

# **CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS FORUM**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The Parish Council Community and Residents' Associations Forum is established to ensure meaningful resident consultation and be an effective forum for expressing views that would inform the work of the Parish Council.

The Forum is not a decision-making body of the Parish Council. Its primary role is to comment on and add value to the Council relating to its work throughout the year and to work towards providing a collective voice on matters of shared concern from local residents.

### **2. STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF THE COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS FORUM**

#### **Forum Composition and voting**

The membership of the Forum comprises each formally constituted community and residents' association within the Parish Council area which are open to all residents within their area, have a valid constitution and hold an annual AGM.

Each member of the Forum – that is, each community and residents' association - shall nominate up to 2 representatives or delegates from its membership to attend meetings of the Forum. Others may be invited in a non-voting, non-speaking capacity (unless invited to speak by the Forum). The Parish Clerk will act as the Secretary of the Forum. All members have equal rights and votes will be taken on contentious issues or where consensus is not achieved on those items where the Forum wishes to make a formal statement or proposal. In the case of an equality of votes, the Convenor (or Deputy if the Convenor is absent) shall have a second or casting vote.

The Forum operates on a one member, one vote basis.

The quorum necessary for the transaction of the business of the Forum shall be no less than one third of members of the Forum.

At every meeting, members present should appoint one of their members to act as convenor for the meeting, whose role it will be to conduct and chair the business of the meeting.

#### **Officers of the Forum**

The membership of the Forum shall elect from their own voting membership a Convenor, a Deputy Convenor and a secretary for a period of 12 months, from the date of the first full meeting of the Forum.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS FORUM**

The Forum shall be responsible for:

- Representing the interests of affected residents in their consideration of relevant issues affecting the Parish.
- Promoting equality in the work of the Forum and in the development of relevant projects.
- Working with the City of Durham Parish Council and other stakeholders to implement proposals to the benefit of all residents.
- Providing information and sign posting assistance to residents.
- Making representations to the Parish Council, Parish Council committees and other stakeholders on a range of issues which are (either negatively or positively) impacting local residents, as appropriate.

Members of the Forum will be expected to:

- Represent the interests of all residents;
- Use their best endeavours to work together to enable the Forum to meet its responsibilities;
- Treat others at the meeting with respect.

#### **4. PROCEEDINGS AT MEETINGS**

##### **Notice of Meetings**

Items for inclusion on the Agenda should be submitted to the Convenor and Secretary no later than 10 working days prior to a meeting.

The Agenda and papers for discussion shall be circulated no less than 7 working days prior to the meeting.

Late items will be accepted at the discretion of the Convenor and shall only be matters that are urgent and could not be included in the Agenda.

Dates, times and means of access to meetings will be publicised on the Parish Council website. As far as possible, members should also publicise dates, times and means of access to meetings on their own websites.

##### **Servicing of Meetings**

Servicing of meetings will be arranged by the Forum Secretary. Minute taking and reports will be the responsibility of the Forum Secretary in consultation with the Convenor and Deputy Convenor. Approval of minutes will be sought at the next scheduled meeting of the Forum.

##### **Frequency of Meetings**

The Forum will meet once every 3 months. The Convenor, after consultation with the Forum Secretary, may convene an extra-ordinary meeting outside the agreed schedule to discuss any urgent issues that cannot wait until the next regular meeting.

## **Review of Terms of Reference**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed once every 12 months from the date of the first full meeting of the Forum.

**Date adopted:** July 2021

**Date to be reviewed:** July 2022