

# CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a meeting of the Business Committee held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 at 12:00 via Zoom

**Present:** Councillors E Scott (in the Chair), E Ashby, G Holland and R Ormerod

**Also present:** A Shanley (Clerk), Mr Graham Soutl (Parish Council retail consultant) and Mr Colin Wilkes (Durham Markets Company).

### 1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr N Brown.

### 2. To receive any declarations of interest from members

None received.

### 3. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

### 4. To receive any public participation comments on the following agenda items.

None received.

### 5. Progressing the roundtable meeting with landlords in Durham City

The Committee **agreed** to host a roundtable meeting with the private rental sector in Durham City on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, with the following Agenda items forming the discussion at this meeting:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Brief introduction to relevant Parish initiatives
3. Identifying any mutual aims for housing and the challenges to their delivery
4. Ways the Parish can support owners' and landlord's positive contribution to the local community
5. Discussion: ongoing communication and ways forward for mutual benefit.

The Clerk **agreed** to circulate invitations to representatives of the private rental sector.

### 6. Report by retail consultant Graham Soutl on work in Durham City

The Chair welcomed Graham Soutl to the meeting.

Graham provided a presentation to all Members regarding his work in Durham City over the last six weeks. Graham advised that the @IndieDurhamCity campaign continues in the City and has received 17,400 twitter impressions so far.

Graham advised that the "Ship indie in Durham this Christmas" messaging has been promoted across social media, in order to support Independent businesses during Christmas.

Graham also advised that he had boosted the #LumiereDurham and #Durham2025 messaging across social media too.

Graham highlighted that the @IndieDurhamCity campaign had recently been mentioned by Cerys Matthews on BCC Radio 6 Music.

Graham also advised that he had been promoting the re-opening of Moon Jewellery in Silver Street across social media too and highlighted how positive it is to see a popular independent return to the City again.

Graham advised that he had recently met with a prospective independent business who is hoping to take on a unit in the City. Graham advised that he had assisted this business in finding an appropriate unit and has already offered marketing support.

Graham advised that several independent businesses in Durham City are now attending Durham Business Club events and he is making excellent connections through these networks.

Graham also advised that he has been promoting the Christmas festival across social media.

Graham advised that his cover stars campaign is continuing and he has recently been promoting independent businesses on North Road who are impacted by the re-development of the bus station.

Graham advised that his next steps will involve:

- Keep promoting and facilitating new businesses opening in the City.
- More cover stars in the New Year.
- Continuing with his 1-to-1 and group support for businesses.
- Collaborating with Durham BID on a "shop local" campaign.

## **7. Update from the Chair on her work as Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships**

The Chair provided an update on her work as DCC Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships.

The Chair advised that she had had a number of meetings with the developers for Milburngate and advised that an Everyman cinema, Brewdog and the Botanist have been secured for units within this development.

The Chair advised that she has also asked the County Council to undertake a review of how visitors and shoppers in the City will flow around the City once the Milburngate development opens.

The Chair advised that she has asked the County Council to arrange a food and drinks festival for the City for 2022 and was confident that this could go ahead. The Chair advised that she felt that food and drink was an important sector in Durham City which needed to be promoted more.

The Chair advised that Alan Day has now resigned as the Chair of the Durham BID and has been replaced by Liza Johnson (Discovering Durham CIC). The Chair welcomed Liza to this role and advised that she has a lot of enthusiasm and energy for the City.

The Chair advised that she has been made aware that there have been two enquiries from hotel operators to come to Durham. The Chair advised that she felt that this is a very positive step for the City.

## 8. Update on Christmas events for December 2021

The Clerk provided an update on Christmas events planning for this year as follows:

**28<sup>th</sup> November 2021** – the official Christmas light switch on event will be taking place in the Market Place, this is being delivered and organised by Durham BID. The cycle Christmas tree will also be in place from 28<sup>th</sup> November at Prince Bishops.

**3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December** – the Christmas Festival at Palace Green will be taking place, this is organised and delivered by the Durham Markets Company in partnership with Durham University and Durham Cathedral.

**Every weekend in December leading up to Christmas** – the usual outdoor market in the Market Place will be taking place. In addition to which, the Christmas farmers and producers' market will be taking place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December and an additional festive outdoor market will be taking place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December.

**Every weekend in December leading up to Christmas** – Prince Bishops Place will be installing its usual Santa's grotto.

**12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December** – Durham Markets Company is hoping to host Christmas-themed arts and crafts events and is also arranging for some street entertainment (LED jugglers) and storytelling over these days. This will be organised and managed by the Durham Markets Company.

**19<sup>th</sup> December** – Durham University's Choir has confirmed that they will be able to provide a Christmas carol service on this date at no charge.

**19<sup>th</sup> December** – Stage invaders will be in place to compliment the Market on the Sunday. They will be going around the City adding interest. This may include a circus workshop in the market place.

The Clerk also advised that a Charity Christmas gift wrap service delivered by local charities and volunteers was being progressed with stalls offered at Christmas Festival, Indoor Market on Saturdays and Sundays in December and possibly a free unit in Prince Bishops over December.

The Committee thanked Colin Wilkes on his work in getting the Christmas festival up and running so successfully with coaches of visitors already booked to attend.

Colin advised that Alice Wilkes is also working with a local school on a production during the Christmas festival and asked if the Parish Council might consider supporting this to a maximum cost of £500. The Committee **agreed** to provide £500 funding towards this.

## 9. Parish Council Strategy 2022-23 – Business Committee priorities

Members **agreed** the Business Committee's priorities for 2022-23 as follows:

<b>Council priorities</b>	<b>Business Committee Priorities</b>	<b>Looking Forwards initiative(s)</b>
<b>1. Being an ambitious voice for the city</b>	Engaging with local businesses	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy
<b>2. Enhancing physical and mental wellbeing of our residents and</b>	Promoting responsible businesses	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy

<b>addressing inequalities in our parish</b>		
<b>3. Upholding the neighbourhood plan and representing the parish on planning matters.</b>	Supporting new businesses in empty units across the city	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy
<b>4. Creating a positive environment for businesses and encouraging tourism to improve prosperity of parish</b>	Marketing Durham as a place to visit	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy  Theme 5: A City with a modern and sustainable transport infrastructure
	Contracting professional support for local businesses in the city	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy
	Promoting businesses in the city centre and encouraging a variety of businesses to ensure wide range of choice for visitors	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy
<b>5. Taking action to combat the climate and ecological emergencies.</b>	Reducing food miles by encouraging the use of local suppliers	Theme 3: A City with a diverse and resilient economy  Theme 6: A City with an enriched community life

## 10. Proposed budget for Business Committee 2022/23

Members **agreed** a draft budget for the Parish Council's Business Committee for 2022/23 as follows:

Item of potential expenditure	Cost (£)
<b>PRIORITY 1: Professional support for independent businesses in Durham</b>	10,000.00
<b>PRIORITY 2: Maintaining and promoting the e-commerce website "Totally Locally Durham" for Durham City Businesses</b>	1,000.00
<b>PRIORITY 3: Hosting events in Durham City</b> (Remembrance Sunday, Christmas events, Queen's Jubilee 2022, Food and Drinks Festival, miscellaneous).	30,000.00
<b>TOTAL PROVISION IN 2022-23 AGAINST PRIORITIES</b>	<b>41,000.00</b>

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

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council Business Committee  
(22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022)**