



City of Durham Parish Council

The City of Durham Parish Council. c/o The Enginemen Secretary's Office. The Miners Hall. Flass Street. Durham. DH1 4BE

Telephone: 07510 074875

Email: parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk

Date of Summons: 11th June 2026

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council's Finance Committee:
Councillors S Walker, L Brown, E Hopgood, E Scott, V Ashfield and L Wilson.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday 17TH June 2026 at 10:00am via Zoom** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown. The link to join this meeting is below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82828087965>

Meeting ID: 828 2808 7965

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 13TH MAY 2026**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. REPORT ON GRANT APPLICATIONS 2026-27**
- 6. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE SUPPORT WORKING GROUP**
- 7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 9th September 2026 at 11:00am

Wednesday 13th January 2027 at 11:00am

Wednesday 10th March 2027 at 11:00am

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Finance Committee held on Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 11:00am via Zoom

Present: Councillors S Walker (in the Chair), L Brown, R Cornwell, E Hopgood, E Scott and V Ashfield.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and **accepted** from Councillor L Wilson. The Chair accepted that Councillor R Cornwell was attending the meeting as a substitute for Councillor L Wilson.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16th MARCH 2026

The Chair introduced the minutes of the previous meeting for approval. Members confirmed that the minutes were an accurate record of proceedings subject to one amendment. Councillor E. Hopgood advised that the minutes did not record her submitted apologies for absence or the attendance of Councillor D Freeman as her substitute. The Clerk agreed to amend the minutes accordingly before finalisation. Subject to that amendment, the minutes were **approved**.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

5. REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chair invited the Clerk to present the financial position of the Parish Council following the conclusion of the 2025/26 financial year. The Clerk provided a detailed overview of the Council's finances, explaining that the Council had concluded the year with £114,054 held in its bank accounts. He advised that a Value Added Tax reclaim totalling £7,060 had subsequently been submitted, bringing the effective closing position for the financial year to £121,114.

Members were reminded that the Council's reserves policy required the retention of £45,000 in general reserves and that a substantial election reserve had also been maintained to meet future electoral costs. The election reserve stood at £27,555 at year end and would be supplemented by a further £5,000 contribution during the current financial year. The Clerk explained that these funds were necessary to prepare for future contested elections and any costs associated with casual vacancies.

The Committee considered the position of ring-fenced and earmarked reserves. The Clerk explained that funds raised through the Green Move Out initiative could only legally be used for the purposes outlined within the fundraising appeal and therefore remained restricted. A carry-forward balance of £5,510 remained available to support the forthcoming Green Move Out campaign. Members were advised that previous years'

initiatives had been highly successful and that landlord contributions had increased significantly due to proactive engagement by Members. The Committee also noted that £10,400 remained available from a donation made by the Freeman's Charitable Trust towards beacon events and that these funds remained restricted to the agreed purpose.

The Clerk outlined a number of committed carry-forward budgets from the previous financial year. These included underspends within staffing budgets, heritage project allocations, planting commitments and outstanding office accommodation costs. Members noted that some funding had already effectively been committed despite invoices not being received until the new financial year. Examples included the Houghall College Chelsea Flower Show project and ongoing heritage initiatives being developed through the Environment Committee.

Members formally commended the Clerk on the management of the Council's finances. Councillor V. Ashfield praised the accuracy of the year-end budget position and noted that the Council had successfully delivered a substantial programme of projects whilst maintaining appropriate reserve levels. Members agreed that the financial position reflected effective planning and sound budget management.

The Committee also reflected upon the revised budget-setting process which had been introduced during the previous year. The Clerk advised that moving the budget-setting timetable forward to November had significantly improved the process, reduced pressure and allowing more strategic discussion before final decisions were made. Members agreed that the revised approach had worked well and should be repeated in future years. Councillor V. Ashfield noted that strategic planning exercises should similarly be brought forward to ensure that budgets were informed by agreed priorities.

The Committee then considered pressures emerging within current budgets. Particular attention was given to the Business Events Grant Fund. The Clerk reported that the scheme had already generated significant interest from local businesses and had helped strengthen the Council's reputation within the business community. Members heard that £6,500 had already been allocated, with further applications and commitments bringing anticipated expenditure to approximately £9,000 from the £15,000 annual budget. The Clerk highlighted positive feedback received from businesses and reported that new enterprises were increasingly approaching the Council for support.

In considering the available financial headroom within the budget, Councillor E. Hopgood proposed that the unallocated funds be transferred to the Business Events Grant budget where there was clear demand and where expenditure could be demonstrated to generate tangible benefits for the city. Members discussed the proposal and, having noted the healthy contingency position already held by the Council, **agreed** that the available funding should be allocated to support business event initiatives.

6. SECTION 106 APPLICATION - DURHAM ARCHERY AND LAWN TENNIS CLUB - PADEL COURT AND TWO ALL WEATHER COURTS

The Chair introduced the Section 106 funding application submitted by Durham Archery and Lawn Tennis Club seeking £90,000 towards the creation of a padel court and improvements to existing tennis facilities.

The Clerk outlined the proposal and explained that a draft Parish Council response had been circulated for consideration. Members discussed the application in considerable

detail. Whilst there was broad support for initiatives which increased participation in sport, physical activity and healthy lifestyles, concerns were expressed regarding the quality and detail of the application. Members noted that the submission provided very limited information and failed to identify clearly which Section 106 funding allocation was being targeted. It was acknowledged that this made it difficult to assess whether the proposal satisfied the criteria attached to any particular legal agreement.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the likely planning implications of the proposal. Members identified potential concerns relating to noise, floodlighting, traffic generation, ecology and the impact upon nearby residential properties. Councillor R Cornwell reported feedback received from local residents, including concerns about light pollution and the possible disturbance arising from padel tennis activity. It was acknowledged that padel tennis generated higher noise levels than conventional tennis and that appropriate mitigation measures would need to be carefully considered through the planning process.

Members also discussed concerns relating to traffic and parking arrangements. The Chair reported comments received from individuals associated with the tennis club who feared that a successful facility could attract significantly increased visitor numbers, placing additional pressure on local roads. Other Members considered that the overall capacity of the site naturally limited the scale of activity which could occur.

Following discussion, Members **agreed** that the Parish Council should support the principle of increased sporting opportunities and therefore support the proposal in principle. However, Members were clear that such support should be expressed without prejudice to any future planning application. The Committee **agreed** that any subsequent planning application would require detailed scrutiny, particularly regarding floodlighting, noise impacts, ecological considerations and the effects on neighbouring residents.

7. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE SUPPORT WORKING GROUP

The Chair invited an update on the work of the Community Centre Support Working Group. The Clerk reported progress regarding the grant awarded to Alington House for the replacement of historic windows. Members were reminded that funding of approximately £33,000 had been approved for the project together with additional support towards professional fees.

The Clerk advised that work had progressed in preparation for the planning application and that a heritage statement had been prepared to facilitate the planning process. Discussions had also taken place with specialist contractors regarding delivery of the project. Members were informed that the works presented a number of technical challenges due to the location and condition of the windows. The preferred approach would involve specialist contractors undertaking the work using harness systems rather than extensive riverside scaffolding, thereby reducing costs and complexity.

Members noted that whilst progress was slower than originally anticipated, the project remained on course to proceed during the current financial year. The Clerk explained that responsibility for progressing the planning application now largely rested with the Trustees of Alington House.

The Committee also discussed arrangements for releasing grant funding. Members agreed that the Parish Council should retain strict oversight of expenditure and that funding should not be released as a single upfront payment. Instead, payments should be linked to verified project expenditure.

The Committee thanked the Clerk for his report and progress on this project to date.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 17th June 2026 – 11:00am

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
17th June 2026

ITEM 5: REPORT ON GRANT APPLICATIONS 2026-27

Members are reminded that Councillors have formally agreed to allocate £21,297 (£6,297 re-allocated from the community centre support fund) of the budget for 2026/27 towards grants for local and voluntary organisations, on the basis that:

- The project to be funded meets the aims and objectives of the Parish Council.
- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community.
- Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in the Parish or will benefit the environment of our Parish.
- Any assistance given will be subject to on-going monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year-to-year basis.

In accordance with the Parish Council's current grant awards policy, the City of Durham Parish Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.
- To help the parish's voluntary groups to improve their effectiveness.
- To ensure the provision of services, needed by the residents, via the voluntary sector.
- To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all parishioners of City of Durham to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.
- To achieve value for money.

The grant funding window opened on 1st April 2026 and this has been advertised on social media, the Parish Council's website and through direct e-mails.

Organisations were asked to apply by early June 2026 in order that the Finance Committee may consider this at its meeting in June and make a recommendation to Full Council in June. Once approved, all grant payments will be made at the end of June 2026. Members have been provided with the full details of all applications.

For ease of reference, the applicant, the amount requested from each applicant and a summary of each project is provided below:

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to consider the merits of each of the grant applications and to make a recommendation for each award to Full Council in June.
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Organisation	Project	Amount requested
Dead Dog Gallery - Durham Sixth Form Centre	We are seeking funding of £1,900 to support our Community Class Programme, delivered at The Dead Dog Gallery and our Visual Arts Centre in autumn 2026. As we enter the next phase of arts development, we are expanding our gallery programme to deliver more residencies, exhibitions and community classes that foster a more creative, connected and inclusive city. This programme will: • Deliver 10 community classes between September and December 2026 • Engage approximately 200 participants. • Provide paid opportunities for 2 local artists. • Offer student volunteering opportunities, supporting pathways into creative careers. The programme prioritises DH1 residents, particularly those experiencing loneliness, isolation, or limited access to creative opportunities. It fosters intergenerational learning, strengthens community connection, and contributes to Durham's identity as a culturally vibrant and inclusive city. The project aligns with Durham's recognition as part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, embedding creativity, lifelong learning and participation in community life.	£1,900
The Marra Project	The grant would support Transoup, a regular social event for trans and non binary young adults, held at Merryoaks Community Hall. The project provides a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space where participants can meet others, foster a community atmosphere, and eat a free nutritious meal. Sessions include a shared vegan meal, refreshments, and informal social activities in a sober environment. All participants are part of at least one socially marginalised demographic, intersecting with mental health vulnerabilities, disability, and more. As such, there is an unexpectedly high incidence of medical dietary needs above and beyond statutory food allergen requirements, meaning specialist food needs to be provided. Many participants are immunocompromised and as such testing for COVID-19, along with air purifiers a necessary part of the event. The group provides an important source of peer support and community connection for individuals who may otherwise feel isolated or excluded from mainstream social spaces. Funding is requested primarily towards room hire costs and food to enable the sessions to continue on a sustainable basis.	£1,152

Durham City Harriers	The club in its current form is consistently performing well in regional athletic competitions, particularly cross country and road running, with multiple accolades in the harrier league (xc), north eastern xc competitions and local road races. The club was awarded club of the year in 2023 for its improvements. There has been increased club investment in increasing our capacity for more juniors as of spring 2025, several new coaches have been recruited for development and foundational work with 8-12 year olds in particular. Additionally a new sprint section has been added to complement the clubs access to the athletics track at maiden castle, the hope is the club will develop and progress multiple young people in many of the athletics fields that are so popular in this nation. Junior membership of the club has grown to 85 in the last calendar year. We are now looking to improve our clubs access and availability of training equipment to accommodate the additional membership and continue to provide for the training and athletic needs of the local community for many years to come. The additional resources will also hopefully assist us to expand our membership offer (we have nearly 30 children on the junior waiting list).	£1,500
Durham & District Prostate Cancer Group	Durham and District Prostate Cancer Group (CIO application currently under review with the Charity Commission) is seeking funding to support community based prostate cancer awareness and early detection activities within Durham and surrounding areas. Funding will help the group provide community awareness events, pop-up information stands, educational materials and facilitated PSA testing opportunities delivered in partnership with appropriate healthcare professionals and organisations. The project aims to encourage earlier awareness and help-seeking amongst men who may otherwise not access support or testing. The group has already identified strong local demand for this work through existing support meetings and previous awareness activities. Funding will contribute towards: • PSA testing event costs • venue and equipment costs • awareness materials and publicity • community outreach activities • volunteer support and event expenses The initiative will particularly benefit men who may be reluctant to seek support, are socially isolated, or may not otherwise engage with preventative health initiatives. What difference will the project make? The project will help increase awareness of	£2,000

	prostate cancer, promote earlier detection, reduce isolation and encourage men to seek advice and support earlier. The group currently supports approximately 120 members and has already delivered awareness activities within the local community. Previous testing initiatives identified individuals who required further medical follow up, demonstrating the importance and potential impact of early awareness and testing opportunities. The project will also help improve community wellbeing by providing accessible support, information and signposting for men affected by prostate cancer and their families. Who will benefit? Men affected by prostate cancer and their families or carers living in Durham and surrounding areas. The project will particularly benefit older men and those who may not otherwise engage with support or preventative health initiatives. About the Organisation Durham and District Prostate Cancer Group CIO is a volunteer led community organisation providing peer support, awareness activities and information for men affected by prostate cancer and their families. The group holds regular meetings and awareness activities and works in partnership with community organisations and healthcare contacts to improve awareness and support early detection initiatives.	
Durham aged mineworkers housing association	Resident Involvement, looking to create more resident Involvement for our residents to reduce loneliness, isolation and promote healthy wellbeing, bring communities together with coffee mornings, craft sessions, gentle exercise gardening clubs etc	£5,000
Durham Hospital Radio	2 YELLOWTEC mikaFolding Monitor arms are required to allow Ergonomic positioning of PC monitors in Studio 3 particularly for presenters who have acute poor eyesight allowing for the screen to be positioned for optimal clarity and reduced eye strain whilst maintaining a healthy working environment.	£500
Friends of Durham Woodland Cemetery	Whilst we are currently financially stable, we are not yet in a position to have the lodge reroofed after it was damaged in the storms of previous years. The lodge which is owned by the Trust was regularly hired by families for funeral ceremonies and memorials which provided an income to cover the outgoings of the Trust. The Lodge also provides a meeting place for volunteers and Trustees. We are slowly working towards raising the estimated £8000 (quotes have been obtained) but are constantly aware of the ongoing deterioration of the roof and the constant loss of tiles which have almost gone.	Any contribution

IWG application (made under NXCA)	Durham International Women's Group has previously received support from Ustinov College, Durham University, which enabled us to deliver activities that brought together women from diverse backgrounds and supported community integration. The success of this work has demonstrated the ongoing need for our activities but sadly the College support is no longer available to us. So our purpose for applying for a grant is to secure funding that would enable us to hire a venue for regular meetings, finance any insurance or safeguarding costs that might arise and give us a budget to cover some of the costs of craft and activity materials, cooking and cultural activity supplies, children's resources, refreshments, evening event costs and guest facilitators. If we had any left-over we would like to reinstate the hugely beneficial family trips we used to take to such places as Holy Island or the Lake District.	£2,500
Merryoaks Community Hall	1. To get a sign installed at the hall 2. Free children's activities - We previously ran free children's holiday activities from May to December 2025, which were extremely popular. Every session was fully booked, and due to high demand, we increased capacity from 20 to 30 children per session. Although the hall is located in an area considered relatively affluent, discussions with parents, carers, and volunteers have shown that many families are unable to afford extracurricular activities such as sports, arts and crafts, and mental health-focused programmes. Funding from other sources, such as Fun and Food, has not always been accessible to these families due to eligibility criteria. By offering activities at the community hall, we can ensure all children have access, regardless of financial circumstance. The sessions provide a safe and welcoming environment where children can build friendships, develop confidence, and improve social and interpersonal skills. The programme also addresses physical health. Childhood obesity is a growing concern, and our activities encourage physical activity, promote healthy habits, and reduce screen time. Children will also gain informal education on wellbeing and nutrition. By reducing social isolation and supporting mental and physical health, the programme helps children thrive holistically. A grant of £2,000 will enable us to deliver sessions during school holidays, supporting over 300 child attendees. This funding will provide high quality, engaging and enriching activities, ensuring children in our community have access to experiences that improve their wellbeing, confidence and physical health.	£2,500

NXCA API action	To produce a banner to commemorate the Battle of Neville's Cross; part of which we are hoping to engage local schools	£200
St. Margaret's Centre	We are seeking funding to purchase materials and equipment needed to run the Centre's wide variety of Health and Wellbeing Activities in the joinery workshop, craft room, and gardens. This will benefit the 250 people currently referred to the service, as well as the estimated 200+ people who will be referred over the next 12 months. These activities provide people with skills training that will support them to better maintain their homes, mindfulness techniques that can offer a distraction from chronic pain and mental distress, and the opportunity to do something that makes them feel good around other people who understand at least some of what they are experiencing. They are designed to help people build confidence in themselves, while benefiting from a sense of structure that is often absent in their lives. The materials needed to run these activities include: • Joinery workshop - wood, screws, glue, stains and varnish, and the purchase and maintenance of equipment • Craft room - art supplies like paint, pastels, and glue, textile crafts supplies such as fabric, scissors, and embroidery hoops • Gardens - compost, seeds, new tools as needed	£4,000
Waddington Street URC	Two elements to improve facilities for all user groups. 1. Upgrading of carpets on entrance, stairs and passageways into community used hall and meeting room. 2. Necessary upgrading of audio system to be a more flexible, user friendly and inclusive experience. (also less crackly and prone to outside interference!)	Any contribution