

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Business Committee held on Tuesday 31st January 2023 at 13:00 via Zoom

Present: Councillors R Ormerod (in the Chair), E Ashby (arrival 13:04pm), D Freeman and N Brown.

Also present: A Shanley (Clerk), Mr Paul Howard and Emma Wright (Durham BID), Mr Colin Wilkes and Ms Alice Wilkes (Durham Markets Company) and Mr Mel Metcalfe (Durham Pride).

1. Election of Chair of the Business Committee

Councillor R Ormerod was elected as Chair of the Business Committee. Proposed by Councillor D Freeman and seconded by Councillor N Brown.

2. Election of Vice-Chair of the Business Committee

At this point, Councillor E Ashby arrived into the meeting.

Councillor D Freeman was elected as Chair of the Business Committee. Proposed by Councillor R Ormerod and seconded by Councillor N Brown.

3. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors G Holland and G Nair.

4. To receive any declarations of interest from members

None received.

5. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 9th November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

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

Mr Paul Howard advised that he was attending the meeting to contribute to discussions relating to item 8 on the Agenda.

Mr Colin Wilkes advised that he was attending the meeting to contribute to discussions relating to item 10 on the Agenda.

Ms Alice Wilkes advised that she was attending the meeting to contribute to discussions relating to item 10 on the Agenda.

Mr Mel Metcalfe advised that he was attending the meeting to contribute to discussions relating to item 8 on the Agenda.

7. Report by retail consultant Graham Sault on work in Durham City

The Clerk advised that Graham was away at a national conference and was therefore unable to make this meeting unfortunately. The Clerk advised that Graham would be providing a written report to Members in due course on his work in Durham City since the last meeting of the Committee.

8. Update on the work of Durham BID

The Chair welcomed Paul Howard to the meeting and thanked him for joining the Committee today to update the Council on the most recent work of Durham BID in the City.

Paul provided an update to the Committee on the most recent footfall stats for the City. Paul advised that the City had seen a strong start to January with footfall figures showing an increase on 14.19% in comparison with January 2022.

Paul reminded the Committee that Restaurant Week was currently taking place in the City and he was pleased to advise that 29 businesses were taking part in this year's Restaurant Week promotion. Paul advised that the social media feedback from the week was extremely positive. Paul advised that a number of publications had also given the campaign some excellent coverage.

Paul highlighted that the recent Independents campaign run by Durham BID had been hugely successful. Paul advised that 49 businesses had taken part in the campaign over Christmas and that the vouchers awarded to each winner were still valid until the end of next week.

Paul advised that Durham BID would be running this campaign twice per year (once in the Summer and once again over Christmas). Paul highlighted the positive social media coverage from the campaign and thanked all of the businesses and residents who had taken part in this.

Paul advised that the next big event happening in the City would be the Fire and Ice Festival. Paul advised that this year's event would be taking place on 24th and 25th February and that there would be 12 sculptures dotted around the City with a steampunk theme this year. Paul advised that the sculptures would be located between the Cathedral down to Walkergate. Paul advised that he had hoped that Milburngate would be open in time for the Festival but this doesn't look like it will happen.

The Clerk and Councillor D Freeman asked if Paul had stats on the average spend per visitor comparing day-time and night-time economy customers. Paul advised that he would look into this.

Councillor E Ashby asked if Paul had any information on some of the more sophisticated methods of measuring footfall. Paul advised that the BID currently uses the bean counters but the next level up from there would be the use of smartphones. Paul advised that he would prefer to use the smartphone method but the set-up costs were very expensive and came in at circa. £80,000. Paul also highlighted that smartphones would need to be connected to free wi-fi which doesn't exist in Durham City at present but he is aware that this is very much on the radar of Durham County Council.

9. Update on proposals relating to ongoing engagement with local landlords

The Committee took the opportunity to thank Councillor E Ashby for her ongoing work as part of the Committee's efforts to engage more with local landlords from the private sector in Durham City.

The Clerk confirmed that the survey has now been launched and that both a hard copy of the survey and a link to an electronic version of the survey had been distributed to local landlords in the City.

The Clerk advised that he had requested that responses be received by no later than 28th February. Thereafter, the Committee could consider the responses received and decide on a course of action for ongoing engagement with the sector.

10. Update on events in the City planning

The Committee took the opportunity to thank both Colin and Alice Wilkes for their exceptional work for the Christmas Festival and Chinese New Year. Members remarked that these were fantastic events and footfall in the City was markedly high.

Ms Alice Wilkes also advised that Durham City had been asked to host the North East Finals for this year's National Market Traders Federation Youth Markets competition on Sunday 2nd July and asked if the Committee would support the Durham Markets Company in this endeavour with some support and funding. The Committee very much welcomed this news and **agreed** to support this event in July.

Mel highlighted that Durham Pride marks its 10th anniversary in 2023. As part of that milestone, Mel advised that Durham Pride is proposing a day of celebration for LGBT+ personnel serving in the British Armed Forces, past and present.

The day will be held on Saturday 27th May 2023 from 12pm to 10pm on the Sands Field with a beer tent, fairground, food court, market stalls and entertainment for all the family to enjoy. It will be free to enter, and Durham Pride will encourage the three regular services LGBT+ forums to get involved. Mel advised that Pride is inviting the Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps and Navy cadets as well as TA units from across the North East.

Mel advised that the event organisers hoped to have a fun 'Battle Challenge' competition with prizes for winning teams. Pride also hopes to have Armed Forces stands/displays and recruiting information stalls.

The day will include some archive material to include the proud history of the DLI and hopefully some personal testimonies from people about their experiences from those who served and those who are serving now in different arms of the UK forces.

Mel advised that Pride would welcome ideas from anyone around the day and what people would like to see whilst maintaining the military LGBT+ theme. Pride would also welcome volunteers for a variety of tasks they would be interested in performing.

Durham Pride is looking for total funding of £6,000 towards this 1-day event and Mel advised that any support would be greatly appreciated. The Committee thanked Mel for all of his exceptional work in planning this event and **agreed** to recommend to Full Council that the Parish Council supports the event at a total cost of £3,000.

The Committee **agreed** the following schedule of events and budgets associated with those events:

Event	Date of event	Costs
Coronation weekend	6th - 8th May	£1,360
Durham Pride (10-year anniversary)	27th - 28th May	£3,000
National Market Traders Federation Youth Markets	2nd July	£2,500
Durham City Children's Book Festival	26th and 27th August	£3,500
Autumn half-term event - TBC	27th October - 6th November	£2,500
Remembrance events	11th and 12th November	£5,000
Christmas events	Throughout December	£7,000
Total:		£24,860

Before the Chair closed the meeting, Councillor E Ashby requested that a discussion ensue about whether the Business Committee meetings could be held at a shorter interval than bi-monthly or, alternatively, that working parties should discuss major items of business in the gap between full Committee meetings to inform and expedite the latter's decision making.

The Chair advised that he would prefer to keep the current schedule of meetings for the full Committee bi-monthly but that he was not opposed to meetings of working parties nor special meetings of the full Committee taking place outside this timetable if the need arises.

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

Signed,

R. Ormerod

**Chair of the Parish Council's Business Committee
(21st March 2023)**