

City of Durham Parish Council

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Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85098292412>
Meeting ID: 850 9829 2412

Dear Councillor,

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the **Environment Committee** will be held in **via Zoom** on **Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 1.00pm** to transact the following business:

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8th FEBRUARY 2022**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. UPDATE ON THE PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING**
- 6. DISCUSSION WITH PAULA GEORGE AND VICKI BURRELL (DCC) ON THE WORK OF STRATEGIC WASTE MANGEMENT TEAM**
- 7. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:**

7a. To decide:

- I) Planning the Clean for the Queen litter picking event – Sunday 29th May 2022
- II) Report by Cllr R Friederichsen on Clean Air and Active Travel – report included
- III) Report from Neighbourhood Warden – discussion on priorities for 2022/23
- IV) Discussion of Durham in Bloom priorities for 2022-23 – to include proposal on Providence Row by local students and green wall at Allergate/ East Atherton Street.
- V) Progressing the 2022-23 blue plaque scheme

7b. To complete:

- I) Update on carbon literacy training
- II) Update on the ecological emergency resolution and the use of glyphosates in the City of Durham parish area
- III) Update on the work to improve the River Wear – including report by Durham Cathedral on improving the Wear
- IV) Report on Section 106 projects in the Elvet and Gilesgate division – lower Claypath bus shelters

7c. To note:

- I) Installation of Mosaic art work at the UHND
- II) Progressing the 2021-22 blue plaques scheme
- III) 7 Hills of Durham project update

8. AOB (please note for information only and not for formal decisions).

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 10th May 2022 – 1pm

Tuesday 14th June 2022 – 1pm

Tuesday 12th July 2022 – 1pm

And pursuant to the provisions of the above-named act, 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 Environment Committee held on 8th February 2022 at 13:00pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors C Lattin (Chair), V Ashfield, D Freeman, R Friederichsen and S Walker.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley and Richard Hornby (member of the public)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr R Hanson.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11th JANUARY 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Richard Hornby advised that he was attending the meeting to contribute to item 5i) of the Agenda.

5. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:

5a. To decide:

VI) Progressing the proposal for community emergency planning

The Chair reminded Members that the Environment Committee had agreed in January to progress the proposal of establishing a community emergency plan. The Chair thanked Richard Hornby for attending the meeting. The Chair advised that Gilesgate is currently progressing its own emergency plan.

Richard presented the miro system to the Committee and thanked the Clerk for meeting with him prior to the meeting to familiarise himself with the functionality of the system.

The Clerk made the link to the miro system available to all Members and the Chair asked Committee members to feed into the plan by 22nd February in order that the next Committee meeting may consider this.

The Clerk asked how the emergency plan will be initiated if an emergency took place during anti-social hours. The Chair advised that she would be happy to be

the initial point of contact for the plan (other than emergency services) should an incident happen.

VII) Addressing light pollution in the City

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had been receiving complaints about the light pollution caused by the lights to the Police HQ car park. The Clerk advised that he had been corresponding between the complainant and the estates team at the Police in order to resolve this issue and it now appears that this has been resolved. The Clerk advised that he would continue to monitor this matter.

Members expressed concerns that the lights to the new multi-storey car park, the new Council HQ and Freeman's Quay leisure centre seemed to be endlessly switched on, causing a huge light pollution issue to the Sands. Members also expressed concern at the public cost of having lights switched on throughout the night.

The Clerk advised that he had been corresponding with relevant officers on this matter in order to seek a solution to the issues. Unfortunately the issue continues. Members **agreed** that a corporate complaint should be submitted to DCC requesting that they address this issue as a matter of urgency.

5b. To complete:

- V) **Durham in Bloom priorities for 2021-22 – trees and bulbs planting and wildflower meadow and**
- VI) **Progressing the "Hallow Green/Greening the Viaduct 2021" project – including John Street and Bridge Street proposals**

The Chair thanked all those involved in the planting activities at John Street on Sunday. The Clerk reported that this had gone very well and thanked Cllrs Ashfield and Ormerod for their support with this.

Cllr V Ashfield advised that the wildflower seed had now been planted underneath the trees at the Sands (planted by the Parish Council in February 2019).

The Clerk advised that there were a number of trees still awaiting planting from Val Standen and further trees were coming from the Woodland Trust. In total, over 150 trees need planting.

It was **agreed** that a proportion of these trees should be given at an event in the Market Place to encourage tree planting in private gardens.

The Clerk reported that he has been chasing permissions from DCC to plant the additional trees at the Sands for a number of months. He has now been advised that a response to this request will come towards the end of February/ beginning of March. The Committee agreed that, given that the trees were all native species and were presently all whips (and not fully grown trees) that the Parish Council should proceed with the planting. The Clerk advised that he would chase the relevant permissions as much as possible.

The Committee advised that they had received reports of a number of planters installed through the Hallow Green project being vandalised with plants being posted through letterboxes. Cllrs V Ashfield and S Walker advised that they had carried out a review of the planters and advised that most were still doing extremely well. It was **agreed** to replace the plants removed and the Committee expressed its disappointment that this had happened.

In preparation for next year's Durham in Bloom events, the Committee also **agreed** to order 6 flower towers for the parish as follows:

- 1 over the road from St. Johns Church (Neville's Cross)
- 2 at Freeman's Quay near to the passport office.
- 2 at North Road (outside Sainsbury's and another by the CEX shop).
- 1 at Clayport library (against the wall facing Claypath).

VII) **Proposal to tackle single use plastics in Durham**

The Clerk reminded Members that the funding for the project to champion businesses going plastic free becomes available in April 2022. It was **agreed** that this project should be placed on the April Committee agenda to progress.

VIII) **Update on carbon literacy training**

The Clerk advised that the Chair of the Parish Council has now approved the training provider for the carbon literacy training and the Clerk advised that he would be circulating dates for a March training day to Councillors.

5c. To note:

The Committee noted that the following projects are being progressed.

- IV) Installation of Mosaic art work at the UHND. In noting the difficulties experienced to date in gaining the relevant installation permissions from the PFI manager at the hospital, the Committee **agreed** that, if this was still not resolved by April, an alternative location for the mosaic should be investigated.
- V) Progressing the blue plaques scheme. The Clerk advised that the planning applications for the two plaques at the Market Hall and 142 Gilesgate are now live and it is hoped that a decision could be made on these soon.
- VI) 7 Hills of Durham project update
- VII) Section 106 project – sedum roofed bus shelters.

6. AOB

Cllr R Friederichsen highlighted that the Environment Agency has now responded to the Parish Council's letter on the quality of the River Wear. Cllr R Friederichsen advised that, as per the previous agreement by the Committee, he would be drafting a letter to Northumbrian Water on what actions they are taking to help improve the quality of the River.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 8th March 2022 – 1pm

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all those present for attending and for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Chair of the Parish Council's Environment Committee
(12th April 2022)**

ITEM 5A: CLEAN AIR AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

By Cllr R Friederichsen

Summary: This report updates the Environment Committee on some discussions and organising that has happened over the past months on the topic area of clean air and active travel in Durham city. It provides a summary of previous and ongoing actions taken by Durham County Council. It presents options to the Environment Committee regarding whether and how members want to contribute to upcoming work in this area. The appendix lists key related documents by Durham County Council.

Recent discussions and organising:

- Elvet Residents' Association (ERA) have raised their major concerns about poor and harmful local air quality in conversations with Cllr V Ashfield who subsequently introduced Cllr R Friederichsen to the chair of ERA
- Following the invitation by the chair of ERA to discuss air quality issues and solutions at an ERA meeting, Cllr R Friederichsen attended the ERA meeting on 13 December 2021 together with SPACE for Durham members Matthew Phillips and Paul Armstrong. They presented a vision and SPACE for Durham-produced sketch drawings for a more advanced and ambitious improvement to the way in which traffic is organised in the triangle comprising of Church Street, Hallgarth Street, and Stockton Road than is currently foreseen in the Local Cycling and Walking Plan (LCWIP)
- After further ERA-internal discussions, ERA expressed broad support for the plans presented by SPACE for Durham and contributed various suggestions for improving the plan
- SPACE for Durham is currently liaising with various individuals and local stakeholders such as St Oswald's Church and Primary School to gauge their interest in improvements to air pollution, the street environment, and road safety
- SPACE for Durham, ERA, and Cllr Friederichsen agree that a better solution for Church and Hallgarth Street, and Stockton Road than what is in the current LCWIP is both feasible and necessary and are committed to engage more local stakeholders with a view to eventually bringing about a more effective solution in terms of air quality, and improved safety and encouragement for pedestrians and cyclists to benefit all local stakeholders

Background on clean air and active travel in Durham city:

- Because of poor air quality, an *Air Quality Management Area* was established in Durham City in 2011, a *Durham City Air Quality Action Plan* was published in 2016, and Durham County Council (DCC) is required to prepare and submit an *Annual Air Quality Status Report (AAQSR)*; the 2020 report was made available to Cllr R Friederichsen upon his request by David Gribben, DCC's Senior Air Quality Officer. At the time of writing, the AAQSR had not been published yet due to pending final revisions relating to accessibility requirements (for the relevant context, see DCC's

web pages at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/3825/Air-quality-in-Durham-City>)

- The contents of the 66-page 2020 AAQSR can only be summarised in a highly selective manner here and with the purpose of answering questions relating to whether and how the Parish Council could and should engage with related work
- Durham City is the area most affected by poor air quality area in County Durham; in particular, the report points out Apex Corner (comprising the junction of Church Street and Hallgarth Street) in New Elvet, Alexandria Crescent, and Gilesgate (page v)
- Relevant actions to improve air quality listed in the AAQSR are
 - #5 (page 7) is to increase active travel; reference is made to the County Durham Strategic Cycling and Walking Plan 2019-2029 and states that work on this action is ongoing
 - #9 (page 8) mentions that a draft *Air Quality Strategy* is in place, currently being consulted on DCC-internally, and will need to be formally adopted by the Council
 - #10 (page 8) Awareness raising on air quality is ongoing; Clean Air Day is 19 June
- The report acknowledges the importance of local engagement (page vi-vii) and actions including “Increasing the access to alternative modes of travel to the use of the private motor car.” and “Increased use of cycle-ways as a modal shift across Durham City.”
- The Durham City Neighbourhood Plan dedicates theme 5 to modern and sustainable transport infrastructure and indicates “significant opportunity for improvement” (page 108) in relation to walking and cycling as well as the priority afforded to safe and sustainable travel among residents and the contribution to global heating that current transport patterns make (page 110).
- On 10 February David Gribben advised that work is currently ongoing to a) establish current levels of air pollution; b) consult DCC-internally on the most suitable remedial actions to be taken; and c) produce a new action plan. A public consultation on the new action plan is likely to take place at a yet to be decided time.
- Three LCWIPs, including one for Durham city, were approved by DCC’s cabinet in October 2021, and the officer Victoria Lloyd-Gent has indicated in correspondence with Cllr R Friederichsen (1 November 2021) that DCC has consulted on these, and that they see no need for further consultation until detailed plans can be consulted upon, which will not be until funding is secured. DCC is now awaiting funding opportunities from central government to implement the LCWIPs

DECISIONS REQUIRED	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For members to agree that SPACE for Durham be invited to the May 2022 Environment Committee meeting to present their vision and suggested solutions. 2) For members to commit to supporting a virtual event with relevant civil society groups to mark Clean Air Day on 16 June 2022 with the purpose of educating and engaging stakeholders, and encouraging action in relation to the issues raised in this report.
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Appendix: Official documents relating to this report

Durham County Council (no date) **County Durham Strategic Cycling and Walking Plan 2019-2029**; available at

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/11677/Strategic-Cycling-and-Walking-Delivery-Plan-2019-2029>

Durham County Council (2016) **Air Quality Action Plan for Durham City**;

available at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/3825/Air-quality-in-Durham-City>

Durham County Council (2018) **Durham City Sustainable Transport Delivery Plan 2018 to 2035**; available at

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/3705/Transport-policy>

Durham County Council (2020) **Air Quality Annual Status Report**. Unpublished.

Durham County Council (2021) **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: Durham**. Available on request.