual.

The volunteers who will prepare the meals at Sanctuary 21 are all food hygiene certified and meals will be provided to all of those in emergency accommodation (including anyone attending the Winter Night Shelter).

Sanctuary 21 has estimated that the total cost of the meals along with packaging and other materials will be approximately £500.

If agreed, the Parish Council will also carry out a press release with all organisations involved in order to promote the support provided.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to agree to the proposal of £500 towards the Christmas Meals for the Homeless project as set out in the above report.
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ITEM 8: REPORT ON PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL CONTROLS

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2011 requires Councils to carry out a review of their internal controls annually before the end of the financial year.

The City of Durham Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.

In discharging this responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The Parish Council has now adopted a risk register and this is under continuing review by the Clerk and any issues arising from risk assessments carried out will be reported to full Council.

The Council

The Council has elected a Chair who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and together with the Clerk for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its January full Council meeting each year. The January meeting of the Council also approves the level of precept for the following financial year.

The Full Council meets at least 11 times per year. The Parish Council does not usually meet in August.

A budget report is prepared and submitted to all of the Parish Council's Finance Committee meetings showing income and expenditure together with a budget update for all Committee spends. Any budget revision reports are also reported for information and these set out any changes to the budget as per Council decisions or any known budget over or underspends.

Clerk to the Council

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day to day compliance with laws and regulations and advises the Council on managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and

policies are adhered to. The Clerk also manages projects agreed by full Council and works with all suppliers and contractors agreed by full Council to carry out functions on behalf of the Council.

2020 has been an unprecedented year for all due to the Covid-19 situation. It became apparent in March, just before the first national lockdown that things would be operating very differently, and it was then that NALC and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) recommended reviewing and agreeing local councils' delegation to the Clerk. Councillors agreed this delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents.

This meant that day to day operations of the Parish Council could continue normally as much as possible. The Clerk has kept Councillors informed of the decisions taken during this period and has sought their views prior to making any decisions regarding significant spending. The Clerk has also consulted with the Chair of the Council on various issues as well as the Chairs of other Committees/Working Parties when necessary.

The Parish Council has also continued holding meetings of Committees and Full Council via Zoom, in accordance with the Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of local authority and Police and Crime Panel meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Payments

All payments made are reported to all Finance Committee meetings. The Parish Council now makes all payments via electronic banking. Two Members of the Council from the current list of five authorised signatories (excluding the Clerk who acts as administrator) must authorise every payment against invoices before authorising the payment using their own login details provided by the bank.

There is a facility for making urgent payments out of meeting if necessary. Such payments are also reported to the Parish Council's Finance Committee meeting and all decisions to spend funds as urgent action are ratified at the next Full Council meetings and minuted as such.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions. The Clerk makes an annual risk management report to the Council. A review of financial management risks is included as part of the review report.

Internal Audit

Last year, the Council appointed an independent Internal Auditor, Mr Gordon Fletcher, who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management
- Reviews
- Insurance cover

A review of internal audit must be carried out before the end of each financial year.

Gordon Fletcher has indicated that he is willing to carry out an audit of the Parish Council again next year. The cost of this service is £150.

Gordon was previously the Audit Manager at Easington District Council before retiring when the Unitary Council was formed and set up his own business by providing an internal audit service for Town and Parish Councils. This has grown to a current portfolio of 7 local Town Councils and 24 local Parish Councils.

Gordon is C.M.I.I.A. (Chartered Member of the Institute of Internal Auditors) qualified and has his own professional indemnity insurance.

External Audit

The Council's External Auditors are Mazars, appointed by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA). They submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council, together with a copy of their report listing any issues to be raised. At the end of the Audit the Council must display the Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 14 days and must make the Annual Governance and Audit Return (AGAR) and Final Accounts available on request. These are also displayed on the Parish Council's website.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has a responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- The Full Council
- The Clerk to the Council who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks
- The independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's systems of internal control
- Mazars, the Council's external auditors, who make the final check using the AGAR, which is completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman and the Internal Auditor.

5. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The external audit report by Mazars stated the following:

"On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met".

6. INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

The Auditors did not raise any significant issues as part of the 2019-20 Audit. The Council did need to amend figures presented as part of the AGAR submission following an external audit but this did not amend the Auditor's opinion as set out above.

The Internal Auditor did recommend that the Council open a new bank account, not associated with its existing bank, in order to further protect its finances. At present, only £85,000 would be protected as part of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The Clerk has sought a new account from another provider.

The Internal Auditor also recommended that all invoices be signed by wet signature from Members approving payments. An alternative electronic provision has been arranged for this year, in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Councillors are requested to approve the report.2) Councillors are asked to agree to the appointment of Mr Gordon Fletcher as the Parish Council's internal auditor for the financial year 2020/21.
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ITEM 9: REQUEST TO SUPPORT DURHAM MAYOR'S CHARITY APPEAL

The Parish Council has received correspondence from the Mayor of Durham Councillor Katie Corrigan, asking if we would consider supporting this year's Mayor's Charity Appeal.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, it has not been possible to hold the traditional Mayor Making Ceremony and therefore Councillor Corrigan shall be remaining in post as Mayor for the time being. Councillor Corrigan has selected a different charity this year and will now be supporting the Fire Fighters Charity until the end of her term. The Parish Council is advised that this charity would have been supported by Councillor Ossie Johnson had he taken over as Mayor as expected in June.

The Fire Fighters Charity offers specialist lifelong support for members of the UK fire services community, helping individuals to achieve mental, physical and social wellbeing throughout their lives. The charity provides independent, personalised support to thousands of people each year and exists to support all fire and rescue service personnel, whatever their role in the service. The charity also supports those who have retired from the service, as well as spouses and dependants.

Further details about the Fire Fighters Charity can be found via its website here: <https://www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/>

It may also interest Members to know that the Lifetime Achievement Award for this national charity was awarded to Harry Binyon, formerly of County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

No specific amount has been requested in Cllr Corrigan's letter and any offers of a donation will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) For Members to agree to support the Mayor's Charity Appeal 20202) If 1) is agreed, for Members to agree an appropriate figure to grant this Appeal.
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