

# **Community Residents' Association Forum meeting - Agenda**

Forum contact details:  
Telephone 07704 525630  
Email: parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk

13<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Forum Members,

I hereby invite you to a meeting of the **Community Residents' Association Forum** will be held in **CLAYPORT LIBRARY, DURHAM, DH1 1WA** on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 17:00pm** to transact the following business:

- 1. Welcome and apologies**
- 2. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Forum meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022**
- 3. Update on progressing the Operation OAK initiative for Durham City**
- 4. Durham County Council consultation on draft ASB Strategy**
- 5. Report by the Forum Convener on operation of CRAF into the future**
- 6. Dates of future meetings in October 2022, January 2023, April 2023**

We look forward to welcoming you to this meeting.

Kindest regards,

**Adam Shanley**  
**Forum Secretary**

## **Minutes of the Community Residents' Association Forum meeting held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

**Present:** Adam Shanley and Alan Doig (City of Durham Parish Council) Richard Hornby (Gilesgate Residents Association), Alan Hayton (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), John Ashby (member of the public).

Alan Doig in the **Chair**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

Apologies were received from Desmond Ward (Whinney Hill Community Group) and Fiona Adamson (Mount Oswald Residents Association).

### **2. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Forum meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

### **3. Making representations to Durham County Council on the 'doitonline' service**

Forum Members highlighted a number of issues relating to the Council 'doitonline' tool. Whilst recognising that an online tool of this type is essential for a Local Authority to have, there are issues in the feedback from the service as well as the lack of any mechanism by which to report bins left out or overflowing as well as messy private gardens/ yards. Forum Members also highlighted the issues of third parties being able to report on behalf of and to support other local residents.

It was **agreed** that the Secretary should submit a letter outlining these issues to Alan Patrickson (DCC Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Climate Change) and requesting that this be reviewed.

### **4. Solutions to address ASB-related matters in the parish**

The Convener highlighted that the Parish Council has been working in conjunction with key partners and stakeholders in its efforts to tackle complaints of anti-social behaviour and noise in the City.

This issue was raised at the recent annual meeting of the parish by a local resident who asked the City's Police Inspector for costs associated with an enhanced policing operation carried out by Northumbria Police in an area of Newcastle with a high student population density.

Since this meeting, the Convener has been engaging with the City's Police Inspector on options for a similar operation in the City. The associated options were presented to Forum Members as follows:

**Option 1** - would be what was discussed at the meeting before Christmas, which would be in the region of £250k for the inception of a University Policing Team, dealing with all matters that arise, taking additional responsibility for additional targeted late night patrols and the oversight of antisocial behaviour and the escalation procedure. This

would involve four full time police officers (with integral supervisory function), working a varied shift pattern to meet key demand and two PCSOs to supply the back office and daytime function. Duties would include primarily engagement and enforcement, including delivery of notices, paperwork in relation to civil procedures, contacting complainants in relation to issues with students and liaising with the university / key stakeholders such as the ASB and environmental teams. They would also have an education function within the university, delivering problem solving initiatives.

The difficulties in this option would be in the additional uplift needed in establishment to ring fence those officers whilst ensuring that there is no detriment to wider policing function. Due to the recruitment and training implications of this option, there would be a long lead in time and there would have to be a substantial commitment in terms of length of the commitment to funding the team.

**Option 2** - This would be similar to option 1 with the two additional PCSOs, but staffing the dedicated PC patrol officers from officers on overtime. This option would be preferable initially, as it could be adopted as soon as we need to with the support of the current team whilst the new PCSOs are being recruited and trained. There are some issues with this option as the officers could be from across the force area and may not have an in depth working knowledge of the issues in Durham, however, the PCSO support team could produce briefing packs and would be able to 'join the dots'. This is the format of Operation Oak, Northumbria Police's response to student issues and the funding required would be in the region of £125K to pay for overtime, a supervisory function and the uplift in PCSOs.

The Convener highlighted that, at its Full Council meeting in June, Parish Councillors endorsed the ongoing discussions with partner organisations to investigate options for an enhanced policing service for the City and advised that the Parish Council could be a funding partner for one of these options and this may likely involve an increase in the Parish Council's precept for 2023/24 as a result.

The Convener advised that, at present, the Inspector has 12 staff and this provision would be in addition to that which is in existence.

The Convener advised that the Parish Council had approached the University to offer this as an option but the University had set out a number of reasons why they did not wish to pursue either option. Namely that the University is providing additional funding for the Community Response Team and Student Wardens as well as diverting their original policing funding to the Council's Nuisance Action Team.

The Convener advised that 155 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) have been issued since November as a result of the new Anti-Social Noise Procedure and only 8 of those CPWs escalated into CPNs.

The University is also providing £85,000 additional funding for the Community Response Team.

Mike Costello advised that the Parish Council should be speaking with the Vice-Chancellor about this and Forum Members agreed with this.

Alan Hayton advised that he would like to see an Option 3 which is the provision which was in place when Rebecca and Kay covered the City.

John Ashby highlighted that the University has a lot of money and can easily afford to be a funding partner in one of the Operation OAK-style options set out by the Convener.

Members of the Forum **agreed** to support Option 2 as set out in the Convener's report, with the longer-term aim of getting an Option 1 style coverage.

The Forum agreed that this is a pivotal moment to pursue this option – with the good will and support of Dave Clarke and the potential funding from the Parish Council.

It was also **agreed** that the Convener and the Secretary should meet with Dr Walia Kani - community representative of DURF and Elvet Residents Association – and Roz Layton in order to discuss a joint approach to the Vice-Chancellor over this issue.

In relation to the local issues leaflet - printed by the Parish Council and set to be distributed at the end of August – Alan Hayton expressed his concerns at the inclusion of the text "try to speak to the occupiers of the house if you feel comfortable doing so" and "the incident number will allow the Police to build up a map of the problem area". Alan advised that he felt that the former went against the official advice of the police and the latter was misleading as the Police were already aware of where the problem areas were.

The Secretary highlighted that one of the most important aspects of the leaflet was the inclusion of "call 101 and request an incident number". Forum Members agreed and expressed their experience that residents have given up calling 101 or don't call at all.

The Forum **agreed** to endorse the leaflet, with the caveat that this would be an annual delivery where further amendments could be made to its content.

Mike Costello asked if there was any update on the PSPO for the City. The Secretary advised that the PSPO for seizure of open alcohol is now in force following consultation. The Secretary also advised that the PSPO for aggressive begging is currently being worked through internally at DCC as there had been some concerns raised about this at consultation stage. The Secretary confirmed that there would be no PSPO for late night noise disturbance.

## **5. Update on the enhanced Neighbourhood Warden SLA with Durham County Council**

The Secretary reminded Forum Members that the Parish Council has agreed to renew its 3-year contract Service Level Agreement with DCC for an enhanced neighbourhood warden service for the parish. The Secretary advised that the Parish Council is looking to continue its SLA providing 10 additional neighbourhood warden hours per week to the City.

The Convener advised that – written into the new SLA with DCC – will be a requirement that payment of the monthly invoice for this service is only made upon receipt of a monthly report from the Neighbourhood Warden on what actions have been taken and where.

Alan Hayton expressed a desire that the Warden's role be focused on patrolling the City to ascertain what local issues are happening in the community as opposed to waiting for a report to come into the office.

Mike Costello highlighted a number of issues where he felt that the Wardens hadn't been as proactive as they could have been in seeking to resolve these issues.

Forum Members highlighted that Kirk Thiis was an excellent warden for the City and expressed disappointment that he had been moved to another part of the county.

Forum Members asked that Dale Clement (the Parish Council's funded Neighbourhood Warden) be invited to attend a future meeting of the Forum.

It was also **agreed** that the Convener and the Secretary should meet with the Neighbourhood Warden manager to discuss the SLA in more detail.

## **6. Update on Durham County Council's recycling campaign**

The Secretary highlighted that Durham County Council is launching a major recycling campaign across County Durham. The Council is placing stickers on all household rubbish and recycling bins to reduce contamination of recycling. The Council has seen a significant increase in the amount of waste and recycling produced since the pandemic, in line with other authorities across the country. Unfortunately, this has also resulted in contamination levels rising in recent years, which has a significant cost implication for the authority.

Richard Hornby advised that a "Bin it Right" sticker had now been installed to his personal wheelie bin and he was very pleased with this.

Forum Members highlighted the difficulties experienced with previous such campaigns; specifically that recycling litter needs to be properly washed, that delivery companies deliver parcels with huge amounts of packaging in them which then isn't subsequently crushed into the bin and that there is a serious issue of contamination with litter, such that very little waste is actually being recycled.

Mike Costello also highlighted that there was a lot of fly tipping taking place in the River Wear and highlighted the weirs being clogged with heavy vegetation and debris. The Secretary advised that the Parish Council's Environment Committee has been in frequent dialogue with relevant agencies regarding the clearing of the weirs and confirmed that this work is currently being scheduled for September this year. This work hasn't happened as swiftly as some residents may have liked however the ecological impact of carrying out this work as well as the logistics involved in clearing very heavy vegetation mean that this cannot happen without detailed planning.

The secretary also advised that the Durham City Riverscape Community – a new group established in Durham to look after the river – is carrying out a litter pick in the river and along the riverbanks every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month.

## **7. Items for the next Forum Agenda**

Richard Hornby highlighted that on average fuel bills were likely to increase by 78% and therefore push a lot of average income family and residents into fuel poverty. Richard advised that he was hoping to progress a scheme whereby the University could use some of its buildings to provide warm hubs to particularly vulnerable residents over the Autumn and Winter months. The Convener asked for this to be an item on the October Agenda.

Mike Costello asked that the future use and protection of the former coach park at the Sands be an item on the next Agenda.

The Convener highlighted that Alan Hayton had raised a number of issues to the Forum Secretary and had asked that the Agenda include items proposed by Residents Associations and limited to 1 or 2 items to allow a proper and thorough discussion of these items. The Convener advised that he would turn these issues into a paper for consideration at the next meeting of the Forum.

#### **8. Dates of future meetings in October 2022, January 2023, April 2023**

The date of the next meeting was **agreed** as 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and Forum Members expressed a desire that it be an in-person meeting.

There being no further business, the Convener thanked all members for their attendance and contribution and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Forum Convener  
(18<sup>th</sup> October 2022)**