



City of Durham Parish Council

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Date of Summons: 8th October 2024

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council's Finance Committee:

Councillors A Doig, D Freeman, J Ashby, V Ashfield, H Weston and L Brown.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Finance Committee meeting** to be held in **Meeting Room 1.01, Clayport Library. Durham. DH1 1WA at 13:30pm on Monday 14th October 2024** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown.

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. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11th SEPTEMBER 2024**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. REPORT ON THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**
- 6. CONSIDERATION OF DCC BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2025/26**
- 7. SECTION 106 APPLICATION CONSULTATION – DURHAM SCHOOL**
- 8. REPORT ON BUDGET SETTING PROCESS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26**
- 9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 11am

Wednesday 16th April 2025 at 11am

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Finance Committee held on Wednesday 11th September 2024 via Zoom

Present: Councillors A Doig, J Ashby and S Walker.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors V Ashfield and D Freeman.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th June 2024 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

5. REPORT ON THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk provided the following report on the current financial position of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that, after a total expenditure of £283,545 during the financial year 2023-24 and following our VAT rebate of £9,526.48, the Parish Council ended FY 23-24 with approximately £74,000 remaining in the account and Members were reminded that this left the Parish Council with a £29,274 surplus.

The Clerk highlighted that the Council based its budgeting process for this current financial year on an assumption that the Council would be left with £45,000 in reserves only.

The Clerk reminded Members that this surplus was reallocated to other priority areas following our last Finance Committee meeting. This was endorsed at the last Full Council meeting in July.

The Clerk advised that this surplus was in part because of a number of budgets not being fully allocated and the success the Parish Council had in securing outside finance for things such as events, landlord appeal, community emergency plan, etc.

In May this year, the Clerk highlighted that the Council completed a successful Internal Audit with our auditor Gordon Fletcher once again commending the Parish Council for its excellent governance and sound financial management. In addition, the Clerk advised that he had received a verbal confirmation from External Auditors Mazars that the Parish Council has once again passed its external audit without any issues.

In January 2024, the Clerk reminded Members that Full Council agreed an ambitious programme of work for this financial year, with expenditure thereof totalling £262,400 with a contingency fund – in addition to reserves – of £15,000 for unforeseen expenditure during the year as well as an election reserve of £5,000. The Clerk advised that the Council has agreed to build up this election reserve over time in the event of a by-election.

The Clerk advised that the Council's total income to date is £283,353. That figure includes:

- £282,429.66 from the precept.
- £6 refund for groceries from ASDA for an event.
- £918 from this year's landlord appeal launched earlier this year. Please note that a further contribution of £2,500 is expected from Durham University.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's expenditure to date (including VAT) totals £138,067.67 and spends are all within allocated budget headings or our contingency funds.

The Clerk referred Members to the Detailed Income and Expenditure report circulated with the Agenda along with the Nominal Ledger. The Clerk advised that he currently felt that the Council's administrative costs are too high. As such, the Clerk advised that he had reduced the phone contract from £95 per month to £7.99. In addition, the Clerk advised that he had cancelled the contract for Premiere Pro at £500. Moreover, the Clerk advised that he had a meeting with the Co-operative soon and is hoping to open a high interest savings account for the Parish Council in due course.

6. REPORT ON BUDGET SETTING PROCESS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

The Finance Committee recognised the difficulties with agreeing the budget for the current financial year and confirmed their intention to manage this process more efficiently for financial year 2025/26. As part of this, Members **agreed** that there should either be no increase in the precept for 2025/26 or at the very least as low an increase as possible.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 11am

Wednesday 16th April 2025 at 11am

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

Signed,

**Chair of the Parish Council Finance Committee
(14th October 2024)**