

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Thursday 23rd February 2023 at 19:00 in the Lantern Room, Durham Town Hall. Durham. DH1 3NJ

Present: Councillors A Doig (in the Chair), L Brown, V Ashfield, E Ashby, C Lattin, N Brown, D Freeman, R Friederichsen, G Holland, R Ormerod, S Walker and H Weston.

Also present: Parish Clerk Adam Shanley, Mr John Ashby and Ms Lynda Delf (members of the public), Ms Jasmine Moore and Ms Livvy O'Hagan (Student Action for Refugees).

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

Apologies were received from Councillors E Scott, R Hanson and G Nair.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor L Brown declared an interest in the planning application for 4-6 Silver Street and took no part in the discussions on this matter.

3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2023 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PRESENTATION BY STUDENT ACTION FOR REFUGEES (STAR) ON THEIR WORK IN DURHAM

The Chair welcomed Jasmine Moore and Livvy O'Hagan to the meeting and thanked them for attending to discuss their work as an organisation with the Parish Council.

Jasmine thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to speak with Members today regarding the work of Student Action for Refugees (STAR) in Durham City.

Jasmine began by highlighting that, across County Durham, there are presently: 240 Ukrainian families (host families), 64 Syrian families (75% under 18), 23 Afghan families (70% under 18) and 25 families of other nationalities (Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Sudan).

Jasmine advised that all children received a place in their local school and that all adults have/ are attending EOSL classes for 15hrs per week, which is excellent but STAR had been supporting refugee children with their school work and language acquisition.

Jasmine advised that STAR had worked together with organisations such as Durham City of Sanctuary to support refugees during the Covid-19 pandemic. Jasmine also advised that STAR had successfully opened a drop-in centre in Durham City in September 2021 for refugees but highlighted the need for a more permanent and cost-effective base for this to happen in.

Jasmine advised that STAR was supporting refugees through a variety of conversation classes, kids' clubs and tutoring. Jasmine highlighted that this was only possible thanks to STAR successfully fundraising approximately £30,000 from various sources.

Jasmine advised that the funding is primarily focused at funding transportation for refugees to allow them to access the drop-in sessions run by STAR as well as the rental costs for a base for the drop-in events to happen.

Jasmine also advised that some of the funding had been allocated to replacing old and worn toys for children, which had been so gratefully received.

Jasmine advised that STAR is also focusing on finding a business mentor for ladies who are able to produce the most amazing middle eastern catering, to provide days out and experiences for children and to host coffee mornings for refugees.

Jasmine also highlighted that the group is keen to find a suitable ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tutor to support refugees with their English language acquisition.

Jasmine also highlighted that STAR is supporting the "Lift the Ban" campaign which aims to lift the ban on refugees being able to seek paid employment whilst in the UK.

Councillor C Lattin thanked Jasmine and Livvy for their exceptional work and advised that she felt that this is certainly an organisation she felt the Parish Council should be supporting.

Councillor G Holland advised that he felt that Jasmine and Livvy were a huge credit to the University and thanked them for their work. Councillor G Holland advised that he fully supported the list the ban campaign.

The Chair asked if the University could provide accommodation for any of the drop-in events. Jasmine advised that STAR has unfortunately experienced a lukewarm reaction to this suggestions from the University and STAR had not pursued this avenue as a result.

Ms Lynda Delf advised that STAR should reach out to a number of the private schools in the City for a suitable ESOL teacher as they may be able to support the group.

The Chair thanked Jasmine and Livvy for all of their work and their excellent presentation.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr John Ashby advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items.

Ms Lynda Delf advised that she was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items.

6. COMMITTEE UPDATES

• Planning and Licensing Committee

Councillor G Holland presented the minutes from the Planning and Licensing Committee meetings held on 6th January, 20th January and 3rd February 2023. There were no queries from Members.

• Environment Committee

Councillor C Lattin presented the minutes from the Environment Committee meeting held on 10th January 2023. There were no queries from Members.

• Business Committee

Councillor R Ormerod presented the minutes from the Business Committee meeting held on 9th November 2022. There being no queries from Members, Councillor R Ormerod moved on to Committee updates.

- Proposal to support Durham Pride 2023 event as part of 10th Anniversary

Councillor R Ormerod highlighted that Durham Pride marks its 10th anniversary in 2023. As part of that milestone, Councillor R Ormerod 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. Councillor R Ormerod 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.

Councillor R Ormerod 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. Councillor R Ormerod 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.

Councillor R Ormerod advised that Durham Pride is looking for total funding of £6,000 towards this 1-day event and any support would be greatly appreciated. Councillor R Ormerod advised that the Business Committee had recently met and had agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Parish Council supports the event at a total cost of £3,000.

Members unanimously **agreed** to support this event with the proposed £3,000 from the events budget agreed for 2023/24.

7. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 26th January 2023.

The Chair welcomed the news that the Parish Council's application for Quality Award status has progressed further and we should expect to hear more about this in later April. The Chair expressed his hopes for a good result on this and thanked everyone involved in this extensive exercise.

The Chair reminded Members that the Clerk has circulated details of the project to re-new the Parish Council's website. The Chair firstly invited all Members interested in forming a Working Group to support this work to let the Clerk know about this by next week. The Chair also reminded Members that a photographer will be coming at a specific timeslot ahead of our April Full Council meeting here in the Town Hall to re-new Members' online photos for their profile. The Chair asked that all Members make a concerted effort to attend this.

The Chair echoed the disappointment from Members regarding the very poor response the Parish Council received from the Fire and Rescue service in relation to the fire exit arrangements for STACK. The Chair highlighted that the Parish Council and others have highlighted significant concerns about the use of Moatside Lane as a fire exit for this venue. The Chair advised that he understood that the Planning Committee is in the process of responding to a letter from Litchfields, on behalf of the operator, to address their rebuttal points.

The Chair welcomed the news that the Police and Environmental Health will be objecting to the Hawthorn Terrace street party application, as and when it is submitted. The Chair expressed that it is abundantly clear that this type of event is inappropriate for such a densely populated residential area and that he shares the concerns expressed by Committee Members and other statutory bodies on this proposal.

The Chair also expressed his disappointment and that of the Police regarding the County Council's decision not to move forward with a PSPO on begging in Durham City. The Chair advised that it is clear from the consultation feedback received by the Council that the vast majority of businesses and residents do view this as a significant issue in the City centre and unless we take action in Durham, we might find ourselves in a situation where begging banned in neighbouring areas will push others to visit Durham for this purpose.

The Chair thanked all those involved in planning for the Coronation events in May. The Chair advised that the Parish Clerk has taken the lead locally in establishing the Golden Orb Working Group and has already applied for National Lottery funding to fund these events. We look forward to seeing plans progress on this.

The Chair expressed the appreciation of the whole Council for the support of CDALC's Steve Ragg over the years. The Chair advised that Steve has provided an invaluable service to this Council through the external advice he has given to the Clerk and performing the role of Interim Clerk ahead of Adam's appointment to get the Council set up and running. The Chair proposed that the Council makes a contribution of £100 towards Steve's retirement gift as Steve will be leaving CDALC in March. The Chair wished Steve a wonderful and richly deserved retirement and advised that he looked forward to continuing to work with Steve's successor Audrey Christie.

The Chair expressed how impressed he was with two recent reports we have received as a Council – namely the Neighbourhood Warden report and the report on work carried out by the hub staff. The Chair advised that both of these services are now completely indispensable for the City.

The Chair highlighted that Neighbourhood Wardens Antony and Kirk are organising a litter pick on 2nd March along the riverbanks – between Baths Bridge to Prebends bridge again – all volunteers are welcome and the Clerk will be circulating more details of this.

The Chair reminded Members that the Parish Council is hosting a licensing training event on Monday 27th February with the Institute for Licensing and David Lucas once again – the Chair advised that this is a really invaluable service we offer to both Members and the public to get up to speed with licensing legislation – so important for a Parish such as ours which receives so many of the County's licensing issues.

The Chair also reminded Members that planning training with Jo-Anne Garrick will also be taking place via Zoom on 21st March and the Clerk has again circulated details of this.

Finally, the Chair expressed his delight that the Environment Committee has actively engaged with the Access for All Group on the Heritage Trail and we now look to be at a point where we have a version which is acceptable to all parties. We look forward to seeing this being launched.

8. PROPOSAL TO REQUEST A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council's Environment Committee has highlighted that a huge increase in resources is required to deal with the environmental issues associated with such a high student population in a compact city centre.

The Clerk also reminded Members that, in the Summer of 2022, the Environment Committee proposed that the Parish Council formally requests a voluntary contribution from local landlords towards the Parish Council's precept in order to

meet this resource need. At the time, it was anticipated that any additional funding acquired from this appeal to landlords will be directed towards additional bin provision, warden and/or officer time to deal with bins and other issues.

The Clerk highlighted that this proposal did not receive full support when presented in July 2022 and it was agreed that the decision on this should be deferred until after the Chairs of both the Environment Committee and the Business Committee had met to discuss this.

The Clerk also highlighted that it was agreed that this proposal would thereafter be revisited by Full Council in early 2023.

The Clerk also advised that Members should be aware that the Business Committee is presently seeking to engage further with the private rental sector in the City and has recently launched a survey for landlords to respond to. It was agreed at the Business Committee meeting in November that requesting a voluntary contribution towards the precept should be removed from the survey.

If agreed, the Clerk advised that it was proposed that the Council delays this request until later into the new financial year.

Councillor E Ashby stressed the importance of the work of the Business Committee in engaging with the private rental sector in the City. Councillor E Ashby also highlighted that there had been a recent change in the Chair of the Business Committee and asked if a subsequent meeting of both Chairs of each Committee had taken place.

Councillor C Lattin advised that she had not had the opportunity to discuss this with Councillor R Ormerod but would be happy to do so.

Members unanimously **agreed** to defer a decision on this item until the Chairs of both the Environment Committee and Business Committee had had the opportunity to meet and discuss a way forward with this proposal.

9. DCC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

The Clerk highlighted that, under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their area.

The Clerk also highlighted that the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 resulted in a revised Code of Guidance, this led to the Homelessness Review in 2018, the development of this revised strategy and how best to satisfy the new duties set out in the Act around service delivery.

The Clerk advised that the County Council is now looking to refresh its Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy which will cover the next five years to 2028.

The Clerk advised that the new strategy will focus on four main priorities. These include preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place; increasing the number of affordable homes available and improving access to them; ensuring

the appropriate support is available for people who are homeless; and ending rough sleeping for good.

Members unanimously **agreed** to support this Strategy in its entirety.

10. PROPOSAL TO CO-HOST AN EVENT TO OFFICIALLY RECEIVE THE CITY'S BEACON AT JUBILEE WALK

The Clerk reminded Members that the Freeman have recently funded the creation of a beacon for the City by a renowned artist at a cost of over £10,000. The beacon is set to be completed by the end of February and installed at Jubilee Walk thereafter.

The Clerk highlighted that the project has also resulted in significance costs for the County Council with estimates of costs incurred being around £60,000-£70,000 for the project. The scheme gained planning approval in 2022 and is intended to be in place ahead of the Coronation of the new King in May 2023.

As part of preparations for the Coronation, the Parish Council has established an 'Operation Golden Orb' Working Group involving many of the major stakeholders of the City in order to plan events for Coronation weekend. It is expected that the beacon will be lit on Saturday 6th May 2023.

The Clerk advised that the Freeman regard the beacon as a gift to the City and this will be supplemented by two interpretation boards to advertise the project and the artist who has worked on the beacon. The County Council has agreed to take on the maintenance and insurance of the beacon, except the burner unit.

In January, the County Council asked if the Parish Council would consider taking over this element of the project and manage any events associated with the lighting of the beacon as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding agreed at Full Council in January 2023.

The Clerk advised that the Freeman are now hoping to have an official handover ceremony for the Beacon.

As part of this event, the Clerk advised that he will arrange for a specialist contractor to be in situ during the event to install the fire burner and manage all the lighting requirements. This will be at a cost of £1,360 (ex. VAT) and it is expected that this cost will be met by the Parish Council.

Members unanimously **agreed** to co-host the official handover event for the Durham City beacon on 27th March 2023 and to cover the costs associated with the fire burner for the beacon as agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding.

11. DCC REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER FOR DOG OWNERSHIP 2023

The Clerk reminded Members that Durham County Council introduced a PSPO to fine irresponsible dog owners in 2017 to tackle issues in local communities from irresponsible dog ownership. Despite these improvements, dog fouling and other dog related issues remain a key area of concern for communities across the

county. The Clerk advised that DCC is therefore proposing to expand the PSPO to tackle other issues. The current PSPO runs to May 2023 and DCC is seeking views on expanding the PSPO to include the following:

- Dogs being banned from more fenced off play areas
- Dogs to be on leads in churchyards, cemeteries, and crematoria
- Dogs to be on leads on identified marked sports pitches
- Dog walkers to walk a maximum of six dogs at once
- All dogs in an open space to have a collar and tag

The Clerk advised that responses will be considered and findings will be reported back to Cabinet and a decision made to confirm the conditions of the PSPO. The PSPO, including any changes, will be introduced by May 2023. It will be publicised on DCC's website and locally across the county where owners take their dogs. A publicity campaign will be carried out to raise awareness of the PSPO order and any new offences it creates.

Members unanimously **agreed** to make the following points to the consultation:

- To seek clarity on how works associated with the expansion of this PSPO, such as additional signage and ongoing enforcement are to be financed.
- To highlight that St. Nicholas graveyard is a private graveyard and that St. Bede's graveyard is already covered by the PSPO.
- To object to the maximum number of dogs being walked at the same time by one individual being six and instead request that this be reduced to four dogs.
- To object to the inclusion of Lowes Barnes sports pitch as a designated area where dogs must be kept on leads.
- To support the requirement that all dogs in open spaces must wear a collar and tag and must be microchipped.

12. DCC REVIEW OF TRAFFIC SENSITIVE STREETS ACROSS COUNTY DURHAM

The Clerk advised that DCC currently has a single permit scheme for work on our roads and footpaths. This means that companies carrying out work must have a permit before they do so.

As a street authority, the Clerk advised that DCC may designate certain streets (or parts of streets) as traffic sensitive. This means that any work on the street will have a big impact as there is a high level of use, and anyone who wants to do work on it must give a greater amount of warning and apply for a permit to get permission.

From April 2023, the Clerk advised that DCC will define a street as traffic sensitive if it:

- has an estimated traffic flow of greater than 500 vehicles per hour per lane (excluding bus or cycle lanes)
- is a single lane two-way road, with a lane width of less than 6.5 metres and has a total traffic flow of more than 600 vehicles per hour
- has more than 25% heavy commercial vehicles
- has more than eight buses per hour in both directions

- is within 100 metres of an important traffic lit junction, roundabout or gyratory (complex roundabout)
- has a pedestrian flow rate of at least 1300 people per hour per metre width of pavement
- is designated as an A road

DCC has a list of over 600 streets in the county that are classified as traffic sensitive. This is a reduction in the number of Traffic Sensitive Streets from the previous review in 2019, which had over 800 streets listed.

DCC is proposing to remove the following streets from the existing list of traffic sensitive streets in our parish:

DURHAM CITY FOOTPATH 48
FIELDHOUSE LANE
SOUTH STREET
ALBERT STREET
TOLL HOUSE ROAD
GREEN LANE
GROVE STREET

The following streets will therefore be those included in the list of traffic sensitive streets in our parish:

A690 (BETWEEN NORTH ROAD ROUNDABOUT AND MILLBURNGATE ROUNDABOUT)
FRAMWELLGATE
NORTH ROAD
CLAYPATH
MARKET PLACE
SADDLER STREET
SUTTON STREET
NORTH END
CROSSGATE
OLD ELVET
ELVET BRIDGE
NEW ELVET
MILLBURNGATE
CHURCH STREET HEAD

DUN COW LANE
FRAMWELGATE BRIDGE
SOUTH CRESCENT
SOUTH ROAD
BOW LANE
CHURCH STREET
PROVIDENCE ROW
NORTH BAILEY
OWENGATE
QUARRYHEADS LANE
SILVER STREET
SOUTH BAILEY
STOCKTON ROAD
WHINNEY HILL
HALLGARTH STREET
MARGERY LANE
CROSSGATE PETH
LEAZES BOWL ROUNDABOUT
MILBURNGATE ROUNDABOUT
NORTH ROAD ROUNDABOUT
A690 (FROM NORTH ROAD ROUNDABOUT TO FRAMWELLGATE PETH)
SNIPERLEY ROUNDABOUT
COCK O' THE NORTH ROUNDABOUT
MOUNTJOY ROUNDABOUT
LEAZES ROAD
ROAD BETWEEN MARKET PLACE AND LEAZES ROAD ROUNDABOUT

Members unanimously **agreed** to make the following points to the consultation:

- To request that the proposed removal of Toll House Road as a traffic sensitive street be reviewed.
- To seek clarity on whether "Church Street Head" refers to "Church Street Head, Anchorage Terrace and Church Street" as they are all essentially the same road.

13. TO REVIEW THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Councillor R Ormerod advised that he would like to resign from the Planning and Licensing Committee. Councillor R Ormerod thanked colleagues for their collective work on this important Committee but advised that, as the new Chair of the Parish Council's Business Committee, he would like to focus his attentions on this role.

The Chair thanked Councillor R Ormerod for his work on this Committee. It was unanimously **agreed** that Councillor N Brown should become the new Member of the Parish Council's Planning and Licensing Committee in Councillor R Ormerod's place.

A concern was also highlighted that some Members of this Committee and other Committees appeared to be regular absentees from meetings. The Council **agreed** defer making any further changes to Committee membership until a later date, in order that Councillors could be spoken with and asked about their ongoing membership of certain Committees.

14. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

- **Report by Cllr E Ashby on the most recent meeting of the County Durham Association of Local Councils.**

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Chandran from Great Ayeclyffe with the two Executive Officers Audrey Christie and Steve Ragg.

12 members, including myself, and 7 officers representing 8 of the 19 Larger Councils had attended the meeting on November 24th in Spennymoor Town Council Offices the minutes of which were accepted as a true record.

In his wide-ranging verbal report of the **CDALC Executive Committee** meeting held on 7 December 2022 Steve Ragg referred to

- The impending interviews for the part time Admin Officer post to start on April 1st, supporting Audrey who will assume a more strategic role after SR's retirement.
- The Consultant's report following the Review of AAP's which was delivered last week and is now with DCC officers.
- Confirmation that the Monitoring officer has a statutory responsibility to deliver training and advice relating to the Civility and Respect agenda. Councils should not need to ask for this. However there are staffing issues at County Hall which affect this.
- Ongoing conversations with DCC and the Lord Lieutenant's office about Op. 'London Bridge' and arrangements for Coronation celebrations. Other councils present were respecting the wish not to light beacons and were planning events mostly similar to the Jubilee. One is moving the picnic indoors with a large screen in case of bad weather.
- There were 4 candidates already for the vacancy on the Standards Committee. More welcome before the deadline on the 21st.

- Audrey drew attention to NALC's appearance in the House of Lords next week re the 10 or 11 amendments to the Levelling Up Bill. (She has since circulated the list of them) One includes suspending councillors in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Under item 5 there was discussion about councils' approach to funding for the **Coronation** with particular reference to one council's approach to the National Lottery and other questions about the terms under which funding could be used e.g. Is the £10 to be spent in Yr 1 or across 3 years.

Item 6 concerning the review of the **PSPO for dog ownership 2023** provoked a lively discussion not only from dog owners present but also more widely about who would pay for the necessary enforcement staff and signage etc. It was felt more information was needed to clarify these and other issues. Councils were encouraged to respond, taking into account their own areas which might be included if the order is made.

Item 7 Internal Audit process. Horden's clerk reported that a group of clerks had recently met with DCC of this service. Concern was expressed at the absence locally of suitably qualified and experienced auditors and it was generally felt the offer of apprentices – none currently available - was not the answer.

Item 8 North East Mayoral Authority Devolution deal was discussed with a general feeling that despite the projected investment fund of £1.4bn, a £60m pa budget for adult education and skills, £900m investment in transport and £69m for housing and regeneration the County's would still be faced with competing for a fair share with the 6 other constituent councils.

Item 9 NALC Policy Committee had accepted a motion from Spennymoor Town Council which will become part of their National policies and will be taken forward at Government level when a legislative opportunity arises. This would mean that a quoracy of councillors is required to call an extraordinary meeting and not just 2 as at present. This would mean 3 for our smallest councils or 8 out of 22. I raised my hand against this, (not the view of the Parish Council) as a member of 'troublesome minority' the phrase used in the January discussion.

Item 10 Civility and Respect Project Audrey reported that this is ongoing with some new resources including 6 HR podcasts on Effective Personnel Committee, Recruitment, Handling Grievances, Handling Disciplinary Situations, Appraisals, Sickness and Absence. Another EDM is asking the Gov. To look again at ethical standards including tougher sanctions for poor behaviour. Councils are asked to at asking their MPs to back this EDM.

Members were reminded of the FREE Civility and Respect Awareness day on Thursday 9th March at the Oakleaf Sports Centre in Newton Ayeccliffe covering conflict, mental health and in the afternoon sessions about the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and the LBGTQ+ communities.

More info. from Civility and Respect Day (cdalc.info)

Future meeting dates were agreed as 25 May, 20 July and 23 November.

There was no other business.

The meeting ended with a 20 min presentation and video about Stanley TC's work in the local community around Northumbria in Bloom by James Harper Environmental Team Leader.

The meeting ended c.12 30.

Cllr Esther Ashby

Cllr Richard Ormerod also attended but had to leave before the speaker.

End of report

- Report by Cllr A Doig on the most recent meeting of the Parish Council's Community and Residents Association Forum (CRAF).

Present: Adam Shanley and Alan Doig (City of Durham Parish Council) Sylvia Hope and Carole Lattin (Gilesgate Residents Association), Alan Hayton and Des Ward (Whinney Hill Community Group) Roz Layton (Elvet Residents Association), Simon Priestley (Crossgate Community Partnership), David Rosser (Sheraton Park Residents Association), Mike Costello (Distressed Residents in the Viaduct Area), Kirk Leister (St. Nicholas Community Forum) and Walia Kani (Durham University Residents Forum).

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Fiona Adamson (Mount Oswald) and Richard Hornby (Gilesgate Residents Association).

2. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Forum meeting held on 18th October 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings, subject to the following addition under AOB:

"It was suggested that an independent economic and social impact assessment of the City Centre and, particularly the impact on the traditional residential communities immediately located within the boundaries of the City of Durham Parish Council, be undertaken to establish the negative and beneficial effects Durham University and its expansion plans has upon them. This was agreed by all those present, including the Parish Clerk and the Convenor and it was also agreed that this would be presented to the Full Parish Council".

In proposing this addition, Alan Hayton noted his disappointment that 3 months had been lost since the last meeting and this request to Building Research Environment (BRE), the company who carried out the 2012 review for the County Council, had not been made.

The Secretary advised that at present BRE had only been tasked with producing a scoping document and quotation to provide an evidence base in favour of the introduction of Additional Licensing across the City of Durham parish area.

Alan Hayton offered to draft a scoping document to provide to BRE so that they might provide a quotation for this report to be carried out.

The Forum unanimously **agreed** to request this from BRE.

3. Addressing ASB/ progressing the Service Level Agreement with Durham Police for enhanced policing

The Convener highlighted that the Parish Council had been working for a number of months on this proposed SLA with Durham Police to provide an enhanced policing service for the parish area.

The Convener advised that it is looking likely that the Parish Council will agree a total fund of £50,000 towards this SLA and the enhanced policing will commence in April 2023. The Convener advised that this would fund two additional police officers (not PCSOs) for Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

As part of this SLA, Durham Police will be providing a vehicle and fuel (fully funded) and Joy Allen is also funding a Safer Streets Coordinator who will be responsible for, amongst other activities, producing reports to the Parish Council and providing feedback to residents who contact 101 / 999.

The Convener highlighted that the SLA has been shared around Forum Members and its content is set to be discussed and agreed at Full Council in January 2023.

Des Ward highlighted that the Police and Crime Commissioner's precept is also set to increase and advised that he was unhappy at having to pay twice for the same service.

Alan Hayton also expressed his unhappiness at the proposed increase in the Parish Council's precept and advised that he felt that residents are having to subsidise an ever-expanding night-time economy for students.

Alan Hayton advised that residents were expected to pay for the Safety Hub and he could see no benefit from this service.

Roz Layton highlighted her previous work as part of the Street Angels programme and advised that she had seen the hub in operation and felt that it was providing an invaluable service.

The Secretary highlighted that only 3 weeks ago the staff from the Hub had saved the lives of 2 men on Milburngate Bridge as well as other actions throughout the month.

Des Ward advised that he felt that it would be helpful to receive some monthly stats from the Hub so that residents can better appreciate the service being provided.

Simon Priestley advised that he felt that the Parish Council should be commended for having reached a point whereby the Hub had been established and residents now had the offer of two additional police officers to safeguard the public around the parish.

Mike Costello advised that he felt that the tax burden on residents had steadily increased over the last few years.

The Convener highlighted that this SLA was a 12-month trial and it would be reviewed in 2024.

Alan Hayton and Des Ward asked that monthly reports from the Safer Streets Coordinator be circulated to residents.

4. Paper from the Convener on feedback on the Forum from the Whinney Hill Community Group

The Convener thanked Alan Hayton and the Whinney Hill Community Group for their work in producing a report on the work of the Forum and how it functions.

Alan Hayton advised that he understood that the Forum would be for residents only who would set the Agenda of meetings focusing on a small number of specific issues. Alan also advised that he understood that there would be no Parish Councillor involvement in the Forum but that the Clerk of the Parish Council would act as an intermediary between CRAF and the Parish Council.

The Convener advised that the Forum would be deciding on its membership and constitution at its forthcoming AGM in April 2023.

5. Dates of future meetings in April 2023 (AGM), July 2023, October 2023

The dates of future meetings of the Forum were **agreed** as follows:

Wednesday 26th April 2023 (AGM) at 5pm.

Wednesday 26th July 2023 at 5pm.

Wednesday 25th October 2023 at 5pm.

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

End of report

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

Signed,



**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(23rd March 2023)**