



City of Durham Parish Council

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Date of Summons: 15th May 2024

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council's Business Committee: Councillors R Ormerod, V Ashfield, E Ashby, N Brown, G Holland and D Freeman.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Business Committee meeting** to be held **via Zoom at 13:00pm on Tuesday 21st May 2024** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown.

The link to join this meeting is below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83656551123>

Meeting ID: 836 5655 1123

Members of the public and press are also cordially invited to attend. Members of the public may address Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings for up to three minutes, with the agreement of the Chair of the meeting, provided that the statement is related to an item on the agenda. The speaker should approach the Clerk before the meeting commences to request to speak during the meeting.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Civility and Respect and Human Rights plus Social, Economic and Environmental matters.

Yours faithfully,

A. Shanley

Mr Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and apologies**
- 2. To receive any declarations of interest from members.**
- 3. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2024**
- 4. To receive any public participation comments on the following agenda items.** Please email the Parish Clerk parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk to register to speak.
- 5. Proposal from Durham Fringe for the 2024 Festival** – to include a discussion with the festival organisers.
- 6. Durham Business Viewpoints** – discussion with Matthew Booth on the business environment of the city and future plans.
- 7. Report by retail consultant Graham Soult on his work in Durham City**
- 8. Update on the work of Durham BID**
- 9. Update on works to improve Fowler's Yard in Durham City and proposed follow-up actions.**
- 10. Report on a landscaping scheme along the new Milburngate river frontage coach drop-off location.**
- 11. Events report** – including D-Day and Children's Book Festival.
- 12. Dates of future meeting(s) of this Committee:**
Tuesday 16th July 2024 at 1pm
Tuesday 17th September 2024 at 1pm

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the Business Committee meeting held via Zoom at 13:00pm on Tuesday 19th March 2024

Present: Cllr R Ormerod (in the Chair), Cllr E Ashby, Cllr V Ashfield, Cllr R Hanson Cllr G Holland and Cllr S Walker.

Also present: Mr A Shanley (Parish Clerk), Cllr J Ashby and Zak Newton (Zen).

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors D Freeman and N Brown. Members **agreed** that Councillors R Hanson and S Walker should substitute for Councillors D Freeman and N Brown.

2. To receive any declarations of interest from members

Councillor G Holland declared an interest in relation to the proposal for the Regatta and therefore took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

3. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2024 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

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

Councillor J Ashby advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items.

5. Durham Business Viewpoints

The Chair welcomed Zak Newton to the meeting and thanked him for attending to discuss his view of the city with the Parish Council.

Zak thanked the Committee for the opportunity to come and speak with the Parish Council today.

Zak began by introducing himself as the co-owner of Tango restaurant, which he and his cousin opened 6 years ago in the city, the owner of Whitechurch, the Rabbit Hole and Zen. Across those businesses, Zak advised that he employs over 114 individuals in a variety of catering and hospitality roles.

Zak advised that he feels very passionately about the city and he hopes to engage further with DCC and the Parish Council.

Zak advised that the hospitality sector is under increasing pressure these days, with an average 29% wholesale price rise on products, increasing energy costs and the impact of the pandemic still being felt today. Zak advised that whilst the industry remains a high cash flow industry, it remains a very low margin business.

Zak stressed that he felt that the City needed more quality venues as opposed to higher quantity. Zak advised that he could foresee a number of well-established

food and hospitality venues across the City closing as they struggle to keep up with competition. Zak advised that he felt that the Government should be looking to prevent grandfather rights being automatically permitted to premises when a new operator comes in.

Zak Newton advised that, as a business owner in Durham, he would be particularly interested to look into options for a new Use Class of HMO for hospitality staff who work and would wish to live in Durham. Zak highlighted that he saw this as a big challenge in terms of recruitment of local staff and asked the Parish Council for their support with this. Zak highlighted that Policy 16 does not differentiate between tenants and therefore prevented multiple unrelated staff living together in one property.

Councillor G Holland thanked Zak for his presentation and invited Zak to come and speak at a future Planning and Licensing Committee meeting on the issue of HMOs for professionals.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that she would like to see more affordable housing in the city as staff in the hospitality sector struggle to afford to live in the city. Zak advised that staffing was always a huge problem for his sector.

Councillor E Ashby asked Zak about what the Parish Council do to support his business. Zak advised that he would like to see footfall return to the City and see more of a mix between retail and food and drink venues. Zak asked for the Parish Council to take as much action as possible to bring retail back to the City as this will help everyone.

The Chair thanked Zak for his presentation and Zak left the meeting at this point.

6. Report by retail consultant Graham Soult on his work in Durham City

The Clerk advised that Graham was currently experiencing technical difficulties in accessing the meeting and therefore would be submitting his apologies for this meeting and providing Members with a written report instead.

In agreeing to continue to provide professional support for local businesses, the Parish Council unanimously **agreed** to continue to fund the Indie Durham City project for a further 2 months' period until the end of May only. Members **agreed** to propose this to the next Full Council meeting accordingly.

7. Update on the work of Durham BID

The Clerk advised that Paul Howard was unable to attend this meeting and had therefore submitted his apologies.

8. Update on works to improve Fowler's Yard in Durham City and proposed follow-up actions.

In highlighting the small step successes of the Business Committee already on the project to improve Fowler's Yard, the Clerk also highlighted that the Committee is continuing its work on two pressing matters which remain top priorities for this project

1. Tackling the proliferation of bins in the service yard area of Fowlers Yard – with a meeting of all businesses and accommodation providers with a bin(s) in this area planned for after Easter.
2. Replacing the windows and repointing the brickwork to the façade of the Victorian section of the Durham City Theatre building – the current windows are seriously impacting on the façade of the building and the wider area and are also proving hazardous to the integrity of the building and repair works are deemed urgent.

On the first matter, the Clerk highlighted that he and Councillor E Ashby had been engaging with businesses and with DCC to try and reduce the level of waste in this area and had recently undertaken a number of site visits on this issue. The Clerk also advised that it was proposed that the Parish Council should facilitate a roundtable discussion with businesses who use Fowler's Yard for their waste storage to try and address some of these issues. The Committee **agreed** to host such a meeting in April.

In relation to the Durham City Theatre, the Clerk advised that the Victorian section attached to the south-end of the Theatre is a large-scale warehouse building constructed from handmade brick and incorporating timber windows painted in red (North elevation) and blue (West elevation). Although this part of the building has been heavily altered over time, with the upper floor rebuilt from modern brick, this section of the building is considered to be of considerable character, appearance and historic interest and in fact was recently listed as a non-designated heritage asset.

The Clerk advised that he has recently submitted a planning application for the like-for-like replacement of the windows to this section of the building (application ref: DM/24/00447/FPA) and is awaiting elevation drawings from the Theatre's chosen architect for this application to go live. Equally, the brick repointing is permitted development and does not form part of the application submitted for the Theatre.

The Clerk advised that, in total, the works are likely to cost between £34-£36,000.

In order to fund these new windows, the Clerk advised that he has reached out to the County Council's community economic development team and has a verbal agreement of £20,000 towards these works (with a possibility of a slight uplift if required), on the condition that this does not exceed 70% of the total costs for these works.

Moreover, the Dramatic Society is able to provide approximately £4,000 of its own funding towards these works.

The Clerk proposed that the £10,000 originally agreed for the improvements to public toilets instead be allocated to these works and the Committee unanimously agreed this. Moreover, in light of development pressure in the City, Councillor E Ashby proposed that the Parish Council condition any contribution towards these works, such that there be a requirement to return the £10,000 should the building be sold to another operator. This was also unanimously **agreed** by the Committee.

The Clerk took the opportunity to thank Councillor E Ashby for her ongoing work and support with this project and stressed that delivery of these improvements to this important independent community facility – whose key aim is to provide cultural/ theatrical entertainment at an affordable cost to the public – will give the area a real uplift.

9. Report on a landscaping scheme along the new Milburngate river frontage coach drop-off location.

Councillor E Ashby highlighted that local resident Colin Jubb had originally raised this issue with her and she was hoping that he would be able to attend this meeting to discuss this in more detail with Members. As Colin was unable to attend this meeting, it was **agreed** to defer this item on today's Agenda. It was also **agreed** to hold another special meeting of the Business Committee in April in order to discuss this in more detail and to work up a proposal for improving this area of the city.

10. Events report

The Committee considered the events plan for 2024/25 and **agreed** to continue its funding for Durham Pride (£3,000), Christmas Festival (£5,000) and **agreed** to also support Durham Regatta this year too at a contribution of £1,000.

The Clerk also highlighted that work is well underway on planning for the upcoming D-Day anniversary in June and he would be circulating details of this in due course.

11. Dates of future meeting(s) of this Committee:

Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 1pm

Tuesday 16th July 2024 at 1pm

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

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council's Business Committee
(21st May 2024)**

ITEM 5: PROPOSAL FROM DURHAM FRINGE FOR THE 2024 FESTIVAL

The Durham Fringe Festival 2023 was a huge success with an 82% increase in ticket sales and 93% of ticket purchasers saying they would recommend the festival to a friend or colleague.

Part of the reason for this success was the beautiful new performance space we created on Palace Green, in a magnificent sculptured stretch marquee. Nestled between the Cathedral and the Castle it was a wonderful temporary addition to this World Heritage Site, as performers filled the air with their song and the words of Shakespeare (just yards from where a copy of the First Folio lies).

We want to build on the success of the Palace Green marquee, and in 2024 fill it with even more performances, including choirs, plays, children's shows and spoken word.

The main marquee is 15 x 20 metres and seats 160. There will be a linked catering marquee, which will be where audiences gather before and after shows. We are working in partnership with New College Durham, who will provide a pop-up catering service on weekdays. It is anticipated that one of our venue partners, the much-loved local business Fabios, will support the festival with licensing and staffing.



Costs of delivering the stretch tent marquee

The total cost of delivering the stretch tent marquee, giving the festival visibility in this high-profile space, is £10,700.

Palace Green	Cost
Palace Green security 7 nights @£120+	£900.00
Tech Equipment	£1,500.00
Engineer Level Cover 8 days (complex get in/out)	£1,800.00
2x 10mx10m Marquees + stretch tent	£3,500.00

Rigging within stretch tent (truss)	
Re-seeding grass	£2,000.00
Seating Hire	£500.00
Pedestrian fence 100m	£500.00
Total	£10,700.00

Contribution requested from the City of Durham Parish Council

- We are requesting a contribution of £5,000 towards the costs of delivering the marquee. This would be a much needed contribution to our overall costs of c. £107,000 this year.

What Durham Fringe Festival could offer, and do to say thanks

- We will acknowledge the City of Durham Parish Council's support through the prominent display of your logo on the barriers surrounding the marquee.
- We will also acknowledge your support on our website, on marketing materials such as our printed programme, and on the pop up banners in each venue,
- We will make available a partners/sponsors social media toolkit which you can use to maximise your own profile as a supporter of Durham Fringe Festival. The toolkit is here: <https://durhamfringe.co.uk/sponsors-and-partners-toolkit/>

Notes from Fowler's Yard meeting – 11th April 2024 11am.

Present: Esther Ashby (in the Chair), Adam Shanley, Cllr Liz Brown, Rick (Fusha), Cengiz and Joanne (Akarsu), Craig Jordan (Leonard's Coffee), Graham Hall (Saddler Land and Property), Nicola and Joshua (Rudy's), Julee and Adam (Kokoro), Thinh (T4), Jake (Faru), Sarah Veitch, Gary Anderson, Belinda Snow and Scott (Durham County Council).

- Councillor Esther Ashby welcomed all those in attendance and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting today. Anticipating the introduction in 2025 of new legislation concerning food waste management, Esther advised that the purpose of today's meeting was twofold: to understand the interests of each of the key stakeholders who currently operate within Fowler's Yard and also to look for solutions to the storage, collection and other waste management issues in the area.
- Adam Shanley advised that the Parish Council was keen to support businesses in seeking a solution to this problem and thereby help promote Fowler's Yard as an attractive visitor destination within the City.
- Gary Anderson and Belinda Snow advised that the waste issues at Fowler's Yard had been going on for over 10 years and managing the situation has become steadily more complex over time. Gary highlighted the large increase in student accommodation in properties backing onto the area as well as the increase in food and drink premises fronting Silver Street, which both add to wet/ food waste.
- Gary advised that the County Council has been taking some proactive steps to reduce the number of bins in the area and had already decreased the total number by 6 bins. Sarah Veitch highlighted that this was an additional cost to the County Council (not the businesses) but an investment the Council is making to try and improve this part of the City.
- Craig Jordan advised that he remembered a time when waste was collected early in the morning at Silver Street by the Council and this operation worked without any of the issues experienced today. Craig advised that the volume of bins in Fowler's Yard had reached a high point and this was causing issues such as the presence of vermin, etc.
- Belinda Snow highlighted that the Neighbourhood Wardens were active in Fowler's Yard almost every day dealing with problems in the area. Belinda advised that the Wardens had issued 40 Fixed Penalty Notices to businesses and individuals using Fowler's Yard for their waste. Belinda felt that the situation had become severe and was only set to get worse with additional bin collections coming in by 2027.
- Joanne from Akarsu highlighted that much of the issue related to the cost of disposing waste for businesses and highlighted her experience that it is

cheaper to have more bins and fewer collections. That said, after the Council recently agreed to carry out collections 6 times per week (at no extra charge to the business), Akarsu had been able to reduce its bins to one bin only. Joanne advised that keeping waste in-store and having a morning collection on-street was unworkable for Akarsu.

- Nicola and Joshua highlighted that Rudy's has a separate bin for each type of waste and much of this came down to national policy and by Rudy's own ethical stance on recycling. Gary highlighted that Rudy's now has 7 bins in Fowler's Yard.
- Graham Hall advised that Saddler Land and Property were the landowner at Fowler's Yard and he has an agreement with the County Council that the land can be used as a highway only. Graham advised that the land can be used for their tenants only and any other business wishing to store their waste on and have it removed from this land would need to pay for this. Graham advised that Saddler Land and Property had tried over many years to gain planning consent for a bin store (holding approx. 20 waste bins) in this area along with office/ accommodation above but that this had consistently been refused by the Design and Conservation team on heritage grounds. Graham recognised that there were now far more than 20 bins on this land now and that the storage plans submitted from 4 years previously wouldn't now deal with the increased scale of the problem in the area. Graham advised that he felt that the County Council should ensure that any new businesses in Silver Street now should be made – through either planning or licensing - to provide on-premise storage of waste and to contract with the County Council for its disposal. Graham advised that Saddler Land and Property were keen to work with partners to make Silver Street and Fowler's Yard more integrated as a picturesque circular walking route in the City.
- In round table discussion it was highlighted that a major factor in the proposal for DCC-only collections is that some businesses are tied into contracts with their existing waste management companies for a number of years.
- It was also highlighted by a number of businesses that each bin may be lockable but that the key allows access to all of the bins.
- Businesses committed to reviewing their current bin capacity and to see if there might be an opportunity to reduce this for example by looking to downsize packaging.
- A number of proposed solutions were discussed during the meeting:

- 1) A waste management plan be created by Saddler Land and Property for Fowler's Yard which all of the tenant businesses would be required to adhere to.**
- 2) Having a properly managed (by an employee of Saddler Land and Property) bin store built be revisited by Saddler.**
- 3) That CCTV be erected on the land to identify who is creating the waste issues in the area.**
- 4) An on-street collection take place in the morning at a specific time on Silver Street, co-ordinated by the County Council.**
- 5) That a wooden bin shelter be built to cover the bins up and make the area more attractive.**
- 6) That landlords of residential properties around the yard engage more actively with their tenants in a campaign targeted at good neighbourly use of waste bins.**

Summing up, it was agreed that further meetings would be useful and should initially focus on specific issues raised in the meeting e.g. engagement with the different waste operators and landlords/owners of neighbouring properties.

The meeting closed at: 12:45pm