

# DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Held via Microsoft Teams on 30 September 2020 at 1pm

## **PRESENT:**

### **Councillors**

Ivan Jewell, Alan Shield, Watts Stelling (Vice Chair), Owen Temple and Alex Watson

### **Partner Organisations**

Mark Clelland - Derwentside Trust, Paul Moralee - Karbon Homes, Rachel Rooney - County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group and PC Tony Burgess and PSCO Julie Brown - Durham Constabulary (on behalf of Insp Dave Stewart)

### **Public Representatives**

Mike Clark, Jeanette Harold (Chair), Helen Marley, Susan Mellor and Shelley O'Brien

### **DVP:**

Corinne Walton - AAP Co-ordinator, Pete Garrod and Kath Clements - Community Development / Project Officers and Lynn Dougal - Support Officer

### **PRESENTERS:**

Rachel Rooney, County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group on Shotley Bridge Hospital update and Mike Clark, Project Genesis Trust on Consett Heritage Trail and Visit Consett website

### **APOLOGIES:**

Partner Reps: Craig Farrage - Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, Alison Lazizzera and Joanne Waller - Durham County Council (DCC), Gary Scott - Do Business Network (DBN) and Insp Dave Stewart - Durham Constabulary. Public Rep: Marlene Boyles.

## **1. Meeting opened by the Coordinator**

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and briefly went through online etiquette and the Teams functions such as connection issues and chat facilities. Corinne advised that Board meetings will be conducted via Teams for the foreseeable future.

Corinne introduced and welcomed two new partner representatives to the Board – Paul Moralee from Karbon Homes and Insp Dave Stewart from Durham Constabulary. Board members introduced themselves and apologies were noted as above.

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (29 January 2020)**

Before going through the minutes Cllr Shield said that as Derwentside Mind will be closing he asked for an update regarding the OPSIF funding awarded to them, back in January, for drop-in sessions. It was agreed that Corinne would go through the minutes page by page as there were quite a few matters arising and will address Cllr Shields' concerns at that point.

The matters arising from the minutes were:

Page 7 – Due to lockdown and the restrictions in place around Covid-19, only 2 of the 3 Environment projects have been able to go ahead to date.

The Allensford Biodiversity and Planting project delivered by DCC Ecology Team has started as this is an outdoor planting scheme.

The Footprint Climate Change Conference to be delivered by Durham Energy Institute has been postponed for 2020 and it is envisaged this would take place in 2021.

The School and Community Plastic Recycling project to be delivered by STEAM Workshops has been put on hold as they are unable to deliver any workshops in school or community settings.

Page 7 – Health and wellbeing proposal: Delta North has been in contact with Public Health to address the queries raised in their application for the Let's Talk About It project. In March the Board were sent an up to date application via email, which reflected Public Health's recommendations, which the Board then agreed to progress. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions in place, this project has not yet started.

Page 9 – OPSIF proposals:

Fast Track Drop-in Service - Derwentside Mind were awarded £8776 for this project but no money was paid to them as shortly after the application was approved, we went into lockdown. Therefore, no offer letter and T&Cs were issued, or any money paid to them. As Derwentside Mind has now closed (as of today - 30 September) the amount of £8776 will go back into the budget and will form part of the Covid-19 Recovery fund.

Silver Talk delivered through Karbon Homes, this project has started and saw an increase in the telephone befriending service during lockdown.

Great Woodland Get Together, through Durham Wildlife Trust and Positive Changes, through Durham Constabulary (partially funded), these are both on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions in place.

The IT Skills for Over 50s proposed by Medomsley Community Action Group in partnership with Hamsterley Mill Residents Association and Burnopfield Community Association did not receive a share of the OPSIF money due to oversubscription. However, the Board would encourage an application for this project in the 2020/21 financial year.

Page 9 – a DVP Funding Subgroup was created and had one meeting prior to the scheduled March board meeting. It was very productive, and they had a number of budgeting process related proposals but unfortunately were not able to progress further due to lockdown. However, is it envisaged that this group will reconvene, and further discussions are to take place as to when this can happen.

Page 10 – the Board agreed to fund Consett Cycle Festival again this year but unfortunately this could not go ahead as planned due to restrictions around Covid-19. However, the Board agreed (in June) to allocate the £10k, that was to fund the Cycle Festival, to a Consett Steelworkers Memorial on the former steel works site. This project has now been completed and a small unveiling ceremony took place in September.

Page 12 – unfortunately the 'environmental/green' edition of the Derwent Valley News (DVN) was not produced in the summer due to limited printing and distribution services operating during lockdown. Rather than incur any cancellation costs, should there be further measures put in place later this year, the next edition of the DVN will be in Spring 2021 when we optimistically feel that the publication can be produced without restriction.

On this note, Corinne advised that at a recent meeting with the Chair and Vice Chairs it was discussed that the partnership produce an e-bulletin in the interim which could go out on an ad-hoc basis. This would keep residents, local community groups, partners, etc. up to date with the work of the partnership in between DVN publications.

Jeanette Harold said as some of our local groups may not be able to get much information about what is going on as they would like to, it would be a good idea to explore other ways of getting the information out there into the community.

Corinne advised that the DVP team would draft an e-bulletin and will circulate this to the Board for comments in due course.

Cllr Shield wondered if the money allocated to the Environment and OPSIF projects above and have not yet started will be added into the Covid19 Recovery budget or will that money be used for those projects once restrictions have lifted.

Corinne said all the applications that were agreed and approved prior to lockdown will still receive their funding, apart from the Derwentside Mind project where that money (£8776) will go into the Covid-19 Recovery budget.

It was noted that the team were liaising with the applicants on a regular basis to ensure the Environment and OPSIF projects are still going to be deliverable when it is safe to do so, and understand some projects may have to be altered depending on social distancing measures and who the client groups are. However, if there are fundamental changes to those proposals, then they would come back to the board to ensure they were happy to support those changes.

Cllr Shield suggested using the OPSIF funding of £8776, that is no longer going to Derwentside Mind, to fully fund the Positive Changes project by Durham Constabulary and fund the joint application IT Skills for Over 50s, rather than going into the Covid-19 Recovery budget. Corinne advised that this option was raised in the Executive meeting with the Chair and Vice Chairs. However, she suggested that a decision be made on this option as soon as possible as this will determine how much money will be available in the Covid-19 Recovery budget going forward, and as part of an imminent potential call out process.

A discussion then took place to consider Cllr Shield's suggestion which included asking if the applicants are still willing and able to deliver their projects under the current circumstances; to take into consideration that the applicants may have to modify their projects which could incur further costs due to Covid-19, and whether the IT Skills for Over 50s could be delivered within the current restrictions - concerns were raised around the practicalities of this.

Corinne said all comments have been noted and we will progress this option directly via the applicants and provide the Board with updates at the next meeting.

There were no further comments and the minutes were AGREED.

### **3. DVP Forward Plan 2020/21 Covid-19 Recovery**

Corinne provided an overview of the report which gave an insight into the work of the DVP since the beginning of lockdown.

Each AAP received £100k Covid-19 Assistance Fund to support local community

organisations with urgent running costs and for provision of essential goods. The DVP supported 12 local community groups / organisations at a total cost of £78,213. This fund ended on 30 June 2020 with the remaining funds across all 14 AAPs pooled in to one Countywide AAP pot (approx. £300k and co-ordinated centrally) to help support projects covering multiple AAP areas.

We are currently moving away from our 3 local priorities of Employment, enterprise and training, Environment and Health and wellbeing towards one overarching Covid-19 Recovery theme, which all 14 AAPs will be focusing on. This broad priority, although this is not an exhaustive list, would focus on project proposals around the following:

- Employability
- Advice and guidance
- Physical activity, mental health & wellbeing
- Organisational sustainability
- Food provision and support
- Social Isolation
- Support for the voluntary and community sector
- Support to small businesses (through a third party, not-for-profit organisation to complement existing DCC and external opportunities).

The Covid-19 Recovery budget is made up of the Area Budget, Welfare Reform, OPSIF and Youth Fund (Holiday Activities with Healthy Food fund is operated separately) with a combined total of £153,678, which includes any funds which have been returned to the DVP. As the Board agreed to fund the Consett Steelworkers Memorial project (£10k), the remaining budget for 2020/21 is £143,678.

Due to the unusual circumstances we find ourselves in this year, the Covid-19 Recovery budget can be carried over into 2021/22. Elected members also have their Neighbourhood Budgets but due to local elections scheduled to take place next year, they cannot be carried over and project applications are requested to be submitted to the team by no later than 31 December 2020.

It was highlighted that a dedicated Task Group has been set up to explore the themes outlined above which will be discussed further under Agenda Item 4.

The Board were asked to discuss the following funding options for allocating the Covid-19 Recovery budget, via the Task Group:

- Open Project Call Out
- Task Group Project Development
- A mixture of both

Cllr Jewell asked how wide the audience is in the call out process and wondered if we are capturing those who would benefit from getting the information. Corinne advised that we circulate the information as wide as possible on social media and via our own networks i.e. partners, community organisations, Board, Task Group and Forum members, etc and also rely on them to share the information through their networks.

After a brief discussion, the Board AGREED to an open call out for projects and the project proposals would be looked at by the Task Group. They would ask questions/raise comments and filter the applications before being presented to the Board for

discussion/recommendation at the November meeting.

Corinne said this would be relayed to the Task Group who will be meeting on 2 October. As for timescales, it is envisioned that the call out would go out week commencing 5 October with approximately a 3-week deadline for applications to be in by. Applications would be reviewed by the Task Group early November and then presented to the Board at the next meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **4. DVP Covid-19 Recovery Task Group Update**

Corinne gave a brief outline of the report and said a dedicated Task Group had been set up to explore the Covid-19 Recovery themes (mentioned in Agenda Item 3 above) and consists of volunteers from the DVP Board and local partner representatives.

The Task Group met on 14 August and 4 September to discuss the themes and look at any data/information provided by partners. To help with the development of project proposals, the group identified 3 or 4 areas to focus on under each theme. Corinne outlined each of the specific areas under each of the themes and asked the Board to consider these.

Cllr Temple said all councillors received a briefing paper that mentioned mental health service providers and he would like those organisations to be included in the call out. He also asked about support for small businesses and wondered if the Task Group had in mind specific non-profit organisations to provide this support or was it more general.

Corinne advised that the DVP received the briefing paper and those organisations linked to mental health provision will be included in the call out. The Task Group are keen to support projects delivered around this theme. Regarding business support, we are not able to fund profit making organisations and any projects that would support local businesses, would have to be delivered by a not for profit organisation.

Regarding the physical activity, mental health & wellbeing theme, Rachel also stressed the importance of physical activities, particular in light of the current situation. She wondered if more emphasis could be given on the physical activity element rather than it just being about using the local environment.

Jeanette concurred and said a lot of people may have put weight on during lockdown and getting out in the local environment is good for our physical and mental health. She suggested rewording the physical activities element to have more emphasis on this aspect.

Corinne advised that Rachel's comments have been noted and more emphasis will be given around this in the call out guidance.

Cllr Shield said Consett Foodbank, which operates out of Glenroyd House, used to be open 5 days a week but is restricted to Wednesdays and Fridays only. He said there is an initiative called The Bread and Butter Thing, based in Manchester and operating in the North East where people can pay £7.50 per week and get regular food deliveries. He said he would like to look into this further and will raise this at the next Task Group meeting on 2 October.

Jeanette said if we are looking at wider organisations, Feeding Families delivers food to families in the area. She is not sure of the difference between the two organisations and thought it might be worth looking at both of them.

Cllr Shield said we have to be careful we do not duplicate projects. Jeanette agrees with Cllr Shield and said Feeding Families has been around for a few years in this area. She also said that she would like to support local initiatives but is happy to look at others.

Mark said since he has been in the meeting, he has received 9 messages for food parcels in our area. After a short lull, they are starting to see an increase in requests as more people are using the service.

Jeanette asked if there are any specific issues with supporting the foodbank, i.e. lack of volunteers or the ages of volunteers.

Cllr Shield said it is a combination of few things and said if there was a need for more support there are volunteers that could be rotated so we can increase the coverage from 2 days to 5.

There were no further comments and the Board agreed for the Task Group to progress with the call out and to bear in mind the comments made at the Board meeting.

## **5. Partner updates**

*Rachel Rooney gave an update on Shotley Bridge Community Hospital (SBCH)*

Before giving an update, Rachel referred to the previous Board minutes, page 4, regarding Stroke Rehabilitation and Ward 6. Unfortunately, the consultation was stood down and the proposal stopped with immediate effect. This was due to the demands on acute beds and the winter season. That work has ceased but there is further work in developing community services, particularly for stroke patients.

Rachel clarified that they are now called County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group (which is an amalgamation of North Durham and Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield).

Rachel continued with the update and said SBCH were allocated approximately £21m through NHS England to develop a modern fit for purpose health care facility. Regular updates are provided to the Hospital Reference Group and the Patient Reference Group.

In January they had a draft clinical model, and it was planned that they would go out and engage with the public on that model. However, Covid-19 has changed the way the NHS operates, and things are done differently, therefore they need to amend that model of care to ensure it is fit for purpose in the future. They hope to engage with the public in November but unfortunately, they are not able to go out into the community as previously and are looking at different methods of getting the information out. Any ideas on how they can engage with the public would be welcomed.

A multi-disciplinary group met to consider various sites for locating the new health care facility and they concluded that there were 3 potential sites:

1. Puddlers Corner in Consett
2. Blackfyne Site on Durham Road
3. Land adjacent to the former English Martyrs School in Leadgate

Working with Durham County Council, they have identified that sites 1 and 2 are not viable options due to issues around access. Therefore, they have 2 options that they will consult on – one at Puddlers Corner and the other is to redevelop the current SBCH site. There has

been some confusion around the current site as it was thought that this was not an option, but when they go out to consultation, they have to look at the current site too.

At the moment, the timescales they are working towards are outlined as follows, but appreciate that these may change in these uncertain times:

an engagement process will start in November; an outline business case to be finalised by March 2021; following purdah, due to local elections, they plan to start their consultation in June 2021. A full business case should be completed by early 2022 and then construction can commence which could take around 15-18 months.

Cllr Shield said the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley (TEWV) Mental Health team were to come into the new facility, with their own funding of approx £4-5m, and hopes that this is still the case, particularly in light of Derwentside Mind closing. Regarding the location at the former English Martyrs school site, he understands that the land has been designated for housing and a school and wondered why it could not be considered for a new health facility.

Cllr Shield also said that PGT will be submitting an application for the creation of an energy recovery facility. He advised that he and Cllr Jewell sit on the Strategic Planning Committee. This new facility, if successful, would generate power via a local smart grid network to Hownsgill Eco Park as well as to the newly planned health care facility site - if located near Puddlers Corner.

Cllr Temple asked for clarification about the current site whether it would mean building within the grounds of the current hospital or refurbishing the existing building. A key concern is continuity of service and that could be difficult under either circumstance.

Cllr Stelling said the Leadgate site is made up of 3 different owners - the former school site, which is privately owned, land identified in the County Durham Plan for housing/school development and the remainder owned by Taylor Wimpey. He also said the latter could be an area for development as the other two are not likely to be available.

Rachel said regarding the land at Leadgate, NHS Property Services source land for them and they did a review on the area and the land owned by Taylor Wimpey was not included in the list of available sites.

Helen Marley wondered what was wrong with the Blackfyne site. Rachel said there were issues around the access to the site.

Cllr Shield wondered how it would be possible to develop a site and maintain existing services. He is concerned that some services could be removed whilst refurbishment / development was going on and for those services not to come back.

Rachel said regarding the comments around the current site, that will form part of the assessment that is undertaken on those 2 options. If continuity of care was not considered that would score unfavourably in the assessment. Although there will be 2 options in the business case and consultation, there will also be a preferred option based on a financial and non-financial assessment and as a public organisation we must demonstrate value for money.

Regarding TEVV Mental Health service, they still want to be part of the site, but their position has changed slightly due to the way Covid-19 has impacted on them. Both the CCG and TEVV are keen to have a presence in the new facility, but it may be on a sessional basis.

Rachel urged everyone, who is eligible, to get a flu vaccination. A message was also picked up in the online chat facility from Rachel '*those registered at Consett Medical Practice who are eligible for a vaccination, further flu clinics are held on the 10th and 17th October (both Saturday mornings)*'.

Jeanette thanked Rachel for the update and input at the meeting.

*Mike Clark gave an update on Consett Heritage Trail and Visit Consett Website*

Before giving an update, Mike responded to Cllr Shields' comments regarding the Waste to Energy provision that Project Genesis Trust (PGT) are seeking to make. It is subject to public consultation and is not specific to the Derwent View site (near Puddlers Corner) and if successful could benefit the wider area.

Mike thanked the DVP and local councillors for funding of the Consett Steelworkers Memorial. The unveiling went well but unfortunately, they had a number of complaints around people not being invited. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, numbers were limited but the vast majority of comments were positive.

A video of the event is available on the Visit Consett website as well as a Consett steelworkers memory board.

The Heritage Trail in Consett continues to be well used and they are working with partners to extend it further for leisure use.

PGT is in the process of establishing a heritage centre with the Heritage Society in the former St John's Ambulance hall in Consett. They are hoping to have this completed in the next 3-4 weeks with the heritage centre opening early next year. It has a large exhibition and event facility and could be available for meetings, in the future.

## **6. DVP Neighbourhood Issues**

Corinne said two neighbourhood issues, raised by Forum members, were circulated to the Board prior to the meeting relating to a local transport survey and a survey around the Derwent Walk and the introduction of rail links.

The DVP do not have any information about the surveys and we understand these have been conducted by local MP Richard Holden. Corinne asked if anyone has any information they can share with us about the surveys, suggesting in the meantime that the DVP contact the MP's office for Mr Holden to provide us with a response that we can pass onto the Forum members.

Cllr Shield referred to the Derwent Walk survey and said the Forum member refers to the excellent bus services that run every 15 minutes, which is very good for those who live in Ebchester. However, it is not so good for those living in Medomsley, High Westwood or Low Westwood where bus services run once an hour. He said he was not aware there was a transport survey; there was no engagement through the AAP or elected members and unsure where that came from.

Corinne said the DVP were not aware of where it originated from, but Kath Clements found a brief reference to a survey on a Twitter feed through the local MP.

It was AGREED that the DVP would contact Mr Holden's office for more information about the surveys.

Cllr Temple thinks this was an informal survey that the local MP undertook to find out what local people's views are. His view is that in the two issues raised they do not support a feasibility study, but he feels that such studies can raise some good points.

## **7. AAP Countywide Events**

Corinne said all AAPs will be holding an online event with each event having a specific focus on its own AAP and the work undertaken by local communities during the lockdown.

The DVP event will be held on Tuesday 20 October from 6pm and will include a number of presentations which includes:

- An update on DCC's Vision
- Information on the Towns and Villages Strategy including a consultation
- An update from Public Health around Covid-19 and to explain about volunteering opportunities as a Covid-19 Champion
- An update on the DVP's Covid-19 Assistance Fund

The online event is open to everyone and will be promoted on our Derwent Valley Life website and Facebook as well as sent out via email to Forum, Board and Task Group members, partners and community organisations. Booking will be via Eventbrite where a link will be available to log your interest and sign up for the event.

## **8. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting**

Jeanette thanked everyone for their attendance and confirmed that the next Board meeting will be on Wednesday 25 November 2020 at 1pm via Microsoft Teams.

Signed as a correct record: .....

Date: .....