



City of Durham Parish Council

The City of Durham Parish Council. Office 3, Clayport Library. 8
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Date of summons: 19th June 2025

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council: Councillors V Ashfield, G Bignardi, L Brown, T Cleaver, R Cornwell, D Freeman, R Handy, G Holland, E Hopgood, C Lattin, P Layton, F Robinson, E Scott, S Walker and L Wilson.

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 **Wednesday 25TH June 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 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 28TH MAY 2025**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. COMMITTEE UPDATES**
 - **Finance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 14th February 2025**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:
<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/environment-committee/>
 - Report on financial position of the Parish Council at the start of Financial Year 2025-26
 - Report on grant applications from local community and voluntary organisations for Financial Year 2025-26
- 6. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 28th May 2025.
- 7. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN EDITORIAL WORKING GROUP TO SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER**
- 8. PLANNING EVENTS TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY OVER JAPAN DAY**
- 9. PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO THE DURHAM CITY SAFETY HUB**
- 10. REQUEST TO SUPPORT THE MAYOR'S CHARITY APPEAL**
- 11. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S CLIMATE LEAD**
- 12. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ARMED FORCES CHAMPION**

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.

13. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO THE DURHAM CITY BEACON

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the annual meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Wednesday 28th May 2025 at 7:00pm in the Main Hall of the Merryoaks Community Hall, Park House Rd, Durham DH1 3QF.

Present: Councillors V Ashfield, G Bignardi, L Brown, T Cleaver, R Cornwell, D Freeman, R Handy, G Holland, E Hopgood, C Lattin, P Layton, F Robinson, E Scott, S Walker and L Wilson.

Also present: Parish Clerk Adam Shanley and 5 members of the public.

Councillor S Walker opened the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor S Walker was **elected** (9 votes in favour and 4 abstentions) as Chair of the Parish Council for the ensuing year. Proposed by Councillor E Scott and seconded by Councillor L Brown. Councillor S Walker read out and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of this Office.

There were no other nominations for the role of Chair.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor D Freeman was proposed by Councillor G Holland and seconded by Councillor C Lattin for the role of Vice-Chair.

Councillor R Cornwell was also proposed by Councillor V Ashfield and seconded by Councillor F Robinson for the role of Vice-Chair.

Councillor D Freeman was **elected** as Vice-Chair of the Parish Council by 8 votes to 5.

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

None received.

4. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

5. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2025 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

7. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 24th April 2025 as follows:

- The Chair extended congratulations to all Members on their successful election to the City of Durham Parish Council and commended the positive campaigns run ahead of the May local elections. The Chair noted that, although the Parish Council was still young in comparison to others across County Durham, new Members could be proud at joining one of only three Parish Councils in the county and one of just 100 nationally to have achieved the National Association of Local Councils' Quality Status Award.
- The Chair advised that the Parish Council fully accepted the democratic outcome of the recent elections and would be working with all of the new County Councillors to ensure the City's voice remained prominent, especially in matters concerning cultural heritage, diversity, clean air and climate change; all of which are major issues for the City.
- The Chair extended her congratulations to the organisers of the recent Durham Pride event, which took place the previous weekend. The Chair reported that Mel Metcalfe and his team had delivered another successful event and she was delighted to have attended alongside the Clerk and Councillors Brown and Hopgood. The Chair emphasised the importance of Pride as a celebration of diversity, equality and inclusion in the City.
- The Chair thanked the Clerk and Durham Markets Company for the successful organisation of VE Day events earlier in the month. The Chair highlighted that the Parish Council's recent street party in Durham City had received BBC coverage. She also thanked Councillors Ashfield and Lattin for supporting the beacon lighting event in the Clerk's absence, alongside the Fire and Rescue Service. Special thanks were given to District Manager Gary Tough and his team for enabling the event to proceed at significantly reduced costs.
- The Chair highlighted that the Parish Council had recently hosted an annual meeting of the parish and extended her thanks to Durham University for hosting the event free-of-charge at the Waterside building. The Chair reported a strong turnout and noted that several well-deserved awards had been presented. The Chair also thanked Dave Clarke for his presentation and for addressing public questions regarding community safety and the Public Space Protection Order. The Chair noted that a first-ever request for a parish poll had not gained sufficient support to proceed.
- The Chair reminded Members of the upcoming Councillor training sessions and reminded anyone yet to book on these sessions to please contact the Clerk by the end of the week.
- The Chair also reminded Members that the Clerk would be on annual leave until 16th June and would be unavailable via email during this period.
- Finally, the Chair extended her congratulations to the founders of Seven Stories on the launch of the new Two Tales unit at Prince Bishops Place. The Chair

reported that the centre featured a gallery, interactive storytelling, and educational workshops. The Chair advised that she was delighted to have attended the opening of Two Tales and wished Claire Riley, Richard O'Neill, Wendy Elliott, and the team every success, expressing hope that the venture would significantly boost the local high street.

8. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE PARISH COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COUNCIL POLICIES

Members were asked to consider the formation of a dedicated, time-limited Working Group to undertake the annual review of the Parish Council's core governance documents. The Clerk highlighted that this included the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Committee Terms of Reference, and various Council Policies.

In addition to the existing documents, the Chair reported that the Working Group would also consider a new Gifts and Hospitality Policy, following correspondence earlier in the month.

The Chair explained that the purpose of the review was to ensure that all governance documents remained current, legally compliant, and reflective of best practice in Parish Council operations. Although not a statutory requirement, the Council had a well-established practice of reviewing these documents annually to maintain high standards of governance, transparency, and accountability.

The Clerk advised that the Working Group would be tasked with reviewing each document in detail; taking advice from the Clerk on any relevant legislative changes since the last review in 2024; identifying any sections requiring amendment or clarification; and bringing forward recommended revisions to a future meeting of the Parish Council for formal adoption.

The Chair noted that, following approval of the updated documents in June, the next review would be scheduled for April 2026 with adoption in May.

Members unanimously **agreed** to the formation of this time-limited Governance Review Working Group and also **agreed** the Councillors S Walker, V Ashfield, C Lattin and R Cornwell should form the membership of this Working Group.

9. TO DECIDE ON APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Members considered the current list of Parish Council representatives on all of the local organisations listed in the report to Council.

Members also considered that the Parish Council has agreed to have a representative on outside local organisations only where the aims of these groups are aligned with the strategic objectives of the Parish Council in the exercise of its functions.

Members also noted that there is a need for all Parish Council representatives to provide a report to Full Council on the work of these organisations/ bodies following each meeting they attend.

In view of this, Members agreed to retain an official Parish Council representative on each of the following groups and the respective representative on each group was also unanimously agreed as follows:

Local organisation/ body	City of Durham Parish Council representative
Community Engagement Task Force	Victoria Ashfield
Community Engagement Task Force sub group - Economic	Elizabeth Scott
Community Engagement Task Force sub group - Lived Environment	Giuseppe Bignardi
CDALC Larger Councils Forum	Susan Walker, Fred Robinson and Adam Shanley
City Safety Group	Adam Shanley
Durham BID board	Adam Shanley
Durham University Housing Group	Roger Cornwell

10. TO DECIDE ON PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chair highlighted that there is a need for the Parish Council to agree the membership of each of its Committees. The report presented to Members highlighted the specific functions of each of the Committees and Members were asked to consider which of these Committees they wished to sit on.

The Clerk advised that a quorum for all of the Committees is presently no fewer than three Members. The Clerk also highlighted that, in all cases, the maximum number of Members per committee is set out within the Terms of Reference for each Committee

Councillor V Ashfield advised that each Committee should have a membership which is formed proportionately based on the overall political makeup of the Council.

Councillor L Brown proposed that the Committees should be able to commence following provisional agreement of their membership at this meeting but that this matter should be reviewed in September 2025 instead of waiting until May 2026 for the next Full Council meeting. This proposal was agreed unanimously.

In light of this, the membership of each Committee was unanimously **agreed** as follows:

Planning and Licensing Committee (7 Members) Grenville Holland Liz Brown Susan Walker Carole Lattin Roger Cornwell Philip Layton Rory Handy	Environment Committee (6 Members) Carole Lattin Victoria Ashfield Tony Cleaver Giuseppe Bignardi Grenville Holland Fred Robinson
Personnel Committee (5 Members) Susan Walker David Freeman Roger Cornwell Giuseppe Bignardi Victoria Ashfield	Business Committee (6 Members) Philip Layton David Freeman Elizabeth Scott Ellie Hopgood Rory Handy Les Wilson
Finance Committee (6 Members) Susan Walker Liz Brown Ellie Hopgood Elizabeth Scott Victoria Ashfield Les Wilson	

In addition, to support the creation of a timetable of meetings, Members unanimously agreed that the first meeting of each Committee should be as follows:

- **Planning and Licensing Committee** – Friday 27th June at 10:00am via Zoom.
- **Environment Committee** - Tuesday 24th June at 13:00pm via Zoom.
- **Personnel Committee** - Wednesday 5th November at 11:00am at Clayport
- **Business Committee** - Tuesday 15th July at 13:00pm via Zoom.
- **Finance Committee** - Friday 20th June at 11:00am at Clayport library.

It was highlighted that, in all cases, a special meeting of each Committee may be called at any time.

Members also **agreed** to continue with the tradition that no Committees should sit in August or December.

11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR 2024/25

- I. Members unanimously **agreed** the actions arising from the report of the internal auditor 2024-25
- II. Members unanimously **approved** the annual governance statement 2024-25
- III. Members unanimously **approved** the draft annual accounts for 2024-25
- IV. Members unanimously **approved** the register of assets 2024-25
- V. Members unanimously **approved** the accounting statement and explanation of variances 2024-25.

In closing this item, the Chair took the opportunity to thank the Clerk for all his work throughout the year in maintaining the Council's accounts and his work in the governance of the Council.

12. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S CLIMATE LEAD

Councillor R Cornwell highlighted that the nomination process for this role requires a Member/ Members to apply to the Clerk no later than 7 clear working days prior to the meeting and he had only received the Agenda and notification of this 3 clear working days prior to the meeting (not including the date of publication of the Agenda and the date of the meeting). As such, it was unanimously **agreed** to defer this item until the June Full Council meeting.

13. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ARMED FORCES CHAMPION

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14. CYCLE OF FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members unanimously **agreed** the following cycle of Full Council meetings for the year ahead:

2025

Wednesday 25th June

Wednesday 23rd July

Wednesday 24th September

Wednesday 22nd October

Wednesday 26th November

2026

Wednesday 28th January

Wednesday 25th February

Wednesday 25th March

Wednesday 22nd April

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15. ARRANGEMENTS FOR UPCOMING REMEMBRANCE EVENTS

Members **agreed** to work in collaboration with both the County Council and the Freeman's Charitable Trust on the delivery of upcoming remembrance events, specifically taking account of ensuring both safety and best value-for-money in delivering these important events.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk should liaise with appropriate Officers and representatives of each organisation on these matters.

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

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(25th June 2025)**

ITEM 5: REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL AT THE START OF FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-26

After a total expenditure of £263,296 in financial year 2024-25, the Parish Council carried £97,439 over to this current financial year (2025-26). In addition to this, £7,654 is to be refunded as part of a VAT rebate from expenditure incurred in 24-25 in this current financial year, resulting in a total of £105,093.

Of this £105,093:

- **£45,000** is held in general reserves.
- **£5,000** is held in election reserves.
- **£36,330** is presently ringfenced for the same project(s) to be carried over into financial year 25-26 as follows:
 - £15,000 from the staffing budget towards grant fundraising support (£5,000 already allocated).
 - £2,350 from the professional planning support (allocated to Article 4 report).
 - £8,263 from the planting budget (originally earmarked for the Market Place improvement project but used to reduce precept request for 25-26).
 - £4,878 from the Improving the River Wear project (additional £5,000 agreed in the budget for 25-26, of which £2,500 is allocated).
 - £3,839 allocated to Green Move Out (raised on the basis of this priority so must be attached to this – there will also be a further appeal later this financial year).
 - £2,000 from the emergency plan project (additional £2,000 agreed in the budget for 25-26).

On this basis and the understanding that each non-ring-fenced project/ priority is either removed or further budget was added for 25-26, £18,763 needs to either be reallocated or put into reserves. In agreeing its budget for 25-26 in January 25, the Parish Council provisionally proposed that £10,000 could be allocated towards the Operation Lentil budget (presently sitting at £40,000) but this is yet to be formally agreed by Full Council.

In agreeing its budget for financial year 2025-26, the Parish Council agreed an ambitious programme of work with a total precept request of £292,172.28. Copies of the Council's budget and strategy for 2025-26 have been circulated to all Members.

Our total income to date in 25-26 is £293,064.30 (including precept + £897 refund for the Battle of Neville's Cross leaflets (S106 funded project)).

Our total expenditure to date is £42,579.26 and all spends are within allocated budget headings.

The Parish Council has recently undergone a successful internal audit by Gordon Fletcher and once more the Parish Council has been commended for its excellent governance and procedures.

At the Finance Committee meeting of 20th June 2025, Members agreed to recommend the reallocation of funding as follows, taking account of underspent budgets:

- £3,000 was moved from the Improving the River Wear budget, leaving approx. £4,300 remaining in this budget for FY25-26.
- £5,000 was moved from the (fundraising support) staffing budget in relation, leaving £8,750 in this budget for FY25-26 (of which up to £3,750 is already earmarked).
- £13,000 was added to the Council's events budget (taking account of upcoming Autumn events as well as the Christmas light switch on).
- £2,000 was added to the administration of the Council budget.
- £7,181 was added to the small grants budget, taking into account the demand for grants this financial year.
- £3,000 was added to the business events grant fund this financial year.
- £2,000 was added to the contingencies budget.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to consider the financial information provided as part of this report and agree to the recommended reallocation of budgets as set out above.
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ITEM 5: REPORT ON GRANT APPLICATIONS 2025-26

Members are reminded that at the January (2025) meeting of the Full Parish Council, Councillors formally agreed to allocate £15,000 of the budget for 2025/26 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 parishes' 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 2025 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 2024 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 2025. Members have been provided with the full details of all applications.

The Finance Committee met on Friday 20th June and their recommendation for each application is included in the grid below.

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 below and to approve an appropriate funding allocation to each project.
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Organisation	Project	Amount requested	Amount agreed by Finance Committee
Alington House	To re-establish a garden group within Alington House, growing fruits and vegetables which the volunteers can take home and encouraging wellbeing by working in the outdoors. Since Covid we had a volunteer project from Ingeus repair access and build a seating area which our users enjoy but many have expressed an interest in gardening again and we are looking for funds towards extra accessible planters (we had raised beds built but these are down steps that are uneven) and plants	£750	£750
Artichoke	A grant from City of Durham Parish Council would enable us to engage Parishioners in a curator-led tour of the festival before it opens to the public, with opportunities to meet the creative team, learn about the artworks and celebrate Lumiere as a community. We will target communities who are underserved by creative activities and who face barriers to taking part, including low-income families. We have strong links with local schools and community groups, and we would work with City of Durham Parish Council to identify priority communities to engage in the tour. We will also work with the Parish Council to promote volunteering opportunities to Parishioners during the festival. Lumiere volunteers guide audiences and provide information about the artworks, meeting new people, developing their confidence and gaining a sense of community pride and belonging.	£1,000	£0

Durham Hospital Radio	The station has an item of equipment which urgently needs repairing at a cost of £1570. Also a contribution of £1430 against our annual running costs would be extremely beneficial.	£3,000	£1,570
Durham Scratch Choir	New printer to print all the music sheets for our choir	£250	£300
Durham Woodland Cemetery	Apart from a ring-fenced grant from Durham Crematorium Fund for 5 memorial benches for each of the glades in the cemetery our funds barely cover even our basic expenses (insurance etc). Our income prior to the covid pandemic came primarily from the hire of the lodge at the Woodland cemetery by families wishing to hold funeral services and memorials. Sadly the lodge has suffered severe storm damage to the roof, for the repair of which we have been quoted around £7000. We are intending to apply to Point North for a grant to help with this repair. We will then be able once again to hire out the lodge to bereaved families as mentioned. As a newly formed group of trustees we are also looking at various ways whereby we can raise regular funds including a possible nominal annual subscription from our membership. In the meantime, we would like to promote the Cemetery and provide information leaflets for funeral Directors and the general public. We are eager to attract volunteer working parties who would assist in the conservation of the area and keep it in good order. We would also like to improve the facilities offered by the lodge. Other than that, we depend upon donations and gift aid.	£500	£500

Friends of Pelaw Woods	We require materials - wood, drains, tools. To date this year we have purchased wood, a pond liner and new scythes. We also hire a contractor to cut the grass in autumn in specific locations. Over the last 4 years we have been spending donations generated by the former Chairman opening his private garden. These reserves are now spent. The current bank balance is £64. The proposed grant will fully fund us for the forthcoming 12 months.	£350	£350
Seven Stories	The Tiger Who Came to Tea touring exhibition from Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books, delivers an unforgettable in-centre experience for children and their grown-ups — combining nostalgia, photo opportunities, and interactive fun. This will increase family footfall, dwell time, and social media buzz this summer. Supported by the Seven Stories unique story telling free to families throughout the day. We will also run book donations weekly whilst this exhibition is in Two Tales supporting books into communities.	£6,000	£2,700

St. Nicholas Community Forum	SNCF DELI COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT: SNCF commenced a community garden project January 2025 – the SNCF Deli Community Garden Project. Our aim is to provide a space where the local community can work together to grow chemical free produce throughout the year and share gardening skills and knowledge. The area is inclusive, child friendly and supports the environment and wildlife. By May 2025 we have 15 regular gardeners, mostly novices, but also wider community support from many other people within the local area who get involved when they can, help as needed with larger jobs, give donations of tools, plants and advice. We promote the project through local forums to encourage other residents to get involved and have linked with the University and students are welcome to join when they can. The community garden has already become something more than a communal space to grow produce. It is flourishing into a space of wellbeing, creativity, growing social connections and friendships. There are opportunities for everyone involved to share and learn gardening, woodwork, produce growing, environment, nature and wildlife skills and knowledge. Together we have cleared the site and planted a large variety of vegetables and herbs, all are growing successfully. We plan to further develop the community garden; to maximise produce growing space and the potential for more members of the local community to be involved. We would like to apply for funding to purchase staging for the existing polytunnel in the garden	£2,964	£2,964
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	(we are currently using makeshift shelves which limit the growing area), a greenhouse where we can grow more produce all year round and a small shed which will be custom made to be accessible and green, using reclaimed wood and a sedum roof. The shed will be used to safely store away tools under cover and resources that can be used by our community gardeners (seeds, gardening guides, etc). This will help us maximise use of the space we have. We are requesting support for Stage Two of the garden development – polytunnel staging, a greenhouse (which includes greenhouse structure, installation, materials to prepare the base, internal staging, automatic window open system and gutter and water butt to utilise rainwater), a small green roof shed and seed trays/plant pots for planting. The SNCF Deli Community Garden has Public Liability Insurance and comprehensive risk assessments for all activities. All necessary requirements are in place for student volunteering opportunities through Durham University volunteer platforms. We are a new member of Social Farms & Gardens and look forward to working towards their vision: 'People and communities reaching their full potential through nature-based activities as a part of everyday life' and have joined the RHS Grow With It national programme to get year-round community growing support.		
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St Cuthbert's Hospice	Our gardens continue to be a focal point of the hospice and are enjoyed by our patients and visitors. 2025 is an extra special year because we have been chosen to be the recipient of the "Hospice Garden" which will be showcased at the Chelsea Flower Show in May. Afterwards it will be rebuilt in our grounds for the benefit and enjoyment of everyone who visits us. The additional garden will improve our grounds and continue to provide sensory stimulation and therapeutic benefits not only to our patients but to everyone who visits. The grant would be used to improve the site/garden and complete essential repairs which will contribute to our grounds being a welcoming and peaceful place for all who visit them. We anticipate at least 1000 would visit our gardens which includes patients, families, carers, health care professional, staff, volunteers and the public.	£4,250	£0
St Margaret's Centre	To purchase IT equipment (3 x laptops) to help us deliver activities, training and support.	£1,047	£1,047
St Oswald's Institute	Renovation of kitchen to include: isolation of gas supply; creation of serving hatch with food warmer below; provision of electric refreshment preparation and food reheating facilities, in line with C. of E. 2030 net zero target, for e.g. providing soup and Warm Space, and other community functions.	£5,000	£12,000
	Total:		£22,181

ITEM 7: PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN EDITORIAL WORKING GROUP TO SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER

In April 2025, the Parish Council adopted its External Communications Strategy, which commits the Council to delivering a quarterly newsletter.

This newsletter is in addition to its existing monthly Neighbourhood Warden report and the annual Chair's report. The strategy identifies this newsletter as a key means of informing residents, partners, and stakeholders of the work of the Parish Council, promoting local democracy, and enhancing community engagement.

A well-produced and accessible newsletter can strengthen trust, raise awareness of the work of the Parish Council and foster a more informed and active community.

Members of the public are able to sign up to gain access to the latest copy of the Parish Council's newsletter online via the Council's website.

Whilst three editions of the newsletter shall be online, at least one edition of the newsletter (that which is published in October) shall be hard copy printed and delivered. Whilst a printed version of each edition of the newsletter would be the ideal, the printing and delivery costs for this make this prohibitive.

In order to support the production of this newsletter, it is proposed that a small Editorial Working Group be established. This group will be tasked with supporting the Clerk in identifying key content, reviewing draft material, and helping to promote the newsletter.

It is proposed that:

- The Editorial Working Group should include no fewer than three elected Members, alongside the Parish Clerk.
- All political groups represented on the Parish Council should be represented on the Working Group to ensure fairness, balance, and inclusivity.
- The Working Group should aim to meet at least once per quarter, in advance of the publication of each newsletter.

A proposed Terms of Reference for this Working Group is included below:

Terms of Reference – Editorial Working Group

The City of Durham Parish Council has established this Editorial Working Group, in order to support the production of a quarterly newsletter and ensure that the content reflects the aims and objectives of the Parish Council's External Communications Strategy.

This Working Group shall have delegated authority from Full Council to produce and publish each newsletter.

The newsletter shall be published in July, October, January and April.

Membership:

- Minimum of three elected Members of the Parish Council
- Parish Clerk (serving in an advisory and editorial capacity)
- Membership should include representatives from each political group on the Council
- The Membership of this Working Group shall be reviewed each year at the annual meeting of the Council in May.

Purpose of this Working Group

- Identify, gather and propose content for inclusion in the quarterly newsletter
- Ensure the tone, balance and messaging of the newsletter aligns with the Parish Council's external communications strategy and policies
- Review and provide feedback on draft editions ahead of publication
- Promote the newsletter to residents and stakeholders
- Consider resident feedback to inform future editions
- Operate in a non-partisan and inclusive manner

Meeting Frequency:

- At least four times per year (once per quarter)
- Additional meetings may be scheduled if needed for special editions

DECISIONS REQUIRED	1) For Members to agree to the establishment of this Editorial Working Group, as set out in the above report. 2) With 1 being approved, for Members to agree the Terms of Reference of this Working Group. 3) With 1) and 2) being agreed, for Members to agree the Membership of this Editorial Working Group.
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ITEM 8: PLANNING EVENTS TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY OVER JAPAN DAY

Members are aware that the City of Durham Parish Council has taken a leading role in the organisation of events to mark important anniversaries in our nation's history.

The 80th anniversary of VJ Day (Victory over Japan) takes place on Friday 15 August 2025, commemorating the end of the Second World War.

While VE Day (Victory in Europe) marked the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still engaged in fighting in the Far East. Victory over Japan would come at a heavy price, and Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) marks the day Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945, which ended the Second World War.

Fighting in the Asia-Pacific took place from Hawaii to North East India. Britain and the Commonwealth's principle fighting force, the Fourteenth Army, was one of the most diverse in history – more than 40 languages were spoken, and all the world's major religions represented.

The descendants of many of the Commonwealth veterans of that army are today part of multicultural communities around the world, a lasting legacy to the success and comradeship of those who fought in the Asia-Pacific.

This 80th anniversary represents a significant national and local opportunity to remember the sacrifices made during the war and to pay tribute to veterans and civilians who contributed to the war effort.

Members are also reminded that the Parish Council has agreed a provisional budget of £1,000 towards hosting an event to mark VJ Day.

It is expected that the programme of events to mark this important anniversary will include:

- A commemorative service on Friday 15 August 2025 at Durham Cathedral, to which veterans, local dignitaries, residents, and school representatives would be invited.
- The Cathedral will be lit once more in red to mark this important anniversary.
- The Clerk has been liaising with The Story on a special exhibition of items from the archives and DLI collections to be on display for visitors to view in the Collections Room, including items belonging to the Durham Light Infantry. This was successfully delivered for VE Day in May.

- The Clerk has also been looking into arranging a showing of the movie *Unbroken* - which follows the story of a POW in Japan during WWII – during August in the City.
- A reception in the Durham Room at County Hall followed by the lighting of the Durham City beacon on 15th August 2025.

The Durham City Freemen Charitable Trust have offered £2,000 funding towards the reception and beacon lighting event and it is hoped that the Parish Council might be willing to contribute towards the cost of the reception for such an event. The Charitable Trust has expressed a desire to have the beacon lit in the usual manner and is offering to finance this aspect of the event.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	1) For Members to approve the above schedule of events, including the hosting of a beacon lighting alongside colleagues at the Durham City Freemen Charitable Trust, at County Hall. 2) If 1 is approved, for Members to delegate all budgetary and logistical responsibility for these events to the Parish Clerk.
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ITEM 9: PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO THE DURHAM CITY SAFETY HUB

As Members are aware, the Parish Council had been a significant funding partner for the City Safety Hub at St. Nicolas Church. In setting its budget for 2025/26, the Council agreed to provide £10,000 worth of funding for the hub for this financial year. This is in addition to the funding provided in 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 of £10,000 each year.

Background to the hub

In Summer 2021, the Home Office invited applications for the latest round of Safer Streets (SS3) funding. The initiative was aimed at implementing improvements for the safety of public spaces. Shortly after release, another funding opportunity linked to Safer Streets was launched.

This opportunity was specifically aimed at the Safety of Women and Girls at Night (SWaN). The same organisation could not bid for both funds, so working in partnership, the Police and Crime Commissioner's office applied for SS3 and DCC applied for the SWaN funds.

Although the projects complimented each other, the SWaN bid could not contain any matters applied for under SS3. The spend on both bids had a challenging target date and was to be delivered by the end of March 22 and the funding could not be carried forward beyond that date. In November 2021, it was announced that the SWaN bid had been successful although SS3 had not.

The SWaN bid had four key elements

1. The appointment of a co-ordinator to oversee and deliver the project
2. Delivering vulnerability training to key staff working in the night time economy and situational awareness training to University Students
3. Deliver a Comms campaign highlighting the issue of safety of women and reporting of sexual harassment
4. Deliver a night hub on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights which could provide a safe space for women should they feel at risk or vulnerable. The Hub would also be manned by staff of DCC who would also assist others in the night time economy when required

The original plan was to secure a retail unit and refit it to suit the operational needs of the hub. Due to the complexities of securing a unit and the costs of refit, this option very quickly became impractical so an alternative solution was sourced.

Positive liaison with St Nicholas Church resulted in an agreement to use that venue for the night hub. The venue is already used by Durham Street Lights and it was agreed that a room in the church could be suitably adapted to meet the needs of the hub.

The Safety Hub in operation

Since opening on the 5th February 2022, the hub has proven to be a positive and at times life-saving facility for Durham City on the busiest three nights of the week

(Wednesday, Friday and Saturday). Working between the hours of 9pm and 3am, the Hub has provided necessary support, assistance and guardianship not only to females in a vulnerable or at-risk state, but also males in a similar situation. These incidents can range from the most serious life-threatening issues to the every day care and wellbeing facility.

Members have been provided with incident log data from the last six months of the hub's operations and the following observations should be highlighted:

- Wellbeing and welfare issues are consistently the highest each month and also indicate an ongoing need for welfare checks and mental health-related support in the city centre. Incidents of intoxication are also high.
- Female-related incidents have outnumbered male-related incidents every month of the hub's operation.
- There are no recorded incidents of spiking having taking place and sexual offences are also extremely low.

Running costs

The major running costs for the hub involve its staffing and security along with general resources and the room hire costs. Th running costs have been reduced through successful negotiation with St. Nic's Church who have significantly reduced the room hire costs and DCC has entered into a more cost-effective security contract with the security provider.

However, whilst the Hub has been running each Wednesday, Friday and Saturday since February 2022, the ongoing need to finance the hub in a restricted funding environment means that the hub will be closing on a Wednesday moving forwards.

The annual running cost for the Safety Hub for Friday and Saturday nights only will be approximately £69,000.

Durham County Council, the lead partner behind the Safety Hub, has approached all partners to seek a more sustainable funding model for the Hub. To date, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and DCC's Public Health teams have confirmed funding for this year of the hub and ongoing discussions are taking place with Durham BID and Durham University.

It has always been the hope of the Parish Council that the hub could be funded into the long-term by the night time economy trade itself and the Parish Council recently submitted evidence to support a late-night levy for the City centre during the consultation into the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to agree to provide £10,000 funding for the City Safety Hub, as set out in the above report.
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ITEM 10: REQUEST TO SUPPORT THE MAYOR'S CHARITY APPEAL

The Parish Council has received correspondence from the Mayor's PA at Durham County Council on behalf of newly elected Mayor of Durham City Councillor Gary Hutchinson, asking if we would consider supporting this year's Mayor's Charity Appeal.

Following his election as Mayor in May 2025, Councillor Gary Hutchinson announced that he would be supporting St Cuthbert's Hospice as his charity this year; a charity close to his heart.

Background to St. Cuthbert's Hospice

Over three decades ago, a group of Durham residents came together for a common cause. They saw the absence of care and support available for those coming to the end of their lives and decided to take action. Thanks to their many years of fundraising and dedication, St Cuthbert's Hospice first opened its doors in 1988 to provide services, free of charge, for people with advanced illness, people approaching the end of their lives and those who are bereaved.

They have been providing care to people in our community ever since.

St Cuthbert's Hospice's care teams can support people at any stage, from diagnosis, to living well with their illness to their last days. Whether it's helping with pain relief, supporting a loved one or just being there to listen, they understand that sometimes it's the little things that can make the biggest difference.

Hospice care is quite unlike many other types of care. The team treat everyone as an individual, spending time learning what is important to them and focusing on delivering care suited to their wishes.

They have a 10 bedded In-Patient Unit, which delivers care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This may be for end-of-life care or to help patients with symptom management.

The also offer Day Services called the 'Living Well Centre', which gives people with life-limiting conditions, and their carers, the opportunity to spend an enjoyable, activity-based or relaxing day at the Hospice. Laughter and chatter can often be heard from our guests who attend the Living Well Centre.

The Hospice couldn't do what they do without the support of the local community which they serve.

Further information about the charity can be found online:
<https://www.stcuthbertshospice.com/>

Again, no specific amount has been requested in the letter from the Mayor's PA and any offers of a donation will be gratefully received and acknowledged and any donations will be divided equally between both charities.

Since 2020, the Parish Council has supported previous Mayors' appeals with a donation of £500 towards local charities.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	1) For Members to agree to support the Mayor's Charities Appeal for St. Cuthbert's Hospice. 2) If 1) is agreed, for Members to agree an appropriate donation to the Mayor's Charities Appeal.
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ITEM 11: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S CLIMATE LEAD

In May 2023, in recognition of the importance of activities to address climate change at a local level, the Parish Council agreed to appoint a Member of the Parish Council as its chosen Climate Lead. In doing so, the following Terms of Reference for this position were also established.

This role and these Terms of Reference must be reviewed on an annual basis at the Council's annual meeting of the Council.

Climate Lead Terms of Reference

1. The Nomination

The Parish Council shall nominate one councillor of the Environment Committee at its annual meeting in May to undertake various roles consequential on the Parish Council's declaration of a climate emergency in March 2019. The councillor will be termed 'City of Durham Climate Lead' and will act to strengthen the Council's climate-related work in the short and long term. Strong climate action is strategic; it integrates the various parts of the Council, and covers mitigation as well as adaptation.

2. The Nomination process

Any councillor may nominate themselves for the role. Any nomination should be submitted in writing to the Clerk 7 clear working days before the meeting. Any nomination should be seconded by another councillor whose name should be recorded on the written submission. The nomination will be subject to a majority vote of the full Council. In the event of two or more nominations, there will be an election whereby the successful nomination will have a majority of votes cast; in the event of a tie, the Chair will have the casting vote.

3. The Length of Nomination

The period of nomination shall be for one calendar year; it may be renewed annually.

4. The Roles

The Climate Lead's roles are as follows:

- to support the Chair and Vice-Chair on climate-related discussions and decisions relating to the Full Council;
- to advise on and support coordination of climate action across the Committees of the Council through the Committees' Chairs and Vice-Chairs;
- to provide guidance on, and - where tasked to do so - coordinating, the actions of the Parish Council as a whole and its committees;
- to provide guidance on those areas of Parish Council where there is a climate aspect, including:

- procurement and commissioning;
 - place shaping (planning, development, transport);
 - showcasing;
 - partnerships;
 - involving, engaging, communicating (see Local Government Association (2021; point 3.2) A councillor's workbook on the local pathway to net zero).
- to support the development of external relationships when tasked to do so by the Parish Council and its Committees;
 - to attend meetings of external partners to provide guidance on, and - where tasked to do so – coordinating, the actions of the Parish Council as a whole and its committees;
 - to support learning and development regarding climate policy;
 - to access technical expertise to inform the Parish Council's climate action.

5. Reporting

The Climate Lead reports to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environment Committee and to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Full Council, as appropriate.

6. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The nomination should act at all times within the Parish Council's Standing Orders, with particular reference to SO18 (Financial Controls and Procurement), SO22 (Relations with Press/Media), SO24 (Communicating with District and County or Unitary Councillors), SO25 (Restrictions On Councillor Activities), FR 10 (Orders for work, goods and services), FR11 (Contracts), FR15 (Insurance) and FR17 (Risk management). The nomination should also act in accordance with City of Durham Parish Council policies on Communications, Environment and Sustainability, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Social Media.

This item was deferred from the May 2025 meeting of the Parish Council, in order to allow Members sufficient time to apply for this role, in accordance with the Terms of Reference as currently agreed above. To date, two applications have been received for this role – one from Councillor R Cornwell and one from Councillor V Ashfield.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	1) For Members to agree the Terms of Reference for the Climate Lead role. 2) If 1) is agreed, for the Council to appoint a Climate Lead from the candidates set out within the above report.
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ITEM 12: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ARMED FORCES CHAMPION

As Members are aware, the Parish Council has taken a lead at a local level on events such as the Battle of Britain, VE and VJ Day anniversaries, D-Day commemorations, Remembrance Day and many more.

In order to promote the role of the Parish Council in its support for our Armed Forces personnel, in June 2023, the Parish Council agreed to establish a new Armed Forces Champion role from within its membership and agreed that one Member be asked to assume this role.

The agreed primary aim of the Armed Forces champion is to maintain the Parish Council's commitment to support the Armed Forces and their families and veterans, and raise the profile of the support provided by the Council and the community as a whole.

To help define this role, the following Terms of Reference were also agreed:

Armed Forces Champion Terms of Reference

1. The Nomination

The Parish Council shall nominate one Member at its annual meeting in May to undertake various roles consequential on the Parish Council's activities to honour our Armed Forces and continued links with the DLI. The councillor will be termed 'City of Durham Parish Council Armed Forces Champion' and will act to strengthen the Council's work on events such as D-Day, the Battle of Britain, Armistice Day, Remembrance Day, etc.

2. The Nomination process

Any councillor may nominate themselves for the role. Any nomination should be submitted in writing to the Clerk 7 clear working days before the meeting. Any nomination should be seconded by another councillor whose name should be recorded on the written submission. The nomination will be subject to a majority vote of the Full Council. In the event of two or more nominations, there will be an election whereby the successful nomination will have a majority of votes cast; in the event of a tie, the Chair will have the casting vote.

3. The Length of Nomination

The period of nomination shall be for one calendar year; it may be renewed annually.

4. The Roles

The Armed Forces Champion's roles are as follows:

- Principal objective - raise the profile and needs of the Armed Forces community, within the Council and the parish area.

- Foster and maintain good working relationships with the Armed Forces community.
- Represent the Parish Council at key events centred around honouring the Armed Forces community both past and present, e.g., Durham City Remembrance Day.
- To act as the cultural link between the Parish Council and the DLI, County Council, Armed Forces and other stakeholders on the redevelopment of the DLI museum.
- Understand the aims of the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) and the needs of the Armed Forces Community in relation to Council policies and service delivery. Ensure awareness is cascaded to staff who have daily contact with the public through engagement.
- Actively communicate the AFC and the work in promoting it within the Council and the community, ensuring that Armed Forces Champion names and contact details are publicised and known both internally and externally through various communication channels.
- Act as the first point of contact for local Armed Forces Units and other key stakeholders, such as Service charities and other service providers.
- Ensure all areas of Council services recognise the needs of the Armed Forces community
- Understand Armed Forces activities and events within the parish area

5. Reporting

The Armed Forces Champion reports to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Full Council, as appropriate.

6. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The nomination should act at all times within the Parish Council's Standing Orders, with particular reference to SO18 (Financial Controls and Procurement), SO22 (Relations with Press/Media), SO24 (Communicating with District and County or Unitary Councillors), SO25 (Restrictions On Councillor Activities), FR 10 (Orders for work, goods and services), FR11 (Contracts), FR15 (Insurance) and FR17 (Risk management). The nomination should also act in accordance with City of Durham Parish Council policies on Communications, Environment and Sustainability, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Social Media.

This item was deferred from the May 2025 meeting of the Parish Council, in order to allow Members sufficient time to apply for this role, in accordance with the Terms of Reference as currently agreed above. To date, one application has been received for this role from Councillor E Scott.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	1) For Members to agree the Terms of Reference for the Armed Forces Champion. 2) If 1) is agreed, for the Council to appoint an Armed Forces Champion for this year of the Parish Council.
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