



City of Durham Parish Council

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Date of summons: 21st March 2025

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council: Councillors E Ashby, J Ashby, V Ashfield, L Brown, N Brown, A Doig, D Freeman, R Friederichsen, R Hanson, G Holland, C Lattin, R Ormerod, E Scott, S Walker and H Weston.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Meeting of the Council** to be held in the **Main Hall of the Merryoaks Community Hall, Park House Rd, Durham DH1 3QF** on **Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7:00pm** 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. 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 27TH FEBRUARY 2025**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. PRESENTATION BY DURHAM FRINGE ON PLANS FOR THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL**
- 6. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- **Planning and Licensing Committee minutes from meetings held on 21st February and 7th March 2025**

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

- **Environment Committee minutes from the meeting held on 11th February 2025**

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

- Proposals to fund the production of the Community Emergency Safety Card following the adoption of the Community Emergency Plan

- **Business Committee minutes from the meeting held on 21st January 2025**

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

- Report on activities to mark the 80th Anniversary of VE Day in Durham City
- To approve the annual events plan for the City of Durham Parish Council during financial year 2025/26.

- 7. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 27th February 2025

- 8. REPORT FROM THE 'OPERATION MAUNDY' PLANNING GROUP**

Due to the confidential nature of the following items, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public will be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in 3 paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the LGA 1972 Act and section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. At this point in time the press and the public will be asked to leave the room.

9. GOOD CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2025 NOMINATIONS

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Thursday 27th February 2025 at 7:00pm in the Main Hall of the Merryoaks Community Hall, Park House Rd, Durham DH1 3QF.

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

Also present: Parish Clerk Adam Shanley and 6 members of the public.

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

Apologies were received and **approved** from Councillors N Brown, R Ormerod and C Lattin. No other apologies were received.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor E Scott declared an interest in item 5 regarding the Traffic Regulation Order and took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22ND JANUARY 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2025 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Rupert Benjamin provided an update to the Council on his ongoing issues regarding the land next to Homer Terrace. Mr Benjamin advised that the area had been cleared of rubble for the first time in some significant time and that he was looking to gain further support from the Neighbourhood Wardens relating to the issue of waste in this area also. The Chair thanked Mr Benjamin for his ongoing work in this area and for keeping the Parish Council updated on this matter.

Ms Fiona Dryer, Ms Kay Fotheringham and Mr Bill McArdle from Climate Action Durham presented their case against the TVERF, expressing their collective concerns over the adverse impact of this facility on the climate, specifically through emissions, pollution and adverse impact on the health outcomes of those living nearby to this facility. Concerns were also expressed regarding the financial implications of this facility and locking local authorities into a significant contract when the focus should be more directed towards recycling and circular economy initiatives.

Climate Action Durham urged Members to support the motion by Councillor V Ashfield under Item 7 of the Agenda and support them in fighting this new facility.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

Planning and Licensing Committee

Councillor G Holland presented the minutes from the Planning and Licensing Committee meetings held on 24th January and 7th February 2025. There were no queries from Members and Councillor G Holland moved on to Committee reports.

Report on recent meeting with DCC Traffic Officers re: road user charge zone

The Chair reported on the recent meeting with DCC Highways concerning the Durham City Road User Charging Scheme.

The Chair thanked Councillors J Ashby and D Freeman for attending this meeting and advised that Parish Council representatives had expressed their strong support for the introduction of stricter traffic regulations in the city, noting the significant misuse of the medieval peninsula, particularly in the Market Place and Elvet Bridge areas.

The Chair reported that it was widely acknowledged that the problem intensified post-8pm when civil enforcement officers were no longer on duty, effectively creating an environment of unregulated vehicle access and parking.

The Chair expressed appreciation to DCC and NSL (parking enforcement) for their engagement on this matter, highlighting the collaborative joint enforcement operations carried out with Durham Constabulary during the summer and autumn of 2024.

All parties had agreed on the importance of presenting a unified stance at the upcoming DCC Highways Committee meeting, now anticipated to take place on 21st March 2025.

The Chair reported that the Parish Council representatives had expressed their strong support for increasing the access charge from £2 to £5 but had stressed the need for this to be implemented per access rather than as a daily charge. However, DCC officers had advised a more measured approach, recommending the introduction of a £5 per day charge. The Parish Council representatives had accepted this proposal on the condition that the new order would be reviewed for effectiveness approximately six months after being implemented.

It had been noted that if the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) including the £5 daily charge were approved in March, it could be enacted almost immediately. Otherwise, any further amendments would require a new consultation, potentially delaying implementation by up to nine months. However, should subsequent monitoring demonstrate that the TRO was insufficient in addressing the issue, an amendment to introduce a £5 per visit charge could be made within 18 months while maintaining the existing TRO and its benefits.

The Chair also reported that the Parish Council representatives had proposed that vehicles registered on the "white list" (those exempt from charges) should be

required to reapply annually, in the same manner as residents reapplying for permits. DCC officers had advised that key organisations, such as the University and the Cathedral, had their own restricted white list, which had been significantly reduced and was now linked to the number of off-street parking spaces available to each organisation. This development was welcomed as a key takeaway from the meeting.

Regarding enforcement, it was also confirmed that vehicles accessing Elvet Bridge outside of the permitted hours (2am-10am) would automatically receive a £60 fine (reduced to £30 if paid promptly), as this would constitute a moving traffic offence. APRN cameras would be used to detect such violations, though they could not be used to enforce parking infractions due to a legal change introduced by Lord Eric Pickles in 2012.

Members thanked the Chair and colleagues for attending this meeting with DCC Officers and **agreed** that the Parish Council should support the position of DCC officers at the upcoming Highways Committee in March 2025 and to work with officers in the ongoing monitoring of the scheme.

Environment Committee

Councillor V Ashfield presented the minutes from the Environment Committee meeting held on 14th January 2025. There were no queries from Members and Councillor V Ashfield moved on to Committee reports.

Proposals to support local groups the Durham City Riverscape Community and the Wear Rivers Trust and improve the River Wear.

Councillor V Ashfield reported that the City of Durham Parish Council had allocated a fund of £5,000 for the 2024/25 financial year to support a project aimed at improving the River Wear.

Councillor V Ashfield reminded Members that this initiative had been a significant priority for the Council's Environment Committee since 2022 and had typically included both financial contributions and collaboration with the Wear Rivers Trust as part of its Durham Peninsula Invasive Non-native Species (DP INNS) project.

The project has also received support from other key stakeholders in the City, notably the University and the Cathedral, as major landowners along the River Wear.

The DP INNS project had been an ongoing effort since 2021, aimed at coordinating efforts across the project area to manage and raise awareness of invasive non-native species (INNS), particularly Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, and Giant Hogweed. The project had already achieved various successes, including intensive survey efforts that had resulted in comprehensive maps of the project area, widespread management of the Giant Hogweed source within the Old Durham Beck system, and the establishment of an active and engaged

organisational register, with members meeting regularly for steering and operations group meetings.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that the Parish Council's Environment Committee had recently considered a funding proposal by the Wear Rivers Trust for volunteer events and school engagement. While school engagement had been welcomed and consistently funded since 2022, Councillor V Ashfield reported that the Committee had determined that priority should be placed on volunteer recruitment and activities.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that the Committee Chair has now requested that the Parish Council funds the printing and distribution (within the DH1 postcode area) of an information and volunteer recruitment leaflet, at a total cost of £1,800 (excluding VAT).

Additionally, Councillor V Ashfield highlighted that the Committee had expressed support for the recently established Durham City Riverscape Community (DCRC) Group. The group, comprising 213 members, had been dedicated to preserving and enhancing the River Wear's beauty throughout Durham City. Councillor V Ashfield advised that their efforts have ensured the riverscape remained an attractive and functional space for residents, visitors, and wildlife alike.

In addition to their well-publicised monthly litter-picking events, the group has facilitated discussions on ideas, visions, and creative solutions for addressing challenges affecting the City's most significant natural asset.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that the Environment Committee had approved the following funding proposals submitted by the DCRC:

- 1. Insurance for the activity (£112)** – Essential for the group to continue operating as an organised entity.
- 2. Long reach poles and hooks (3 units) (£282)** – Required to retrieve inaccessible litter due to challenging terrain.
- 3. Printed logos on Hi-Vis vests (50 units) (£175)** – Aimed at fostering group identity and encouraging responsible litter disposal.
- 4. Tear-drop flags (2 units) (£300)** – To publicise group activities and increase visibility.
- 5. Disposable rubber gloves (£132)** – Necessary for protection against contaminated litter.
- 6. Sustainable dispensers for antibacterial gel (£113)** – Environmentally friendly and cost-effective alternative to disposable dispensers.

The total funding request from the DCRC amounted to £1,067.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that both groups had confirmed that their activities would be covered by their own insurance policies and that they bore sole

responsibility for carrying out necessary risk assessments and procedures. They had also acknowledged that any funding received from the City of Durham Parish Council will be formally recognised in all promotional literature and online materials.

Councillor V Ashfield presented the report for Members to approve the funding requests as follows:

- Wear Rivers Trust: £1,800 for the production and distribution of an information and volunteer recruitment leaflet.
- Durham City Riverscape Community: £1,067 for the activities outlined above.

Councillor A Doig expressed concern at funding the insurance element of the request from the Durham City Riverscape Community as it had long been a tradition of the Parish Council that the Council did not fund core funding. Members felt that the activity carried out by the group was worthy of the Parish Council's full support and therefore **agreed** (by 8 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention) to fund each group to the total amounts and for the activities set out within the report.

Business Committee

Councillor D Freeman presented the minutes from the Business Committee meeting held on 19th November 2024. There were no queries from Members however Councillors V Ashfield and E Ashby expressed their ongoing disappointment that this Committee only met once every two months.

Finance Committee

Councillor A Doig presented the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on 15th January 2025. There were no queries from Members and therefore Councillor A Doig moved on to Committee reports.

Response to recent Section 106 application by DCC for a 20mph scheme outside St. Oswald's school.

Councillor A. Doig reported that the Parish Council had recently been consulted on a new Section 106 application submitted by Durham County Council's Traffic Assets Division. This application sought funding from the Elvet and Gilesgate division's Section 106 funds to support the installation of a part-time advisory 20mph speed limit in the vicinity of St Oswald's Church of England Primary School.

Councillor A Doig advised that the Parish Council's most recent Finance Committee had met to discuss this application and had submitted the following response which was **approved** (retrospectively) at this Full Council meeting by Members:

Thank you for consulting the Parish Council on this Section 106 application by Durham County Council for the installation of a part-time advisory school 20mph

scheme in the vicinity of St Oswald's Church of England Primary School. The City of Durham Parish Council writes to express its wholehearted support for this proposal.

Firstly, the Parish Council wishes to commend both Durham County Council and St Oswald's school for bringing forward this long-awaited initiative to improve pedestrian safety on Church Street. As the main route to and from the University's main campus as well as the location of the school along this road, Church Street is one of the busiest pedestrian streets in the City. The safety of school children and other pedestrians is of paramount importance and we fully support any measures which enhance road safety in our community.

Whilst the Parish Council has consistently advocated for a permanent 20mph speed limit running the entirety of Church Street, the Parish Council recognises the statutory and budgetary constraints which have influenced this proposal. In 2013, the Department for Transport provided revised guidelines on the **Setting Local Speed Limits (DfT Circular 01/2013)**, encouraging traffic authorities to consider introducing more 20mph limits over time, and over a larger number of roads. However, it also advises that 20mph limits are most appropriate where the mean speed (85th percentile) is already at or below 24mph. At present, we understand that the mean speeds on Church Street exceed this limit and therefore a 20mph speed limit covering the entirety of Church Street would only be possible with further (costly) traffic calming measures.

Notwithstanding this, and in considering the existing road layout, comprising side roads, accesses, parking and restrictions, current pedestrian usage and vehicle movements, the Parish Council appreciates that the introduction of physical traffic calming features to slow traffic down would likely to be inappropriate as they are generally aimed at maintaining lower speeds where an excess problem is present.

Additionally, the Parish Council recognises that there are minimum length requirements for the implementation of a standalone speed limit and Church Street falls short of these requirements. Considering this, a legal permanent speed limit could only be implemented if it included a wider area and this would certainly impact traffic flow and emergency response times in these city centre locations.

In recognising these constraints on the local traffic authority, we would invite Durham County Council to join us in further lobbying central Government to ensure that all roads adjacent to primary schools can be designated as 20mph zones, that the minimum length requirements be reviewed and that appropriate funding is allocated to local authorities to achieve this vital safety improvement.

On the application itself, we understand that the costs originally associated with this scheme may have been reduced to circa. £20,000. Before final approval of this funding application, we would appreciate confirmation of the total amount of funding now being sought and would particularly welcome the use of solar-powered signage as opposed to signs that rely on power from the grid. A solar-powered solution aligns better with our environmental commitments and will

contribute to reducing carbon emissions associated with the scheme's implementation.

The Parish Council also acknowledges concerns regarding the potential increase in emissions caused by vehicles slowing down and speeding up within the proposed advisory zone, particularly given that Church Street is already identified as an area of air quality concern. As such, the Parish Council is delighted to be proactively working with DCC's public transport team on its own Section 106 proposal to install new green roof bus shelters in the area. These shelters will play an important role in carbon capture and mitigating air quality issues. We look forward to submitting a funding bid for this initiative in due course and trust that Durham County Council will give this its full support.

We very much look forward to working with the County Council on the delivery of this proposal and would particularly be interested to learn more about how the effectiveness of this scheme is to be monitored once installed.

Thank you once more for consulting us on this proposal.

End of response

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair provided an update on matters arising since the last Full Parish Council meeting as follows:

The Chair extended thanks to all involved in the Lunar New Year event in the Market Place and confirmed that a wash-up session had been arranged. The Clerk has put forward a proposal for an organised bonfire event for next year following complaints about private firework displays. The Chair noted that DCC is recruiting a new International Officer who may take a leading role in future planning.

The Chair welcomed the news that The King and Queen are set to visit Durham Cathedral for the Royal Maundy Service on 17th April 2025. The visit was specifically requested by His Majesty, and extensive planning is currently underway.

The Chair was pleased to note that the redevelopment of the DLI Museum has progressed, with the steel structure now visible. The Parish Council wished all involved in the project well.

The Chair welcomed DCC's decision to proceed with negotiations for acquiring the Milburngate development, recognising that a Council-led intervention may be necessary to complete the site.

The Chair reminded Members of the official opening of the Rushford Court development, the new site for Hild & Bede College, on 12th March 2025 and encouraged attendance.

The Chair noted that the pre-election period begins on 20th March 2025 and reminded Members that the Clerk would not be taking on additional casework related to election canvassing.

The Chair thanked DCC for hosting a candidate information session for prospective Parish Councillors, acknowledging that this rendered the Parish Council's planned drop-in session unnecessary.

The Chair noted that the Clerk does not attend election counts by personal choice. All newly elected Councillors will receive an invitation from the Clerk to complete their acceptance of office and register of interests forms on 5th May 2025.

The Chair expressed gratitude to CDALC Larger Councils Forum for supporting the Parish Council's motion to introduce public health as a fifth licensing objective. The motion will now be considered by CDALC's Executive Committee.

The Chair thanked the Mayor, Councillor Liz Brown, for inviting all Members to the annual Mayor's Civic Dinner on 14th March, in aid of Feeding Families and StrayAid.

7. MOTION BY COUNCILLOR V ASHFIELD ON THE TEES VALLEY ENERGY RECOVERY FACILITY

Councillor V Ashfield presented a report setting out her concerns relating to the proposed Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that this facility had agreed in 2019 by four Tees Valley councils (Redcar and Cleveland, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, and Stockton), alongside Darlington, Durham County, and Newcastle City Councils.

Councillor V Ashfield set out that this project involved the construction of a new incineration facility in Teesside (Grangetown, Stockton), with an anticipated commercial operation date of no earlier than 2029. The authorities had signed a 29-year operating contract.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that the projected cost of the incinerator had exceeded £300 million, raising concerns over its financial viability and that the UK Government had proposed stricter environmental standards and charges on incineration emissions through the Emissions Trading Scheme, which could lead to significant additional costs for councils from 2028.

Councillor V Ashfield also advised that two participating councils, Newcastle and Stockton, were already reconsidering their involvement in the project.

Councillor V Ashfield expressed her concerns that recycling rates in the North East (31.2%) were the lowest in England, significantly trailing behind Wales (over 65%).

In addition, the 29-year contract would lock local authorities into producing high volumes of waste, particularly plastic, to sustain the incinerator, disincentivising recycling initiatives.

Councillor V Ashfield also expressed her concerns at the health impact of this facility on residents living nearby and advised that she was frustrated that public engagement on the project had been limited.

Councillor V Ashfield proposed the motion as set out in the report.

Councillor R Friederichsen expressed his strong support for this motion and echoed the concerns expressed by Councillor V Ashfield. Councillor R Friederichsen advised that he felt that this facility was contrary to the aims of County Durham to become Net Zero by 2050.

Councillor A Doig advised that he was concerned at the length of the contract DCC appeared to be signing up to with this facility.

Councillor D Freeman expressed his strong opposition to this motion and urged Members to vote against this as this facility had undergone the most rigorous regulatory scrutiny, including through the planning process where a Government Inspector had approved the proposal. Councillor D Freeman advised that there was no genuine alternative to this facility, which will deal with waste from 1.5 million homes in the North East. Councillor D Freeman highlighted that the only genuine alternative would be landfill and this is looking likely to be banned by the UK Government.

Councillor E Scott echoed the remarks of Councillor D Freeman and advised that these facilities were heavily regulated and the existing incinerators would come to the end of their working lives/ not meet current UK standards by 2026.

Councillor E Ashby proposed an amendment to the motion and this was seconded by Councillor V Ashfield. The amended motion was as follows:

"Given the UK Government's proposal to introduce new charges for sending waste to incineration, the City of Durham Parish Council requests Durham County Council to review the finances and other factors associated with the TVERF and re-evaluate, in conjunction with the six other signatory authorities, whether this delivers the most cost-effective and environmentally sustainable method of handling residual waste. The City of Durham Parish Council further agrees to copy this request to the other local authorities involved as well as the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) for consideration at their next meeting."

This motion was **agreed** by 6 votes in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention.

8. REPORT ON THE RECENT 'MAKING SUICIDE EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS' CONFERENCE

The Chair provided a report on the recent 'Making Suicide Prevention Everybody's Business' conference, hosted by Durham County Council on 18th February 2025.

The Chair advised that this event was aimed at raising awareness, fostering a shared ambition, and refining a comprehensive suicide prevention strategy. The Chair advised that this event brought together public health experts, emergency

service representatives, academics, and individuals with lived experience to discuss the current suicide landscape and actions required to address the issue.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to those involved in arranging this Conference and stressed some key takeaways from this event. Specifically, that this had reinforced the urgency of suicide prevention efforts and the importance of community-wide engagement.

The Chair advised that attendees had been encouraged to take an active role in implementing the revised strategy and fostering a culture of support and awareness.

The Chair also highlighted the need for additional support specifically for men, as well as increased mental health first aid training within the community and advised that, through her work with Merryoaks Community Hall, she would be looking to pursue some initiatives of this kind.

In noting the content of this report and thanking the Chair for representing the Parish Council at this event, Members unanimously **agreed** to support ongoing efforts to enhance suicide prevention initiatives within the community and the Clerk **agreed** to arrange mental health first aid training for all new Members post-May's election.

9. REPORT ON COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS' FORUM MEETING

The Chair presented the following report from the recent meeting of CDALC from 20th February 2025:

1. CDALC Executive Committee Report

A verbal report highlighted recent committee meetings, including financial updates and policy changes. The Executive Committee emphasized ongoing efforts to support local councils and improve governance structures.

2. May 2025 Local Elections

An overview of the upcoming local elections scheduled for 1 May 2025 was presented. Key points included nomination deadlines, voter registration dates, and election procedures. Councils were encouraged to attend training sessions on election management. Details Can be found here:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-parish-council-elections-england>

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/elections2025>

<https://cdalc.info/members-area/elections/>

3. Government Consultations & Devolution White Paper

Updates were provided on various government consultations, including:

- **Strengthening Standards and Conduct Framework** – Proposal for a mandatory code of conduct and potential powers for local authorities to suspend councillors for misconduct.
- **Local Audit Reform** – Strategies for improving local audit processes and accountability.
- **Remote Meetings & Proxy Voting** – Review of legislation allowing councils to conduct meetings remotely.
- **Local Authority Funding Reform** – New approaches to funding allocations and resource management.
- **English Devolution White Paper** – Potential impacts on local governance structures and enhanced roles for town and parish councils.

4. Workplace Recycling Regulations (Environment Act 2021)

New regulations coming into effect from 31 March 2025 will require workplaces to separate dry recyclables, food waste, and black bin waste. Local councils must ensure compliance by implementing appropriate waste management practices. (Not especially pertinent for CODPC.)

5. Addressing Alcohol-Related Harm Through Licensing Laws

We presented a proposal to advocate for amendments to the Licensing Act 2003. Key recommendations included adding a public health objective to licensing regulations and lobbying for policy changes to mitigate alcohol-related harm. This was approved after some discussion.

6. Partnership Working with Durham County Council (DCC)

- **Durham County Local Networks** – Updates on replacing Area Action Partnerships with Local Networks, scheduled for implementation post-May 2025 elections. The new boundaries will require new arrangements for Parish representation with one Parish representative from Belmont Parish, City of Durham, Framwellgate Moor Parish, Pitlington Parish, Sherburn Village Parish, and Shincliffe Parish for the proposed Durham Local Network. CDALC would like each Parish Council group to decide amongst themselves which council should provide their representation.
- **Register of Interest Forms** – Proposed updates to the system to enhance transparency and compliance. These will be ready in time for the newly elected councillors to complete.

7. Housing Allocations Policy Review

John Kelly from Durham County Council provided insights into proposed changes to housing allocation policies, focusing on improving fairness and accessibility. He urged councils and councillors to respond to the consultation which can be found here:

<https://letstalkcountydurham.co.uk/en-GB/folders/socialhousingpolicyreview> .

If CODPC is to respond it should be noted that the deadline for submissions is 12 March 2025.

8. Martyn's Law (Counterterrorism Measures)

Graham Wakeman and Andy Bailey discussed the impending Martyn's Law, which will introduce stricter security requirements for public venues. Councils were advised to prepare for compliance with counterterrorism measures, including risk assessments and emergency response planning. They are available for consultation with Parish Councils and community groups for free. (Audrey to forward on contact details.)

End of report

In thanking the Chair for representing the Parish Council at this meeting, Members warmly welcomed that CDALC's Larger Council's Forum had **agreed** to approve the City of Durham Parish Council motion on health as a licensing objective and recommend this to its Executive Committee at this meeting.

Due to the confidential nature of the following items, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the LGA 1972 Act and section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. At this point in time the press and the public were asked to leave the room.

10. REPORT FOLLOWING ANNUAL STAFF APPRAISAL WITH THE PARISH CLERK

The Council received and **approved** the report following the annual staff appraisal with the Parish Clerk and **agreed** that the Clerk should proceed with formal training on public safety for events.

The Council also **agreed** that a formal salary review should take place following the formation of the new Parish Council in May 2025.

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

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(27th March 2025)**

ITEM 6: PROPOSALS TO FUND THE PRODUCTION OF THE COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SAFETY CARD FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

As Members are aware, in recognition of the need to improve community resilience and emergency preparedness, the City of Durham Parish Council has developed and formally adopted the **City of Durham Community Emergency Plan**. This Plan was devised in collaboration with Durham County Council's **Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU)**, local residents' groups, and key stakeholders including Durham University, Durham Cathedral, and Durham Business Improvement District.

The Plan outlines a coordinated community response to a wide range of emergencies—from severe weather events to infrastructure failure and civil unrest—and provides vital guidance for residents. It is designed to support, not replace, the official response of emergency services and local authorities.

The Emergency Plan was agreed at a Full Council meeting several months ago and has since been formally adopted. It is currently awaiting a **trial run by the CCU**, which will test its operational effectiveness in a real-time scenario.

A central element of the Emergency Plan is the **Safety Card**. A prototype of this was included in the Plan adopted by Members and is included within this report too. This is intended as a compact, accessible reference guide to be distributed to every household within the parish area. The card will contain essential information including:

- Key emergency contact numbers
- Instructions on what to do in the event of specific emergencies
- Location of designated places of safety
- Details on how to activate or engage with the Community Emergency Plan

The Safety Card will ensure that all residents - particularly the elderly and those who do not use digital platforms - have clear and immediate access to crucial information during times of crisis.

To facilitate the production and distribution of the Safety Card, funding is required to cover the printing of high-quality, durable cards for all households in the City of Durham Parish as well as the distribution costs for these to go out to each household. The total cost for this is approximately £1,800.00 and Members have already agreed £2,000 towards this initiative.

Safety Card

The prototype of the Safety Card is included overleaf.



DURHAM CITY EMERGENCY CARD

Emergencies have shown us that being prepared at a community level can make a big difference to our resilience.

This Emergency Card was developed by the City of Durham Parish Council in consultation with neighbourhood Residents Associations. It has been created to help support residents in the event of an incident or emergency in Durham. An emergency could include any of the following incidents, either individually or in combinations:

- Extreme weather events, such as the effects of high winds, flooding, cold or snowfall
- Disruption to public utilities, such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone or the internet.
- Highway or transport disruption.

The Emergency Services and Local Authority will lead the emergency response. However, during the early phases of an incident, their resources may be overwhelmed. This is where an initial response can come from within the community, ensuring people are reassured, supported and, if appropriate, opening places of safety for people to seek refuge, prior to the emergency services taking control.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IN AN EMERGENCY

In an emergency and unless instructed to do otherwise by the emergency services:

- ***Stay at home*** if you can and it is safe to do so, provided you have some non-perishable food and water.
- ***Keep in contact with your neighbours*** - are they okay, do they need help?
- ***If you need help, ask a neighbour or any of the other points of contact that residents can use***
- ***In case you cannot stay at home, have ready a 'grab bag' of key things.***
- ***If you need (or would prefer) to leave your home*** (for example to stay with relatives, friends or at one of the places of safety), do let your neighbours know so that no one is worried about your welfare.
- ***Go to one of the local places of safety where you should be able to find support.***
- ***Don't panic!***

In an emergency, communications can be slow, confused or inconsistent. This Emergency Card is intended to provide a reassuring starting point for household action.

KEY CONTACTS

Name/Organisation	Telephone:
Emergency Services	999
Police non-emergency enquiries	101
Anti-terrorism hotline	0800 789 321
Crime stoppers	0800 555 111
Fire and Rescue Service - non-emergency enquiries	0345 305 8383
Civil Contingencies Unit email for activation notification	ccenquiries@durham.gov.uk
Civil Contingencies Unit telephone number for office hours enquiries	03000 264654
Health - non-emergency enquiries	111
Gas emergencies	0800 111 999
Electricity emergencies	0800 66 88 77
Emergency water leaks and sewerage	0345 717 1100
Social Care Direct - for concerns about someone's welfare	03000 267 979
Durham County Council Customer Services	03000 26 0000
Northern Powergrid general enquiries:	0800 011 3332
For power cuts, 24 hour emergency number:	0800 66 88 77
Northern Gas Networks	0800 040 7766
Durham County Council Environment, Health and Consumer Protection	03000 261 016



PLACES OF SAFETY

- Durham Cathedral
- St. Cuthbert's Church, North Road
- North Road Methodist Church
- The Big Jug, Claypath
- St. Nicholas' Church Youth Centre, Providence Row
- St. Cuthbert's Church, New Elvet
- St. Oswald's Church, Church Street
- St. Oswald's Institute, Church Street
- Radisson Hotel
- Merryoaks Community Centre
- Ustinov College Community Room

Durham City has a parish wide Emergency Plan that includes neighbourhood specific protocols, risk assessments and communication structures that will be used in emergencies to help provide awareness and support.

GRAB BAG ESSENTIALS

It's a good idea to have a 'grab bag' ready containing important items that you may need if you were evacuated from your home due to an emergency:

- ✓ Medication
- ✓ Important documents (insurance, ID etc.)
- ✓ Contact numbers (hard copy)
- ✓ Essential Toiletries
- ✓ Mobile phone, charger and power bank
- ✓ Cash and credit cards
- ✓ Warm waterproof clothing
- ✓ Bottled water and ready-to-eat food or snacks
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Wind up battery torch and radio (or torch and spare batteries)
- ✓ Baby food & care items
- ✓ Games for children
- ✓ Pet items



DECISIONS REQUIRED

1. To approve funding for the production and distribution of the Safety Card as part of the implementation of the Community Emergency Plan.
2. To delegate responsibility for overseeing the production and rollout of the Safety Card to the Parish Clerk and the Environment Committee.
3. To note the forthcoming trial of the Emergency Plan with the CCU and consider feedback from this trial.

ITEM 6: REPORT ON ACTIVITIES TO MARK THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY IN DURHAM CITY

On 8th May 2025, Durham City will be marking the historic 80th Anniversary of VE Day, alongside communities from across the nation coming together to unite and celebrate 80 years of peace since the end of World War II in Europe that so many millions paid the ultimate sacrifice to achieve it.

VE Day 80 is not only a tribute to those who fought for the freedom we all enjoy today, but is also a powerful reminder of the resilience and unity that have defined the country ever since.

The Parish Clerk has been working with key partners on the delivery of a series of events locally which will mirror the national protocol for this historic occasion.

On Monday 5th May, communities across the United Kingdom shall be coming together in an act of celebration during the Bank Holiday and are encouraged to host street parties and community get-togethers. The Clerk is working alongside DCC and Durham Markets Company on the delivery of a street party in Durham Market Place, including the provision of musical entertainment and (payable) food and drink offers (food vans, etc).

On Thursday 8th May at 9:00am, communities are being asked to undertake the VE Day Proclamation as the VE Day 80 flags are raised. With the closure of the Town Hall, the Clerk is presently investigating the best location for this to occur.

At 12 noon the same day, pipers will play a unique tune especially written for the occasion entitled 'Celebratum' from the top of the UK's four highest Peaks (Mount Snowdon, Scafell Pike, Slieve Donard and Ben Nevis).

At 6:30pm, Durham Cathedral and St. Nicholas Church will ring out in united celebration, alongside other Churches and Cathedrals throughout the nation.

At 9.30pm, over one thousand of beacons and hundreds of Lamp Lights of Peace will shine throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, with the flames from both representing the 'light of peace' that emerged from the dreadful darkness of war, along with the nation coming together at this special and unique one moment in time.

The Clerk is presently liaising with the Charter Trust and the City Freemen to investigate whether the costs of lighting the beacon (£1,800) could be shared between the three organisations. Last year, the costs of lighting the beacon fell entirely on the Parish Council and the Charter Trust funded the catered reception prior to this. It is not our intention to host such a reception this year.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to note the above report and to delegate all planning and budgetary responsibility (within the agreed budget parameters) for the delivery of these events to the Parish Clerk.
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ITEM 6: TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL EVENTS PLAN FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL DURING FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26.

As Members are aware, events play a crucial role in the delivery of the City of Durham Parish Council's work in our community.

Events form a big part of the Business Committee's work and serve as vital opportunities for bringing local residents together, fostering a sense of community spirit, and celebrating civic life within our parish area. In addition, these events significantly raise the profile of the Parish Council and drive vital footfall into the City, offering much-needed support to our local businesses and hospitality and retail sectors.

As part of its budget-setting process in January 2025, the Parish Council agreed a total allocation of £30,000 for events in the 2025/26 financial year under the Business Committee's budget. This budget reflects the Council's ongoing commitment to supporting high-quality events that deliver benefits across our community and represents a large part of the Parish Clerk's work.

In addition, as part of the Clerk's annual appraisal, the Personnel Committee has asked that he establishes a Gantt chart to demonstrate the cost and time investment of the Parish Council into these events from a personnel perspective. In order to facilitate this, the Council is being asked to approve this plan for financial year 2025/26.

The events, either delivered directly by or supported by the Parish Council, are vital for creating shared experiences, celebrating our diverse and vibrant community, and sustaining economic activity within the City of Durham parish area.

A significant amount of work has gone into ensuring the most effective use of this budget. The Parish Council has worked closely with a range of key stakeholders—including event organisers, local charities, cultural bodies, and business representatives—to ensure that these events are well-supported and align with the broader aims of the Council, including inclusivity, economic vibrancy, and community wellbeing.

The Business Committee is committed to working collaboratively with key stakeholders to ensure that every pound spent delivers maximum benefit and contributes to the ongoing success of our City and its business community.

Below is a summary of planned events for 2025/26 where the Parish Council is proposing to offer financial and logistical support, as agreed at the most recent meeting of the Parish Council's Business Committee:

Event name 2025/26	Date of event	Potential Parish Council contribution	Notes
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VE Day event	Thursday 8th May 2025	£2,500	Looking at street party in Durham Market Place on Bank Holiday and part-funding for a beacon lighting event on 8th May in line with national protocol - requires additional funding from Charter Trust / Freemen
Durham Pride	Saturday 24th - Sunday 25th May 2025	£5,000	Previous contribution of £3,000 but costs have increased significantly and there may be a shortfall in DCC funding for this event. AS supporting Mel find alternative sponsorship. Impressed by level of exposure and credit to sponsors.
Durham Regatta	Saturday 14th - Sunday 15th June 2025	£1,500	Same contribution as last year. Impressed by level of exposure and credit to sponsors.
Durham FRINGE Festival	Wednesday 23rd July to Sunday 27th July 2025	£5,000	Same contribution as last year. Impressed by level of exposure and credit to sponsors.
Durham DUCK race	Provisionally looking at 5th October 2025	£3,000	Previously committed this amount for event which did not take place in 2024. Durham BID applying for funding and leading on this event.
Durham City Children's Book Festival	TBC but usually last weekend in August	£1,000	Usual contribution of £3,500 however footfall stats from 2024 show little impact on footfall figures from this event and newly announced Seven Stories apparently going to support/ lead on this in future.
VJ Day Event	Friday 15th August 2025	£1,000	Not delivered previously but recognised by the recent Business Committee as equally as important as VE Day and therefore the Committee is keen to host

			an event to mark this important anniversary.
Uniformed Services Day	TBC but usually first Friday in November	£1,500	Same contribution as last year. Impressed by level of exposure and credit to sponsors.
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday 9th November 2025	£4,500	Parish Council is the civic host for this event.
Christmas events	Throughout December 2025	£5,000	Contribution primarily focused on supporting the Christmas Festival. Suggest reduction from £7,000 (2024) to £5,000 (2025) - other partners need to contribute, e.g. BID, DCC.
Lunar New Year 2026	Saturday 17th February 2026	£1,000	Same contribution as last year. Impressed by level of exposure and credit to sponsors.
		Total: £31,000.00	

**DECISION
REQUIRED**

For Members to approve the annual events plan for the City of Durham Parish Council during financial year 2025/26, as set out in the above report.

ITEM 8: REPORT FROM THE 'OPERATION MAUNDY' PLANNING GROUP

Notes from the Operation Maundy group – 4th March 2025.

Present: Adam Shanley (Parish Council), Paul Howard (Durham BID), Colin Wilkes MBE (Durham Markets), James Wilson (Durham Markets), Julie Marshall (Citrus Group), Joe Peat and Warren Goodwin (Durham County Council).

Notes

The Operation Maundy group expressed its delight that Their Majesties would be making a visit to Durham City for a Royal Maundy Service at Durham Cathedral on 17th April 2025. This is the first time a Monarch had visited Durham for the Maundy Service since 1967 and the group agreed that the City should ensure a warm welcome for Their Majesties.

The visit is not a Royal walkabout visit of the City and will purely be a Cathedral Service. During the service His Majesty will present 152 recipients, 76 men and 76 women (signifying the age of the Monarch), with specially-minted Maundy money to thank them for their outstanding Christian service and for making a difference to the lives of people in their local communities. These recipients have been selected from the Diocese of Durham and other dioceses across the Province of York and from Wales and Scotland.

The Cathedral was noted to be "pulling out all of the stops" for a spectacular Royal Service. The group noted the great success of the Cathedral in hosting these types of events.

The following action points are being progressed accordingly:

Action Point	Update	Notes/ further AP
Road closure to be in place in the peninsula from 6am on 17 th April but with pedestrian access still possible.	Adam Shanley to produce a letter to all businesses in the affected area. To be approved by the police and other partners.	Check with Sara Baxter on times that road closure will likely be lifted.
Musical entertainment in Market Place	Colin Wilkes has pencilled in Paul Skerritt (singer) for early morning music (10:00am – 10:45am). Paul brings a microphone and amp with him as kit. Adam Shanley has booked the North Tyneside Steel Band from 1:30pm (set up starting at approx. 1:15pm).	Intention is to create a buzz around the City and ensure additional dwell time in the City. Concern at report that DCC do not want to book musical acts on the day. Adam Shanley to confirm with Police/ DCC that music will be outside key times.

Royal-themed decoration around Prince Bishops e.g. umbrellas, etc.	Julie Marshall looking into royal-themed decorations around Prince Bishops	N/A
Business frontages	Adam Shanley designing large posters welcoming Their Majesties to go in each shop front window along the access route. Paul Howard also suggested window paintings and is looking into this.	Adam Shanley to circulate draft designs of business frontages. Paul Howard to confirm costs for window paintings. Paul Howard to advertise this to businesses.
Bunting on Saddler Street and Silver Street.	Approximately 500 metres of bunting is being produced by local WI groups around the County. This will be installed on 10 th April by Keith Dawson at both Saddler Street and Silver Street.	Each flag is 30cm in length and spaced 20cm apart (approx.). Once installed, point to check with Police/ DCC on any impact on CCTV, etc.
Knitted displays to be installed at Market Place post box and (possibly) street bollards along Saddler Street.	Local WI groups and Bridie (Neville's Cross) producing a showstopping topper for the post box and bollards on Saddler Street.	Adam Shanley to liaise with DCC and groups.
Frontages in Bloom	Paul Howard to contact businesses in order to launch the <i>Frontages in Bloom</i> business competition.	Durham BID to offer prize for best window.
Royal-themed breakfasts and Afternoon Teas	Paul Howard to launch a Restaurant Week-styled promo asking businesses to host Royal-themed Breakfasts and afternoon teas on the day as well as sell royal merchandise if a retail business.	Posters being produced by Adam Shanley could be a template for frontages with "Royal breakfasts served here..." type promo.
Jet washing and extra blooms	Joe Peat confirmed that jet washing of the peninsula would be	Joe Peat to look at show stopping hanging baskets for Magdeleine Steps. Sustainable

	taking place ahead of 17 th April.	hangers will already be in situ and baskets also being delivered to Prince Bishops.
Advertising	Parish Council and Durham BID to work on the production of an online advert promoting what is happening on the day.	IMPORTANT: exact timing of royal arrival, etc. cannot be published.

The group **agreed** to meet each Tuesday at 10:00am (virtually) with the final meeting of the group to take place **in-person** on Tuesday 15th April at 10:00am

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to note the above report and to delegate all planning and budgetary responsibility (within an allocated budget of £1,000) for the delivery of these activities to the Parish Clerk.
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