



**City of Durham  
Charter Trustees for the City of Durham**

Ref: JM

24 October 2017

To: The Mayor and Members of the  
**CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM**  
(Councillors B Kellett, D Bell, E Bell, J Blakey, L Brown, J Chaplow,  
K Corrigan, S Dunn, D Freeman, D Hall, A Hopgood, L Hovvels,  
C Marshall, E Mavin, L Mavin, M McKeon, R Ormerod, E Scott,  
M Simmons, A Simpson, D Stoker, P Taylor, F Tinsley, J Turnbull,  
M Wilkes and M Wilson).

Dear Sir/Madam

A Meeting of the **CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM** will be held in  
Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 1 November 2017 at 12.00 pm.

**Please Note:** In the event that Full Council runs beyond 12.00pm, the Charter Trustee  
meeting will commence immediately following the County Council meeting.

**BUSINESS**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the meetings held on 9 and 21 June 2017 (Pages 3 - 10)
3. Declarations of interest, if any
4. Conclusion of Audit for 2017- Report of the Clerk to the Charter Trustees (Pages 11 - 12)
5. Revenue Outturn for the period ending 30 September 2017 and Projected Outturn to 31 March 2018 - Report of the Treasurer (Pages 13 - 16)
6. Freedom of the City - RAF - Report of the Clerk to the Charter Trustees (Pages 17 - 26)
7. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

Yours faithfully  
Clerk

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Web Site: [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

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## CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

At the **Annual Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Main Hall, Town Hall, Durham, on Friday 9 June 2017 at 3.00 pm

**Present:** Councillors D Bell, J Blakey, J Chaplow, K Corrigan, S Dunn, D Hall, L Hovvels, B Kellett, C Marshall, M McKeon, F Tinsley, J Turnbull and M Wilson

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Clerk explained that there was a slight change in procedure as the Mayor was unable to attend the meeting and asked Charter Trustees for nominations to Chair the meeting.

Councillor Hovvels moved and Councillor Turnbull seconded that Councillor D Bell Chair the meeting.

**Councillor D Bell** in the Chair

### **1 Prayers**

Prayers were said by Canon Rosalind Brown.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor Councillor E Bell and Councillors L Brown, D Freeman and E Scott.

### **3 Recording of Proceedings**

Charter Trustees consented to the taking of photographs during the meeting.

### **4 Election of Mayor**

The Chairman asked for nominations for the election of Mayor.

Councillor Tinsley moved and Councillor M Wilson seconded that Councillor Bill Kellett, be appointed Mayor of Durham for the ensuing municipal year.

#### **Resolved:**

That Councillor Bill Kellett be duly appointed as Mayor of Durham for the ensuing municipal year 2017/18.

## **5 Appointment of Deputy Mayor**

The Chairman asked for nominations for the election of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor McKeon moved and Councillor Dunn seconded that Councillor Katie Corrigan, be appointed Deputy Mayor of Durham for the ensuing municipal year.

### **Resolved:**

That Councillor Katie Corrigan be duly appointed as Deputy Mayor of Durham for the ensuing municipal year 2017/18.

**The meeting adjourned for 5 minutes in order for the newly elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor to receive chains of office and be robed.**

## **6 The newly elected Mayor to receive the Seal and make the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor**

Councillor Kellett received the Seal and read the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor of Durham which he then signed.

## **7 Mayor's Acceptance Speech**

The Mayor conveyed what an honour and privilege it was to be elected to the role of Mayor of Durham for the ensuing year which would be the pinnacle of over 35 years associated with councils at various levels.

He thanked his family, friends and those who had provided advice and support to be able to achieve the position of Mayor of Durham and would repay those who had faith in him with commitment and dedication.

The Mayors chosen charity during his term of office would be the Great North Air Ambulance Service. Without the service they provide, his daughter may not be here today.

## **8 Mayor to call on Retiring Mayor/Consort to receive the Past Mayor/Consort Jewels**

The Retiring Mayor and Consort unfortunately were unable to attend the meeting, therefore would receive their Jewels to commemorate their term of office at a later date.

## **9 Vote of thanks to Retiring Mayor and Deputy Mayor**

The Mayor offered the vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor and Consort who had been dedicated in carrying out their duties with such grace and enthusiasm during a difficult year. He expressed how proud Councillor Eddie Bell was to be the City's Mayor and his involvement with the Cathedral and the Ceremonial Bodyguard had been highlights for him.

The Mayor congratulated them both on their tireless efforts in relation to their chosen charity, Veterans at Ease in which they had raised just over £10,000.

The Mayor offered the vote of thanks to the retiring Deputy Mayor, Dr Bill Moir and his Consort, Councillor Katie Corrigan for the support they had given to the retiring Mayor over the last year and was sure that as their roles reverse, Bill would enjoy supporting Katie just as much in her new role as Deputy Mayor.

## **10 Address by the Retiring Mayor**

Unfortunately the retiring Mayor was unable to attend the meeting and asked Dr Bill Moir to read out a letter on his behalf. He thanked the Deputy Mayor, the Mayors Bodyguard, Town Hall Staff and the Mayors Secretary for their support during his year in office and everyone who helped raise over £10,000 for his chosen charity. He recalled a year filled with many highlights and memories and expressed what an honour and delight it had been to be Mayor of this historic City. He wished the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor a wonderful year ahead.

## **11 Mayor to call on Retiring Deputy Mayor/Consort to receive the Past Deputy Mayor/Consort Jewels**

The Mayor presented Dr Bill Moir and Councillor Katie Corrigan the past Deputy Mayor and Consort Jewels as souvenirs to commemorate their term of office.

## **12 Address by Dr Bill Moir, Past Deputy Mayor**

Dr Bill Moir reflected on a remarkable and exciting two years in which he supported Past Mayors Councillor Jan Blakey and Councillor Eddie Bell during their terms in office. He expressed what an honour it had been to represent the City of Durham and recalled one of many highlights which was the proudest day of his life when he addressed 150,000 people at Durham Miners Gala in 2016 and felt the spirit of his Great Grandfather who at the age of 9 worked down the mine at Tow Law. He asked that Charter Trustees join the Mayor in attending as many occasions as possible and looked forward to supporting Councillor Katie Corrigan in her role as Deputy Mayor.

### **13 Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### **14 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **15 Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor announced that the Mayor's Evensong would be held at Durham Cathedral on Sunday 25 June 2017 at 3.30pm and asked Trustees and Aldermen for help in supporting the Mayoralty and his chosen charity.

### **16 Presentation of Mayoral Service Medal**

The Mayor presented long service awards to Mr Alan Ribchester and Mr Harvey Evans in recognition of the loyal and voluntary service they had given to the Mayors of Durham for the last 5 years.

The Clerk announced that Mr Colin Lidster also qualified for the 5 year long service award, unfortunately he was unable to attend the meeting, therefore would be presented with his awarded at a later date.

### **17 Retirement of Mr F Grant, member of the Bodyguard**

The Mayor presented Mr Francis Grant with an Honorary Member of the Guard certificate in recognition of 28 years of loyal and voluntary service he had given to the Mayors of Durham.

### **18 Appointment of Officers**

Consideration was given to the appointment of Officers as listed on the agenda for the meeting.

#### **Resolved:**

That the following Officers be appointed:-

- Pant Master (Miss Sharon Spence)
- Billet Master (Chief Superintendent Kerrin Wilson, Durham Constabulary)
- Macebearer (Mr David Baker)

- Swordbearer (Mr Stan Lincoln)
- Deputy Bearer (Mr Frank Bilton)
- Assistant Bearer (Mr David Watson)
- Honorary Judicial Recorder (His Honour Judge Christopher Prince)
- Recorder (Mrs Clare Pattinson)
- Mayor's Chaplain (The Dean of Durham, The Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett)

## **19 Meetings of the Charter Trustees for the City of Durham**

The Clerk advised Trustees of dates for future meetings of the Charter Trustees for the City of Durham for the municipal year 2017/18 (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

The Mayor announced that there was no other business and invited all attending to refreshments.

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## CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

At the **Meeting** of the **Charter Trustees for the City of Durham** held in the Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 21 June 2017 at 12.00 pm

**Present:** The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor B Kellett (in the Chair) and Councillors D Bell, J Chaplow, K Corrigan, S Dunn, D Freeman, A Hopgood, L Hovvels, C Marshall, L Mavin, M McKeon, R Ormerod, E Scott, A Simpson, P Taylor, F Tinsley, J Turnbull and M Wilson

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Blakey, L Brown, E Mavin and M Simmons.

### **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the special meeting held on the 2 June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### **3 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4 Revenue Outturn for the year ended 31 March 2017**

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer that provided information on the 2016/17 final revenue outturn (for copy see file of minutes).

The Treasurer reported that the total net revenue expenditure for 2016/17 was £55,362, an underspend of £10,205 against the original budget of £65,567.

#### **Resolved:-**

That the final outturn position for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 be noted.

### **5 Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2017**

Charter Trustees considered a report of the Treasurer seeking approval of the Accounting Statements and Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ended 31 March 2017, which were included in the Annual Return (for copy see file of minutes).

#### **Resolved:-**

That the Annual Return (Sections 1 and 2) for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 be approved.

## 6 Honorary Aldermen

Councillor Hopgood recalled that a proposal was made at a previous meeting to consider bestowing the title of Honorary Freeman to three former Charter Trustees and suggested that the position of Honorary Aldermen also be considered.

The Clerk explained the distinction between an Honorary Freeman and an Honorary Alderman. He advised that the principal council, in this case Durham County Council, governed by the Local Government Act 1972, could confer the title of Honorary Alderman to a past councillor with 16 years or more service and providing two thirds of voting members agree at a special meeting.

The relevant authority for the Honorary Freeman, which is the Charter Trust, could confer the title to a person of distinction and who, in their opinion, rendered eminent services to that place or area, providing two thirds of the voting Trustees agree at a special meeting.

Trustees appreciated that the decision would be made on the merits of each individual, however, felt it would be prudent to understand the parameters and have details of previous recipients of the title in addition to a complete biography for each candidate to help make an informed decision. The Clerk advised that selection was at the Trustees discretion within the law and Trustees would have to determine how they judge if each candidate qualified for the status.

The Clerk confirmed that upon receiving any nominations together with a supporting biography to support them he could provide a report detailing legislation, previous recipients of the title and the proposals from Trustees who were proposing to bestow the title of Honorary Freeman. A special meeting would then be arranged to vote on the proposals.

### **Resolved:**

That the Clerk, upon receipt of nominations together with supporting biographies, to provide a report to a special meeting detailing legislation, previous recipients of the title and proposals for the title of Honorary Freeman.

The Mayor agreed that in order to keep members informed, the next items of business could be reported.

## 7 Display Cabinets

The Clerk advised that the display cabinets for the Mayoral Robes had been successfully installed, under budget, costing £3,200 with an additional £192 for electrical installation. The Town Hall Manager was in the process of arranging a historical note to be added to the display.

**CHARTER TRUST FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM**

**1 November 2017**

**Conclusion of Audit for 2017**



**City of Durham**

**Report of Bryan Smith, Clerk to the Charter Trustees**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Trustees of the conclusion of the Audit for year ended 31 March 2017.

**Background**

2. Each year BDO carry out an external audit of the Trustees as a small authority. Trustees will recall submitting an annual return in May 2017 in the usual format. Such Return contained checks on annual financial and governance practices, accounting statements, and an internal audit cross check.
3. I am pleased to report that BDO concluded that, on the basis of the report, in their opinion the information contained therein was in accordance with proper practices and only one minor matter arose regarding the recording of petty cash transactions which was corrected and no other matters have arisen to give concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Notice of conclusion of the audit on 13 September 2017 has been duly published.

**Recommendation**

4. That Trustees note and accept this report.

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**Contact: Bryan Smith      Tel: 03000 269717**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – Detailed within the report.

**Staffing** - None specific within the report.

**Risk** - None specific within the report.

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - None specific within the report.

**Accommodation** - None specific within the report.

**Crime and Disorder** - None specific within the report.

**Human Rights** - None specific within the report.

**Consultation** - None specific within the report.

**Procurement** - None specific within the report.

**Disability Issues** - None specific within the report.

**Legal Implications** - None specific within the report.

## Charter Trustees for the City of Durham

1 November 2017

### Revenue Outturn for the period ending 30 September 2017 and Projected Outturn to 31 March 2018



City of Durham

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## Report of Jeff Garfoot, Treasurer

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### INTRODUCTION

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the:
  - actual expenditure compared to the profiled budget for the period ending 30 September 2017;
  - forecast of expenditure to 31 March 2018 in comparison to the 2017/18 original budget.

### COMPARISON OF REVENUE OUTTURN WITH BUDGET

- 2 At 30 September 2017 actual net expenditure was £38,048; an underspend of £6,006 (or 13.63%) against a profiled budget of £44,054.
- 3 It is anticipated that actual expenditure at 31 March 2018 will be slightly lower than the original budget of £66,436 by £7,452 (or 11.22%). The sum required to be drawn from reserves to balance the budget is therefore expected to reduce from £11,962 to £4,510.
- 4 An analysis of the expenditure over subjective budget headings is set out in Appendix 2.
- 5 Explanations regarding the main variances between actual expenditure and the budget are provided below:

### TRANSPORT

- 6 Based upon the current activity levels, it is anticipated that actual expenditure on transport will be £10,350 at the financial year end which is £97 (or 0.93%) less than the original budget.

## SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

- 7 The total expenditure on supplies and services is £312 less than the profiled budget to date. Based upon the activity levels to date, the supplies and services outturn figure at 31 March 2018 is expected to be £18,183; a small underspend of £20 (or 0.11%) in comparison to the annual budget.

## INCOME

- 8 It is anticipated that actual income will be £2,546 at the financial year end which is £2,506 more than the original budget. This is due to the fact the original budget was nil and the Mayor's civic dinner planned for March 2018 for which is has been estimated to generate a similar amount of income as March 2017.

## FORECAST OF OUTTURN

- 9 The latest forecast of net expenditure to 31 March 2018 is £58,984, an underspend of £7,452 (or 11.22%) against the net expenditure budget of £66,436.

## GENERAL RESERVE

- 10 The general reserve balance at 1 April 2017 was £68,078. With a projected underspend of £7,452, the amount required to be drawn from reserves would be £4,510, rather than the original budget figure of £11,962. Consequently the reserve balance would decrease to £63,568 as at 31 March 2018.

## VAT

- 11 As at 30 September 2017 the total VAT paid and reclaimed was £7,177.58.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12 It is **RECOMMENDED** that the City of Durham Charter Trustees:
- note the outturn position for the period ended 30 September 2017;
  - note the forecast of outturn to 31 March 2018;

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**Contact: Ian Herberson, Tel. 03000 261861**

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**RISKS AND IMPLICATIONS**

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**Finance**

The report provides information on the:

- actual expenditure compared to the profiled budget to 30 September 2017
- forecast of expenditure to 31 March 2018 in comparison to the 2017/18 original budget

**Staffing**

None

**Equality and Diversity**

None

**Accommodation**

None

**Crime and Disorder**

None

**Human Rights**

None

**Consultation**

None

**Procurement**

None

**Disability Discrimination Act**

None

**Legal Implications**

None

**ACTUAL OUTTURN COMPARED TO THE PROFILED BUDGET TO  
30 SEPTEMBER 2017 AND PROJECTED OUTTURN TO 31 MARCH 2018**

<b>Annual Budget 2017/18</b>	<b>Budget Head</b>	<b>Profiled budget to date</b>	<b>Year to date Actual</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Variance (Projected Outturn v Annual Budget)</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Employees</b>				
3,500	Mayor's Allowance	3,500	0	0	-3,500
1,500	Deputy Mayor's Allowance	1,500	0	0	-1,500
	<b>Premises</b>				
3,501	Town Hall	3,501	3,501	3,501	0
	<b>Transport</b>				
6,305	Civic Car	3,153	3,200	6,500	195
1,198	Bus Hire	599	360	1,100	-98
2,944	Sergeants at Mace/ Bodyguard	2,944	2,750	2,750	-194
	<b>Supplies and Services</b>				
16,640	Mayor's Hospitality	6,570	6,498	16,568	-72
418	General Office Expenses	209	273	482	64
840	Insurance	833	833	833	-7
305	External Audit	305	0	300	-5
	<b>Support Services</b>				
16,690	Administration	8,345	8,430	16,861	171
12,635	Support Services	12,635	12,635	12,635	0
	<b>Income</b>				
0	Mayor's Civic Dinner	0	-420	-2,520	-2,520
-40	Investment income	-40	-13	-26	14
<b>66,436</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>44,054</b>	<b>38,048</b>	<b>58,984</b>	<b>-7,452</b>
-6,940	<b>Council Tax Support Grant</b>	-6,940	-6,940	-6,940	0
-11,962	<b>Transfer to / -from Reserves</b>	0	0	-4,510	7,452
<b>47,534</b>	<b>Net budget</b>	<b>37,114</b>	<b>31,108</b>	<b>47,534</b>	<b>0</b>

**CHARTER TRUST FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM**

**1 November 2017**

**Freedom of the City - RAF**



**City of Durham**

**Report of Bryan Smith, Clerk to the Charter Trustees**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Trustees of a request by RAF for consideration of granting the Freedom of the City.

**Background**

2. The Council and the Charter Trustees have been notified by Group Captain TC Willbond (retd) RAF of the forthcoming celebrations for the RAF 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year and in particular the possibility of a northern regional event in the summer.
3. It has been suggested that the Charter Trustees may wish to pay tribute to the RAF on this important anniversary and Number 607 (County of Durham) squadron Royal Auxiliary Air force has been suggested for consideration of the granting of the Freedom of City. Brief details have been supplied confirming that 607 squadron came into existence in 1930 and served with great distinction until it was disbanded in 1957. Whilst the squadron was based at RAF Usworth during 1940 it took part in the great Northern battle on 15 August 1940 in which a large enemy advance was repelled to great effect. A squadron standard was presented at a ceremony on Palace Green in 1960 and laid up in the Cathedral. The squadron is now back in being and based at RAF Leeming. It is intended that both 202 squadron RAF and 607squadron RAuxAF will take part in the RAF 100 regional celebrations next year.
4. Following an acknowledgement and request for further details a briefing note is now supplied as attached to this report.
5. Charter Trustees may wish to consider if this is an opportunity to bring the RAF in line with the Army (Rifles) and Navy (HMS Bulwark) who have previously been granted Freedom of entry.

6. Charter Trustees are reminded that under 249 (5) Local Government Act 1972 they may admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority –
  - (a) persons of distinction, and
  - (b) persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.
  
7. Charter Trustees previously agreed at a meeting on 28 June 2012 that certain criteria be adopted for considering the granting of Freedom of Entry to the City of Durham namely
  - (1) To recognise and celebrate the long and close links between the City and other organisations.
  - (2) To recognise and celebrate a contribution to the culture and life of our City and/or an ambassador for our region.
  - (3) To recognise the unstinting support for local charities by a resident of our City.
  - (4) To recognise and celebrate a long and outstanding career by someone born and raised in our City.
  
8. Charter Trustees should consider whether this request is suitable for a further report to a specially convened meeting for the purpose of deciding if Freedom of Entry to the City be granted.

### **Recommendation**

9. That Trustees note this report and decide if a specially convened meeting may be called.

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**Contact: Bryan Smith      Tel: 03000 269717**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – Detailed within the report.

**Staffing** - None specific within the report.

**Risk** - None specific within the report.

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - None specific within the report.

**Accommodation** - None specific within the report.

**Crime and Disorder** - None specific within the report.

**Human Rights** - None specific within the report.

**Consultation** – Information contained within the Report as supplied by the RAF.

**Procurement** - None specific within the report.

**Disability Issues** - None specific within the report.

**Legal Implications** – Exercising powers under the Local Government Act 1972.

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## **Briefing Note for the Charter Trustees of the City of Durham**

**On**

### **Nº 607 (County of Durham) Squadron RAuxAF**

#### **Background**

Lord Trenchard created the Auxiliary Air Force (AAF) in 1924 as a part time volunteer force to support the RAF in both peace and war. Altogether some 21 auxiliary squadrons went to war in 1939 and they played a most significant role throughout the war.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the army was largely recruited from local populations into county-based units such as the Durham Light Infantry. The AAF was formed on a similar principal with units being named for counties and cities and located either within or close to its named area and drawing its recruits from the area.

No 607 Squadron AAF was formed 17<sup>th</sup> March 1930 and it needed a home base in Durham.

In October 1916, the airfield that subsequently became Sunderland Airport started as a Flight Station for 'B' Flight of No. 36 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), and was originally called Hylton. Royal Flying Corps was given the task of Home Defence, setting up a number of squadrons, with flights spread over the length of the British coastline.

Nº 36 Squadron was tasked with the defence of the NE coast. On 27 November 1916, a patrol of B.E.2cs intercepted two groups of Zeppelin airships over the North East coast. Lieutenant IV Pyrott destroyed LZ34 that crashed into the mouth of the Tees; the sight of this caused the other airships to turn back. The only other action that the squadron was involved in was the unsuccessful attack on Zeppelin L42 over Hartlepool on New Years Day 1918.

After the end of the First World War, the area around Usworth was returned to non-flying use. It languished unused for over a decade, until being re-activated as RAF Usworth on 17 March 1930 as the home of Nº 607 (County of Durham) Squadron.

## **The Early Years**

In September 1932, the airfield was ready to receive personnel under the command of Leslie Runciman, later Viscount Runciman. The personnel of No 607 County of Durham Squadron came from all walks of life locally and were trained by a nucleus of regular RAF personnel, including 2 Qualified Flying Instructors. Evenings and weekends were busy when the part-time airmen turned out for training. Training continued in earnest, and in June 1934 the squadron proudly flew nine of its Wapiti aircraft in formation past its first Honorary Air Commodore, the Marquis of Londonderry.

The squadron continued training as a light bomber squadron until September 1937 when it was re-designated as a fighter squadron. Eventually equipped with Gloucester Gladiators it was called to action on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1939 moving to Merville by 15<sup>th</sup> November as part of the Air Component of the British Expeditionary Force.

On 12<sup>th</sup> April 1940 the squadron moved to Abbeville and re-equipped with Hurricanes. The squadron saw fierce and continuous action leading up to the evacuation at Dunkirk and also provided cover during the evacuation itself. During its time in France the squadron was responsible for destroying over 70 German aircraft.

On return to the UK the squadron was sent back to Usworth to re-build arriving back on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1940.

## **The Squadron Defends Durham**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> August the Luftwaffe was still concentrating its efforts directly against the RAF and on that day they launched a major assault. In the mistaken belief that the North was largely undefended the assault included a flanking attack against the North of England. This comprised two large formations the most Northerly of which was targeted against Acklington and Usworth. The response to the attack was masterful with 72 Squadron engaging the enemy off the Farne Islands and then as part of the raid flew over Durham 607 squadron, fighting over its home county, engaged the enemy to great effect causing the enemy to abandon its attack. The squadron shot down two aircraft and damaged several more. The defeat was complete and the Germans never tried a major flanking attack in the North again. The squadron had fully justified its County title.

## **Battle in the South**

On 9<sup>th</sup> September the squadron moved to Tangmere with 16 Hurricanes and twenty-two pilots. Tangmere came under N°11 Group where the majority of fierce air fighting took place and where the outcome of the battle was decided. The County of Durham Squadron was quickly engaged in mortal combat. Most notably the squadron took part in the battles of the not to be forgotten day of 15<sup>th</sup> September; on that day they were scrambled to action four times with the poor ground crew given hardly enough time to re-arm and re-fuel the aircraft. The County of Durham fought heroically and with great distinction until the battle was essentially won and it was sent back to Turnhouse on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1940 for rest and recuperation and it was used in a training capacity to bring new pilots to operational readiness.

The squadron was selected to become the first fighter-bomber squadron and after training at Martlesham Heath it was posted to Manston where it took the fight to the enemy in France.

### **Posted to India**

After numerous moves around the country and the award of two more battle honours the squadron was posted to India arriving in Bombay on 20th May 1942. The squadron had built a very strong reputation and it was to build on this by winning battle honours for Arakan 1942 - 1944, Manipur 1944 and Burma 1945. The County of Durham Squadron was disbanded on 19th August 1945 in SE Asia.

Although none of the original Auxiliary pilots remained and the squadron was a very different one to that which joined battle with the Luftwaffe in France many of the ground crew recruited from Durham were still serving with the squadron and most importantly the spirit of the squadron was unchanged. Throughout a most eventful five years the squadron proudly bore the name of the County of Durham.

### **The Squadron is Reformed**

On 10 May 1946, the County of Durham Squadron reformed over the border at RAF Ouston in Northumberland as a day fighter squadron of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. Four original members of the squadron returned with Squadron Leader Joe Kyall in command, Flight Lieutenant Francis Blackadder, Flight Lieutenant JM Brazin and Flying Officer REW Pumphrey who had been a prisoner of war for five years. Initially the squadron was equipped with Spitfire Mk XIV but they were exchanged for Spitfire XXII in 1948. In 1951 the squadron converted to the de Havilland Vampire FB V day fighter which it flew until it was disbanded. The squadron had returned home and was once again drawing its manpower from Durham and the North East.

The Royal Auxiliary Air Force was stood down and all squadron disbanded on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1957.

### **The Awarding and Laying up of the Squadron Standard**

Although the squadron had ceased to exist on 10<sup>th</sup> march 1957 the Squadron standard had been produced.

On a Sunday afternoon on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1960 on Palace Green, in the Shadow of the Cathedral and in the company of Hawker Hurricane Mk 1 P-2617 that had been flown by the squadron during both the Battle of France and the Battle of Britain, a moving ceremony took place.

In the presence of 120 ex-members led by the last Honorary Air Commodore Viscount Runciman, Marshal of the RAF Sir Dermot Boyle, a former Chief of the Air Staff, handed over the Standard on behalf of the Queen after which it was dedicated by the Dean of Durham.

A special service in the Cathedral followed during which Viscount Runciman gave the Standard into the keeping of the Dean.

Viscount Runciman's speech is attached as an Appendix.

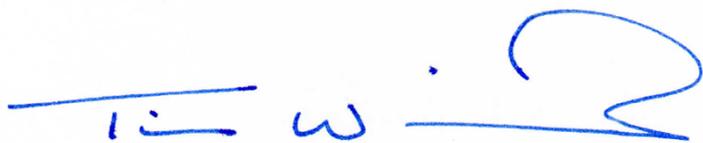
Tangible links with the squadron can be found in the Cathedral where the squadron dead, many of whom came from Durham and the North East, are honoured on an oval stone tablet in the south transept. The squadron standard is situated above the memorial in the south transept.

### **Reborn Again**

The County of Durham Squadron was re-formed on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 as part of the new reserve forces initiative; the Squadron is now a General Service Support Squadron (GSS). The squadron has re-forged its links with Durham since its reformation taking part in Armed Forces Days, Mayor making ceremonies, a concert in the Cathedral, Battle of Britain and Remembrance events in Durham over the last two years. Lady Peel is the current Honorary Air Commodore of the Squadron.

The story of the County's squadron is a remarkable one with many local young men giving their lives for the country whilst others who survived returning to continue the traditions of the squadron after the war. It is particularly moving that the County of Durham squadron was able to defend its own County during the major air assault of August 1940. The squadron was involved in some of the most intense air fighting and throughout the war it carried with pride the name of County of Durham squadron.

We would be most grateful if the Charter Trustees would consider bestowing the very great honour of the Freedom of the City of Durham on N<sup>o</sup> 607 (County of Durham) Squadron on Palace Green on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018 where the final act of disbandment and the laying up of the standard was carried out in 1960.



Tim Willbond  
Group Captain RAF (Retd)  
Vice Chairman (Air)  
The Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for the North of England

**Viscount Runciman's Address  
On the  
Occasion of the Awarding of the Royal Standard to the Squadron**

'Sir, There stand here today not the officers and airmen of a squadron in being, but only some remainder of those who in peace and war served with 607 during 25 years. That is our misfortune, not our fault. If, in the years to come, Her Majesty should again require of this squadron that service for which she has been pleased to award us this Standard, our successors will, I am confident, be found worthy of it.

We who have served in No. 607 (County of Durham) Squadron are proud and grateful for the honour conferred on the squadron by Her Majesty in the award of this Standard and we thank you, Sir, for coming here today to present it. We thank you not only as a former Chief of the Air Staff, as a distinguished airman and fighter, but also because you have yourself served with an Auxiliary Squadron, and we make bold to claim you as in some sense one of ourselves.'

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