

# City of Durham Parish Council

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Dear Councillor,

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, I hereby give you notice that the annual meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL** will be held in the **Ritson Hall, Alington House, 4 North Bailey, Durham DH1 3ET** on **THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022 at 7:00pm** to transact the following business:

- 1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE (OR NOT) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM TODAY'S MEETING**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022**
- 4. PRESENTATION BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ON THE DURHAM CITY LEVELLING-UP FUNDING BID**
- 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 6. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- Planning Committee minutes from meetings held on 24<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:  
<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/planning-committee/>

- Report providing an update on the Sniperley Park development

- Environment Committee minutes from meetings held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:  
<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/environment-committee/>

- Proposal to support improvements to the River Wear

- Licensing Committee minutes from meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:  
<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/licensing-committee/>

- Response to the consultation on proposed changes to the County Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Policy 2021-2026

- **Business Committee minutes from meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:  
<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/business-committee/>

- Proposal to support the Durham City Children's Book Festival 2022

**7. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

**8. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE**

**9. KEEP BRITAIN TIDY'S LOVE PARKS WEEK 2022**

**10. NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ASB-SUB GROUP**

**11. REQUEST FOR A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION FROM LOCAL LANDLORDS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT**

**12. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

- Report by Cllr E Ashby on the most recent meeting of the County Durham Association of Local Councils.
- Report by Cllr L Brown on the most recent meeting of the Durham Access for All Group
- Verbal update from the Chair on the latest meeting of the Parish Council's Community Residents Association Forum meeting

**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 the meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 19:00 in the Lantern Room, Durham Town Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors A Doig (in the Chair), L Brown, E Ashby, V Ashfield, D Freeman, G Holland, C Lattin, E Scott and S Walker.

**Also present:** Parish Clerk Adam Shanley, Mr Eric Wilton (National Trust), Mr Rupert Benjamin, Mr John Ashby and Mr John Lowe (members of the public).

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

Apologies were received from Councillors R Friederichsen, R Hanson, R Ormerod, G Nair and N Brown.

## **2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

Councillor D Freeman declared an interest in item 9 of the Agenda and took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

Councillor C Lattin declared an interest in item 10 of the Agenda and took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

## **3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings, subject to an amendment under item 13 of the minutes in relation to the licensing committee from "*Meets once every two weeks on a Friday at 2pm*" to "*Meets once every two weeks on a Monday at 4:30pm*".

In agreeing the minute relating to Committee Membership from the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the Chair advised that he would be happy to accept a motion in writing from any Committee requesting that additional Members be added to the Committee.

## **4. PRESENTATION BY THE NATIONAL TRUST ON FUTURE PLANS FOR CROOK HALL**

The Chair welcomed Mr Eric Wilton from the National Trust to the meeting to discuss the future plans for Crook Hall and Gardens.

Eric began by thanking the Parish Council for the opportunity to come and speak with them today and advised that the National Trust was delighted to have added Crook Hall and Gardens to its portfolio recently and to maintain this as an open space for the community and as an important visitor attraction for the City.

Eric gave some background to the property itself. Eric advised that Crook Hall is a Grade 1 listed property, set within 5 acres of mature gardens, which had previously been managed by Keith & Maggie Bell as a visitor offer in Durham City for the past 25 years. Eric advised that the National Trust had acquired the property on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Eric advised that Crook Hall is in a unique position – being as it is 10 minutes' walk from the Durham World Heritage Site & Durham train station and yet set within the greenbelt with access to Durham City's important green and blue corridors.

Eric advised that the National Trust is working with key partners to shape the Trust's offer at Crook Hall Gardens alongside a connected green/blue corridor providing access to nature.

Eric gave some background as to the staffing structure at Crook Hall, advising that he is assuming the role of General Manager of Crook Hall and Gardens and the team also includes 6 operational staff as well as 10 garden volunteers.

Eric advised that the plan for Crook Hall and Gardens included a number of key objectives for 2022; namely to establish the property as a National Trust site, to recruit a new property, visitor welcome and gardening team, to refurbish the café, to provide a Café City Apartment offer (refurbished and available summer 2021) and to meet the target opening date of 13th July 2022 – with the offer to include gardens, medieval hall & café.

Eric also advised that the plan also included some key objectives relating to Durham City's green and blue corridors.

- Firstly to provide green corridor access directly from Crook as a steppingstone into nature.
- To improve the footpath connections, specifically the Crook Hall Gardens & Moorhouse Woods and River Wear paths.
- To establish a cycle Hub at Crook Hall Gardens
- To establish the Trust's Vision document for the property and to have this co-created following community & stakeholder engagement.
- To reopen the Northumberland Water bridge over the River Wear
- To attract external funding for the site, including Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity, National Highways etc.
- To reopen the Belmont Viaduct – to develop this project with partners – aim to eventually reopen as part of route between Newton Hall & Belmont

The Chair thanked Eric for his presentation and opened the meeting up to questions.

Cllr E Ashby emphasised what an important role Crook Hall played for tourism in the City and asked if the National Trust is actively engaging with coach drivers to let them know about changes to coach drop-offs in the City, etc. Eric advised that the National Trust weren't doing this at present but highlighted that Crook Hall has very good public transport links. Cllr E Scott advised that DCC and Visit County Durham will be engaging with coach drivers on the coach arrangements.

Cllr L Brown asked about the pricing structure for the site and whether there would be a discounted rate of admission for local residents. On the latter point, Eric advised that there wouldn't be a discount for residents and on the former advised that he would get back to the Parish Council on this.

Cllr E Scott advised that she was pushing to get a tourism bus established in Durham and hoped that Crook Hall would be a key destination for this bus.

Eric finished by advising that the National Trust is very keen to work with key stakeholder partner in the City and offered the Parish Council a free tour of the site post-opening on 13<sup>th</sup> July.

The Chair thanked Eric for his presentation and time this evening. At this point, Eric left the meeting.

## **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Rupert Benjamin asked Members if they were aware of, and supported, a gentleman with extremist views living within a housing association property in the City and within close proximity of an educational establishment which teaches a significant number of pupils from diverse backgrounds. The Chair thanked Mr Benjamin for his statement and advised that the Parish Council – through Councillor Liz Brown – would liaise with the appropriate authorities and with Mr Benjamin on this issue outside of this meeting.

Mr John Ashby advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items but specifically item 10 on the Agenda.

Mr John Lowe advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items but specifically the item on the Sniperley Park master plan.

## **6. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **• Planning Committee**

Cllr G Holland presented the minutes from the Planning Committee meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> May and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022. There being no queries from Members, Cllr G Holland moved on to Committee updates.

#### **- Report providing an update on the Sniperley Park development**

Cllr G Holland reminded Members that the issue of the Sniperley Park development, located outside of the parish area, has been discussed at a number of Parish Council meetings.

Cllr G Holland advised that he and Cllr R Friederichsen had presented a report to Full Council in April 2022, where Members fully endorsed the following energy solutions at the Sniperley Park development and also agreed to liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils on this development. Cllr G Holland updated the

Council that neither Framwellgate Moor Parish Council nor Witton Gilbert Parish Council wished to work in partnership on this issue.

### **Energy solutions at the Sniperley Park development:**

1. An Energy Assessment for the entire site designed to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions with all properties satisfying the 2030 operational energy and embodied carbon targets set by the RIBA 2030 Challenge which identify the optimal set of energy solutions to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. All homes and buildings to be built to EPC A rating standard as a minimum.
3. No connection of the site to the national gas network.
4. Photovoltaic panels / and battery storage in all homes and buildings.
5. Ground and/or air source heat exchange systems for all homes and buildings.
6. District heating system using any potential geothermal energy.
7. All houses to have electricity supply points for electric cars.

Cllr G Holland reminded Members that Cabinet Member Councillor Mark Wilkes attended the last Full Parish Council meeting and assured Members that the County Council is pushing for as sustainable development as possible at Sniperley, within the legal framework set by Government on sustainability and climate impact.

Cllr G Holland updated the Council that, on 15th June, the Parish Council was notified that both developers were submitting non-determination appeals for applications DM/21/03574/OUT and DM/21/02360/FPA.

In both cases, the case officer has submitted a follow-up letter setting out the present position on these applications and highlighting that the Local Planning Authority is not in a position to positively determine these applications in their current form.

Cllr G Holland advised that it is clear that Durham County Council has concerns about these proposals and the Parish Council has had an early indication that these appeals may lead to a public inquiry.

At the Planning Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022, Cllr G Holland advised that Committee Members had agreed that a further approach to DCC on the Sniperley Park masterplan should be undertaken as soon as possible including the City of Durham Trust and the Western Relief Road Action Group, along with any other interested groups.

Members thanked Cllr G Holland for his report and unanimously **agreed** that a further joint approach to DCC on the masterplan for Sniperley, along with the City of Durham Trust and the Western Relief Road Action Group (WRRAG) and other interested groups, subject to their approval.

- **Environment Committee**

Cllr C Lattin presented the minutes from the Environment Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022. There being no queries from Members, Cllr C Lattin moved on to Committee updates.

- **Report on the installation of further blue plaques in the parish**

Cllr C Lattin reminded Members that the Parish Council launched a public nominations scheme last year for the introduction of blue plaques to commemorate important people, buildings and events in the parish.

Since then, 5 blue plaques have been delivered as follows:

- The pioneering female photographer Daisy Edis - 142 Gilesgate
- The location of the former organ builders Harrison & Harrison - Harrison House
- The Market Hall - outside the Indoor Market Hall
- The three first female graduates of Durham University Mary Gibson, Dora Heslop and Winifred Hindmarch - St. Hild and St. Bede's College
- The Railway Cottages - Railway Cottages

Cllr C Lattin highlighted that, attached to the Agenda papers, is a copy of the remaining set of nominations from the public for the blue plaques scheme. In January, the Parish Council agreed sufficient funding to provide two further blue plaques to the 5 already delivered.

Cllr C Lattin advised that the Environment Committee has asked that a blue plaque for 20 Alllegate be included in this year's scheme and it is open for Members to nominate the blue plaques they'd like to see delivered this year.

Cllr C Lattin highlighted that the scheme has been very popular and the experience from last year's scheme has shown that buildings which are unlisted and non-University owned are easier to deliver.

The Clerk highlighted that, for ease of this meeting, he had requested votes ahead of the meeting in writing and confirmed that the agreed two plaques for this year were 20 Alllegate and Neville House.

Cllr E Ashby asked that more publicity be given to the blue plaques delivered and that some form of event can take place to highlight their installation.

Cllr V Ashfield also asked if the Parish Council could be more transparent in letting nominators know the reasons as to why some blue plaques nominated hadn't been delivered.

The Chair thanked the Clerk and Cllr C Lattin for this report.

- **Report on the renewal of the enhanced Neighbourhood Warden service SLA with Durham County Council**

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council currently has a service level agreement (SLA) in place with DCC to provide an enhanced Neighbourhood Warden service for the City.

This service level agreement provides 10 additional Neighbourhood Warden hours for the City at an annual cost of £10,000. In January 2022, the Parish Council agreed to allocate £10,000 towards this priority and the continuation of this service.

The Clerk advised that, in addition to the present provision of Wardens for the City, both the Parish Council (10 hours per week) and Durham University (full time) provide funding for an enhanced service for the City. The Clerk highlighted that the University has recently renewed its SLA with the County Council.

The Clerk highlighted that the benefits of this service are significant due to the heightened responsiveness to environmental issues and a substantial increase in proactive environmental enforcement.

The Clerk advised that, as part of the service level agreement in place, reports of what has been achieved on a monthly basis are expected to be provided. The Clerk advised that an annual report of what has been achieved since June 2021 is attached to this Agenda for Members' consideration.

Cllr C Lattin advised that the Environment Committee recently met and agreed that this service is an essential one provided by the Parish Council, albeit there are issues with reporting which need to be resolved with the County Council.

Whilst the issues of reporting need to be addressed, the Environment Committee recommends that the service level agreement be renewed for a further 3 years.

Members unanimously **agreed** to renew the service level agreement for an enhanced Neighbourhood Warden service with DCC as set out in the above report. In doing so, Members also **agreed** that a monthly report must be a requirement written into any new SLA prior to payment of funds for the service.

- **Licensing Committee**

Cllr S Walker presented the minutes from Licensing Committee meetings held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022. There were no queries from Members on these minutes.

- **Finance Committee**

Cllr A Doig presented the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022. There were no queries from Members on these minutes.

## **7. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The Chair advised that, as this is the first meeting of the Full Council since the Platinum Jubilee weekend, this is a great opportunity to say a tremendous thank you to all those involved in organising events in the City – a terrific example of

partnership working and the Chair advised that he felt that the Parish Council and its partners had done Her Majesty proud.

The Chair reminded Members that the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Baton Relay event is expected to be in Durham City on 14th July at approximately 15:00pm, starting at the Gilesgate roundabout. Councillors and members of the community are most welcome to attend this event as well as the event at Durham Racecourse. This leg of the Baton relay will be carried by Jessica Eddie (British rower and Olympic Silver medal born in Durham).

The Chair offered a big well done from the Parish Council to everyone involved in the City of Culture 2025 bid. It was sad that Durham didn't quite win the trophy and the Chair offered his congratulations to Bradford on their success. The Chair also welcomed the news that each of the runners-up will receive £125,000 from central Government. The Chair advised that he looked forward to seeing this money spent on cultural projects for Durham.

The Chair advised that the blue plaques project has proven extremely popular and it was great to see such a successful event take place in Gilesgate over the weekend for the Daisy Edis plaque. The Chair gave a big thanks to everyone involved in the logistics of this event as well as to the Clerk who drafted a 17-page heritage statement for the planning application in order to get this through. Excellent work by everyone.

The Chair reminded Members that the Wear Rivers Trust – an organisation the Parish Council has partnered with to support improvement works to the river wear – is hosting a balsam bash event in Hopper's Wood on 10<sup>th</sup> July to deal with invasive non-native species. Its set to be a great day of community volunteering and the Chair advised that he hoped to see as many Members there as possible.

The Chair advised Members that the Clerk has provided a ballot paper to each Member attending this evening. This is the vote for the position of the Durham representative on CDALC's executive committee. As some background the Executive Committee comprises twelve area committee representatives (divided by AAP areas) plus members elected at the AGM in October as CDALC's Vice Presidents and Honorary Treasurer. The Durham position has been vacant for a period of time. The Committee is CDALC's 'management board', dealing with its overall management, control, administration and conduct as well as representing us and lobbying at a national level. The Chair asked Members to ensure that they cast their vote and submit this back to the Clerk this evening and he will put forward our vote as a Council depending on the outcome of this.

The Chair advised that the Parish Council's Finance Committee met earlier this month. The Chair remarked that it is great to see so many projects for the City progressing so well. The Chair advised that it is clear that the Parish Council will finish this financial year with most if not all of what we set out to achieve done and the funds spent. The Chair advised that the Council will need to consider this in January next year as typically the Council has used underspend from previous financial years to keep the precept frozen.

The Chair asked Members, when Council officers are attending Committee meetings, to please remember to treat them with courtesy and respect as we all work together in our joint aim of making the City better.

Finally, the Chair gave a warm welcome and congratulations to the new Mayor of Durham. The Chair advised that he was very proud to have one of our fellow Parish Councillors take on this important role and we wish Cllr Freeman an excellent year. The Chair advised that he looked forward to the day when the Mayor of Durham City is a Parish Councillor from this Parish Council.

## **8. 2022/23 ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDING TO LOCAL VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

The Clerk reminded Members that, at the January meeting of the Full Parish Council, Councillors formally agreed to allocate £15,000 of the budget for 2022/23 towards grants for local and voluntary organisations. At its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022, Full Council approved emergency grant funding of £10,000 from this budget towards the continuation of the Safety of Women at Night (SWaN) hub in Durham City.

The Clerk advised that the grant funding window for the remaining £5,000 opened on 1st April 2022 and this has been advertised on social media, the Parish Council's website, through the local press and through direct e-mails.

The Clerk reminded Members that organisations were asked to apply by 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022 in order that the Finance Committee may consider this at its meeting in June and make a recommendation to Full Council in June.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's Finance Committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> June and agreed to allocate funding as per the report provided. In order to achieve this, the Clerk advised that the Finance Committee had agreed that the following allocations should be moved to the grants budget:

£2,200 be taken from the contingencies fund of £15,000 and £4,000 be taken from the Environment Committee budget as follows:

- The £3,000 allocation for an OASES/schools project be reduced to £1,000.
- The £1,000 allocation for a community composting scheme be removed entirely.
- The £1,000 allocation for businesses reducing their plastic use be removed entirely.

The Clerk advised that the reallocation from the Environment Committee's budget was proposed on the basis that this would go towards projects which also improve our parish's environment and was agreed by both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee in advance of the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022.

Members **agreed** (8 in favour and 1 abstention) to the reallocation of funding towards the grants fund, as set out in the report provided. Members to agree to the allocation of grant funding for each application as follows:

| <b>Organisation</b>   | <b>Project details</b>  | <b>Amount requested</b> | <b>Amount agreed by Full Council</b> |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Durham Hospital Radio | To fund continued improvements to the Durham Hospital Radio studios to improve the functionality for the presenters enabling social media and other software to be used in conjunction with live shows. Also, some installed computers need hardware upgrades to allow moving systems to Windows 11.  | £1,200                  | £0                                   |
| Sixth Form Centre     | <p>A grant is required to support and extend our community programme offer into 2023. Following the success of our ongoing pilot programme launched in April 2022, we have gained valuable experience and significant positive feedback from participants. Including:</p> <p><i>'Friendly, accessible and welcoming - I loved it!', 'Engaging content! Thank you for arrangement and planning' and 'Great value. Very exciting - loved the collaborative exercise, fun and very creative.'</i></p> <p>Initially we have commissioned AiRs past and present to deliver either one-off workshops or a series of classes, supported by our arts development officer. Each workshop or block of classes covers a specialist art form, so far including ceramics, ink drawing, digital illustration and drawing.</p> <p>We hope to commission a new programme of classes to launch in Spring 2023. We will continue to work with our AiRs and extend partnerships with cultural organisations and individuals to deliver specialist sessions such as photography and life drawing.</p> <p>By Spring 2023 our new community arts space and gallery will be complete and will be a base for this community work.</p> | £2,000                  | £1,000                               |

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|     | <p>We hope to reach out into new community groups and invite people to take part in our programme of activities.</p>  |        |        |
| ERA | <p>Re-painting and enhancement of both sides of the brick 'football' wall in St Oswald's playpark (Church St, Elvet). The front side will be repainted with appropriate images for play (e.g. goalposts, targets), and the rear side repainted with a mural depicting by local historical themes: an image of the 'Dun Cow', with a frame inspired by miners' banners. Community artist Lewis Hobson (<a href="http://www.facebook.com/DurhamSprayPaints">www.facebook.com/DurhamSprayPaints</a>) has created an outline design, and (if the project goes ahead) will work with residents and with pupils at St Oswald's Primary to develop it. (See attached document for images.) He will also be responsible for carrying out the painting work.</p> | £1,263 | £1,000 |

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|         | <p><b>Stronger Together</b></p> <p>This is a new project we want to launch to support the family members of the clients we help. We have recognised that there is no practical support for immediate family or even close friends of the clients who are using our service. Whilst our clients get emotional support and practical advice from us, when in an abusive relationship or after leaving an abusive relationship, it can often be difficult on the parents, siblings and adult children. As those people have not been direct victims of abuse they are not eligible for support within our service but it has become clear that they often do need some form of support. We want to offer a monthly group session so they can offload, have a contact within Harbour to ask or seek advice and guidance.</p>             |                  |
| Harbour | <p>Initially we will deliver this service via Teams, but in the longer term we want to deliver this locally, face to face in a friendly environment, we therefore need to cover staffing costs, venue costs as well as refreshments. We will also need to cover costs to promote this new service across the area. We have a staff member who is willing to deliver this service, as additional hours to her usual working hours, therefore no additional training costs are needed. She is a fully qualified Counsellor and Support worker so has all relevant skills and tools needed to facilitate this project. It will be supported by the Service Manager and organised and managed by an admin officer. We have had some funding to deliver this in the Tees Valley area but would like to reach our Durham clients also.</p> | £1,000<br>£1,000 |

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| Merryoaks WI         | To purchase a further microphone enabling each speaker to have their own avoiding the need to share. To purchase a full Zoom subscription to allow speakers from elsewhere in the country and to enable us to hold hybrid meetings, making us fully inclusive.  | £250   | £250   |
| St Cuthberts Hospice | <p>Our gardens provide much needed sensory stimulation and therapeutic benefit to our patients and their families.</p> <p>Funds from the City of Durham Parish Council will be used to improve accessibility around the Hospice grounds and enhance experience for all who visit our gardens through improvements and essential repairs. Your donation will be used to pay for tools, equipment, plants and furniture.</p> <p>As a result of these funds and improvements, we will be able to remain a welcoming, peaceful and accessible environment for our patients, families and visitors, through innovation and repair. Over a 12 month period we expect that 1,000 patients and their families will be able to enjoy the therapeutic value of nature within our grounds.</p> <p>Gardening Supplies = £1,750<br/>Grounds Maintenance = £2,500</p> | £4,250 | £1,750 |
| St Margarets Centre  | A new course has been arranged in joinery and wood working skills in order that participants can earn a certificate issued by the centre describing exactly the level of skill that has been achieved by the production of actual articles made and produced on the course. For example, joints, rebates, hinge and lock settings, routing etc. This application is specifically for the purchase of a new Bandsaw and the purchase of materials where the costs have escalated for the purchase of both soft and hard wood.  | £3,000 | £3,000 |

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|----------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| St Nics Church | To help fulfil our aims of serving the community and acting as an eco-church we need to reclaim the church's graveyard which has been neglected (and desecrated) over the last 10 years. We want to turn it into a heritage rest and recuperation area potentially with mini-allotments for older residents to use and designated picnic and meeting areas and areas for rest and contemplation. | £3,200         | £3,200         |
|                | <b>Total</b>   | <b>£16,163</b> | <b>£11,200</b> |

## **9. REQUEST FOR A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE MAYOR'S CHARITY APPEAL**

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council has received correspondence from the Mayor's PA at Durham County Council on behalf of newly elected Mayor of Durham City Councillor David Freeman, asking if the Parish Council would consider supporting this year's Mayor's Charity Appeal.

The Clerk advised that, following his election as Mayor on 9 June 2022, Councillor David Freeman announced that any funds raised during his Mayoral year would be channelled towards Durham Samaritans.

Durham Samaritans are situated in Durham City and are an organisation the Parish Council has supported in the past with their base of operations in the Viaduct area of the City. Volunteers provide face-to-face, telephone and email support to anyone struggling with their mental health.

The Clerk advised that no specific amount has been requested in the letter from the Mayor's PA and any offers of a donation will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

The Clerk reminded Members that, in December 2020, the Parish Council supported the previous Mayor's appeal with a donation of £500 towards the Fire Fighters Charity.

Members **agreed** to support the Mayor's Charity Appeal for Durham Samaritans and (by 6 votes in favour to 3 votes against) **agreed** a donation of £500 to the Mayor's Charity Appeal.

## **10. PROPOSAL TO FUND THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF AN INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR RESIDENTS BY DURF**

The Chair highlighted that the Durham University and Residents Forum (DURF) has been working on the production of a residents' information leaflet. The Chair advised that the purpose of this leaflet is to act as a signpost to residents informing them of how to report a specific issue of concern and the follow-up actions, they should expect following a report.

The Chair advised that it is hoped that this will assist members of the public in addressing their issues in a speedier manner which helps resolve the issue(s).

The Chair highlighted that the content of this leaflet has undergone extensive approval stages and has now been agreed by representatives of DURF. A copy of this leaflet is included with this Agenda for Members' consideration.

In order to ensure that all residents receive the same information, the Chair proposed that the Parish Council funds the printing and delivery costs associated with providing each resident with a copy of this leaflet.

In addition to properties within the parish boundary, the Chair also proposed that the Parish Council funds the costs associated with printing and delivery for the unparished part of Gilesgate, in view of Gilesgate Residents Association being an important member of the Parish Council's Community and Residents' Associations Forum (CRAF). The Chair advised that the Chair of Gilesgate Residents Association has advised that the Association would be able to put £100 towards the unparished part of Gilesgate and it is open to Members as to whether or not they accept this.

The Clerk advised that the cost of printing the leaflet (A4 folded to A5 full colour) will be £43.50/ 1000 leaflets. The cost of delivering these leaflets - solus delivery - i.e. by themselves is £98.00/ 1000 leaflets.

There are 8,588 postal addresses in the City of Durham Parish area but this includes the following PBSA numbers (2,196 in total) which we can hand deliver:

The Chair proposed that the Parish Council looks to have these leaflets delivered to the PBSAs directly and liaise with the relevant PBSA management to ensure that each dwelling therein receives this through their letterbox.

The Clerk advised that there are a further 2,118 postal addresses in the unparished part of the Gilesgate Residents Association area.

The Clerk advised that the estimated costs for each section are therefore as follows:

- The City of Durham Parish area - approx. £1,000 (£373.58 printing, £626.42 delivery).
- Unparished GRA area - approx. £299.69 (£92.13 printing, £207.56 delivery).

The Clerk highlighted that, as this is unallocated funding, if agreed by Council at this meeting, it is proposed that the costs of producing and delivering this leaflet is drawn from the Council's £15,000 contingencies fund.

The Chair proposed that these leaflets be produced and delivered to every resident in the identified area for the end of August/ beginning of September, ahead of the new University academic term.

Members unanimously endorsed the content of the draft residents' leaflet.

Members also unanimously agreed not to accept the offer of £100 from Gilesgate Residents Association towards the printing and distribution of this leaflet in the unparished part of Gilesgate and to fund this directly from the Parish Council funds.

Members also unanimously agreed the associated costs of printing and delivering this leaflet to the identified area, with an additional (approx.) 2,000 leaflets produced in case of any gaps in the delivery of this leaflet.

In drawing the discussion to a close on this item, the Chair took the opportunity to thank Mr John Ashby for his tireless work in bringing this leaflet to fruition and getting this agreed by the relevant stakeholders.

## **11. OPTIONS FOR ENHANCED POLICING OF DURHAM CITY**

The Chair highlighted that the Parish Council has been working in conjunction with key partners and stakeholders in its efforts to tackle complaints of anti-social behaviour and noise in the City.

The Chair advised that this issue was raised at the recent annual meeting of the parish by a local resident who asked the City's Police Inspector for costs associated with an enhanced policing operation carried out by Northumbria Police in an area of Newcastle with a high student population density.

Since this meeting, the Chair advised that he has been engaging with the City's Police Inspector on options for a similar operation in the City. The associated options are as follows:

**Option 1** - would be what was discussed at the meeting before Christmas, which would be in the region of £250k for the inception of a University Policing Team, dealing with all matters that arise, taking additional responsibility for additional targeted late night patrols and the oversight of antisocial behaviour and the escalation procedure. This would involve four full time police officers (with integral supervisory function), working a varied shift pattern to meet key demand and two PCSOs to supply the back office and daytime function. Duties would include primarily engagement and enforcement, including delivery of notices, paperwork in relation to civil procedures, contacting complainants in relation to issues with students and liaising with the university / key stakeholders such as the ASB and environmental teams. They would also have an education function within the university, delivering problem solving initiatives.

**Option 2** - This would be similar to option 1 with the two additional PCSOs, but staffing the dedicated PC patrol officers from officers on overtime. This option would be preferable initially, as it could be adopted as soon as we need to with the support of the current team whilst the new PCSOs are being recruited and trained. There are some issues with this option as the officers could be from across the force area and may not have an in depth working knowledge of the issues in Durham, however, the PCSO support team could produce briefing packs and would be able to 'join the dots'. This is the format of Operation Oak, Northumbria Police's response to student issues and the funding required would be in the region of £125K to pay for overtime, a supervisory function and the uplift in PCSOs.

The Chair advised that this report is purely for information purposes at present for Members and that a further meeting of key stakeholders is planned for later in July to discuss these options further.

The Chair highlighted that Members should consider that the Parish Council may need to be a funding partner in this operation and this may likely involve an increase in the Parish Council's precept for 2023/24 as a result.

The Council thanked the Chair for this report and **agreed** to await further feedback on this initiative from the Police.

## **12. MOTION BY COUNCILLOR E ASHBY ON LEGAL ACTION BY PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS**

Cllr E Ashby highlighted the very many difficulties facing public service workers, relating to the cost of living and ongoing negotiations over pay disputes and asked the Parish Council to support the following motion. This motion was seconded by Cllr V Ashfield:

*"The City of Durham Parish Council fully supports all legal action by public service workers in justifiable defence of their jobs and conditions of employment".*

Cllr D Freeman advised that he was a Union representative and had been involved in strike action and pay negotiations in the past. Cllr D Freeman expressed his concerns at the Parish Council agreeing to support all legal action and felt that the Council's support should rather be given on a case-by-case basis where the merits of such support could be assessed based on the individual circumstances.

There were no amendments to this motion. Members voted against the motion (by 5 votes against the motion to 4 votes in favour of the motion).

## **13. UPDATE FROM BRIEFING ON LEVELLING UP FUNDING BID BY DCC**

The Clerk advised that he and Cllrs C Lattin and V Ashfield received a briefing from DCC on future levelling up funding bid relevant to the City.

The Clerk advised that, in the 2021 Budget, Central Government announced the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), to provide investment in regeneration and growth in places with low productivity and poor connectivity

The Clerk advised that County Durham has been identified as one of the areas of greatest need of levelling up in the UK and has been classified as a Tier 1 area by Central Government. The Round 1 submission for the Bishop Auckland Parliamentary Constituency: Rural Connectivity and Cultural Connectivity, was successfully awarded £20 million Levelling Up Funding in the Autumn Statement, October 2021. The LUF is a competitive fund totalling £4.8 billion nationally, with £1.7 billion awarded to successful applicants in Round 1. This leaves £3.1 billion for future rounds.

The Clerk advised that further guidance for Round 2 Levelling Up bids was released in March 2022. This confirmed that the funding criteria was broadly in line with

the previous round. The Clerk advised that each parliamentary constituency within the Local Authority area can submit one bid for Government grant of £20 million. County Durham, with six parliamentary constituencies, can submit up to six bids in total. The Government guidance states that a minimum of 10 percent match funding is required to support each bid.

The Clerk advised that the briefing on 30<sup>th</sup> May from DCC had confirmed that a range of potential schemes has been developed across the remaining parliamentary constituencies to support transport connectivity, culture, heritage and regeneration in the city, town centres and villages.

A £20 million Levelling Up government grant is being sought to contribute to the delivery of three schemes that will collectively enhance and maintain Durham City's economy. The schemes support economic development through transport and cultural led regeneration. The Clerk advised that the schemes proposed are:

- a) Bowburn Relief Road – tackling traffic capacity constraints to bring forward Phase 3 of Integra 61, by reassigning traffic away from Junction 61 and Bowburn village (A177);
- b) City Centre active mode connectivity, linking new and existing cultural attractions; Cultural attractions including the DLI, Wharton Park, Crook Hall, Elvet Park, Peninsula, and the Riverbanks will be better linked for visitors. Health and wellbeing will be enhanced through active mode connectivity linking residential areas with the city centre.
- c) Stabilisation of A690 – ensuring the A690 remains open and there are no adverse impacts on the A1 or the wider city.

The Clerk advised that the County Council will potentially use identified Section 106 funding towards project (b) identified in this report; specifically relating to the Elvet Park proposals. At the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the Parish Council requested that further public consultation be undertaken for residents in the Elvet area.

The Clerk advised that, as this funding could be used to develop the LUF bid, the County Council has agreed that all new applications for Section 106 funds be suspended in the Elvet and Gilesgate division until such a time when funding becomes clearer on the LUF bid. More information will hopefully become available in Autumn 2022.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for this report and Members **agreed** to note its content and await further feedback on how the bids develop.

#### **14. REPORTS FROM THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS 2022**

- **Report on Parish Council/ Durham Markets Company led events**

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council and the Durham Markets Company took the lead on organising events in the City for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in and around the Bank Holiday weekend (2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022).

The Clerk advised that the organisation of these events was a big undertaking by local partners and helped to deliver a series of Jubilee events.

The Clerk highlighted that all of these events ran successfully and the Parish Council has received positive feedback from all those participating in these events. In particular, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant Sue Snowdon has contacted the Parish Council to express her sincere gratitude to the Parish Council for arranging a series of outstanding events for the Jubilee.

The Clerk highlighted that he had written to all Members expressing his thanks in particular to Councillor E Ashby, Colin Wilkes and Alice Wilkes for their tremendous work in organising these events.

Members have expressed a desire for the Parish Council to provide Alice with a gift to say thank you for her work in particular.

The Clerk advised that he has already arranged for the Lord Lieutenant to send a personal thank you card to all those actively involved in organising Jubilee events alongside the Parish Council.

The Clerk highlighted that the agreed partnership and additional resource for organising events provided by Durham Markets Company worked extremely well and has proven to be an essential resource to the Parish Council. The Clerk advised that this was funded from the budget allocated to an assistant for the Clerk and not directly from the agreed events budget. The Clerk reminded Members that Alice Wilkes was seconded to the Parish Council for 4 hours/ week for these events at a cost of £15/ hour.

The Clerk has expressed his hope that this arrangement can continue at a cost of £240/ month going forward for other events in the City.

The Clerk also highlighted that the funding of £8,000 from all four County Councillors towards the Jubilee events has provided the flexibility to organise further events this year and the Parish Council's Business Committee will be meeting in July to discuss an events plan.

Cllr E Ashby advised that she was aware that Alice particularly liked the clothing from a new store in the Market Place and suggested the Parish Council acquire a voucher for Alice to spend at this store as a small token of the Parish Council's appreciation for her work over the Jubilee. This was unanimously supported and **agreed** by Members.

Members also unanimously **agreed** to continue the agreement with the Durham Markets Company for additional support with events in the City at a cost of £240/ month going forward.

- **Correspondence from Crossgate Community Partnership on the street party at Hawthorn Terrace**

The Clerk advised that he has received correspondence from the Chair of the Crossgate Community Partnership (CCP) regarding the street party which took place at Hawthorn Terrace during the Jubilee weekend.

As reported at the last Parish Council meeting, the Clerk advised that the Parish Council had received a number of concerns regarding this party from local residents.

The Chair advised that he wrote formally to Durham University, Durham Police and Durham County Council to express these concerns and to request that this be looked into in order to ensure that the event took place safely and with little disruption to nearby residents.

Members reported that the event was cleared up appropriately and there were no known reports of late night noise disturbance or ASB associated with this event. However, Members expressed concerns that the event had clearly breached the legal limit of 499 attendees permitted as part of a TEN (Temporary Event Notice) and **agreed** to write to DCC to ask what enforcement they'd be undertaking.

It was also **agreed** that the CCP should be asked to gain information as to what the costs associated to the public were for the policing of this event.

## **15. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

Cllr C Lattin presented a report on the latest meeting of Durham University's Engagement Task Force Lived-Environment sub-group as follows:

- Issues with the parking of students' cars had been previously raised. As an update the meeting was informed that a statement advising students not to bring cars unless there was a serious issue is now on the student website and also in the Livers out leaflet. It is still felt that this does not address those students who simply ignore this advice.
- No progress on student engagement with local businesses. There is a proposal, not yet progressed, that there could be some sort of loyalty card to encourage students to shop locally, to replace a previous scheme.
- I gave an update on the meeting I had with Quentin Sloper and his team at Maiden Castle. I was assured that lights are automatically switched off at 10 p.m./ and are not on all night. On some occasions they are turned on again in the mornings for early training. The team are hoping to install LED lighting which is more efficient and cost effective. An additional bin will be placed on the other side of the Maiden Castle foot bridge. Notices asking dog walkers to keep their dogs on leads and avoid the sport area will also be put at the other end of the path. The team were unaware of the spigot mortar gun emplacement on their land but have since visited it. They are now debating the best way of protecting this heritage.
- 'Green Move Out' details were given and this is now underway. Students in all colleges have received bags. Collections are on a rolling basis. Colleges

are paired with different charities. All houses in designated areas receive purple bags even if they are not student houses. The area has been expanded and includes more places in Neville's Cross.

- The Greenspace festival will be opened by David Loudon on June 11<sup>th</sup> at Collingwood College. All are welcome to attend but need to pre-register with Eventbrite.
- Landlord Licensing proposals have not moved forward. John Ashby gave a report saying that DCC are preparing a voluntary scheme and encourage landlords to join. DCC will need the university to make a financial input.
- The new chair of DURF is Jonny Moore. He will attend the forthcoming DURF meeting. John Ashby also reported on the protocol which has been agreed to tell residents what actions to take when dealing with ASB. This will be delivered to every house in the CODP area.
- Gary Anderson will oversee the removal of over-flowing bins. David Loudon has met with representatives of DCC to identify hotspots. It is noted that HMO applications are spreading further and further out from the city centre. Attention was drawn to new PBSA applications at Robson House and the Banks development at Mount Oswald. DCC planners have told the university that they have no veto.
- Community webpages on the university website are under development.

**Estates update:**

- The Environment agency are comfortable with the plans which have been submitted including the management plan. The lighting and sensors have been adjusted. Currently a design team are considering the revision of the floor plan. The proposal goes to planning on July 5<sup>th</sup> and everything is dependent on receiving planning permission. Swift boxes will be installed.
- 25, Old Elvet. No decision has been made about its possible use and it is possible that the university might sell it. They wish to demolish the modern, rickety extension and have applied for permission for this.
- The swimming baths are under review for possible uses. It is acknowledged that the building itself helps to reduce the flood risk in that area. The intention is for a decision to be reached by the end of 2022
- The St. Hild and St. Bede re-development is ongoing.

**End of report**

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

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council  
(28<sup>th</sup> July 2022)**

## **ITEM 6: TO CONSIDER THE LATEST UPDATES ON THE SNIPERLEY PARK DEVELOPMENT**

Members are reminded that the issue of the Sniperley Park development, located outside of the parish area, has been discussed at a number of Parish Council meetings.

On 15th October 2021, ahead of the adoption of the Masterplan, the Co. Durham Land LLP submitted plans for the demolition of existing buildings adjacent to the B6532 and an outline planning application for a maximum of 1,550 dwellings, a local Centre, public house (use class sui generis) and primary school (use class F1), associated infrastructure and landscaping.

On 1st July 2021, ahead of the adoption of the Masterplan, Bellway Homes submitted a hybrid planning application for outline permission for an extension to the Sniperley Park and Ride and full planning permission for the development of 370 dwellings associated access and works and demolition of former farm buildings.

In both cases, the City of Durham Parish Council has objected to these applications, on the grounds that a full and comprehensive Masterplan for the site – as required by CDP Policy 5 – has yet to be agreed.

On 10 January 2022, the City of Durham Parish Council submitted their detailed comments on the consultation on the Sniperley Park Masterplan, primarily highlighting the inadequacies of the present proposals in terms of their sustainability and impact on climate change as well as the highways network to and from the City.

Following on from this, Cllrs G Holland and R Friederichsen presented a report to Full Council in April 2022, where Members fully endorsed the below energy solutions at the Sniperley Park development and also agreed to liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils on this development. Framwellgate Moor Parish Council has indicated their intention of working alone on this development and Witton Gilbert is considering the City of Durham Parish Council's position.

### **Energy solutions at the Sniperley Park development:**

1. An Energy Assessment for the entire site designed to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions with all properties satisfying the 2030 operational energy and embodied carbon targets set by the RIBA 2030 Challenge which identify the optimal set of energy solutions to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. All homes and buildings to be built to EPC A rating standard as a minimum.
3. No connection of the site to the national gas network.
4. Photovoltaic panels / and battery storage in all homes and buildings.
5. Ground and/or air source heat exchange systems for all homes and buildings.
6. District heating system using any potential geothermal energy.
7. All houses to have electricity supply points for electric cars.

Following on from the last Full Parish Council meeting, the Parish Council, the City of Durham Trust and the Western Relief Road Action Group submitted the following joint letter to County Councillor and Cabinet Member Mark Wilkes:

*We are writing to you because recent world events have given a new sense of purpose to the intended construction of over 1700 houses at Sniperley Park. The energy market, which has long relied almost exclusively on both hydro-carbons and external sources of supply, has de-stabilised and there is no certainty that it will be restored to its previous position, even in the long term. As a result, many countries, the UK included, now lack energy security, and the fear of this will soon far outweigh any concerns over global warming as nations scramble to cover their shortfalls.*

*This absence of energy security affects everyone and it must inform our planning protocols. Family household budgets, now and in the long term, can no longer be controlled or planned with any degree of certainty responding instead to the whims of the energy market. This has created an immediate need that, as a sine qua non, all future housing be built to energy secure standards, with housing that is both self-sustaining and forming a sustainable community.*

*Policy 5 in the 2020 County Durham Plan was drafted before this crisis emerged and was therefore based on what are now outdated assumptions and economic models. However, concerns over global warming with their associated planning constraints were already in place, and the Plan addressed those concerns as follows: "Objective 17: Low Carbon - Reduce the causes of climate change and support the transition to a low carbon economy by encouraging and enabling the use of low and zero carbon technologies, supporting the development of appropriate renewable energy sources and sustainable and active transport."*

*Those policies, and their implementation in the Master Plan, must now be fully sustained if the County Council's original ambitions expressed in Policy 5 are to be realised: "Sniperley Park will be a sustainable urban extension ... providing the right type of housing to meet the needs and aspirations of existing and future residents...The sites will deliver attractive, well-designed places, incorporating sustainable development principles, adopting sustainable construction methods, and using appropriate densities". In particular, "Development is required to be comprehensively master planned and ...will have regard to the provision ... of the infrastructure and services necessary to support them." All of these good intentions must be retained while the new energy demands are met.*

*As from April 2022, all local planning authorities must now integrate their activities and responses with the British Energy Security Strategy which has identified faster decarbonisation as the primary route to energy security and independence. The planning constraints recommended in the government's most recent Carbon Budget for introduction in 2025 must be brought forward.*

*In response, Durham County Council should therefore build this essential directive into their Master Plan for Sniperley now, rather than wait for its deadline to be reached in 3 years' time. To do otherwise, to pander to the recent demands of the building lobby to build on Sniperley immediately and without constraint, would be unpardonable because one central objective already embedded in the County*

*Durham Plan was to "support the transition to a low carbon economy by encouraging and enabling the use of low and zero carbon technologies and supporting the development of appropriate renewable energy sources".*

### ***Updating the Master Plan***

*In the radically changed circumstances of today since the initial consultation on the Sniperley Master Plan in January 2022, we believe that the Master Plan for Sniperley should now include at least:*

1. An Energy Assessment for the entire site designed to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions with all properties satisfying the now updated 2030 operational energy and embodied carbon targets set by the RIBA 2030 Challenge which identify the optimal set of energy solutions to minimise energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. All homes and buildings to be built to EPC A rating standard as a minimum.
3. No connection of the site to the national gas network.
4. Photovoltaic panels and grid-linked battery storage in all homes and buildings.
5. Integrated ground and/or air source heat exchange systems for all homes and buildings.
6. District heating system using any potential geothermal energy.
7. All houses to have electricity supply points for electric cars.

### ***Conclusion***

*As it presently stands, the Master Plan must be updated and amended. The old order, the old way of house building that used hydro-carbon sourced energy as a primary or only form of energy, must be set aside. From here on, all new housing must be self-sustaining in its provision for heating, lighting and transport. The development at Sniperley offers both the Council and the building lobby an excellent opportunity to achieve this zero-carbon goal by leading the way to what must soon become a national target.*

*In particular, we also believe that applications for proposed development at Sniperley Park, DM/21/03574/OUT and DM/21/02360/FPA, should not be determined until all matters concerning the Master Plan have been resolved.*

Immediately prior to the submission of this letter, the Parish Council was advised that the Sniperley Masterplan was adopted under delegated powers at DCC. A full copy of the Masterplan can be found here:

<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=20563>

The Parish Council's Planning Committee is presently investigating the content of the Masterplan and is set to respond in due course.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to note the above report and the content of the recently adopted Masterplan for Sniperley and await further feedback from the Parish Council's Planning Committee. |
|--------------------------|--|

## **ITEM 6: PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIVER WEAR**

As Members are aware, in approving its budget for 2022/23, the Parish Council agreed to allocate £6,000 towards improvements to the River Wear.

The River Wear is an intrinsic element of the iconic landscape of the Durham World Heritage Site (WHS), being overlooked by Durham Cathedral and Castle on the Durham Peninsula. The WHS is being expanded to incorporate the adjacent River Wear, in part to safeguard the aesthetic value of this landscape.

Despite its importance to the WHS, the River Wear along the Durham Peninsula is subject to a range of pressures, including invasive non-native species eroding the riverbanks, point and diffuse pollution sources, physical modification and recreational use.

All partners share a vision for the River Wear in this reach to become a more natural, thriving and inspiring asset for the City of Durham, while at the same time enhancing the river as a feature of the WHS.

In trying to achieve a more partnership-based approach to tackling the issues facing the River Wear, the Parish Council's Environment Committee has been actively engaged in a number of stakeholders meetings which include Durham Cathedral, Durham County Council, rowing clubs, the Environment Agency, the Wear Rivers Trust, the City of Durham Trust and local volunteers. This group is establishing itself as the "Durham City Riverscape Community".

As part of the Environment Committee's efforts to improve the River Wear, the Committee has proposed a partnership to support the work of the Wear Rivers Trust in their WINNs project. This project has previously been supported by the Parish Council.

The Wear Rivers Trust is working to tackle three of the worst invasive non-native species (INNS) in the Wear catchment: Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed. These have been increasing in the area for many years following their introduction to the UK in the 19th Century. All three species grow in large clusters which smother native vegetation and leave riverbanks vulnerable to erosion during winter dieback.

The Trust and the Environment Committee have provisionally agreed on an ambitious work programme for the year ahead, identifying that the work to tackle this serious issue on Durham's riverbanks is likely to be very labour intensive and therefore there is a requirement to educate the public about these issues as well as to recruit more volunteers for this work.

There is a great desire amongst local residents of the City to see that the riverbanks become more healthy and usable spaces for all to enjoy.

The following work programme has been devised by the Wear Rivers Trust and the Parish Council's Environment Committee to help support improvements to Durham's riverbanks.

| <b>Item</b>   | <b>Rate</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Total</b>     |
|---|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| PA1 & PA6AW/INJ training (complete training required by an individual to apply herbicide using a knapsack sprayer or stem injector next to water) | £600.00     | 3 people         | £1,800.00        |
| Replacement or additional equipment, PPE, and consumables   | £1,000.00   | N/A              | £1,000.00        |
| WRT staff time for training arrangements and potential direct management action   | £300.00     | 2 days           | £600.00          |
| WRT staff time for education sessions   | £300.00     | 2 days           | £600.00          |
| Production and distribution of leaflets* to advertise work and volunteering opportunities around the Peninsula                                    | £1,300.00   | 1 leaflet drop   | £1,300.00        |
| WRT staff time to design leaflets and consult relevant partners   | £300.00     | 2 days           | £600.00          |
| WRT mileage   | £0.45/mile  | 220 miles        | £99.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |             |                  | <b>£5,999.00</b> |

\*Leaflets to be designed by WRT and produced/distributed by the Parish Council

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to agree to fund the project to improve the River Wear - in partnership with the Wear Rivers Trust – as set out in the above report. |
|--------------------------|--|

## **ITEM 6: CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY**

The County Council has recently consulted on amendments to its Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Members will recall that the Council consulted on this in 2020 but the policy as proposed (following 2020 consultation) was pulled and further changes were proposed to be made, taking account of the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the taxi trade.

See further details below:

[Consultation on changes to our Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy - Durham County Council](#)

From feedback received, Members accepted many of the changes made to the 2020 proposals. The Parish Council's Licensing Committee is responsible for responding to this consultation on behalf of the Parish Council and the consultation deadline closed on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Following agreement at its 7th February 2022 meeting, one of the Licensing Committee's priorities under tackling climate change is: "*to encourage all new taxi licenses granted by DCC to be for low emissions/ electrical vehicles only*".

The changes to the Policy insofar as vehicle emissions standards are concerned are summarised in the grid below:

### **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy consultation**

#### **Changes to vehicle emission standards**

| <b>2020 proposals</b>   | <b>2022 proposals</b>   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>new licences:</b> from the date on which the new policy is adopted in 2021, all new applications for licensed vehicles will only be accepted if the vehicle to be licensed is less than four years old from the date of registration</li><li><b>existing vehicles:</b> must be newer than eight years old from 1 April 2024 i.e. from 1 April 2024 all diesel and petrol engine vehicles will be Euro 6 or above</li><li><b>vehicles over eight years old:</b> all existing licensed vehicles that are more than eight years old will not be re-licensed after 1 April 2024</li><li><b>wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV):</b> existing licensed WAV's will have an extra two years added to the age restriction, meaning that WAV's that are more than 10</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>New applications (newly licensed vehicles):</b> New applications for vehicle licences will only be accepted for vehicles manufactured to the emissions standard Euro 6 or higher.</li><li><b>Renewal applications (existing vehicles and continued licensing):</b> After the 1 January 2023, we will not accept renewal applications for licensed vehicles meeting Euro 4 or lower. After the 1 January 2024, we will not accept renewal applications for licensed vehicles meeting Euro 5 or lower.</li></ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>years old will not be re-licensed after 1 April 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>zero emission vehicles:</b> fully electric and zero emission (at source) vehicles would be exempt from the age restriction / emissions policy</li> </ul> |  |
|--|--|

The Parish Council's Licensing Committee responded to this consultation as follows:

*With up to 900 licensed vehicles permitted to operate in Durham City at any one time, the review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy is of real importance to our parish area and we are grateful for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation.*

*The City of Durham Parish Council applauds the extensive work which has been carried out by both the Department for Transport and Durham County Council in formulating this revised policy; with the key aims of ensuring the safety and welfare of the public, encouraging environmental sustainability and ensuring efficient taxi and private hire services in County Durham.*

*Primarily, there is clearly a consensus that common core minimum standards are required to better regulate the taxi and private hire vehicle sector. The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards reflect the significant changes in the industry and lessons learned from experiences in local areas since the 2010 version of the Department for Transport's Best Practice Guidance. It is noteworthy that the recommendations set out in the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards document (and which the proposed County Council policy seeks to incorporate) are the result of extensive consultation with the taxi and private hire vehicle sector, regulators and safety campaign groups.*

*Following on from the 2020 consultation, the Parish Council understands that this present consultation is taking place to allow for further responses that may result from or reflect the effects of the Covid pandemic on the taxi trade and the travelling public. Whilst much of the Policy remains unchanged from the 2020 proposals, some significant amendments have been made and these are helpfully detailed on the County Council's website.*

*The Parish Council very much welcomes much of what is proposed from the 2022 amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2021 – 2026 and would make the following comments.*

#### ***Vehicle emissions and manufacturer criteria***

*Firstly, the Parish Council very much welcomes that this Policy now includes a requirement that all new applications must meet at least Euro 6 vehicle emissions standards. I.e. for a diesel vehicle, it cannot emit more than 80mg/km of NOx*

*(nitrogen oxides) gases and a petrol vehicle cannot emit more than 60mg/km. The previous Policy proposed that this commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and the Parish Council is pleased to understand that this will commence as soon as this Policy is adopted by the Full County Council.*

*Furthermore, for all renewal (existing vehicles) applications, the Council now proposes that, after the 1 January 2023, DCC will not accept renewal applications for licensed vehicles meeting Euro 4 or lower. After the 1 January 2024, DCC will not accept renewal applications for licensed vehicles meeting Euro 5 or lower. The Parish Council very much welcomes this amendment to the wording of the Policy. The Parish Council believes that specifying Euro emissions standards in the Policy is preferable to a specification of the age of the vehicle as Euro emissions standards must be the predominant factor of a vehicle not its age. The 2023 standard is new and acceptable to the Parish Council. However, the Parish Council requests that the original proposal from 2020 that all renewal applications from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 must meet Euro 6 emissions standards – as opposed to the newly proposed Euro 5 or lower standard – be reintroduced to the Policy.*

*The revised Policy has also removed the 2020 proposal for wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV), i.e. that existing licensed WAV's will have an extra two years added to the age restriction, meaning that WAV's that are more than 10 years old will not be re-licensed after 1 April 2024. The Parish Council's understanding from the new Policy is that there are no vehicle emissions standards for WAVs at all. This should be clarified in the new Policy.*

*The Parish Council very much applauds the commitments made by the North East Combined Authority (NECA) at the North East Joint Transport Committee on 17th November 2020 to expand the EV charging network in the region and to invest in enabling infrastructure for this to happen. As such, the Parish Council very much welcomes the clear and unambiguous statement in the 2022 Policy that "zero emission vehicles - fully electric and zero emission (at source) vehicles are welcomed by the Council" with no specification of age restriction etc. The Parish Council would equally welcome any and all new initiatives by the County Council to support the roll out of Electric Vehicles as part of its existing fleet and thereby include an incentive to drivers e.g. a reduced application fee or similar in order to demonstrate this support.*

*The Parish Council fully supports the additional amendments made to this Policy.*

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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to note the above report and to await feedback on the adoption of the new 2022 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle policy |
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## **ITEM 6: PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT THE DURHAM CITY CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL AND FUN DAY**

As Members are aware, the Parish Council has agreed a total budget of £22,000 for this financial year towards hosting events in the City.

To date, thanks to the support of the contribution towards Jubilee events from the four County Councillors, the only event expenditure from this financial year is approximately £3,000 directly from the Parish Council for the Jubilee events.

The Parish Council and the Durham Markets Company have established a very close working relationship to deliver events for the City. As such, the Parish Council has received the following request for support to once again host the Durham City children's book festival in 2022 from the Markets Company:

In 2021, with the support of Durham Parish Council (DPC) we held the first children's book festival, ably assisted by local children's author Jenny Pearson.

The single event was very well received with a mix of authors and illustrators throughout the city centre alongside free children's entertainment. The restrictions imposed by Covid last year limited some of the numbers but nevertheless the feedback was such as to encourage us to try and go bigger and better this year!

So, this year we are looking at a two-day event which we hope Jenny and her colleague Sam will still be able to headline even though they are on a book tour at the moment, but the other authors and illustrators will be local and up and coming which will give them an opportunity of an audience to showcase their talents to, an opportunity which perhaps they would not normally get until they were more well known, which then becomes a bit of a vicious circle.

In addition to the authors and illustrators, this year we are looking to be as inclusive as we can be by setting up a space in the St Nicholas' Church church hall which will centre on a quiet chill out inclusive space for children and families to access activities at their own pace. We have specifically included workshops for children with autism and sensory needs.

The event will run Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August towards the end of the summer holidays and will, in the main, be free at point of delivery. The only exception to this may be the combined session by Jenny and Sam who feel there should be a small cover charge for their event of say £2.50 per person. If this concept does go ahead, we have suggested that any such payments can be offset against the cost of the purchase of one of their books (one ticket, one discount of that amount).

In addition to the literary aspect, we are looking at free face painting, creepy crawlies displays, arts and crafts etc.

Again, the rationale behind the event is not only to encourage children to engage in reading and illustrations in a safe, non-competitive space, but to provide an event in these constrained times which is mostly free at point of delivery and encourage more families back into the city centre with something for them to amuse and occupy their families.

With the event running over 2 days, the cost of putting on such an event has significantly increased. In addition, we are looking to provide, this year, a safe inclusive space for children and families who might otherwise have not felt comfortable coming to such an event. To make the event as professional as possible we have also provided for audio and large TVs in the marquee to provide a better experience.

EXPENDITURE

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| Marquee, tables & chairs                           | £1200 + VAT   |
| Audio equipment 2 days                             | £1250 + VAT   |
| Authors and illustrators (min 8)                   | £1500         |
| Safe space display S Nic's 2 days                  | £300          |
| Face painter, Bugs n stuff, arts and crafts 2 days | £850          |
| St Nic's Church Hall hire 2 days                   | £TBC          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                       | <b>£5,100</b> |

We would greatly appreciate financial support from DPC in helping us to put on this event in the region of £3000.

We are receiving £250 from both County Councillor Richard Ormerod and Elizabeth Scott and the balance of the funding will come from Durham Markets Company Limited.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Alice on [alice@durhammarkets.co.uk](mailto:alice@durhammarkets.co.uk)

With grateful thanks for your consideration and we look forward to working with DPC again on another successful event for families in the city centre.

**C.R Wilkes**  
**[colin@durhammarkets.co.uk](mailto:colin@durhammarkets.co.uk)**

At its recent meeting in July, the Parish Council's Business Committee agreed to support this event with funding of £3,000 plus any additional costs for advertising this event. A few thousand leaflets have been produced and are being disseminated amongst all local schools by Alice Wilkes.

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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to agree to support the Children's Book Festival with the proposed funding of £3,000 plus any additional costs for advertising this event. |
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## **ITEM 8: CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE**

- Proposal from Cllr G Holland and Cllr S Walker

On 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the Parish Clerk wrote to all Members highlighting a number of issues relating to Parish Council Committee meetings.

This follows a number of recent meetings where some Committees have experienced difficulty in making formal decisions as a quorum of Members were not present and/or unable to vote on a particular item of business.

In the correspondence of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the Clerk asked Members to consider the following:

1. To confirm if they are able to commit to the timetable and work of the Committees they sit on at present.
2. To let the Clerk know if the current timing of meetings isn't working for them – the Clerk has advised that he is able to work outside of his contractual hours to have meetings in the evening for Members who work etc. during the day.
3. To consider - as was proposed at the last Full Council meeting - whether the nomination of a substitute Member in your place for a Committee meeting is a practical way forward.
4. To ensure that all apologies (if you are unable to attend a meeting) are given to the Clerk no later than 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time please.

It is clear from the feedback received to date from Members as well as experience from recent meetings that there is clearly an issue with forming a quorum on both the Planning and Licensing Committees. In order to overcome this issue, it is proposed that the Planning and Licensing Committees merge to form one Committee and the timing of this meeting is proposed to be every two weeks on a Friday at 2pm.

Members have also highlighted that the workload on the Environment Committee is significant and there is a need to ensure that work is distributed evenly amongst Members of this Committee and the Clerk. There is also a desire to move the timing of this Committee meeting back to start at 2pm as opposed to 1pm but keep the date of this meeting as every second Tuesday of the month.

If the merge of both the Planning and Licensing Committees is accepted by Members, it is proposed that the Chair and Vice-Chair of this new Committee are re-elected at the next meeting of this new Committee. It is also proposed that the Membership of this Committee is 7 Members (as shown in the grid overleaf). The Terms of Reference for both the Planning and Licensing Committees will also be re-drafted to include all aspects of the work of these Committees.

The Personnel Committee has not met since May 2022 and therefore there is presently no Chair and/or Vice-Chair of this Committee.

All Members have agreed that apologies must be submitted no later than 24 hours in advance of the scheduled Committee meeting.

### **Proposed new Committee structure and membership**

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| <p><b>Planning and Licensing Committee (7 Members) – proposed to meet once every two weeks on a Friday at 2pm</b></p> <p>Grenville Holland<br/>Victoria Ashfield<br/>Carole Lattin<br/>Susan Walker<br/>Alan Doig<br/>Esther Ashby<br/>Govind Nair</p> <p>(Chair and Vice-Chair TBC)</p> | <p><b>Environment Committee (6 Members) – proposed to meet every second Tuesday of the month at 2pm</b></p> <p>Carole Lattin (Chair)<br/>Victoria Ashfield (Vice-Chair)<br/>David Freeman<br/>Liz Brown<br/>Robert Hanson<br/>Rupert Friederichsen</p>         |
| <p><b>Personnel Committee (5 Members) – Meets as and when required, typically once per year.</b></p> <p>Elizabeth Scott<br/>Alan Doig<br/>Govind Nair<br/>Victoria Ashfield<br/>Grenville Holland</p> <p>(Chair and Vice-Chair TBC)</p>  | <p><b>Business Committee (6 Members) – Meets once every two months, dates and times agreed at Committee level.</b></p> <p>Elizabeth Scott (Chair)<br/>Richard Ormerod (Vice-Chair)<br/>Nicola Brown<br/>Grenville Holland<br/>Esther Ashby<br/>Govind Nair</p> |
| <p><b>Finance Committee (6 Members) – meets once per quarter, dates and times agreed at Committee level.</b></p> <p>David Freeman (Chair)<br/>Alan Doig (Vice-Chair)<br/>Robert Hanson<br/>Victoria Ashfield<br/>Helen Weston<br/>Liz Brown</p>  |  |

It has also been proposed that the Parish Council considers introducing a substitution rule for Committees and to include the following wording to the Parish Council's Standing Orders:

### **MEETINGS GENERALLY**

- Full Council meetings 
- Committee meetings 
- Sub-committee meetings 



e. acceptance of membership of a committee or committees assumes that members agree to confirm if they are able to commit to the timetable and work of the Committees they sit on at present.



f. acceptance of membership of a committee or committees and attendance at full meetings of the parish Council assumes that members agree to confirm that apologies (if they are unable to attend a meeting) are given to the Clerk no later than 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time.



g. where members are unable to attend a meeting of a committee, they may nominate to the Chair of the Committee a substitute Member for that specific meeting and it for the Chair of that Committee to decide whether or not to accept the nomination.

- any Member of the Parish Council will be permitted to act as a substitute on a Committee.
- a substitute Member will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary Member of the committee but will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person they are substituting.
- Substitute Members may attend meetings in that capacity only:
  - a) to take the place of the ordinary Member for whom they are designated substitute.
  - b) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting;
  - c) where the ordinary Member has notified the Chair of the Committee and the Proper Officer of the intended substitution no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

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| <b>DECISIONS REQUIRED</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) For Members to agree to the proposed merge of both the Planning Committee and the Licensing Committee to form one Committee.</li><li>b) If a) is agreed, for Members to agree the Membership of this new Planning and Licensing Committee, as set out in the above report.</li><li>c) For Members to agree to introduce a substitution, as set out in the above report.</li><li>d) If all of the above are agreed, for Members to request that the Clerk makes the necessary amendments to the Terms of Reference of the new Planning and Licensing Committee as well as the Council's Standing Orders.</li></ol> |
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## **ITEM 9: KEEP BRITAIN TIDY'S LOVE PARKS WEEK 2022**

Love Parks Week was first established by the campaign group 'Keep Britain Tidy' and is celebrated each year from July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 5<sup>th</sup>.

The goal of Love Parks Week is to get as many people as possible, young and old, out into the great outdoors to take advantage of their local park. A park is an excellent place to get some fresh air and boost your mental health, and you'll also be doing your part to preserve your local park's resources for future generations by making regular use of them.

Parks help to provide locations for individuals of the community to come outside and be healthy, thereby encouraging them to live a better lifestyle.

Research indicates that parks can reduce crime, promote psychological well-being, relieve stress, boost immunity, increase efficiency, and promote healing. The favourable impacts on people's well-being, especially in densely populated environments, cannot be overstated.

Whether it's walking the dog, picnicking with friends, or pushing our little ones on a playground swing, our parks give our communities, our children, and our pets a vital space to play, grow, and bond.

This year, the campaign is running in partnership with Regatta and is made possible thanks to players of the People's Postcode Lottery.

To help parks managers, local authorities, town and parish councils and land owners take part in Love Parks Week and amplify the campaign, Keep Britain Tidy have developed a digital resource pack to download.

The pack contains artwork for social media resources and artwork for posters and banners.

More information about the campaign can be found here:  
<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/love-parks-week>

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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to agree to support the 'Love Parks Week' and to promote this on the Parish Council's social media page and website. |
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## **ITEM 10: NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ASB-SUB GROUP**

As Members are aware, the Parish Council has been an active member of the Durham City Safety's ASB sub-group since the sub-group was first established in 2019.

The establishment of this sub-group followed the Parish Council's ASB conference in October 2019 and involves a number of key stakeholders such as Durham Police, DCC, the Parish Council, Durham BID, Durham University and Durham Students Union.

The Clerk has requested further clarity on the position of this group as a) it has not met on a regular basis for some time now and, b) the Chair of the sub-group has now left the County Council.

On 18<sup>th</sup> July, the Clerk met with the Chair of the Durham City Safety Group Alan Patrickson in order to discuss arrangements going forward. Alan advised that the role of the ASB sub-group has recently been reviewed and it is proposed that this sub-group be closed and that the Parish Council instead joins the main City Safety Group.

The Durham City Safety Group was set up in January 2015 as a multi-agency approach to improve public safety in Durham City following a series of river related incidents. These incidents, some of which resulted in fatalities, followed nights out in Durham bars and clubs.

The group sought to allow the agencies to work more closely together to identify and implement measures to improve safety in the city centre.

Since then, the role of this group has developed, such that it now encompasses anti-social behaviour, crime and disorder matters, etc.

The group meets on a quarterly basis and also includes senior officers from the partner organisations identified above. The Parish Council has not been invited on to this group previously.

It is still a requirement of this group that it be officer-led and therefore the offer of a position on this group necessitates the Clerk to agree to be part of this group.

At the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> July, Alan also advised that the County Council is currently working on an ASB Strategy for the County and this is likely to go out to public consultation in October/ November 2022.

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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to agree that the Parish Council should be represented on the City Safety Group and request that the Clerk join this group. |
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## **ITEM 11: REQUEST FOR A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION FROM LOCAL LANDLORDS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT**

In the financial year 2019/20 a total of £7,429,000 was lost in Council tax revenue in Durham due to Class M and Class N (student) exemptions. This figure for 2020/21 has increased by £1,368,335 to £8,797,335. In addition to which £41,174 was also lost due to 'Student Disregards'.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021, there are 22,219 active students at Durham University, of these 18,276 live within DH1 of which 7,328 are in college affiliated accommodation, either owned by the University or leased from the private sector. Next year the University expects the numbers in college affiliated accommodation to rise to 7,528. There are also 965 students that reside at home and a further 434 in rented accommodation outside of DH1, all within regular commuting distance of Durham City.

There are 934 students studying away from Durham as part of their course (e.g. year abroad) and the University also has a number of students who are studying online and who do not reside in Durham, 1,610 students took that option this year up from 259 at December 2019. The University expects this to reduce post-pandemic but to support future growth in this area the University are expanding the number of dedicated online only programmes.

The University Strategy 2017-2027, which was approved by the University Council in 2016, has a target of 21,500 active students by 2027. The University student intake for 2020 and 2021 was higher than anticipated due to the unexpected shifts in the grading of A-levels and other Level 3 qualifications. The University expects to return to the overall target in the coming years as the larger intakes of 2020 and 2021 progress to graduation.

There are already some 22,219 Durham University students, well above the target of 21,500 for 2026/27. The sharp increase in student intake in 2020 and 2021 has resulted in a number of issues for the City, albeit all students have been accommodated whilst in Durham for their studies.

Residents have reported the waste in areas with high student populations has been the worst they have experienced in the City (see pictures overleaf) and DCC have put in extra resources to deal with these issues.

The Environment Committee recently met to discuss this issue and took the opportunity to commend the work of DCC officers on the ground dealing with these issues. Committee Members highlighted that much of the resources of the County Council are as a result of activities from the non-Council tax paying population of our parish.

The grant from Central Government to local Government to cover the loss of class N exemptions has been significantly reduced since 2010 and therefore most, if not all, of the expenditure to deal with these issues is required from local authorities.

The Parish Council's Environment Committee has highlighted that a huge increase in resources is clearly required to deal with the environmental issues associated with such a high student population in a compact city centre.

The Environment Committee is therefore proposing that the Parish Council formally requests a voluntary contribution from local landlords towards the Parish Council's precept in order to meet this resource need. If accepted by the Council, it is anticipated that any additional funding acquired from this appeal to landlords will be directed towards additional bin provision, warden and/or officer time to deal with bins and other issues.

If accepted, the Parish Council will write to all of the private landlords in the City stressing the need for greater resource. Furthermore, the Parish Council will indicate that any and all contributions towards the precept will be published to promote those landlords who do contribute to the City and its well-being.



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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to agree to launch an appeal to local landlords for a voluntary contribution to the Parish Council's precept, as set out in the above report. |
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**ITEM 12: REPORT BY CLLR E ASHBY ON THE MOST RECENT MEETING OF THE COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS.**

Report by Cllr E Ashby for City Of Durham Full Council meeting July 28th 2022.

**County Durham Association of Local Councils**

**Larger Councils Forum Meeting Thursday July 14<sup>th</sup> 2022**

10 30am Horden Parish Council Offices, Peterlee, SR8 4LX

The Clerk and I were among approx 25 representatives from the 19 Town and Parish councils who form the Larger Councils Forum.

Following a warm welcome from the new Chair, Cllr A. Chandran, and agreement of the minutes of the meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Steve Ragg gave a verbal report from the CDALC Executive Committee meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>. He referred to

- DCC's ongoing work on ways of separating waste for recycling, and updates on this from target areas eg Bishop Auckland and Durham City.
- The matter of double taxation was currently subject to no further action by the Association.
- The Chair signed DCC's COP26 Climate Pledge on behalf CDALC on June 30<sup>th</sup> as had the Chair of the Smaller Council's Forum. It was hoped to have a video for circulation in the near future.
- The likely Association budget deficit was slightly below what had been estimated but still required a decision about whether to reduce reserves or raise the subscription rate which had been 10p per elector since the mid 20teens. One cause of the problem is the loss of income to CDALC due to withdrawal of paper copies by publishers of the Local Government Review. Talks about this with NALC are ongoing.
- Concerning the advice to all councils to have in place appropriate Human Resource Policies and Documents: further information about this would be circulated after the summer recess.
- Now that DCC's policy on street naming had been changed, councillors are urged to be proactive in this e.g. *by drawing up lists of possible names and engaging with officers early on.\**

The meeting of the Local Councils Working Group on July 1<sup>st</sup> had been cancelled.

The first agenda item for general discussion, tabled by Horden, concerned what partnership agreements member councils had with DCC around roadside planting and roundabouts. A variety of wishes and experiences emerged particularly about re wilding and the practicalities of 'installing' and maintenance. The use of boiling water to control weeds in preference to spraying was being trialled by one council.

Agenda item 6 asked members to note and comment on a MoU between CDALC and the Police and Crime Commissioner. This specifically referred to ways of signposting support for those troubled by ASB. Following an event in November 2021 with the PCC there was some informal discussion with the PCC about CDALC

entering into a pledge/memorandum of understanding with the PCC to demonstrate commitment on both sides to partnership working in order to try and help tackle anti-social behaviour. The following wording has been proposed:

**"Durham Police and Crime Commissioner and County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) working in the County commit to work together to support those experiencing anti-social behaviour. We will improve signposting so that those experiencing anti-social behaviour know where to turn to for help, assistance and reporting of incidents. As partners, we will share intelligence, promote joint working and maximise the impact we can have collectively on community safety within County Durham".**

The meeting agreed that each constituent Council should be asked for their own individual view on this pledge and to report this back to the next CDALC meeting.

When shown C of D's new leaflet on this very subject it was agreed to make this an agenda item at the next meeting.

Discussion next moved to improving 'working between tiers' i.e. between parish and town councils and DCC as the principal authority. *Members were asked to note and if possible register for NALC's chargeable webinar on how to improve engagement and delivery of services across tiers.\**

*In another NALC initiative, councils are invited to first look at the Dementia Friendly Councils Guide and also complete the survey aimed at gathering feedback on this subject.\**

Under the item Civility and Respect Campaign councils were urged to take part in training courses organised by NALC on this subject and particularly take note of advice to look for support when problems begin to arise not wait until matters are serious. Horden suggested that training should be written into a council's culture.

The last item was a general discussion on NALC's written response to the Levelling up Bill and Shared Prosperity Fund the last point of which is a request for an amendment to allow councils to have the flexibility to hold remote meetings.

Finally it was agreed to hold the next CDALC meeting in Spennymoor.

The meeting ended at 12 30 and at 1pm members were invited to a guided tour of Hordens new Welfare Park.

Esther Ashby

**I have asterisked items which may need referring to a committee for further action or a decision at FC about appointing a representative or agreeing the cost of same.**

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| <b>DECISION REQUIRED</b> | For Members to decide whether they wish for CDALC to enter into the PCC's pledge on anti-social behaviour, as set out in the above report. |
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**ITEM 12: REPORT BY CLLR L BROWN ON THE MOST RECENT MEETING OF THE DURHAM ACCESS FOR ALL GROUP**

Access for All meeting 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022

I'll start off by blowing my own trumpet. I've been successful in getting a dropped kerb on Hastings Avenue and was thanked by the Chair.

We began with an update about the disabled access for the underpass under Milburngate Bridge. Discussions are still ongoing between the developer and DCC about this.

This was followed by a discussion about the Market Place. Members identified various ongoing problems for those with disabilities. The steps are still a problem as they are difficult to see and the high vis paint on the edges is not renewed often enough. There are problems with the differentiation between pedestrians and vehicles (e.g. there's nothing that a guide dog could recognise as a kerb) There was also mention of the lack of arms on the seats in the centre of the square.

Members then moved onto the problem with street clutter with which members of the Parish Council are very familiar!

Finally we looked at a report on accessibility that came out of a visit that three members had made to Durham Cathedral. It was felt that the web site was difficult to navigate and there were areas that were identified as being in need of improvement. Discussions are continuing with the Dean and Chapter.