

Minutes of the Community Residents' Association Forum meeting held on Thursday 18th October 2022

Present: Adam Shanley and Alan Doig (City of Durham Parish Council) Richard Hornby and Carole Lattin (Gilesgate Residents Association), Alan Hayton and Des Ward (Whinney Hill Community Group) Roz Layton (Elvet Residents Association), Sarah Wilkinson (Crossgate Community Partnership), David Rosser (Sheraton Park Residents Association), Mike Costello (Distressed Residents in the Viaduct Area), Janet George (St. Nicholas Community Forum), Walia Kani (Durham University Residents Forum) and Dave Clarke (Durham Police).

Alan Doig in the **Chair**

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Simon Priestley (Crossgate Community Partnership) and Kirk Lester (St. Nicholas Community Forum). The Secretary advised that Sarah Wilkinson and Janet George had been nominated by both respectively to represent each Residents' Association at this meeting.

2. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Forum meeting held on 28th July 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th July 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings, subject to the reference to "City" being amended to "parish" under item 5 of the minutes.

In approving the minutes, the Secretary noted that whilst DCC had acted swiftly to address a number of the issues raised regarding the doitonline service, the request to add "bins left out" as a reporting option had not yet been achieved. The Secretary advised that he is continuing to pursue this matter with DCC.

Carole Lattin also highlighted under item 7 of the minutes that a number of meetings were taking place regarding the issue of Warm Spaces. Carole advised that David Loudon, at the last Lived Environment sub-group, had confirmed that the University is keen to help use its estate as part of efforts around Warm Spaces, which is very positive news.

Richard Hornby also added that Gilesgate Residents Association is doing a lot of work to publicise where there is Warm Spaces provision in the Gilesgate area.

The Secretary advised that the City of Durham Parish Council is focusing on support at home for the most vulnerable residents.

Under item 7, Mike Costello also proposed that CRAF writes formally to DCC to express its unhappiness at the lack of protection for the land which was the former coach park at the Sands since its de-registration. The Convener advised that he would raise this during one of the regular meetings the Parish Council and the Freemen are having with DCC on this subject.

3. Update on progressing the Operation OAK initiative for Durham City

The Convener reminded Members of the ongoing efforts to provide real time late-night policing of the parish.

The Convener highlighted that the Secretary is due to have a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner Joy Allen about this alongside Dave Clarke, Durham City Neighbourhood Inspector.

Dave Clarke advised that he had looked closely into Operation OAK in Newcastle (Jesmond) and confirmed that this is an additional safety operation led by Northumbria Police and which is jointly funded by both Newcastle and Northumbria Universities.

Dave advised that to initiate a similar model in Durham would require approximately £150,000 and it would need to be covered through overtime from existing officers with the Police as opposed to newly recruited officers.

Dave also highlighted that the University's Community Response Team (a private security firm) is responding to issues within the parish within 30 minutes; something his officers would not be able to do as he presently only has 3 officers covering the City.

Alan Hayton advised that he would like to see a return to the previous system under PCSOs Kay and Rebecca, which did work and which had public confidence.

Walia Kani also highlighted that a number of residents were advising her that they are not receiving feedback from the Nuisance Action Team once a complaint is made. Dave advised that the Police have a similar issue in terms of feedback.

Richard Hornby advised that he felt that the University has a duty of care to its students to provide additional policing from a safety perspective.

The Secretary asked if additional provision from a safety perspective could be delivered if the Parish Council were to put in additional funding. Dave advised that he believed this would be possible and highlighted that Safer Streets 4a) funding may be applicable to this scheme.

The Convener asked the meeting for their views if the Parish Council increased the precept in order to deliver this additional provision. The increase to the Band D charge being around £12. Forum Members advised that they would need to take this back to their membership to discuss further.

It was highlighted that the City of Durham parish precept is very low and has not been increased since the inception of the Parish Council.

The Convener also highlighted that he felt that the funds raised through the Charter Trust could be re-allocated towards such a project.

The Forum **agreed** that the Secretary should meet with Joy Allen and Dave Clarke next week to explore options for additional safety across the parish through making the Safety Hub in the City centre a more mobile operation and for police to be on active patrol throughout the parish area.

4. Durham County Council consultation on draft ASB Strategy

The Forum considered the draft ASB Strategy by Durham County Council.

The Forum felt that this Strategy was very light on specific details relating to how certain services – such as better call handling, victims support, etc would be delivered.

The Forum also felt that more proactive work was needed around promoting and publishing stats relating to the community trigger referenced within the Strategy.

Alan Hayton highlighted that a lot of the actions referenced in the Strategy required the work and support of the Police in order to deliver.

Alan Hayton also advised that late-night noise disturbance should be seen as a key aspect of ASB for the City.

The Forum agreed that the Strategy was not specific to the City which has its own unique issues of ASB because of the demographic of the population, size of late night economy, etc. The only reference to the City in the Strategy at all being the PSPO on alcohol seizures.

The Forum agreed that PSPOs were an important tool to tackle ASB but highlighted that PSPOs which had previously been consulted on – e.g. aggressive begging – had not been introduced by DCC in spite of the support for this from the Police.

The Forum also highlighted that private landlord – whether licensed or not – formed an important part of addressing ASB in the parish area.

Mike Costello asked that, in the absence of selective licensing, the Parish Council should pursue DCC getting approval for “additional licensing” of HMOs; a matter he has been pursuing since 2010 when the proposal was first introduced.

The Convener advised that the Parish Council would be drafting a formal response to the ASB Strategy consultation this week, ready for approval by the Parish Council at its meeting next week.

Mike Costello asked for sight of this draft response before it was sent to the Parish Council. The Convener advised that this would depend on the Secretary’s time to do this.

5. Report by the Forum Convener on operation of CRAF into the future

The Convener thanked Alan Hayton for raising important matters as to the operation of CRAF going forwards and advised that he would be bringing a formal written paper on this matter to the next meeting of CRAF for Forum Members’ consideration.

6. Dates of future meetings in January 2023 and April 2023

The Convener advised that the Secretary would be in touch in due course with a confirmed date in January 2023 for the next CRAF meeting.

7. 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.

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

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive name followed by a long horizontal flourish.

**Forum Convener
(January 2023)**