

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th December 2023 at 5:00pm in the Main Hall of the Merryoaks Community Hall, Park House Rd, Durham DH1 3QF.

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

Also present: Parish Clerk Adam Shanley and Mr John Ashby (member of the public).

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

Apologies were received from Councillors R Hanson, C Lattin, R Ormerod and H Weston.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2023 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr John Ashby advised that he was attending the meeting to hear the discussions on item 6 of the Agenda.

5. UPDATE ON THE BY-ELECTION FOR THE DURHAM SOUTH PARISH WARD

Members **noted** that a request had now been formally received by ten electors within the Durham South parish ward for a by-election, following the resignation of Councillor Govind Nair. Members also **noted** that two candidates had now been nominated and therefore the by-election is to be contested. As such, the Parish Council will bear the full cost of this by-election.

The Clerk advised that, following on from correspondence received from Members, the decision was also taken that the Parish Council should fund the production and distribution of polling cards for the by-election.

6. REPORT ON THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

Members considered the priorities of all of the Parish Council's Committees for the forthcoming year and each Committee's respective budget requests for financial year 2024/25.

Members agreed the following draft budget for 2024/25. In doing so, Members noted that the receipt of the LCTRS grant for 2024/25 would be for the forthcoming financial year only and would not be paid on a standing basis each year.

The Chair also invited each Committee to carry out a further review of its priorities and budget requests following this meeting and ahead of the Finance Committee meeting in January.

Councillor E Scott asked if the Finance Committee could present a number of budget options to Full Council in January, where the Parish Council must agree its budget and precept request for 2024/25. This approach was unanimously **agreed** by Members.

(**Please note:** that the areas highlighted in green reached broad agreement, the areas in purple were questionable and the areas in red were proposed to be removed)

The agreed draft working budget is set out below:

Planning and Licensing Committee

Item of expenditure	Cost (£)
PRIORITY 1: Representing the parish on planning and licensing matters	
Professional support in responding to planning applications and licensing hearings	£5,000.00
Review of County Durham Plan policies	£3,000.00
PRIORITY 2: Improving the licensed economy	
Enhanced drug searching scheme with Durham Police	£600.00
Introducing the Purple Flag scheme to Durham City	£5,200.00
PRIORITY 3: Review of the Licensing Framework Policy	
Professional support for licensing policy review	£5,000.00
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024-25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	

Environment Committee

Item of expenditure	Cost (£)
PRIORITY 1: Additional policing and safety for the parish area	
Enhanced SLA with Durham Police for late night policing	£40,000.00
Safety of Women at Night Hub	£8,000.00
PRIORITY 2: Noise abatement	
Building on the Shhh...11pm to 7am campaign	£2,000.00
PRIORITY 3: Clean Air, Clean and Green City	
Planting budget	£10,000.00
A project to promote clean air across the City	£2,500.00
PRIORITY 4: Engaging the youth in the work of the Parish Council	
Project working with young people (OASES / Elvet and Bailey)	£2,500.00

PRIORITY 5: Improving the appearance of our City	
Neighbourhood Warden SLA	£10,000.00
Christmas frontages awards	£1,500.00
PRIORITY 6: Recycling	
Terracycle scheme	£3,000.00
Green business award	£1,000.00
PRIORITY 7: Enhancing the River Wear	
Supporting the work of the Wear Rivers Trust	£5,000.00
PRIORITY 8: Emergency planning	
Supporting our community in preparing for emergency events	£4,200.00
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024-25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	

Business Committee

Item of expenditure	Cost (£)
PRIORITY 1: Supporting Independent businesses	
Professional support for independent businesses in Durham	£10,800.00
PRIORITY 2: Increasing footfall through events	
Hosting events in Durham City (Remembrance Sunday, Christmas events, D-Day Anniversary, miscellaneous).	£25,000.00*
PRIORITY 3: Filling empty units with new retailers	
Welcome to Durham Fund (match funded through UKSPF)	£5,000.00
PRIORITY 4: Improving access to public toilets	
Production of a map and extra signage on available public toilets	£1,500.00
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024-25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	

Full Council

Item of expenditure	Cost (£)
PRIORITY 1: Administration of Parish Council	
(Office rent, room hire, audit, insurance, printing and postage, newsletters, website, other expenditure)	£17,000.00
PRIORITY 2: Training of staff and Councillors	
Training budget	£3,000.00
PRIORITY 3: Upgrading the Parish Council website	
Website upgrade	£8,000.00
PRIORITY 3: supporting local community and voluntary organisations	
Grants budget	£10,000.00
PRIORITY 4: Staffing costs	
Clerk salary (including salary, pension, NI on costs)	£75,000.00
Part-time administrator for the Parish Council	£15,000.00
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024-25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	

General reserves	£45,000.00
Contingencies	£15,000.00
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024-25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	£60,000.00

Committee	Cost (£)
Planning and Licensing Committee	

Environment Committee	
Business Committee	
Full Council	
TOTAL PROVISION IN 2024/25 AGAINST PRIORITIES	

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

Signed,



**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(25th January 2024)**