



## **CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

***The meeting of the Full Parish Council, held on 23rd January 2020, began with all present observing a one minute silence in memory of the late Police Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham Ron Hogg CBE.***

**The City of Durham Parish Council made the following decisions at its last Council meeting, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020:**

- Councillors heard a presentation from Dave Wafer, DCC Strategic Traffic Manager, on the proposed new bus station on North Road. The City of Durham Parish Council will be formulating a response to the current consultation on the proposals ahead of the closing date of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
- Councillors agreed that the Parish Council Planning Committee should be delegated responsibility of responding to consultation with Durham County Council on the selection of the Independent Examiner for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Councillors agreed to allocating a budget of £1,000 towards the professional promotion of the pocket ashtrays initiative; an initiative aimed at clearing cigarette-related litter from the city centre of Durham. The funding will also include supporting the identification of the main hot spot areas of the city centre where this litter is most prevalent.
- Councillors agreed to support a code of non-usage of diesel generators in the market place and also agreed to fund the installation of sockets and cabling to support users of the market place to go to electric. This work has been done in partnership with the Durham Markets Company.
- Councillors agreed to the allocation of a £1,000 grant towards a tree planting project, carried out by the organisation OASES (Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists), in three local schools in the Neville's Cross area.
- Councillors noted a report by the Clerk on the internal controls of the Parish Council finances and also approved the appointment of their internal auditor.
- Councillors noted a report by the Clerk on the Parish Council's current level of reserves and agreed to examine the situation at year-end when there may be non-earmarked funds that can be transferred to general reserves. The Parish Council is pleased to report that its finances are in good order.
- Councillors agreed their budget for the financial year 2020/21; some highlights include:



- an increase in grant funding of local voluntary and community organisations
  - funding professional support for independent businesses and retailers
  - the amount paid from the Parish Council on its Neighbourhood Warden to be doubled.
  - funding towards planting and “blooming” the Parish to be quadrupled compared to the previous year.
  - funding a part-time member of staff to focus on bringing in more external grant funding to the Parish.
  - Funding greater planning enforcement in the Parish area through a service level agreement with the County Council to tackle breaches in planning permissions and planning policy.
  - Setting up a city-wide youth Environment Committee
  - A fund to tackle pollution (air/noise/light) in the Parish
  - A fund for events in order to deliver Remembrance Sunday in Durham City, the Battle of Britain Anniversary, etc.
  - Introduction of an award for the best-run licensed premises in the Parish
  - The award for best business frontages to be continued
  - A fund for promoting the heritage of Durham and the rich history of the Parish.
  - A new fund towards marketing Durham to visitors from across the region and beyond.
- Councillors agreed to freeze the Parish Council precept for the second year in a row and to continue the focus of delivering the services Parishioners want cost-effectively.
  - Councillors agreed to a contribution of £800 towards the “Nostalgia Day” event, organised by Durham Markets Company, to take place in Durham City.
  - Councillors agreed to support proposals for a selective licensing scheme for County Durham – a scheme where landlords must apply for a license if they wish to rent out their property. The scheme means that the County Council can check whether the landlord is a “fit and proper” person to be a landlord or letting agent and the landlord must also adhere to stipulations regarding management of their property/properties. As part of this, Councillors also agreed that Durham City ought to be a priority for the County if and/or when such a scheme is rolled out. Councillors also established a Working Group of the Parish Council to lead on the work in relation to the proposals and will request that Durham County Council consult with the Parish Council on any emerging business plan associated with the scheme.
  - Councillors agreed to respond to the latest rebuttal from the County Council on the application to have the coach park at the Sands de-registered as common land.