



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community
Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

FULL COUNCIL

31st May 2024

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Ordinary Meeting of Duston Parish Council to be held at Duston Community Centre on Thursday 6th June 2024 commencing at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Issued by:

Gary Youens
Parish Clerk, Duston Parish Council

AGENDA

23/24. To receive apologies for absence

24/24. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th May 2024 (APPENDIX A)

25/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda (*Members should disclose any interests in the business to be discussed and are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business*).

Tel: 01604 583626

Web: www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk

@DustonPC

@Duston_PC

26/23. Public Participation Session (*Persons wishing to address Council may register their intention to do so at the above address by telephone or email by 12 noon on the day of the meeting and may speak for a maximum of 3 minutes*).

27/24. To receive any information update on Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy

28/24. Councillor Reports – Information Only

- To receive any informational reports from Councillors.

29/24. Annual Return

- a) To receive the Report of the Internal Auditor for 23/24 (APPENDIX B)
- b) To agree the Annual Return and Governance Statement 23/24 (APPENDIX C)
- c) To receive year end information and agree the Accounting Statements for 2023/24 (APPENDIX D)
- d) To confirm the period for the exercise of electors rights

30/24. Asset Register

- To approve the Asset Register for 2023/24 (APPENDIX E)

31/24. Reserves Policy

- To adopt the Reserves Policy (APPENDIX F)

32/24. Committee Updates

- a) To receive a report in the form of the minutes of the Planning Committee (APPENDIX G)
- b) To receive a report in the form of minutes of the Community Services Committee (APPENDIX H)

33/24. Community Services Committee Recommendations

- a) To receive a the copy of the Youth Report and the updated SLA (APPENDIX I)
- b) To agree the Newsletter and distribution (APPENDIX J)

34/24. Planters

- a) To decide what to do when plants are stolen from DPC planters (eg. replant, remove planter, leave planter empty)
- b) Should DPC have planters on lampposts rather than hanging baskets? Lamppost planters to be purchased using Community Infrastructure Levy. Lampposts belong to WNC.

35/24. DOWPA Bench

- To agree that DOWPA can put a commemorative bench on St Luke's Field.

36/24. Litter Bins

Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published. Copies of all council papers are available to download at www.duston-pc.gov.uk

- a) To proceed with putting in a litter bin at Duston Gardens / Telstar Way now it has been completed
- b) To decide whether to put a litter bin at Haydown Green Play Area
- c) To consider the request whether to put a litter bin at Firsvie Drive opposite Lidl supermarket on Lodge Farm. On the grass verge adjacent to Harlestone Road.

37/24. Play Equipment Items

- To decide whether to install the playground items at Haydown Green and Grafton Way Meadow using Community Infrastructure Levy (APPENDIX K)

38/24. Duston Parish Council Corporate Objectives

- a) To agree with Duston Parish Council Corporate Objectives (APPENDIX L)
- b) Consult each standing Committee as to what the core priorities should be with each Corporate Objective.
- c) Bring back to Council for consideration and devise a new Corporate Plan to replace the existing Four Year Plan

39/24. Staffing Review

- To note that if councillors have any comments or proposals on the current staffing review then contact the Chair of the Council directly.

40/24. Bravery Award

- To get a recognised bravery award for Limehurst Square Shop Keeper
Proposed by Sandie Maitland

41/24. Date of the Next Meeting

- To decide whether to keep the date of the next meeting of 4th July or to postpone it until another day/time due to the General Election.
Proposed by Cllr Jan Ennis-Clark



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Northampton
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FULL COUNCIL MINUTES
THURSDAY 16th MAY 2024

Chair: Cllr P Enright-King

Councillors Present:

Craven, Dickinson, Ennis-Clark, Ingram, Liddon, Littlewood, Maitland, Roper

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Youens – Clerk

Ryan Ikavnieks – Assistant Clerk

01/24. Election of Chair of Duston Parish Council

- **RESOLVED:** Cllr Paul Enright-King was elected Chair for the municipal year of 2024/25.

02/24. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

- **RESOLVED:** Cllr Enright-King signed the Acceptance of Office

03/24. Election of Vice Chair of Duston Parish Council

- **RESOLVED:** Cllr Sandie Maitland was elected Vice-Chair for the municipal year of 2024/25.

04/24. To receive apologies for absence

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- Apologies were received from Cllrs Barnes, Golby and Mumford.

05/24. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2024 (APPENDIX A)

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th April 2024 (APPENDIX A) were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

06/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests in the items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. There were no interests declared.

07/24. Public Participation Session

- There were no members of the public present.

08/24. To Review and Adopt the Following Policies

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Councillor Code of Conduct (APPENDIX B) was received and readopted for the municipal year of 2024/25.
 - b) That the Standing Orders & Scheme of Delegation (APPENDIX C) were received and readopted for the municipal year of 2024/25.
 - c) That the Councillor Laptop Policy (APPENDIX D) was received, discussed and adopted.

09/24. Appointment of Standing Committees

- **RESOLVED:** That the following appointments to each Standing Committee, as per the Standing Orders & Scheme of Delegation, were made:
 - a) Planning Committee – Cllrs Barnes, Ingram, Liddon, Littlewood, Mumford + Enright-King
 - b) Community Services Committee – Cllrs Craven, Ennis-Clark, Golby, Maitland, Roper + Enright-King
 - c) Environment Committee – Cllrs Craven, Dickinson, Ennis-Clark, Ingram, Liddon + Enright-King

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- d) Resources & General Purposes Committee – Cllrs Barnes, Ennis-Clark, Ingram, Littlewood, Maitland + Enright-King
- e) HR Sub-Committee – Cllrs Enright-King, Maitland and Ennis-Clark

10/24. Internal Controls Councillor

- **RESOLVED:** That Cllr Barnes was elected as the Internal Controls Councillor for the municipal year of 2024/25

11/24. NCALC Police Liaison Representative

- **RESOLVED:** That Cllr Liddon was elected as the Police Liaison Representative for the municipal year of 2024/25

12/24. Subscriptions

- **RESOLVED:** That the following list of annual subscriptions was received, discussed and approved:
 - a) NCALC £5096.16 Includes (APPENDIX E)
 - NCALC Membership - £2902.93
 - NALC Membership - £966.83
 - Internal Auditor - £1012.00
 - Data Protection Officer - £10
 - b) Northants ACRE - £42
 - c) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) for the Clerk - £238

13/24. Community Infrastructure Levy

- The Council recognises the tremendous effort Cllr Ingram has devoted to ensure that the Community of Duston have received their fair share of Community Infrastructure Levy monies owed to them from Housing Developers and subsequently West Northamptonshire Council.
- The Council thanked Cllr Ingram for tackling this endeavour.
- **RESOLVED:** That the record of CIL income and expenditure until March 2024 (APPENDIX F) was noted.

14/24. Financial Regulations

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- **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the new NALC model Financial Regulations (APPENDIX G) were noted.
- b) That the Clerk makes the adjustments appropriate for Duston Parish Council to present at a future Council meeting.
- c) Councillors send any suggestions to the Clerk in how they might be applied to Duston Parish Council.

15/24. Bank Reconciliations

- **RESOLVED:** That the bank reconciliations for March 2024 (APPENDIX H) were received and approved.

16/24. Payment of Invoices

- **RESOLVED:** That the invoice payments for March 2024 (APPENDIX I) were received and noted.

17/24. Updates from Committees

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the report in the form of draft minutes from the Environment Committee (APPENDIX J) was received, discussed and noted.
 - b) That the report in the form of draft minutes from the Resources and General Purposes Committee (APPENDIX K) was received, discussed and noted.
 - c) That the report in the form of draft minutes from Community Services Committee (APPENDIX L) was received, discussed and noted.

18/24. West Northamptonshire Council Local Plan

- **RESOLVED:** That the following points are raised as part of the response to the West Northamptonshire Council Local Plan Public Consultation (APPENDIX M):
 - That Duston Parish Council:
 - Welcomes the requirement for affordable housing, if anything it should be more ambitious.

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- Welcomes the commitment to the North West Bypass
- Has concerns over the lack of commitment or mention of the Sandy Lane Relief Road.
- Wishes for a commitment for Section 106 agreements to be adhered to and delivered.
- Large amounts of Public Open Space helps new build developments to be more environmentally sustainable. However, they should be offered to the local parish/town council for adoption in the first build developments

19/24. Recommendation From Planning Committee

- **RESOLVED:** That the recommendation from the Planning Committee for the Clerk to apply for Double yellow lines on the north side of Berrywood Road, outside The Duston School (APPENDIX N) was received discussed and approved.

20/24. Recommendations From Resources & General Purposes Committee

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the recommendation for a new sound system for Duston Community Centre (APPENDIX O) be considered for the next budget in 2025/26.
 - b) That the recommendation for the Clerk to complete Community Governance (Level 4) course, which is above CILCA, be added to the proposed budget for the next municipal year (2025/26), unless money can be found in the meantime (APPENDIX P). However, if the Clerk decides to do this course there must be an agreement in place that they repay all costs of the course if they leave Duston Parish Council within 2 or 3 years. The Clerk will notify the Chair in due course whether they now wish to do the course in light of this "golden handcuffs" clause.
 - c) A HR Working Party has been set to look into staffing issues and current structure. No decisions have been made and there have only been preliminary discussions. Council wanted to ensure it had the best structure in place that could deliver its priorities.

21/23. Recommendation from Community Services Committee

- The Assistant Clerk provided a progress update upon the Newsletter. They noted that they were unable to incorporate feedback received from the Community Services Committee in time for this meeting. They described the feedback and the new intended design to Council.
- **RESOLVED:**

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- a) That the verbal update received from the Assistant Clerk upon the progress "Duston Together" Newsletter for publication was received, discussed and to be brought back to the next ordinary meeting of Council for further discussion.
- b) To consider its distribution within Duston at the next ordinary meeting of Council.
- c) To agree how it is to be funded for the rest of the financial year at the next ordinary meeting of Council. Potentially it could be funded by not continuing with In & Around Duston.

22/24. DPC Staff Pensions

- **RESOLVED:**

- a) To readopt and clarify Council Resolution from 12th January 2017

"That the existing LGPS pension will be closed to all new employees, Irrespective of their position. If new employees have continuous employment and are already in the LGPS they will be eligible for LGPS with DPC. The existing 3 members of staff that are eligible but not currently in LGPS will be auto enrolled into the existing LGPS scheme on auto-enrolment date 1st February 2017."

- b) To affirm the following:

- The Position of Clerk / RFO of Duston Parish Council will be automatically enrolled on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).
- New employees with continuous Local Government Service on LGPS will be automatically enrolled.
- All new employees are continued to be placed on an alternative work place pension scheme.

- c) All other aspects Duston Parish Council will continue to follow Local Government Terms and Conditions (known as "The Green Book") for staff expect for the above.

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Report to Full Council

Date: Thursday 6th June 2024

Agenda Item: 29/24 a) Report of the Internal Auditor 2023/24

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the report of the Internal Auditor and to ask the Council to review the effectiveness of Internal Audit regime.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Parish Council currently uses Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils (NCALC) to undertake its Internal Audit and the findings of the Auditor are reported to Full Council each year.
- 2.2 It is important for the Council to recognise that internal audit's function is to test and report to them on whether the Council's system of financial control put in place by management is adequate and working satisfactorily.

3. SCOPE OF INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN PROPOSAL

- 3.1 All Parish Councils are required to review the effectiveness of the system of internal audit at least annually. The following five standards need to be addressed in order for Internal Audit to be considered effective and should be clearly defined in the Internal Auditor's engagement letter:

3.1.1 Scope of Internal Audit

What should be included in the audit plan, or, in other words, what is it that the Council wants the internal audit to do. It is recommended that the minimum requirements contained in "Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England" are required of Duston's internal audit. The Council may also wish to consider additional areas of work.

The work should take account of the risk management processes (e.g. the annual Corporate Risk Assessment) and also the wider internal controls (the whole system of checks and controls, financial or otherwise, established by management in order to provide assurance regarding the achievement of the organisations objectives). Good examples of internal controls are robust and regularly review Financial Regulations, regular financial reporting to Council and Councillor conducted bank reconciliation.

3.1.2 Independence

The Internal Auditor should be allowed to have direct access to those charged with governance (i.e. the Council/Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer) where this is thought necessary by the auditor.

The Internal Auditor should have no other role within the Council and the Council should confirm this. This is not to say that he/she cannot be an employee of the Council. This may happen within larger local Councils and certainly does happen in principle authorities, but the Internal Auditor should have no role in the financial or decision-making processes.

The Internal Auditors report should be made in his/her own name and addressed to the Council. It is perfectly feasible to prepare the audit report on a "negative" basis, i.e. only those items which require amendment or improvement to be mentioned, but where the auditor finds that no matters have arisen from the audit which necessitates bringing to the attention of members, then the report should reflect this.

3.1.3 Competence

The Council must be satisfied that the Internal Auditor is competent to carry out the work. The Internal Auditor does not have to possess any qualifications but the following essential competencies to be sought should be:

- understanding of basic accounting processes;

- understanding of the role of internal audit in reviewing systems rather than undertaking detailed checks that are more appropriately the responsibility of management;
- awareness of risk management issues; and
- understanding of accounting requirements and the legal framework and powers of local councils.

3.1.4 Relationships

The Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) of the Council should be consulted on the content of the audit plan and all concerned should agree this beforehand. Responsibilities for officers and internal audit should be defined in relation to risk management, internal control and fraud and corruption matters. These will be clearly set out in such documents as job descriptions and the auditors' engagement letter.

Council members should be clear on their own responsibilities for the "protection of the public purse" within the internal audit framework. The Council has a duty to consider the annual internal audit report and to demonstrate that consideration by inclusion in the minutes. Each item mentioned in the report should be fully addressed.

3.1.5 Audit Planning and Reporting

The audit plan should properly take account of the corporate risk i.e. controls and procedures within the Council which minimise the risk of the body not being able to function or carry out what it sets out to do. The Council should approve the plan. Internal audit should report in writing in accordance with the plan.

The Internal Auditor is appointed by and reports to the Council not the Clerk/RFO. The auditor should have up-to-date and adequate professional indemnity insurance and provide or agree a letter of engagement with the Council.

- 3.2 In order to satisfy all of these requirements the Council approved an audit plan in accordance with the above mentioned "Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England" and approved an Audit Engagement letter.

4. REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

- 4.1 The report of the Internal Auditor is attached to this report and is self-explanatory.
- 4.2 The majority of the internal auditor work is done by viewing information that must be published on our website under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.
- 4.2. Whilst no significant issues were identified by the Internal Auditor for the period 2023/24 some issues were highlighted.
- The Council should consider the risk of holding all its funds with just one bank due to the limitations of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (protection of balances up to £85,000). There is a case for spreading the risk by placing deposits with different banks, the risk and strategy should be reviewed by the Council annually.
 - Following on from this point the Internal Auditor raised a concern that Duston Parish Council had not been able to implement the agreed switch to Unity Bank. Many local councils now use Unity Bank as it is tailor-made for the sector. Whilst the account was set up in a satisfactory manner it could not be used due to the lack of appointed signatories being registered for online use. The Internal Auditor recommends that the updated NALC model Financial Regulations are reviewed and adopted as they can be used to simplify the delivery of banking and payments procedures.
 - The Internal Auditor commented that some local councils are exhausting their general reserves to fund revenue expenditure. Some local councils in Northamptonshire are running on low reserves. However Duston Parish Council is in a strong financial position and the Clerk is scheduled to present the Reserves Policy to Council for adoption and subsequent publication.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

- a) Council receive the report of the Internal Auditor
- b) Council agrees that the scope of Internal Audit remains appropriate and
- c) Council agrees that the Internal Audit regime is effective

Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	Duston Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	John Marshall	Date of report:	16.05.2024
Year ending:	31 March 2024	Date audit carried out:	16.05.2024

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. It is important to note that managing the council's internal controls is a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and councillors and it would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of the council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to and seen by me. The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.

To the Chairman of the Council:

By agreement, I met with Gary Youens, Clerk & RFO and Natalie Green, the council's retained accounts consultant via an online meeting platform, to carry out the annual internal audit. I am grateful to both for their co-operation and assistance in delivering the audit; having the year-end data available in good time ahead of the audit has been very helpful.

Prior to our meeting, I examined the publicly available information displayed on the council's website including the council's policies, procedures, agendas, minutes, financial and other records. I sought evidence that the previous year's Internal and External Audit reports had been properly reported to and where necessary acted upon by the Council; they had and whilst the External Auditor raised no issues and the Conclusion of Audit notice was posted on 05 September, the AGAR section 3 report and certificate was not reported to the council until the 07 December meeting. Of the 3 issues identified in my Internal Audit report, just 2 have been fully addressed; I comment further below.

I then examined the council's arrangements for the management and control of its business in the areas of bookkeeping, due process (ie compliance with the 'proper practices' as set out in the Practitioners' Guide*), risk management, budget setting and monitoring, payroll, asset register, bank reconciliations, internal control and year-end procedures including the display of information and the exercise of public rights.

Where necessary, I requested and was provided with supplementary evidence to enable me to reach a conclusion regarding the enquiries I am required to make as set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) that forms part of the council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This supplementary information was obtained through inspection of documents and questioning at the audit meeting.

I noted 2 audit issues;

1. **Risk Management.** The risk associated with holding significant balances in excess of

£85,000 ie the sum protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme has yet to be addressed and included in the council's current Risk Register, updated during the course of the audit year. I reiterate my previous observation that this does not mean deposits with any given bank or deposit taker should never exceed £85,000 but the requirement in the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 is for the council to review, annually the risks to which it is exposed and as part of that review means the council must be able to justify its current policy and strategy for managing its cash deposits.

The situation was exacerbated during the audit year by the closure of the council's Unity Bank account, with the funds being transferred to a Barclays account and I am dismayed to discover from the Minutes that this was a direct consequence of a lack of appointed signatories coming forward from amongst the elected and co-opted members.

I reiterate the council's current Financial Regulations recognise this issue at reg 5.10 viz *'The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time'*. New NALC model Financial Regulations were published on 08 May and I urge the council to adopt the updated model as soon as possible, taking advantage of the opportunities offered therein to simplify and facilitate delivery of its banking and payments procedures.

2. Reserves. The council correctly considered the use of its financial reserves as part of the budget and precept setting process but the details of the reserves held (both general and earmarked) are not included in the budget documentation displayed on the website. The council should also now finalise and publish its General Reserve Policy, mentioned in the Annual Report as such a document is now an explicit requirement of para 1.13 of the current (2024) Practitioners' Guide, so part of the mandatory 'proper practices'. Further guidance on reserves is set out on paras 5.31 - 5.39.

Notwithstanding the above, it is apparent that the council continues to exhibit acceptable standards of governance and compliance with statutory requirements. Based on the information made available to me I am satisfied that in all significant respects, the internal control objectives are being delivered and achieved to a standard adequate to meet the council's needs. Accordingly, I have completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report as required.

John Marshall, CiLCA
Internal Auditor to the Council
07505 139832
wjm.marshall1@gmail.com

The figures submitted in the Annual Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2023	Year ending 31 March 2024
1. Balances brought forward	482,261	695,342
2. Annual precept	531,239	597,451
3. Total other receipts	450,921	260,454
4. Staff costs	280,624	317,955
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	119,589	119,334
6. Total other payments	368,866	437,380
7. Balances carried forward	695,342	678,578
8. Total cash and investments	681,801	667,158
9. Total fixed assets and long term assets	4,487,183	4,568,866
10. Total borrowings	1,539,989	1,481,882

The proper practices referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 that smaller authorities must follow are set out in The *Practitioners' Guide*. A copy of the current version of the Guide and other useful information is available for free download from this page:

<https://www.pkf-littlejohn.com/services-limited-assurance-regime-useful-documents-and-links>

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - Sections 1 and 2 must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority must approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both must be approved and published on the authority website/webpage before 1 July 2024.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, must return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, approved and signed, page 4
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate
- Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority must comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (Section 2, page 5). An explanation must be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 5. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not fully explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, must set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which must include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority must publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor before 1 July 2024.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk**

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Duston Parish Council

www.duston-pc.gov.uk

FOR PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

16/05/2024

NORTHANTS-CALC-LTD
INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

W J McL. Marshall, CILCA¹ AL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

16/05/2024

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

Duston Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

Duston Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	482,261	695,342	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	531,239	597,451	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	450,921	260,454	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	280,624	317,955	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	119,589	119,334	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	368,866	437,380	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	695,342	678,578	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	681,801	667,158	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4,487,183	4,568,866	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	1,538,989	1,481,882	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

G. JONES

Date

13 05 2024

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Committee: Full Council
 Date: 6th June 2024
 Agenda Item: 29/24 c. ANNUAL RETURN, GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND
 END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2023/24

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide the Council with a commentary on the year end figures for 2023/24.
 To ask the Council to approve the year end accounts, Annual Governance and
 Accountability Return for 2023/24.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The accounts are prepared by methods that comply with the standard
 accounting practices and are based on the following basic concepts:

Going Concern – The accounts are prepared on the assumption that the
 Council will remain in existence for the foreseeable future. The alternative to
 this would be the 'winding up' basis which would value the assets at the level
 they could be sold for at the date of the accounts.

The Matching Principle – Incomes or Benefits are matched to their associated
 costs and reported in the most appropriate financial period.

Consistency – The same accounting principles are used and uniformly applied
 from one year to the next to ensure figures are comparable year on year.

Prudence – Where alternative outcomes are possible the one which produces
 the lowest profit, lower asset value or higher liability is chosen. The prevents
 overstatement of profit or benefit.

- 2.2 The Council is subject to intermediate audit by PKF Littlejohn. Council are
 asked to approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and
 authorise the Chairman to sign the same.

3. YEAR END ACCOUNTING ADJUSTMENTS

A computerised accounting systems records transactions strictly by invoice date, date of payment or date of banking for receipts. Where this would cause an item to be reported in the wrong financial period a manual adjustment is required to correct the accounts.

Prepayments – where items are paid or invoiced in advance for a service which extends beyond the end of the financial year the cost must be split pro rata between the two financial periods.

In the accounts for the year to 31st March 2024 the following adjustments were made:

Prepayments	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Insurances	6,702	7,360
Utilities to be recharged to tenants	24,000	5,000
Duston Fund Day expenses paid in advance	3,636	5,253
Other prepayments	5,355	7,511
TOTAL	39,693	25,124

Accruals – Where the benefit of goods or services has been received or a cost incurred but an invoice from the supplier has not been received by the year end an adjustment is required to recognise the expenditure within the appropriate year. In the accounts for the year to 31st March 2024 the following adjustments were made:

Accruals	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Audit and accountancy fees	6,180	6,180
Utilities	13,473	11,720
Legal and surveyors fees re leases etc	6,075	-
Youth provision Nov-Mar 24	-	5,500
Other accruals	1,613	600
TOTAL	27,341	24,000

Deferred Income – Where a sales invoice is raised in advance for an event or service that takes place in the following financial period then this income must be adjusted to transfer it into the accounts for the following year. For example tenants rent invoices which are raised in advance.

Deferred Income	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Tenants rent in advance	15,253	14,557
Room hire events after year end	559	500
Duston Fun Day monies in advance	496	300
TOTAL	16,308	15,357

4. OTHER BALANCE SHEET ITEMS

Cash and Bank Balances – At the 31st March 2024 the Council held £666,984.98 in bank accounts. The balance per the bank statements before taking into account uncleared items as at 31 March 2024 totalled £666,984.98. The Council held £172.63 in petty cash and various floats. The cash and bank balances as at 31 March 2024 totalled £667,157.61.

The Council is required to ensure that it has sufficient funds to be able to pay staff salaries, trade creditors, HMRC and pension scheme contributions in April before the first half of the following year's precept is received at the end of April. The first instalment of the precept amounting to £317,656.50 was received as cleared funds on 26th April 2024.

Debtors – The year end debtor balance represents the following:

Debtors	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Debtors	42,090	52,045
HMRC (VAT refund due)	5,079	-
Other debtors	6,389	2,131
Prepayments	39,693	25,124
TOTAL	93,251	79,300

Creditors – The year end creditor balance represents the following:

Creditors	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Purchase Ledger (includes PAYE and Pension*)	31,537	19,847
VAT payable	-	3,544
Refundable deposits	400	1,050
Accruals	27,341	24,000
Deferred income	16,308	15,357
Tenant deposit	1,937	1,771
Rent for lobby	2,187	2,187
Other creditors	-	122
TOTAL	79,710	67,878

*PAYE and pension scheme (LGPS) contributions relating to the March payroll were due for payment in April.

5. CONCLUSION

The Council budget for 2023/24 expenditure was £917,951 and the actual expenditure amounted to £874,668, of this £90,902 was met from ear-marked reserves. The income budget (excluding transfers from ear-marked reserves) was £817,951 and the actual income received was £857,905. This included Community Infrastructure Levy income of £12,582. Transfers were made to ear-marked reserves in the sum of £67,499 (net transfers to ear-marked reserves £23,403). Key variances included in the Annual Return (those over 15%) are shown in the table below.

The utility costs for the centres have now stabilised and in total have been below budget. The surplus has been transferred to an ear-marked reserve due to the volatility in energy markets. Legal and professional fees (excluding those met by ear-marked reserves) have exceeded the budget by £4,956, this was mainly due the further costs required to review and prepare new leases for the commercial office tenants and additional costs of the community asset transfers. This has been offset by the increase in room hire income. Savings have been made against the salaries budget. The cost of salaries and pensions was £19,215 lower than the budget as the agreed pay award was lower than anticipated. Costs were carefully managed throughout the year and the budgeted break-even was exceeded, leaving a surplus (after net movements to ear-marked reserves) of £6,638.

Key variances	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Variance £	Variance %	Detailed explanation of variance (with amounts £)
<i>Other receipts</i>	450,921	260,454	(190,467)	42.23%	In 2022/23 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies were received in the sum of £209,124 in 2023/24 this was reduced to £12,582. An additional grant was received in 23/24 of £3,000 and bank interest increased in 23/24 by £2,379
<i>All other payments</i>	368,866	437,380	68,514	18.57%	<p>During the year the cost of benches, planters and signs was £22,366 (from CILs monies). This was an increase on £20,019 on the previous year.</p> <p>Play equipment was purchased and the existing play areas were refurbished at a cost of £46,997, an increase of £37,557 over the previous year (from CILs monies).</p> <p>Events expenditure increased by £9,456, additional events were held and costs included the commencement of the work on the Tree of Hope.</p> <p>The cost of tree works and vegetation removal during the year increased by £16,040.</p> <p>Utility costs fell by £16,619 during the year.</p>

6. TOTAL BUDGET VARIANCE ON THE GENERAL RESERVE

The Council ended the year with a General Reserve of £364,311 (2022/23: £357,673) and earmarked reserves of £314,267 (2022/23:£337,670), resulting in an overall reserve balance as at 31st March 2024 of £678,578.

7. BREAKDOWN OF RESERVES

Reserves as at 31 March 2024 are as follows:

	£
Earmarked reserves	
Grounds maintenance from 2028	31,167
Capital expenditure	31,219
Elections	27,679
Buildings refurbishment and maintenance	90,725
Community Asset Transfers costs	4,808
Community Infrastructure Levy	116,669
Grants received not yet spent	2,000
Utilities	10,000
Total earmarked reserves	314,267
General reserves	364,311
Total reserves	678,578

8. BORROWINGS

The Council has Public Works Loans Board borrowings of £1,481,882 as at 31st March 2024.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

- a) The Council approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Review 2023/24 and authorise the Chairman to sign the same
- b) The Council approve the end of year financial statement as a fair and accurate record of the Council's financial position at 31st March 2024.

Duston Parish Council

ASSETS @ 31/03/2024

	Location	Date acquired	Amount £	
5xnotice boards	various	pre 2005	5,982.00	
2xnotice boards	various	24/10/2012	712.45	
Notice boards	various	2013-14	1,604.05	
2 cycle barriers	Duston CE park	pre 2006	1,092.00	
2 cycle barriers	Errington Park	pre 2005	1,092.00	
Computer equipment	parish office/youth worker	various	-	Dispose 23/24
Commemorative bench	Rose Garden		856.96	
office equipment	parish office		1,081.00	
teak memorial bench			541.00	
18xlitter bins	various		9,644.00	
8xpublic seats	various		13,126.00	One disposed 18/19 £1875
1seat&bin	weggs farm		1,623.00	
3xseats and bins	various		3,102.00	
Bins & seats	various	2013-14	10,765.35	
HQI camera - Police passed ownership to Council			780.00	
Equipment various	parish office		1,974.00	
MUGA	Errington Park		80,000.00	
Village Sign (donated Emp Cllr Allow)	corner of Berywood Road		1,485.00	
Cycle - PSCO Nigle Phelps	kept by police owned by DPC		500.00	
generator	storage parish office		160.00	
4 roundabout, Errington Park, Mendip Park, Grafton Park, Quarry Park			43,095.00	
Playground equip/safety grass	Duston Wildes, Quarry Park	18/01/2017	2,339.30	
Playground equip	Errington	2013-14	27,014.13	
office furniture	parish office	30/03/2012	276.00	
Fridge	parish office	13/04/2012	95.82	
Computer equipment	parish office	04/12/2012	3,170.66	
Computer	parish office	18/11/2014	434.33	
Hazard Cupboard	Community centre	03/07/2014	256.00	
Microwave	Community centre	03/07/2014	63.32	
Tree Lights	St Luke's		83.32	
Computer	Community centre	30/05/2014	662.06	
Office Furniture	Parish office	31/10/2014	1,382.75	Dispose 7 office chairs E400
Camera	Parish office	08/04/2014	41.66	
Events Equipment	Parish Office	29/05/2014	464.12	
Youth equipment	St Luke's Centre	07/05/2015	50.00	
Computer equipment	Parish Office and Community Centre	28/02/2016	-	Dispose 23/24
Catering Equipment	Community Centre	25/02/2016	8,626.68	
Tables & chairs	Community Centre	08/01/2016	2,713.00	Dispose 10 chairs 18/19 @ £15 each
Environment Equipment	Parish Office	02/03/2016	291.88	
Bin	Parish Office	02/02/2016	340.00	
Litter barrow	Parish Office (environment)	19/10/2016	200.00	
Salt bin	Parish Office (environment)	15/12/2016	248.00	
Litter bin	Parish Office (environment)	18/10/2016	279.95	
Notice boards	Parish Office (environment)	25/04/2016	1,736.74	
Office Furniture	Community Centre	14/03/2016	1,022.13	
Signage	Community Centre	18/12/2015	1,211.50	
Signage	Community Centre	19/08/2016	556.91	
TV aerial	Community Centre	10/08/2016	250.00	
Reception Counter	Community Centre	18/04/2016	1,960.00	
Ice making machine	Community Centre	15/07/2016	99.98	
Panasonic TV and DVD	Community Centre	09/08/2016	448.33	
TV trolley	Community Centre	09/08/2016	62.49	
Piano trolley	Community Centre	09/08/2016	106.12	
Catering Equipment	Community Centre	27/09/2016	95.97	
Circular tables	Community Centre	03/01/2017	629.00	
Garment rail and hangers	Community Centre	09/02/2017	190.00	
10 lt water boiler	Community Centre	16/02/2017	49.98	
Sun protections/kitchen window	Community Centre	28/02/2017	427.50	
Display cabinets	Community Centre	21/03/2017	623.08	
Build and install planter	Parish Office (environment)	03/06/2016	1,970.00	
Vacuum cleaner	Community Centre	04/04/2016	30.00	
Till for bar area	Community Centre	06/04/2017	472.85	
Ikea - baby chairs	Community Centre	13/04/2017	33.50	
Tommy Tippee play equipment	Community Centre	08/05/2017	24.99	
The Works, stage lighting	Community Centre	17/05/2017	2,049.55	
The Works, theatre talk back	Community Centre	17/05/2017	673.80	
Flute glasses	Community Centre	30/05/2017	45.99	
Safe	Community Centre	26/07/2017	249.99	
PAT testing equipment	Community Centre	17/08/2017	200.00	
Powerwasher	Community Centre	14/09/2017	166.67	
Mugs (cafening)	Community Centre	11/09/2017	36.50	
Serving stand	Community Centre	23/10/2017	16.00	
Coffee machine/teaboiler	Community Centre	03/11/2017	315.98	
Barrier	Community Centre	06/11/2017	255.95	
Teaspoons	Community Centre	06/11/2017	79.58	
Fire door retainers	Community Centre	05/12/2017	515.94	
Signs	Community Centre	15/12/2017	13.77	
Blackboard for café	Community Centre	21/03/2018	20.79	
2 coat stands	Community Centre	26/03/2018	101.96	
Panasonic 58" smart tv	Community Centre	26/03/2018	499.17	
TV Cart	Community Centre	26/03/2018	49.99	
Leaf blower	Environment	27/06/2017	191.67	
Removable bollard	St Lukes	02/08/2017	295.00	
Mirror	St Lukes	08/12/2017	69.54	
Table and 6 chairs	St Lukes	07/03/2018	200.00	
Microwave	Parish Office	29/09/2017	35.00	
Coat stand	Parish Office	27/11/2017	40.00	
Coat stand	Parish Office	21/02/2018	40.00	
War Memorial railings	Environment	22/11/2017	675.00	
Greenhouse Youth Club	Youth	01/04/2017	83.74	
Van Peugeot Partner MD17HTT	Van	19/12/2018	8,448.00	
Wifi Solution Hardware (DBFB)	Parish Office	16/11/2018	816.00	
Netgear 24 Port Switch	Parish Office	26/11/2018	-	Dispose 23/24
Netgear 24 TG588 router	Parish Office	28/11/2018	-	Dispose 23/24
Netgear 24 Port Switch/TG588 router installation	Parish Office	26/11/2018	-	Dispose 23/24
Trent Furniture 20 chairs	Community Centre	13/04/2018	-	Dispose 23/24
Undercounter freezer	Community Centre	11/10/2018	148.00	
Display system	Community Centre	01/11/2018	148.00	
7 fire doors	Community Centre	14/11/2018	1,782.34	
Defibrillator	St Lukes	26/02/2019	1,315.20	
Cupboard	Parish Office	22/10/2018	280.00	

ASSETS @ 31/03/2024

	Location	Date acquired	Amount £
Hedge trimmer	Environment	10/05/2018	476.58
2 Gazebos	Environment	11/05/2018	359.90
3 removable bollards	Environment	22/10/2018	945.00
World War 1 memorial bench	Environment	31/10/2018	809.50
Speed signs	Environment	29/11/2018	2,110.31
Traffic Control	Environment	25/01/2019	4,924.06
Office chairs	Parish Office	31/10/2019	623.00
Gazebo for fun day	Community Centre	25/04/2019	137.50
20 tables	Community Centre	03/04/2019	685.00
Platform steps	Community Centre	14/05/2019	146.53
CCTV system 2 new cameras and box	Community Centre	25/06/2019	1,420.00
Slimline fridge	Community Centre	08/08/2019	129.00
LEC fridge	Community Centre	20/09/2019	166.00
Bar shutters	Community Centre	30/09/2019	2,600.00
Flag	Environment	07/10/2019	2,089.80
Timken Art	Environment	01/04/2019	1.00
Wicksteed Rainbow slide	Environment	10/09/2019	2,796.00
Wicksteed Zig Zag buster	Environment	10/05/2019	2,435.00
Wicksteed St Lukes play equip	Environment	29/08/2019	15,840.78
Wicksteed Mendip Road	Environment	29/08/2019	18,384.70
Wicksteed Grafton	Environment	31/10/2019	14,542.15
Bins	Environment	08/08/2019	194.95
Bee & Butterfly seat	Environment	04/09/2019	1,726.00
Greenlea seat	Environment	12/09/2019	460.00
Bins	Environment	17/09/2019	558.90
Gates at community centre	Environment	17/09/2019	980.00
Traffic cones and parking signs	St Lukes	10/03/2020	404.80
Room wall guards	Community Centre	07/04/2020	2,740.58
Baca key cabinet	Community Centre	18/05/2020	74.04
Abbott Signs - new signs	Community Centre	03/07/2020	959.48
Nisbets bins	Community Centre	08/07/2020	324.95
Addison - perspex screen	Community Centre	09/07/2020	125.00
SSS - security camera	Community Centre	27/08/2020	345.00
Argos - TV	Community Centre	11/08/2020	166.65
Argos - TV bracket	Community Centre	11/08/2020	161.72
ESPO notice boards	Community Centre	03/09/2020	210.00
Abbott Signs - new internal signs	Community Centre	16/12/2020	675.24
The Works loop system	Community Centre	17/12/2020	189.98
The Works PDA loop system	Community Centre	17/12/2020	346.47
PB Electrical Floodlight for rear exit	Community Centre	14/01/2021	130.00
The Works - signet amplifier	Community Centre	14/01/2021	1,099.41
Abbott Signs - signs for doors	Community Centre	23/03/2021	234.77
Zephyr - St George Flag	Environment	28/04/2020	214.90
Community Heartbeat defibrillators	Environment	15/05/2020	5,895.00
Community Heartbeat emergency phones	Environment	01/09/2020	1,090.00
Community Heartbeat signs	Environment	29/09/2020	205.00
Abbott Signs - signs	Environment	02/11/2020	494.68
Abbot Signs - remembrance day display	Events	15/12/2020	435.66
Dell - computer dock	Administration	01/09/2020	940.98
Dell Sleeve and monitor	Administration	01/09/2020	236.18
Dell - 8 computers (Latitude)	Administration	01/09/2020	4,574.22
Broxap - 2 bins	Environment	24/06/2020	584.90
Fire doors and closers	Community Centre	13/07/2021	4,508.90
Telescopic ladder	Community Centre	13/08/2021	99.98
Exterior sign DPC	Community Centre	20/08/2021	674.50
Plaques	Community Centre	13/10/2021	141.45
Internal signage	Community Centre	31/10/2021	638.64
Speakers	Community Centre	13/11/2021	706.66
Exterior signage	Community Centre	11/01/2022	397.40
Bluetooth projector	Community Centre	13/03/2022	124.14
Showcase	St Lukes	13/05/2021	381.00
EVAC chair	St Lukes	24/09/2021	561.00
Chairs and tables	St Lukes	01/11/2021	2,735.00
New lighting St Lukes	St Lukes	25/11/2021	2,501.00
Roller blinds	St Lukes	28/01/2022	3,350.25
2 door cupboard	Administration	04/10/2021	162.00
Filing drawer and cupboard	Administration	07/10/2021	309.00
Notice boards	Community Centre	09/10/2021	1,296.00
Borth' bench	Environment	13/05/2021	414.00
Reston' seat	Environment	13/07/2021	357.00
NHS Key workers '3 seats	Environment	16/09/2021	3,486.00
Jubilee bench	Environment	13/02/2022	820.83
Welcome to Duston sign	Environment	26/04/2021	3,965.00
Desk	Community Centre	13/04/2022	152.93
Speakers	Community Centre	13/08/2022	157.50
Ezone fan	Community Centre	13/09/2022	158.32
Install camera main hall	Community Centre	01/03/2023	970.00
Tablet	Administration	31/03/2023	459.00
Floor buffer	Community Centre	15/09/2022	718.50
New sink	St Lukes	27/04/2022	950.00
Bookcase	Administration	04/05/2022	70.00
Cupboard	Administration	13/05/2022	94.00
Whiteboard	Administration	18/10/2022	184.00
Abbot Signs - parks	Environment	17/11/2022	5,846.00
Community Heartbeat defibrillator and cabinet	Environment	29/03/2023	2,810.00
Wicksteed play equipment	Environment	19/10/2022	3,216.81
Keep Britain Tidy signs	Environment	11/05/2022	2,250.00
Rainbow bench	Environment	10/05/2022	564.00
Jubilee bench	Environment	16/06/2022	540.00
Lomond seat	Environment	12/12/2022	995.00
Security camera on garage at St Lukes	St Lukes	28/04/2023	1,400.00
Sign at St Lukes	St Lukes	30/04/2023	2,132.31
Electricity meters St Lukes offices	St Lukes	08/09/2023	575.00
Electricity meters St Lukes offices	St Lukes	09/01/2024	1,630.00
Camera St Lukes main hall	St Lukes	26/02/2024	660.00
Cabinet	Administration	13/06/2023	141.99
Office chairs	Administration	13/02/2024	739.00
Zephyr flag winch	Environment	26/05/2023	1,225.00
Welcome to Duston signs	Environment	14/06/2023	2,721.90
Gates at St Lukes fields	Environment	26/06/2023	1,434.00
Planters	Environment	27/07/2023	1,895.00
Swarco traffic signs	Environment	28/07/2023	7,300.00
Bicycle rack	Environment	13/08/2023	167.87

ASSETS @ 31/03/2024

	Location	Date acquired	Amount £
Bleed control cabinet	Environment	31/08/2023	479.98
Gate - Timken/field	Environment	21/09/2023	1,634.00
Planters	Environment	20/10/2023	5,609.00
Sihl strimmer	Environment	17/11/2023	1,194.31
3 tier planter	Environment	11/12/2023	990.00
No dogs' sign	Environment	02/02/2024	254.00
Ifor Williams trailer	Environment	01/03/2024	1,625.00
Planters	Environment	11/03/2024	1,719.44
DPC banners and pop ups	Events	30/06/2023	369.00
Play equipment Duston Wildes	Environment	28/06/2023	24,500.01
Play equipment Haydown	Environment	18/07/2023	15,299.75
Goal post and nets	Environment	21/02/2024	1,464.83
Coronation bench	Environment	12/04/2023	1,815.00
Lest We Forget bench	Environment	17/08/2023	1,535.00
Lomond bench	Environment	31/08/2023	1,034.00
Roslin bench	Environment	18/08/2023	734.00
Rose bench	Environment	02/02/2024	1,545.00
Dell computer	Administration	10/10/2023	574.23
Dell computers x 5	Administration	17/08/2023	3,981.25
Poly tunnel	Events and community	13/10/2023	775.82
Kitchen equipment	Events and community	13/10/2023	369.06
Royal British Legion statue	Events and community	13/11/2023	292.67
Tree of Hope (part)	Events and community	21/03/2024	2,300.00
Community Centre Pendle Road, buildings			1,176,287.72
Duston Leisure Centre, buildings			1,803,188.50
St. Lukes Centre, buildings			1,074,084.39
Renovation work at St Lukes		22/23	16,913.67
St Lukes field			1.00
Land at Pendle Road (bin store and strip of land)			1.00
Erington Park			1.00
Grafton Way Park			1.00
Mendip Park			1.00
Melbourne Lane Open Space			1.00
British Timken Gates, Main Road, Duston			1.00
Rose Villa Hut and Wall			1.00
TOTAL ASSET VALUE Box 9			4,568,865.76

MEMO only:

Asset additions 2024

Security camera on garage at St Lukes	St Lukes	26/04/2023	1,400.00
Sign at St Lukes	St Lukes	30/04/2023	2,132.31
Electricity meters St Lukes offices	St Lukes	08/09/2023	575.00
Electricity meters St Lukes offices	St Lukes	09/01/2024	1,630.00
Camera St Lukes main hall	St Lukes	26/02/2024	660.00
Cabinet	Administration	13/08/2023	141.99
Office chairs	Administration	13/02/2024	739.00
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Dell computers x 5	Administration	17/08/2023	3,981.25
Poly tunnel	Events and community	13/10/2023	775.82
Kitchen equipment	Events and community	13/10/2023	369.06
Royal British Legion statue	Events and community	13/11/2023	292.67
Tree of Hope (part)	Events and community	21/03/2024	2,300.00
			92,107.42

Reconciliation

	£	
B fwd 1.4.23	4,467,183.25	
Additions	92,107.42	
Disposal	(10,424.94)	
Total at 31.3.24	<u>4,568,865.73</u>	As above



Reserves Policy



Financial Reserves Policy

Duston Parish Council is required to maintain adequate Financial Reserves to meet the needs of the Council. The purpose of this Policy is set out how the Council will determine and review the level of Reserves.

Section 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of Reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of Reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer to advise the Council about the level of Reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

The Joint Panel on Accountability & Governance Practitioners Guide states *Reserves — The authority needs to have regard to the need to put in place a General Reserve Policy and have reviewed the level and purpose of all Earmarked Reserves.*

Types of Reserves

Reserves may be categorized as General or Earmarked. Earmarked Reserves can be held for several reasons and are intended to be restricted for that agreed use. General Reserves are funds that do not have any restrictions as to their use. These Reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cashflows, offset the budget requirement, if necessary, or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

Earmarked Reserves – Earmarked Reserves will be established on a ‘needs’ basis, in line with anticipated requirements. Any decision to set up an Earmarked Reserve must be approved by the Council. Expenditure from Reserves can only be authorized by the Parish Council.

Reserves will not be held to fund ongoing expenditure. This would be unsustainable as, at some point, the Reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that Reserves are used to meet short term funding gaps, they must be replenished in the following year. However, Earmarked Reserves that have been used to meet a specific liability (or project) would not need to be replenish, having served the purpose for which they were originally established.

General Reserves – the level of General Reserves is a matter of judgement and so this policy does not attempt to prescribe an overall level. However, the current level of General Reserves to be held by the council is targeted to be a minimum of 50% of the annual precept figure.

The primary means of building General Reserves will be through an allocation from the annual budget. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish Reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.

The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks it faces, as expressed in its Corporate Risk Assessment which is reviewed annually.

If, in extreme circumstances, General Reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its Earmarked Reserves to provide short-term resources.

Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances the Council must keep a minimum balance, sufficient to pay three months salaries to staff, in General Reserves at all times.

Opportunity costs of holding Reserves

In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding Reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilized. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy. However, there is an "opportunity cost" of holding funds in Reserve, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. Given the opportunity costs of holding Reserves, it is critical that Reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.

Policy in Practice

The Council will hold Reserves for these three main purposes:

- A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cashflows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing – this forms part of the General Reserves
- A contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this also forms part of the General Reserves
- A means of building up funds (Earmarked Reserves), to meet known or predicted requirements. Duston Parish Council has buildings, parks and green open spaces that need to be regularly maintained.



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community
Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

Community Services Committee
Minutes 29th May 2024

Chair: Cllr S Maitland

Councillors Present:

Craven, Enright-King, Ennis-Clark, Roper, Golby

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ryan Ikavnieks – Assistant Clerk

Cllr Littlewood

Laura Wood – Team Coordinator for Free2Talk

CSC01/24. To elect the Chair of the Community Services Committee

- **RESOLVED:** That Cllr S Maitland was elected Chair of the Community Services Committee for the municipal year of 2024/25.

CSC02/24. To elect the Vice-Chair of the Community Services Committee

- **RESOLVED:** That Cllr S Roper was elected Vice-Chair of the Community Services Committee for the municipal year of 2024/25.

CSC03/24. To receive apologies for absence

- No apologies were received.

Tel: 01604 583626

Web: www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk

H 2101399A

CSC04/24. To receive and approve the minutes of the Community Services Committee on Thursday 9th May 2024 (APPENDIX A)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on the 9th of May 2024 were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

CSC05/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- Cllr Golby declared a non-pecuniary interest – due to his position as Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Public Health and Regulatory Services for West Northamptonshire Council.

CSC06/24. Public Participation Session

- There were no members of the public present

CSC07/24. Free2Talk Report

- The Committee receive a presentation from Laura Wood, Team Coordinator for Free2Talk.
- 19 individual young people have attended 3 or more sessions during the current quarter, bringing the total number of attendances to 74 and is equal to approximately 139 contact hours
- Primarily attendees are in the 14-15-year age bracket (Years 9/10 at school).
- During an Outreach Session 18 young people and 5 parents were approached and spoke with a youth leader.
- This quarter saw low youth engagement due to three main barriers: mock exams for school years 10-13, use of the youth group as punishment, and a fallout among friends. To address these issues, the plan includes targeting the 12-14 age group to maintain numbers, recruiting a volunteer for simultaneous outreach and centre-based work, improving visibility by attending community days, and enhancing social media promotion with the help of young people. Outreach during Easter reached over 20 young people and parents, highlighting the need for continued community engagement efforts.
- The report outlined a Topic and Activity rota that was created by the young people who attend. The aims of this exercise was to foster a sense of ownership and pride for the young people over the youth work.
- The Chair of the Committee and Council thanked Laura for the presentation and ask her to pass their thanks on to the rest of the Free2Talk team for their invaluable work.
- **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the report from a representative of Free2Talk regarding the Youth Club / Work was received, discussed and noted.
- b) That Free2Talk and the Youth Working Party be thanked for their hard work to date.

CSC08/24. Recommendations To Full Council

- **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the Community Services Committee accepted the Free2Talk report.
- b) Recommends the report and updated SLA be endorsed by Council.

DRAFT

Duston Youth Sessions

Quarter 2 Jan –Mar 2024





At a glance...

- Quarter 2 was the first full 12-week programme of delivery, running from 8th Jan - 25th March 2024
- The staff team and young people have been supported by a student youth mentor, adult volunteers and Parish Councillors intermittently throughout this programme
- 19 individual young people have come to explore the offer across this quarter
- In addition to the weekly sessions, some of the group have taken part in the Duston wellness fair
- An extended outreach session was undertaken in week 13 to help meet new young people across the area

YP Demographics

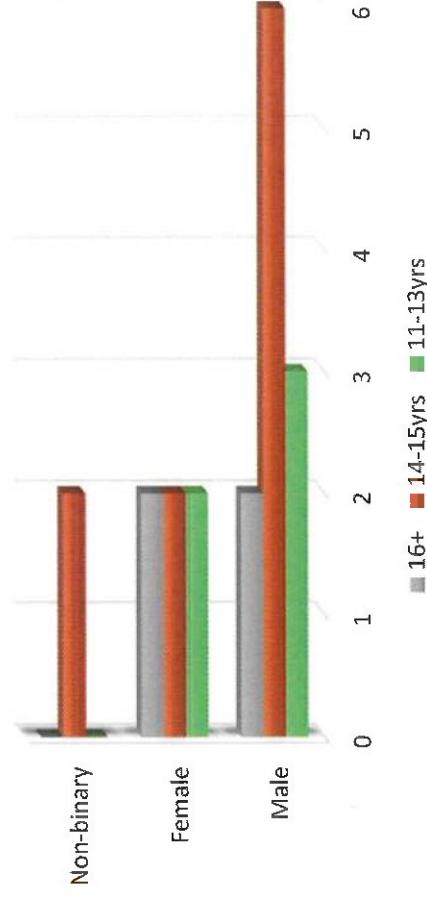
19 individual young people have attended 3 or more sessions over the quarter, this has totalled 74 attendances and is equal to approximately 139 contact hours.

Primarily attendees are in the 14–15-year age bracket; school years 9/10.

There is a higher population of males than females attending the sessions currently, but female attendance has doubled since the 8-week review in Jan, from 3 to 6 individuals. 2 attendees identify as non-binary or 'other' in relation to their gender identity



Attendance by Gender/Age



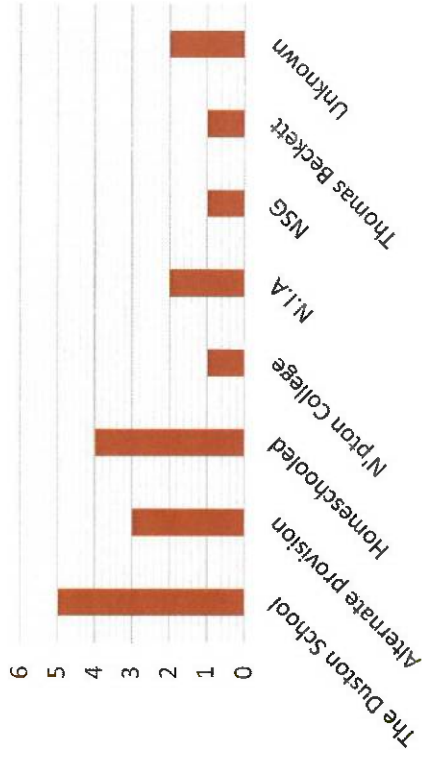
YP Demographics

Of the 17 who have completed the membership form in its entirety, the schools/education provision they attend is vast and although this primarily includes The Duston School, students from Alternate provision (e.g the CE academy) and Elective home education continue to make up a large number of our current and regular attendees.

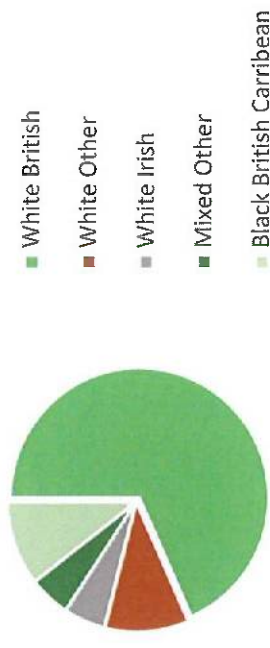
From the information taken in the last 12 sessions, the primary ethnicity of attendees is White British, making up 68% of the group.



School attendance



Ethnicity



Programme aims

Over the course of each programme, we aim to support the young people to have:

1. Built trusted relationships with adults
2. Gained confidence, developed self-awareness and increase resilience
3. Increased feelings of safety
4. Increased awareness of local activities
5. Developed greater care and respect for people in their community
6. Developed healthy relationships with peers and others
7. Access and opportunities to develop a healthy hobby: Music, Art, Sport
8. A positive attitude to learning
9. Opportunities for active participation, co-production, ownership and leadership

Over the course of each programme, we aim to support communities to:

10. Have knowledge and trust in who to go to for support for young people
11. Have happier young people in their community
12. Feel young people are safer and their community is safer
13. See positive images and relationships with young people
14. Develop a sense of responsibility and care for their young people
15. Develop an empowered approach to advocate for their young people

Outcomes met this quarter

The youth team, volunteers and councillors have continued to engage young people in a range of activities that help to foster trusted relationships. These relationships continue to help the young people in learning to manage themselves in a shared social space, and with their personal and social development through informal and fun learning... The activities provide the vehicle for trust and the depth of discussions that the young people are bringing to the youth team helps to evidence how this is growing. In the last quarter young people have begun to talk openly about sexual health concerns, raise questions around substance use and other risk-taking behaviour. The youth work process is opening the dialogue that helps to signpost and keep young people safe and is now actively informing the trajectory of the programme on offer, which cycles back to young people having ownership of the group and the programme itself.

Outcomes
1, 2, 3, 9, 11, 15

Youth workers are encouraging young people to attend and engage with community events, both locally and further afield – this is to help broaden horizons, understand more about the local offer, as well as taking ownership of discussions with adults in these spaces. The collective sessions are elevating youth voice through the podcasting and interview skills development and encouraging the emerging young leaders to pursue active roles within their community and improve co-production/participation opportunities . Feedback from the wellness event was positive from both young people and community members, the skills development through multimedia engagement continues to grow confidence in young people, outside of formal education. We are now working towards young people presenting these reports to councillors in the coming months and have begun to invite community groups into sessions, so that young people can meet them directly and learn about opportunities available to them.

Outcomes
3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14

As the relationships develop and the young people are sharing worries and reporting areas of concern, they have actively taken part in safety mapping exercises, discussed strategies for keeping themselves safe and developed tools for conflict management and resolution, negotiation and finding solutions – this works to develop feelings of safety and build both their self and social awareness and improves resilience. In turn, this helps to improve the overall wellbeing of individuals in the locality and improves care and respect for others.

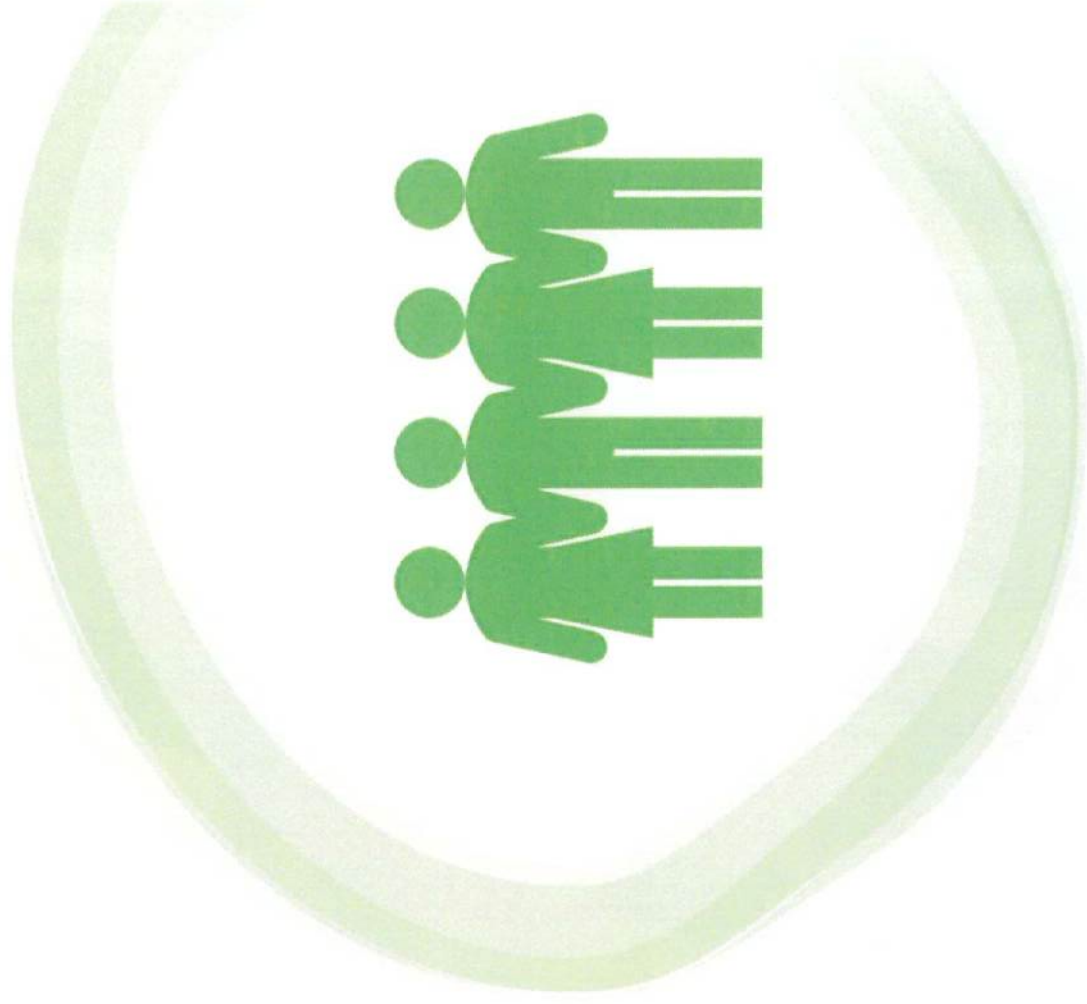
Outcomes
2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12

The safety mapping outcomes have been factored into the next programme of delivery and works to evidence the challenges that young people are experiencing in contemporary society, giving them a responsive programme, that their experiences and voices are helping to shape.

Duston wellness event

Duston Community and Wellbeing fair

Young people's interviews



Case study; Background

- S is an elective homeschooled student. He is 12 years old and has older siblings, who are also homeschooled.
- S was quite shy when he first attended the sessions, and Mum reported struggles with managing anger – and he informed us she was exploring a diagnosis of ADHD
- Due to being homeschooled S reported limited actual friendships and was observed to struggle to initiate peer interaction



Case study; Intervention



THE YOUTH TEAM WORKED DIRECTLY WITH S TO LEARN ABOUT HIS LIKES AND DISLIKES, ASCERTAIN HIS STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS AND BUILD TRUST

THEY WORKED COLLECTIVELY TO FOCUS ON THE SKILLS S ALREADY POSSESSED AND INTRODUCE HIM TO NEW ACTIVITIES



THROUGH THE SUCCESS OF RELATIONSHIP BUILDING, S WAS ABLE TO BE MORE CONFIDENT IN TRIALING NEW ACTIVITIES.

WHEN HE STRUGGLED TO FOCUS OR ACHIEVE THINGS YOUTH WORKERS EXPLORED WAYS TO RE-ENGAGE AND MANAGE FRUSTRATIONS – DEVELOPING HIS RESILIENCE



THE YOUTH TEAM HAVE ALSO SPECIFICALLY WORKED TO HELP S FORM AND DEVELOP NEW FRIENDSHIPS.

AN OLDER PEER, P, HAS UNDERTAKEN SOME MENTORING AND EDUCATION WITH S, AROUND MUSIC PRODUCTION AND DJ'ING, AND S HAS SHOWN A REAL SKILL IN THIS AREA



Case study; Now?

- S is now a regular attendee of other youth sessions throughout the week, taking part in lots of activities, and has demonstrated significant skills development in managing frustration and failure (resilience) and in developing new hobbies and interests through music and music production
- Mum reports that there has been an improvement in S managing his anger and feels this is a result of the creative way he is expressing himself and his newfound friendships through the youth sessions
- S has shown a greater confidence in engaging with others, welcoming new people and has also begun to invite friends from the homeschooled community, bringing others to the sessions as a result – and evidencing how important the sessions have been for him



Barriers & Challenges... and overcoming these

Low numbers of young people

Although there has been a steady stream of young people, this quarter has come up against 3 distinct barriers to engagement. Young people have told us that their lack of attendance has been due to:

1. Mock exams for school years 10,11,12 and 13 and this impacted time for revision
2. That the youth group was used as punishment – reports from 3 young people (and parents) were that they were banned as punishment for behaviour
3. That there was a fallout amongst a group of friends and so they stayed away from each other

Plan:

We recognise fluctuation in numbers is likely to happen, particularly around exam time and that to keep numbers up, we need to approach the 12-14 years age groups

An outreach session was undertaken over Easter and over 20 young people and parents were spoken too, fliers distributed, and consultation was undertaken – so we need to recruit a volunteer to ensure outreach and centre-based work can be undertaken simultaneously

Youth workers are still relative strangers to the community, so we will attend the community days to help improve visibility and undertake more work on social media promotion, alongside young people!

Getting the environment right

Young people commented that, on occasion, there have been a lot of adults in the space, and it can 'feel weird' for them when walking into that environment. They also identified that the hall was really big compared to the current numbers and activities – making them feel self-conscious and that they were being watched and this meant they didn't want to come back.

Plan:

This feedback was considered, and the sessions were already moved to a smaller room, this helped for the sessions to feel busier and less intimidating, and, we hope, more accessible for young people.

The youth team have also been tasked with reviewing who and how often people should be visiting the sessions, in conjunction with the young people themselves and ascertaining what feels comfortable

The programme will be altered so that there is clear distinction of adult/YP ratio to help reduce anxieties of young people accessing the youth group and gives greater power balance to the young people. Volunteers should be invited into the sessions for specific activities

Outreach session



18 young people were spoken to during the outreach event on Tuesday 2nd April

The route encompassed Lime Hurst square, New Duston, Main Street, Errington and Crispin's Parks

Around 5 Parents were also spoken too – one of whom consented to us sharing her feedback (attached here)

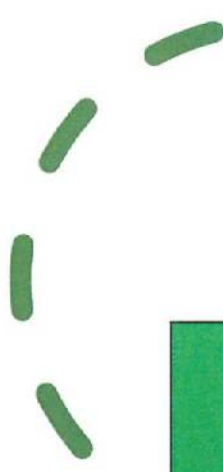
Fliers and youth group promotion were undertaken, and young people gave some ideas on how to develop their local park (attached here)

Parents approached youth workers to check who they were, and this helped to raise visibility of youth work in the local area





What's ahead?



Week	Date	Topic and activity
1	08/04/2024	Group rules revisited
2	15/04/2024	Origami challenge
3	22/04/2024	Football/ Badminton
4	29/04/2024	Quiz Night
5	06/05/2024	Bank holiday – no session
6	13/05/2024	Podcasting
7	20/05/2024	Marshmallow Tower Challenge
8	27/05/2024	Bank holiday – no session
9	3/06/2024	Dodgeball, Podcasting and DJ'ing
10	10/06/2024	Duston Players visit
11	17/06/2024	Programme planning, and feedback
12	24/06/2024	Movie Night or Party
13	30.06.2024	Duston community fun day

+

○

Summary

Overall, the evidence suggests that the group is going from strength to strength, there are positive indications of the young people beginning to learn and trust in the youth work process, evident in the open conversations they are having with adults, particularly around sex, relationships and risk-taking behaviours.

Youth workers are taking time to get to know the individuals, and this is helping them to feel welcomed, valued and heard – this is particularly useful whilst numbers are lower and is supportive of developing a core group of attendees. Our evaluation to date suggests that youth work is working to support Duston's young people in a way that other adults may not be able to deliver, due to the formalities of the relationships they have within schools and family life.

Despite some fluctuations in numbers, the core group of young people have returned, and over the course of the programme, have brought other young people along – this reinforces the notion that they feel safe within the environment, and it is providing a welcome space for them to be in.

Our ongoing work is to continue to tweak the format and delivery in line with young people's ideas and wishes, and the changing seasons – whilst growing the presence of youth work in the locality area to ensure the offer is seen, understood and accessible.

We want to extend our continued thanks to the Duston Parish council for their patience and support as we continue to navigate the learning and establish youth work provision in the area.

●



Service Level Agreement

Between
Free 2 Talk

and

Duston Parish Council

Part A: Conditions

Part B: Service specification



Part A: Conditions

Service Level Agreement (SLA)

Between **Free 2 Talk CIC**

Address: **14 Park Square, Kings Heath, Northampton, NN5 7LQ**

(known as 'the Partner/Provider' hereafter)

And: Duston Parish Council

Address: Pendle Rd, Northampton NN5 6DT _____

1. Purpose of this SLA

1.1. This SLA relates to the agreement between Duston Parish Council and the Partner/Provider covering the provision of the following services:

Youth Work in Duston

1.2. The detail of this service is as set out in Part B: Service specification.

2. Authorised representatives

2.1. For the purpose of this SLA, the Council representative is:

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax:

Email:

2.2. For the purpose of this SLA, the Provider's/Partner's representative is:

Name: **Jodie Low**

Designation: **Free 2 Talk CIC**

Telephone: **07786227365**

Email: Jodie.low@free2talkcic.org enquiries@free2talkcic.org

3. Duration

3.1. The date on which this SLA comes into effect is **20th November 2023**

3.2. The duration of this SLA will end on **19th November 2024** unless renewed or terminated sooner in accordance with section 9.

4. Spirit of the agreement

4.1. The working of this SLA is based on the premise that both parties will enter the arrangements in a spirit of partnership and will seek to maximise the benefit from working together. It is not the intention to create any unnecessary bureaucracy and the success of the SLA arrangements relies on both parties being reasonable in the usage and monitoring of it. This agreement of partnership is not for profit but shall set out the relationships between the parties so that maximum benefit may be achieved through clarity of responsibility and certainty of purpose.

5. Staffing issues

5.1. Where the service detailed in Part B relates to contact with children or families, the staff concerned (whether volunteers or paid workers) are subject to the policies of Free 2 Talk CIC under the Council Safeguarding Board and the legal rules and procedures defined by [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#).

5.2. The qualifications of staff, management and volunteers shall meet the minimum legal requirements and be suitable for the services to be delivered.

5.3. If the Service involves the care of children as defined by Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP), then the qualifications of staff and managers shall be subject to the National Childcare Standards currently prevailing.

6. Complaints

6.1. The Partner/Provider must communicate its complaints procedure to all service users.

6.2. Any issues regarding performance of the service as detailed in section 6 will be addressed by the representatives stated in sections 2.1 and 2.2 either as part of monitoring arrangements or if necessary, a specially arranged meeting.

7. Charging

The Parish Council will pay Free 2 Talk CIC for the following:

48 weeks of delivery per year, 2 hours weekly Youth Group - For 1 room open in DCC – up to 15 YP per session with emerging needs met. Totalling £14,182.

Session delivery falls over a 13 week cycle; 12 weeks of face to face delivery (i.e 48 weeks per year) and a week of non-delivery - to allow for monitoring and reporting to be completed.

Where usual delivery falls on a Monday and impacted by Bank holidays, alternative delivery dates will be offered, this may include additional dates added to the end of the agreed term or alternative dates for delivery agreed; for example alternative times could be offered over the school holidays – to ensure that all contractual hours are met. Alternate delivery will be agreed on a programme by programme basis – i.e. reviewed and agreed within each 12 week delivery period.

Delivery will be as usual over the school holiday periods.

Where the weather and winter nights impact 30 minutes of outreach each session, e.g. no young people are out or it is unsafe to undertake outreach work, this time will be offered as an alternate outreach session during school holidays or added to an alternative delivery such as time given over for a trip, attendance at community fun days or undertaking alternate activities with young people. Time will be monitored and opportunities explored in conjunction with Parish Council representatives

8. Disputes

8.1. If a dispute arises between the parties, every effort will be made to achieve a local resolution. If this is unsuccessful, disputes should be referred progressively through senior levels of management, as applicable, for both partner and provider.

9. Termination of this SLA

9.1. This SLA may be terminated by either party giving **2 weeks'** notice to the other, or over a shorter period if both parties agree. The Council reserves the right to terminate this agreement unilaterally, without notice, in the interests of the safety and well-being of children and young people.

10. Engagement of young people

Young people will attend the provision on a voluntary basis only.

11. Monitoring

11.1. The provider shall keep accurate records of service users with monitoring documents.

11.2. Additional monitoring and reporting requirements will be detailed in the service specification at part B

12. Information Sharing

12.1. Information to be shared:

- Age, Special category data (such as gender, ethnicity)
- Views, opinions and experiences of young people
- Any welfare concerns which have a legal basis for sharing.

12.2. Information can only be shared with a party where there is a legal basis for the party to process the information. In most cases, the legal basis for sharing the information in the Agreement will be in compliance with a legal obligation; the data subject may be informed of the reason under any relevant legislation why the data is being shared. Where the legal basis for sharing is consent, the data subject's consent shall be sought and obtained before the data is shared.

12.3. Capacity to provide consent:

All people over the age of 16 are presumed, in law, to have the capacity to give or withhold their consent to sharing of confidential information unless there is evidence to the contrary. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice will be followed when it is considered by relevant professional that a family member does not have the capacity to make decisions. Generally within England and Wales or in Northern Ireland, competence is assessed depending upon the level of understanding of the child, but it does indicate an approach that will be reasonable in many cases. A child should not be considered to be competent if it is evident that he or she are acting against their own best interests. If it has already been decided that a child is competent to provide their own consent then it will usually be reasonable to assume they are also competent to exercise their own data protection rights. If a child is competent then, just like an adult, they may authorise someone else to act on their behalf. This could be a parent, another adult, or a representative such as a child advocacy service, charity. As a consequence the issue of consent, should be considered against the context of the request for consent, nature of

the information concerned, and their ability to understand the effect of their actions. (ICO Guidance - Children and the GDPR).

13. Insurance, risk and liability

- 13.1. Each party to this SLA shall be responsible for securing appropriate insurance for the services to be provided.
- 13.2. This will include public liability insurance to a minimum value of **£5,000,000**, employers' liability, products liability and specific risk insurance, depending on the nature of the services to be delivered, e.g. educational trips and visits.
- 13.3. All parties to this SLA should seek professional advice on the relevant insurance requirements.
- 13.4. Evidence of appropriate insurance must be provided to the Duston Parish Council before services commence.

14. Engagement of third parties

- 14.1. The engagement of third parties to deliver services under this agreement is subject to the same rigorous requirements as to suitability, qualifications, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, confidentiality, fidelity, insurance and indemnity as the main parties.
- 14.2. The Council has a right to terminate or prevent the engagement of any person or organisation in connection with this agreement on grounds of safety or non-compliance with statutory requirements.

15. Signatures

On behalf of Duston Parish Council

Signature:

Name:

Designation:

Date

On behalf of Partner/Provider Free 2 Talk CIC

Signature:

Name: Jodie Low

Designation: Director & Youth Worker

Date: 16/10/23

Part B: Service specification

1. The services described below will be delivered within the Duston Parish Council area.
2. Day to be Agreed: A 2 hour Youth Work session on an evening between Monday - Friday
3. Times: 2 hours between 4-9pm
4. The Services will commence on: 20/11/23 and cease on: 19/11/24
5. Services will meet the National Youth Agency quality standards for Youth Work
<https://www.nya.org.uk/practice-standards/>
6. The Services will be subject to the following monitoring arrangements. Each party will share information relevant to the participation of beneficiaries and quality of services provided which will include:
 - i. Beneficiaries' involvement in the design, management, monitoring and evaluation of services.
 - ii. Progress reports will be arranged on a quarterly basis between the Partner/Provider and the designated person at the Council who oversees this provision. The quarterly reports will be provided before the following dates by Free 2 Talk:
Interim report 26/1/24; Qu2: 16/4/24; Qu3: 12/7/24; 11/10/24 and final evaluation will be 06/12/24 (this can be moved if additional sessions have been added on)
 - iii. Midway communication of progress will be provided by Free 2 Talk CIC and an end report will be provided. These should be communicated through report and meeting at 6 and 12 months.
7. The target beneficiaries are children aged between 12 years and 18 years, accessing the Duston Parish Area. A register of attendance indicating external beneficiaries will be maintained by Free 2 Talk CIC.
8. The provision of services during the school holidays will be agreed between the parties on a case-by-case basis. Any additional days and times agreed will be recorded in writing and attached to this agreement.
9. If the Partner/Provider is unable to provide sufficient staff, or staff with relevant qualifications, then the service will be modified, postponed or terminated as necessary in the interests of safety and welfare of children and young people. This will be discussed between the parties as soon as possible so that alternative arrangement can be made and parents can be informed. The Partner/Provider will contact the Parish Council by telephone as soon it is known that any significant change may be likely, and, where possible, alternative staffing will be provided to ensure that no child is left without adult supervision, until parents, guardians or taxis are able to collect children.
10. Food and drink provided will meet with the Healthy Schools standards and will be served and handled in accordance with food hygiene regulations.
11. Parental / Legal Guardian or Carer's consent for attendance, outings, activities and photography will be obtained before children are permitted to participate.
12. Premises provided for the delivery of services to be fit for purpose.

13. Equipment provided by the Partner/Provider must be fit for purpose. No equipment will be employed that does not meet with Health and Safety at Work standards. Electrical equipment, including computers and portable appliances, shall be subject to appropriate safety checks and certification.
14. Security of premises, keys, caretaking, cleaning and maintenance: the Partner/Provider will be required to ensure that the premises are secure and that safe access is maintained.
15. Problems, complaints and remedies:
Parties will maintain a dialogue and keep communication channels open to ensure that any problem or complaint is addressed at the appropriate level at the earliest opportunity. Free 2 Talk CIC shall be responsible for initiating formal procedures to deal with complaints that are of a serious nature, utilising the providers existing disciplinary and grievance procedures.
16. Partner/Provider staff will attend Council meetings as and when necessary.

Community Services Committee Report

To: Full Council

Agenda Item: 30/24

Author: Community Services Committee

Subject: Recommendation for Bi-Annual DPC Newsletter

1. Recommendation

The Community Services Committee recommends that Duston Parish Council produce a bi-annual newsletter for its residents. The proposed newsletter aims to enhance communication, provide reliable information, and engage more effectively with the community.

2. Rationale

The Community Services Committee give the following reasons why the Council should consider using a newsletter.

- i. **Current Reliance on Social Media:** The Council predominantly uses Facebook for announcements. However, not all residents use this platform.
- ii. **Need for Broader Reach:** To connect with a wider audience, including those not on Facebook and the younger generation on other social media platforms, the Council would need to increase spending on social media advertising.
- iii. **Accountability:** The Council which takes money from households via the precept has an obligation to inform residents about its activities, expenditures, and decisions.
- iv. **Good practice:** Literature from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) emphasises the importance of engaging with residents. A newsletter is one in which the Council can engage with its residents. Many other local councils in Northamptonshire produced a printed newsletter of some kind such as Wootton, Hackleton, Daventry, Moulton, Brackley, Towcester.

3. Focus and Content:

The Community Services Committee envisage the following

- i. **Themed Issues:** Each newsletter could focus on different topics, such as environmental issues, planning updates, or health & wellbeing.

- ii. Showcasing Achievements: A printed newsletter provides an opportunity to highlight the Council's achievements and services.
- iii. Impact: An A3 newsletter folded in half strikes a good balance between being informative and manageable in terms of time and resources. Printed newsletters are more impactful than e-newsletters, which often get lost among spam emails.

4. Additional Features

Further thoughts of the Community Engagement Committee

- I. Interactive Elements: Including QR codes can invite residents to participate in consultations or access further information online.
- II. Potential Sponsorship: Once established, the newsletter could attract sponsorship to help offset costs.
- III. Proposed Title
- IV. The Committee recommends the newsletter be titled "Duston Together."

5. Conclusion

The Community Services Committee believes that a bi-annual printed newsletter will significantly improve the Council's communication efforts, reach a broader audience, and foster a stronger sense of community engagement.

Recommendation: The full Council approve the production of "Duston Together" which is produced twice a year. The newsletter will be produced in accordance with the Council's current Communications & Engagement Policy.



Duston Together

Tree of Hope Project



At the end of Berrywood Road stands a symbol of resilience and unity, born out of the challenges of the unprecedented global lockdown of 2020. The Tree of Hope, so called because it symbolises strength and renewed hope for the future, is a testament to the spirit of community emerging from the collective efforts of local residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Our aim was to come up with a project that would keep our community feeling connected and engaged," explains Alison Grantham, Duston Parish Council's Community Development Manager, *"With a national lockdown and many people shielding, there was no option to hold events: knitting and crocheting was something that residents could do from the safety of their homes."*

The project brought together individuals of all ages, from young to old, each contributing their own crafted pieces, from flowers to rainbows, butterflies to hedgehogs.



Even those who couldn't knit anymore found ways to contribute, donating knitting needles, spare wool and buttons to their neighbours, ensuring that the project truly became a collective endeavour.

The Tree of Hope featured in local and national press, BBC online, social media and even an international knitting magazine. Residents told us that they were sharing pictures of its development with their friends and families all over the world.

Alison reflects, *"Any community project is special, but to create something so beautiful out of pretty dark times for people was extraordinary."*

The Tree of Hope stands tall, not just as a symbol of strength and renewal, but as a testament to the power of community, reminding us that even in our darkest moments, we can find hope and solidarity in coming together. Over the past few years pollution and the elements had taken their toll on the materials used. We needed to come up with another solution to preserve a project that became poignant and significant to a lot of people at that time, whether they contributed to the project or passed it on their daily permitted exercise.

Duston Parish Council were delighted to have commissioned and worked with sculptor, Peter Leadbeater who has done an amazing job of capturing the spirit of a very special project for posterity.



The project was funded with Community Infrastructure Levy monies, a charge imposed on developers when they undertake new building projects.



In This Issue...

- Page 1** Tree of Hope Project
- Page 2** Councillor Contact Information and Budget Breakdown
- Page 3** Community Centre Information
 - Groups
 - What's On
 - How to book
- Page 4** Events and Initiatives

YOUR LOCAL PARISH COUNCILLORS - CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Chair: Paul Enright-King		Vice Chair: Sandie Maitland	
New Duston West			
Clr Matt Golby	Email: clr.mgolby@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Sandie Maitland	Email: clrs.maitland@duston-pc.gov.uk
Clr Mike Ingram	Email: clrm.ingram@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Miles Barnes	Email: clrm.barnes@duston-pc.gov.uk
Clr Iain Liddon	Email: clri.liddon@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Andrew Dickinson	Email: clrad.dickinson@duston-pc.gov.uk
Clr Joanne Mumford	Email: clrj.mumford@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Sandra Roper	Email: clrs.ropor@duston-pc.gov.uk
New Duston East			
Clr Jan Ennis-Clark	Email: clrj.ennis-clark@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Frank Craven	Email: clrf.craven@duston-pc.gov.uk
Clr Paul Enright-King	Email: clrp.enright-king@duston-pc.gov.uk	Clr Bill Littlewood	Email: clrb.littlewood@duston-pc.gov.uk

Duston Parish Council is comprised of 12 councillors who are elected every four years to represent their particular wards.

Precepts and Budget Information

How the £111.61 per household (Band D) per year is allocated:



DID YOU KNOW?

That West Northamptonshire Council has an app?

The West Northamptonshire Council app now includes a Report It feature, waste collection alerts, a recycling guide, local info, and council news. Download for free on Google Play or the Apple App Store.



The Parish Precept is the element of your Council Tax that is paid to Duston Parish Council.

Every year, the Parish Council draws up budgets and calculates how much money it needs for the next financial year. Duston Parish Councils budgeted expenditure for 2024/25 is £871,313 with a planned income of £236,000. Duston Parish Council precept for a "Band D Equivalent" for 2024/25 is £111.61 (The graphic is based upon a Band D households precept demand).

West Northamptonshire Council charges £5.42 (Band D figure) as a special expenses charge to residential dwelling for grass cutting of parks, open spaces and the cemetery.

*Co-opted Councillors do not receive any remuneration and others refuse to accept the funds.

Creating a Safer Community



Duston Parish Council have funded a network of five community defibrillators strategically stationed across the area and a bleed cabinet mounted at Duston Community Centre. The defibs are located at Chiltern Avenue, Weggs Farm Road, Harlestone Road, Errington Park and St Luke's Centre. Duston Parish Council also owns four Speed Activated Signs that are placed strategically and frequently relocated to remind motorists of their speeds to improve and monitor road safety.

Community Events

Duston Parish Council organises an exciting array of events and initiatives that bring our community together. From the lively Duston Fun Day to monthly Health and Wellbeing talks, the grow together allotment, our Indoor Carboot Sales and the Christmas Market, there's always something on for everyone to enjoy.



Preserving Heritage

While not the owner, the Parish Council maintains the Duston's War Memorial, a poignant symbol of sacrifice and remembrance. The Council is afforded the power to maintain by the War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923. The Council has also taken on the stewardship of both the Timken Gates and the Rose Villa Hut to preserve both historic artifacts.



Community and Sport Centres

Duston Parish Council owns and operates Duston Community Centre and St Luke's Centre, they stand as beacons of community engagement. These centres offer community spaces for hire, all managed with care and dedication by Parish Council staff. Duston Sports Centre and field is owned by the Parish Council, with Trilogy Active handling the day-to-day operation, ensuring top-notch facilities and services which promotes active living.



Parks and Open

Duston Parish Council is responsible for Errington Park, Mendip Park, Grafton Way, St Luke's Field. The Council own and maintains the gym equipment in St Luke's Field and Errington Park alongside four Multi-Use-Games-Areas (MUGA).



Recently, the Council has installed two table tennis tables in Errington Park and St Luke's Field which were funded with Community Infrastructure Levy monies.

Beautifying Duston and Street Furniture

Duston Parish Council manages street furniture and vibrant floral displays, planters, and hanging baskets. The Parish maintains the Timken Artwork and Tree of Hope sculpture.



The Council ensures clean streets and encourages proper litter disposal by installing bins and funding maintenance. Eight Parish notice boards in Duston provide Council-related information.

Dates For Your Diary

**SAVE
THE
DATES!**

Regular Groups Rota

Monday	
Pilates	09:00-10:00
Yoga - Smile Lifestyle	09:30-10:30
Cotswold Bowls	10:00-12:00
Free2Talk Youth Club For Ages 12-18	16:30-18:00
Tuesday	
Active Senior Exercise Class	09:45-10:45
Not So Dusty Social Club (Meets Bi-weekly)	09:30-12:00
Computer Pals	10:00-15:00
Art 4 All (Meets Bi-weekly)	14:00-16:00
Sugar & Spice Social Club (Meets Bi-weekly)	19:00-21:00
Tai Chi	19:00-20:30
Duston Camera Club	19:30-22:00
Wednesday	
Art Group	09:30-12:00
Broomhall's Day Care	09:30-15:30
Lighten Up	10:00-11:00
Long Covid Support Group - Breathing Space Meets Monthly (Registration Required)	10:30-12:30
Happy Circle Whist Club	13:00-16:00
Zumba with Suzi-Suze	18:15-19:30
Move it or Lose it	19:00-20:00
Sewcial Sewing Club (Meets Bi-weekly)	19:30-22:00
Thursday	
Tai Chi	10:00-11:30
Move it or Lose it	14:00-15:00
Duston Parish Council Meetings	19:00-21:00
Cotswold Duston WI (Meets Monthly)	19:00-21:45
Duston Towns-Women's Guild (Meets Monthly)	19:30-21:30
Friday	
Tumble Tots (Term Time Only)	09:30-13:15
Barsews Quilters (Meets Monthly)	10:00-16:00
Saturday	
Assessing & Tutoring with Sarah	09:00-13:00
EkLipsLtd Taekwondo	10:00-12:30

Duston Parish Council Events and Initiatives

Thursday 16th May 2024	13:15
Health and Wellbeing Talk - Menopause	
Thursday 20th Jun 2024	13:15
Health and Wellbeing Talk - Arthritis Action	
Sunday 30th June 2024	11:00
Duston Fun Day	
Thursday 18th July 2024	13:15
Health and Wellbeing Talk - Navigating the Care Conundrum	
Thursday 17th October 2024	13:15
Health and Wellbeing Talk - Topic To Be confirmed	
Saturday 26th October 2024	
Sunday 10th November 2024	
Duston Remembers 2024	
Thursday 14th November 2024	13:15
Health and Wellbeing Talk - Topic To Be confirmed	
Saturday 30th November 2024	11:00
Sunday 1st December 2024	11:00
A Merry Christmas Tree Festival & Market	

Duston Parish Council hosts a community 'What's On' calendar to help publicise local events.

Scan the QR code for more information.



Alternatively, head over to:
www.duston-pc.gov.uk/local-events
 or email Sarah, our lovely events officer:
events@duston-pc.gov.uk

Scan the QR code for booking information or contact George our facilities manager who will be more than happy to help:
facilities@duston-pc.gov.uk



GET IN TOUCH WITH DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Tel: 01604 583626, Monday - Saturday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk Website: <https://www.duston-pc.gov.uk>

Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road, Duston, Northampton NN5 6DT



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

A Duston Parish Council Corporate Plan

In 2021, Duston Parish Council embarked on a strategic journey with the creation of a Four Year Plan, reflecting the community's aspirations for a range of projects. It has resulted in some tangible benefits across Duston.

As we reach the culmination of this plan, it is imperative to reflect on its successes and chart a course for the future.

The proposed Corporate Plan is envisioned to be a comprehensive framework comprising seven core objectives. It will serve as a successor to the Four Year Plan, providing a renewed focus for the Council's efforts. The plan will undergo regular reviews to ensure progress and adaptability.

It consists of seven key objectives, each designed to address different aspects of community life and council operations. The Council recommends adopting these objectives and engaging with its committees—Environment Committee, Community Services Committee, Planning Committee, and Resources & General Purposes Committee—to determine specific short, medium, and long-term aims for each objective. The outcomes of these discussions will be consolidated into the final Corporate Plan.

A Corporate Plan is not merely a document; it is a commitment to the people of Duston. It will provide clarity and direction for Councillors, staff, and residents alike, ensuring that the Council continues to grow and meet the evolving needs of the community with focus and professionalism.

Each committee within the Council will discuss how to achieve the corporate objectives, contributing to the formulation of the final Corporate Plan. This collaborative approach ensures that the Plan addresses community needs effectively. The Corporate Plan will be regularly reviewed, enabling the Council to monitor progress and make adjustments as needed, ensuring continued alignment with the community's evolving needs.

The transition to a new Corporate Plan marks a significant step in Duston Parish Council's development. By adopting and working towards these seven objectives, the Council will provide clear direction and focus, ensuring sustained improvements in the community's quality of life and efficient management of resources.

7 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

1. HAVING EXCELLENT COMMUNITY CENTRES

Description

The Council has now for a decade provided three Centres that have served the community of Duston. Duston Sports Centre is managed on behalf of the Council by Trilogy Active. The Council directly manages St Luke's Centre and Duston Community Centre which offer quality room hire at very competitive rates. The objective is to continue to provide facilities that are managed to a good standard, in an efficient, effective and responsive way, at an affordable cost.

2. DELIVER HIGH QUALITY GREEN SPACES

Description

The Council is in the process of taking on more public open space and has also agreed with West Northamptonshire Council to have the freehold of the two allotment sites. It is in the process of building up capacity and expertise when it comes to the management of Parks and Open Spaces. The Council will eventually take on full maintenance of Parks, Open Space and Allotments. The

Council aims to deliver high quality parks & green open spaces in Duston for residents to use and enjoy.

3. A MORE SAFER, SUSTAINABLE AND PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT

Description

The Council has made numerous improvements to the public realm in recent years and is beginning to do this as part of the core services it offers to residents. The Council maintains hanging baskets, planters, monuments (Timken Artwork, Timken Gates & War Memorial) and various street furniture. It also seeks to improve the environment by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Within its remit the Council will strive to enhance and protect local biodiversity. The Council encourages and promotes a more safer, sustainable and pleasant in every part of the Parish.

4. PRODUCES AN EVENTS PROGRAMME WHETHER ON ITS OWN OR IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHERS

Description

For a long time the Council has delivered community events which has provided local entertainment and information to residents. Most notably the Council has had a summer event which is currently titled "Duston Fun Day" and more recently the Council has put on a "Community Info & Wellness Fair". The Council also does regular Indoor Car Boot Sales and a Christmas Market. This year the Council is doing a Christmas Tree Festival.

5. ADVANCING HEALTH & WELLBEING

Description

The Council aims to maximise community wellbeing in the broadest sense such as playing a role in reducing social isolation and creating opportunities for young people. It is important that the Council works with residents, West Northamptonshire Council and other service providers, businesses and community organisations with the aim of achieving a healthy, prosperous and caring community. As a Parish Council we look beyond the medical models of health care to look at how the community can be energised and supported to tackle the social determinants of health and get involved in improving the wellbeing of their community. The Council has recently adopted a Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

6. ADVOCATING AND PROMOTING DUSTON

Description

The scope of the Parish Council is broader than just the services it directly provides. The Council is there to do what it can to promote all businesses, establishments, services and amenities within the Parish. Celebrate what Duston has to offer. The Council supports local initiatives and organisations that improve the quality of life for its residents in a fair and even handed way. An example of this the Parish Council using its social media platforms to promote Duston Market and has a Grants Application Process. The Council advocates the interests of Duston to others such as Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner and West Northamptonshire Council.

7. BEING A PROFESSIONAL AND COMPETENT COUNCIL

Description

A prudent Council that is responsible with public money and has a strong financial base to meet future and unexpected challenges. With strong financial reserves the Council is less likely to need to borrow in the future. Duston Parish Council is open and transparent with most information published

on the website www.duston-pc.gov.uk Across all aspects area of its working it aims to provide an effective service to residents and strives for improvement. A Council that has good governance in place and meets all the necessary statutory requirements. Delivers good customer service.