

City of Durham Parish Council

Room 103, Floor 1
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09 August 2018

Dear Environment Committee Member

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the **City of Durham Parish Council's Environment Committee** will be held in **Room 3, Alington House, 4 North Bailey, Durham, DH1 3ET** on **Thursday 16 August at 19:00** to transact the following business:

1. Election of Chair of Committee
2. Election of Vice Chair of Committee
3. To receive any declarations of interest from members.
4. To receive any public participation comments on the following agenda items.
5. Priority Setting by Environment Committee – see attached report.
6. Cllr E Ashby has requested that his committee considers the formation of a working group to engage with appropriate County Council officers to investigate a means of 'domesticating' the driving environment on the A 167 between the Sniperley and Cock of the North roundabouts.
7. Cllr E Ashby requests that this committee forms a working group to meet with officers from the County Council's Clean and Green team to discuss the setting up of pilot scheme for an award in 2019 of the Best Kept shop frontage in the city centre.
8. Cllr E Ashby requests this committee seeks urgent discussions with the Finance Committee on means of funding a part time member of staff to undertake from time to time such outside tidying and cleaning duties as may be required by this council.
9. Report of Britain in Bloom lunch held on 7 August 2018 – Cllr E Ashby.
10. Cllr Ashfield to move that he council identifies a means of reducing emissions caused by ice cream vans and other promotional vehicles (eg health bus) while working in the marketplace and other static sites in the city.
11. Cllr Ashfield requests that the council investigates the making safe the steps in various areas of the city (e.g. from Silver street to the car park on the river side,

from Silver street to the haberdashery shop, from Kepier Heights to Hillcrest. Many residents have reported that these are dangerous for the elderly and people with mobility difficulties, especially but not exclusively, in wet and icy conditions.

12. Cllr Ashfield to raise "improved signage in and around the city centre"
13. Dates of future meetings

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



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Reports

Agenda item 5: Priority Setting by Environment Committee

At the parish council meeting held on the 6 June members discussed priority setting and agreed that the following topics should be discussed by the Environment Committee:-

- Involving young people
- Greening Millenium Place
- A167 Traffic Calming – see agenda
- Night Time Safety Partnership (membership requested of the Durham City Safety Partnership)
- Heritage Signing
- Good neighbour of the year
- Litter

There are a significant number of other priorities identified from the Neighbourhood Plan Forum which are shown below for information. It is probable that these will need to be discussed as part of the away day proposed for later in the year.

The June 5th meeting of the City of Durham Council considered setting priorities.

It was also agreed at the June 28 council meeting that the council explores the holding of a public meeting to discuss, with the residents of the City of Durham Parish Council area, what they see as their priorities for the council area. It was also agreed that the council should provide a list of what they see as being the priorities for the new council to assist with the agenda for this meeting.

Members were informed that the Neighbourhood Plan Forum Group had consulted residents as part of their Neighbourhood Plan production. This had revealed a myriad of priorities that were not necessarily planning related but had been incorporated into the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The issues identified in the Neighbourhood Plan are therefore included below for examination by the council and or the Environment Committee.

It was explained that during the consultations for the Neighbourhood Plan (which covers the same area as the City Council) people had made proposals which were not capable of being expressed as planning policies, because they were not about land use. The Neighbourhood Planning Forum felt that rather than rejecting or ignoring

these as being outside its remit, it should list them so that others could take them forward.

An obvious possibility for this task is the City of Durham Parish Council. It must be emphasised that the Forum is simply suggesting that the Council might like to take these projects forward. It is up to the Council to decide whether it does so or not.

In the Neighbourhood Plan, published in November 2017, these projects were published in its Chapter 5 and Appendix A. There were no adverse comments made. However, the Forum now considers that it would be clearer if the projects were all placed in the same location, Appendix A, and that change will be made before the Plan is submitted to Durham County Council for its independent examination.

What follows are the projects as submitted for the public consultation in November / December 2017. As explained above, these will be subject to an editing process, but the substance of each of these projects will not change.

The Neighbourhood Plan itself may be viewed at <http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/the-plan/>

Chapter 5: Implementation and Monitoring

5.1: PROGRESSING THE PLAN

5.1 The City of Durham Neighbourhood Planning Forum will not be the body that undertakes implementation and monitoring of Our Neighbourhood Plan. Its role is limited by legislation to producing the plan, with no on-going role. It is also important that the projects to improve the economic, social and environmental realm, summarised in Appendix A, are taken forward. The involvement of community organisations is invaluable, and such grass-roots bodies may often take the initiative in progressing and implementing the actions.

5.2 For the time being the Durham Area Action Partnership is a very good possible vehicle as it includes all of the main agencies – Police; Fire & Rescue; Health; Durham University; Community Action; public representatives; and above all the County Council with its wide range of functions including planning.

5.3 The setting up of an elected Parish Council for Our Neighbourhood has recently been agreed by Durham County Council (20 September 2017). The City of Durham Parish Council will become a recognised legal entity on 1 April 2018, with inaugural elections taking place in May 2018. This body will then assume the role of successor to the Forum once the Neighbourhood Plan is formally in place.

Alongside it there will need to be an implementation agency (or perhaps more than one such agency) such as a Durham City Regeneration Body (a company limited by guarantee), able to give executive action to a series of projects that make a difference for the better and part-funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 receipts.

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5.2: PROJECTS TO IMPLEMENT PLAN POLICIES

5.4 Some of our Neighbourhood Plan policies would benefit from implementation projects in addition to any relevant planning proposals that might be brought forward by interested parties.

Policy Implementation Project 1: Policy G3 – Creation of the Emerald Network

5.5 The Emerald Network could be set up via community action of wildlife groups and friends associations in partnership with statutory and other relevant bodies. The implementation strategy would comprise:

- setting up a management group
- writing an implementation plan
- engaging the local community (local residents and friends groups, schools, university and colleges)
- liaising with key stakeholders, such as Durham County Council, the City of Durham Parish Council, the Durham City Area Action Partnership, the Woodland Trust, the Durham Wildlife Trust
- negotiating with landowners, e.g. the Cathedral, the University, owners of individual Local Wildlife sites etc., owners of land incorporating footpaths
- seeking funding to carry out assessments of existing sites and paths and need for new sites and paths, and then for site and path management and maintenance, signposting and interpretation boards.

Policy Implementation Project 2: Policy D2.3 – Reconversion of Some Houses in Multiple

Occupation Back to Family Homes and General Housing

5.6 Mechanisms for taking this forward include:

- use of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts/Section 106 monies
- developers of private PBSAs (purpose built student accommodation) and of University colleges donating into a fund, the level of the donation as a proportion of the number of beds in the PBSA/college
- purchase of properties by housing associations – to renovate and bring back into normal use
- forming a regeneration trust or company – the Durham City Regeneration Company – that acquires HMOs (houses in multiple occupation) in a pilot area, converts them to

be suitable for families with children, young couples starting-out, and older people, and recycles the resultant capital or revenue into further project areas. The Viaduct area of the City is proposed as the first such pilot area.

Policy Implementation Project 3: Policy C1 – Community Arts Facilities

5.7 During the process of public consultation the need for improvements in facilities for the arts in the City were identified (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2017). This project includes three key aspects:

- a range of community arts facilities – studio spaces for artists, rooms for courses and rehearsal space, art and crafts workshops for residents of all ages and rooms for meetings of art organisations;
- a City art gallery, including gallery space for permanent and temporary exhibitions by national and local artists;
- a creative business centre for local artists and/or more independent shops to help small creative businesses to sell their products, build a consumer base and give local artists more exposure.

5.8 In order to implement this project when the Forum ceases to exist, it will be necessary to do two things:

1. The Forum will continue to consult with organisations and partnerships involved with the arts and culture in Our Neighbourhood during the development of the Plan. This will be in order to support their existing strategies to improve facilities for the arts in the City and to encourage them to address elements of this project in any of their future strategies for the City. This includes working with Durham County Council, the City of Durham Parish Council, the Durham City Action Area Partnership, Durham University; the Cathedral Dean and Chapter, Durham BID (The Durham Business Improvement District Committee), the Chamber of Trade, the County Durham Cultural Partnership, Durham Creatives, Visit County Durham, The Empty Shop and other local and regional organisations.

2. A Durham City Regeneration Body (a company limited by guarantee) could be set up in the future. The improvement of facilities for the arts would be part of its brief and the Body could work alongside a possible future Town Council.

Policy Implementation Project 4: Policy C2 – Information Hub

5.9 There is no central 'information hub' in the City. The need for one for the benefit of both residents and visitors has been identified during the process of public consultation as an essential facility (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015, 2017). In order to implement this project it will be essential to do two things:

1. The Forum will need to work with Durham County Council, the City of Durham Parish Council, and other key stakeholders.

2. A Durham City Regeneration Body (a company limited by guarantee) could be set up in the future. The development of an Information Hub would be part of its brief and the Body could work alongside the Parish Council.

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Appendix A

PROJECTS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL REALM

1. The statutory requirement of a neighbourhood plan is to set out planning policies and proposals for the use and development of land. This has been done in Chapters 1 to 5. Nevertheless, the preparation of our Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity for the public to express views on other types of improvements that are seen to be necessary and desirable. The ideas and proposals expressed during the consultation process so far have been brought together as possible projects under each element of the vision for further consideration by the public and action by the most appropriate bodies. An important part of the draft plan consultation will be to test the feasibility of the 22 resulting projects with the public and the potential implementers of the projects.

2. There are many bodies that could potentially implement these projects, individually or in partnership. These bodies include, but are not restricted to: Durham County Council; a Town Council for Durham (if one is established); the Durham City Action Area Partnership; the Durham City Regeneration Body (a company limited by guarantee which could be set up in the future with the aim of implementing Our Neighbourhood Plan); Durham University; the Cathedral Dean and Chapter; Durham BID (The Durham Business Improvement District Committee); the Chamber of Trade; the North East England Chamber of Commerce; businesses in the City; housing associations; the County Durham Cultural Partnership; Visit County Durham; The Empty Shop; Durham Wildlife Trust; Transition Durham; the Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust; residents groups; community, amenity, interest and lobby groups; friends associations; local charities; religious organisations; the Students Union; the public.

A1: A CITY WITH A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE – PROJECTS

Project 1: Durham Sustainable City. An annual report on the (ultimately) adopted social, environmental and economic realm projects to establish the extent to which the City is moving towards or away from a sustainable future with recommendations. All major building projects and in particular public sector schemes including the University, Primary Care Trust and the County Council must demonstrate best practice in construction and use.

Project 2: Clean Air Zone. The declaration of a Durham City Centre Clean Air Zone with formal monitoring and reporting procedures

A2: A BEAUTIFUL AND HISTORIC CITY – PROJECTS

Project 3: Interpretation/Visitor Centre. Set up an initiative to provide this essential community facility to provide an imaginative exploration of the unique Story of Durham.

Project 4: Clean Durham Forum. A forum of to seek ways of achieving a cleaner public realm including innovation in waste collection, street cleaning and litter control.

Project 5: 'To Let' Sign Control. Stricter control and enforcement of regulations on outdoor advertising and in particular 'To Let' and 'Have Let' boards. The prospective Article 7 (Planning) Direction should be extended to cover the whole of Our Neighbourhood to control 'To Let' and 'Have Let' boards.

Project 6: Designation, Protection and Enhancement of Community Assets. Comprehensive review of status, management and use of all open space including cemeteries, sites with wildlife, allotments, sports fields, the Green Belt, individual trees and groups of trees, and of buildings with heritage value, with a view to enhanced designation and management. Consideration should be given to the designation and management of the County Council land at County Hall as an extension of Wharton Park. Modern buildings, structures and artworks of aesthetic, visual and architectural interest whose appearance, character and cultural value contribute to the future heritage of Our Neighbourhood should be listed as non-designated heritage assets and recommended for statutory designation. Appendix C gives a list of non-designated heritage assets in our Neighbourhood. A similar list of open spaces (both hard and green) and green assets needs to be produced.

A3: A CITY WITH A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY – PROJECTS

Project 7: Aykley Heads Business Park. The preparation, promotion and realisation of a master plan as an outstanding opportunity for diversification of the local economy and of sustainable economic development.

Project 8: Broadband Upgrade. Action to ensure that the City is served by fast broadband and full mobile connectivity as soon as possible and at the latest by 2018.

Project 9: Improvements to the City Centre. Actions to improve not only the vitality and diversity of the economy, but also its cultural and environmental attractiveness and well-being. Such measures could include:

- improve shop frontages including removal of illuminated signs;
- maintain the fabric of buildings, property boundaries i.e. walls and railings, and street furniture;
- upgrade the environment of the back lanes and paths;
- improve rear access to properties for servicing i.e. deliveries and waste collection;
- contribute to the promotion of a sign-posted circular shoppers' route and the rationalising of existing signs to move shoppers around and through the City;
- improve accessibility to all users, particularly older people, people with disabilities, and people with young children;

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- use empty shops temporarily by start-up businesses for two years under permitted development rights;
- contribute to a community hub incorporating a crèche where shoppers can leave children;
- designate parking bays which provide free disc parking for a maximum stay of an hour to allow for brief shopping trips and the collection of click and collect items;
- offer flexible use of private car parking to enable public use at specified times.

Project 10: City Centre Retail Revival Action Plan. New initiatives to attract shoppers and repeat visits through more events such as the biennial Lumière, the annual Book Festival and the Christmas market and to rebalance the daytime and evening economies by a measure such as 'Live after Five' where attractions remain open into the early evening.

Project 11: Shop Front Improvement Grant Scheme. Publish a shop front guide and introduce a grant scheme to encourage improvement of both primary and secondary shopfronts.

Project 12: Places in Durham. Action to achieve enhancement and good management of important places and spaces in Durham including Millennium Place, the Market Place, Reform Place and Fowler's Yard, to achieve the fulfilment of their potential.

Project 13: North Road Regeneration. Ongoing work requires the comprehensive redevelopment of key sites which include the post war shops and offices and the bus station. The bus station should be redeveloped on its existing site, including the demolition of the existing frontage shops and provision of café, toilets and public transport information and services.

Project 14: Visitors and Tourists. Actions to provide new and improved facilities for visitors and tourists which would enhance the experience, lengthen the stay, help secure the future of the City as a tourist destination, and increase prosperity deriving from tourism expenditure. Such measures could include:

- improve welcoming facilities including new digital displays for visitors and tourists at 'gateways' to the City including the coach park and Millennium Place, bus station, and park and ride terminals; or
- provide new visitor accommodation including a new hotel at Old Shire Hall, and extensions to existing accommodation; or

- set up a heritage/leisure/arts trail which relates to the 'Emerald Network' of riverside and countryside attractions and the World Heritage Sites, incorporating new signage and interactive interpretation boards; or
- maintain community open space and identify potential sites which can be used to stage events, e.g. events organised by Durham BID, Christmas market and the Book Festival; or
- improve coordination with other tourist and visitor attractions in County Durham including transport connections; or
- provide new and improved public conveniences; or
- promote information about the City through smart phones, tablets and other electronic devices, in association with the proposed 'Information Hub'.

A4: A CITY WITH ATTRACTIVE AND AFFORDABLE PLACES TO LIVE – PROJECTS

Project 15: Article 4 (Planning) Direction. The extension of the Article 4 Direction to cover the rest of Our Neighbourhood in anticipation of widening pressure for HMOs (houses in multiple occupation) resulting from the growth of demand for student accommodation.

A5: A CITY WITH A MODERN AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Project 16: Public Transport Integration. Seek cooperation by operators towards greater integration of services in the City and the early introduction of electric or hybrid buses.

Improvements could include flexible ticketing allowing use of multiple operators, and extension of routes across the city centre to provide through journey opportunities especially to major employment and educational sites.

Project 17: Walking and Cycling Durham. Funding of a rolling programme of physical improvements and other measures to achieve greater shift to active transport modes and reduction of traffic conflicts. The programme should be developed via annual consultation and publication of progress reports including network audits, and should take into account the findings from the Forum's public engagement summarised in Maps 10 and 11.

Project 18: Rights of Way Durham. Registration of rights of way that are not currently registered (unrecorded footpaths and bridleways created before 1949 need to be recorded before 2026).

Project 19: Car Parking Provision. Review of existing city centre car parking arrangements to favour short term parking in recognition of changes in demand including development of 'Click and Collect' services. Consideration is needed of the potential for additional Park and Ride sites on the south-west and south-east sides of the City, and extension of services into the evenings.

Project 20: Rail Service Enhancement. Working with Transport for the North, NECA and Nexus to improve early morning and late evening rail services, local services to Chester-le-Street, and to seek provision of rail connections to destinations such as Washington, Sunderland and Teesside.

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Project 21: Taxi Service Modernisation. Upgrading of taxi ranks, introduction of emission controls on standing and idling of taxis in the City centre, and the limitation of use to electric and hybrid vehicles by 2023.

A6 A CITY WITH AN ENRICHED COMMUNITY LIFE – PROJECTS

Project 22: Local Sustainable Food. Implementation of the principles of healthier food availability and local sustainable food production through support for local initiatives including Transition Durham.