

# Stanley Area Action Partnership Board Meeting

## Minutes of the Stanley Area Action Partnership Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday 13th January 2021 at 1.00pm via Teams

### Present:

#### Councillors

Cllr Olga Milburn  
Cllr Jeanette Stephenson  
Cllr Lyn Boyd  
Cllr Bala Nair  
Cllr Joan Nicholson

#### Partner Organisations

Alan Tubman (Stanley Town Council)  
Suzanne Jobson (Karbon Homes)  
Insp. Dave Stewart (Durham Constabulary)

#### Public Representatives

Nerise Oldfield-Thompson (Chair)  
Linda Tyman  
Helen McCaughey  
Kevin Howe

#### Officer Attendance

Daniel O'Brien (AAP Coordinator)  
Andrea Boyd (Community Development Support Officer)  
Lesley Lines (Support Officer)

#### Apologies

Vicky Walton, Katie Platten, Cllr Carole Hampson, Martyn Stenson (Durham County Council Council), Cllr Joyce Charlton, Gordon Binney, and Karen Brown (Business Representative).

#### Public Attendance

None

### Introductions and Apologies

Nerise Oldfield-Thompson (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. Introductions were made. Apologies are noted above.

### Declaration of Interest

AAP Board Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest in relation to the agenda items; None recorded.

# Agreement of the minutes – 11th November 2020 and Matters Arising

The Chair went through the previous Board Meeting minutes page by page. The minutes were agreed as a true record.

## Matters Arising

Nerise asked if there was an update on Durham County Council 2021/22 Budget and 2021/22 to 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Plan – Consultation and Budget.

Daniel advised there was no update as yet.

There were no other matters arising

Open Discussion - Community needs/areas for action now & the year ahead:

A discussion took place;

Kevin Howe advised a plan was needed for coming out of lockdown.

Suzanne advised there was a need for customers to engage now before they get to crisis point. Consideration of the gaps was needed.

Lynn Boyd felt the real concern may be that people will not want to leave the house after the lockdown. Planning now is essential.

Jeanette agreed that a mapping exercise was needed within the Stanley area.

Olga highlighted that the financial settlement hadn't yet been agreed for Councillor's and DCC.

Bala agreed that a coordinated approach was needed.

Joan highlighted that people have never been in this situation before and do not know where to go for help. People now have multi needs and there is a need to have a one point of contact.

Jeanette highlighted the Community Hub which worked well during the crisis. However, there could be a role for the AAP and Community Volunteers once we are in recovery. Mapping needs to be done to identify people and organisations to avoid duplication.

Kevin suggested using PACT House as a framework. He also suggested bringing Advice in County Durham to a Board meeting to give a presentation. **Action: Daniel**

Kevin highlighted that there was a need for crisis management for Homelessness and Suicide Prevention.

Joan highlighted that fuel poverty was also a concern, and unless residents were with British Gas vouchers could not be issued. Helen suggested someone needed to contact the providers in the area for more information and advice. **Action: Daniel**

Nerise suggested looking at another Newsletter to be produced for the recovery phase in partnership with Stanley Town Council. She highlighted the need to meet with Leads to make sure the right contacts are at hand. Including Schools, Employers, Mental Health, Community Groups, Venues that are still operating. **Action: Daniel**

## Neighbourhood Issues and Locality Policing Issues

Insp. Dave Stewart gave an update on the work his team were currently pursuing; He advised enforcement of gatherings was top priority at the minute and repeat offenders were being tackled.

Olga asked if quad bike ASB was increasing during lockdown. Dave advised although the problem was still there no increase had been recorded.

Jeanette advised that people had travelled into Annfield Plain and Greencroft to sledge. She believed they had come from South Shields. Dave advised the area would be monitored.

Cllr Olga Milburn asked for an update on the bus station shutters. Insp. Stewart advised that a Security Company would be taking over responsibility for the shutters.

## AAP Coordinator Update

Area Budget 2020/21 Update & Next Steps – Daniel advised he was awaiting comments from the funding team before issuing offer letters on the projects approved. He advised the budget still had £50K outstanding to issue which could be rolled over to next year.

A discussion took place around any need for any immediate projects.

Nerise advised the Stanley Fund had now closed and a meeting was called for 9th February to discuss the projects they had received. She added it might be an idea to wait to see what projects they had received.

Kevin advised that his thoughts were to wait and see if any funding had been withdrawn that would be needed in Stanley. **The Board agreed this to be the way forward.**

Holiday Activity with Healthy Food (HAHF) February 2021 Half Term - Daniel advised he had £4k to help groups during the February Half Term. Groups could apply for between £250 – £999 only 2 applications had been received to date. Closing date for applications was 20th January.

Daniel further advised wider work was in progress with County Durham receiving 2.3 million to spend over the next 18 months. Further information would be brought to the next meeting.

Stanley AAP Mental Health Sub-Group – Daniel advised the group had met and was well attended. The next meeting was scheduled for 25th January.

## Partner Work Update / Stanley specific items of interest:

**Stanley Town Council** – Alan advised there were no Civic Hall operations at present. The foodbank is now operating via PACT House. He added that the Town Council were meeting next week to sign off the budget.

**Karbon Homes** – Suzanne advised Karbon Homes was still operating, they were actively supporting customers with Well-Being Training, and financial advice. Basic Skills and IT Training were still ongoing. She advised the Skills Hub is now fully ready to open once restrictions are lifted. Feeding into the Masterplan.

**SHAID** – Kevin gave an update:

Firstly, I would like to thank the following organisations who have supported the work we do. Each case is usually highly complex involving several agencies and without the support of local services such as PACT house, housing solutions, Local DWP officers, social services and many of the services linked to Advice in County Durham, Thanks must also be extended to A number of AAPs Local authorities and funders who have supported our services financially. I have no doubt that SHAID staff and volunteers would have burnt out a long time ago without this additional support. But more importantly many vulnerable persons may have been left or forgotten due to their unique support needs, and to be honest the consequences of not being there frightens me.

Over the past few months numbers accessing SHAID's services have increased by a further **70%** against the same time last year.

Domestic abuse cases have increased by over **300%** within the last 5 months. Shaid has supported an additional **28 women with over 60 children** who have fled abusive relationships. What is also unique to SHAID is that we are now beginning to see an increase in Indian, Black and ethnic minority families needing our support, we are also seeing an increase in LGBTQ+ people accessing services and support.

The last three months saw an additional 42 homeless presentations (not including the additional domestic abuse clients). These numbers are increasing and my biggest fear is when the safety net measures are finally taken away /dissolved, and they will be, Durham, and Stanley in particular, will witness phenomenal levels of Homelessness. Council tax rises and arrears, rent arrears, mortgage repayments, debt collectors, Illegal lenders, mental health impacts will all play to increasing numbers even further. There is also the added context of people recovering from the physical and psychological effects of Covid-19 and Long Covid, dealing with the ongoing impact of social isolation, deconditioning from shielding or lockdowns, and trauma of losing family and friends without the traditional opportunities to share their grief. Dealing with all these aspects alongside Homelessness or potential homelessness will be extremely complex over the coming year if not years. However this level of support has always been the bread and butter of Shaids support to its clients.

But we are much much more than that, we are a confidant, an advocate, a support network, a friend, and at times a mother or father to the clients we support.

The last 12 months to date, during the pandemic, we have supported well over 500 individuals across all support services, at an overall increase of around 200%. Yes we have increased services through accommodation and dispersed properties to meet the additional demand but funding has been cut and no staffing increases implemented.

Moving forward we intend to push ahead with potential housing developments' and these include a new sheltered accommodation unit for care leavers, work with Stanley Builders and Durham County Council on the old Town Hall and Board school proposal. Other developments include extending our dispersed property portfolio and further supported accommodation for veterans further developing our highly respected and award-winning St Peters and Hollyacer Centre projects where we have housed over 2,000 veterans to date directly and through our own and partners properties. As part of this programme we have also supported hundreds of veterans and young people back into employment, education and mental health services. We have also secured the extension of the Durham Works programme until December 2021 and the roll out of a new ESF 1.2 programme entry to employment and education for 16 to 24 years olds in January 2022. We will need to find about 80k match funding against the 3-year programme equating to a project valued at around £290,000 for the young people of the area.

We are a hidden charity as we carry out the work behind the scenes but with a return of excellent across 99% of participation feedback we do get the results, without the funding or marketing budgets of larger housing charities, we are an essential charity, which provides a safety net for the more vulnerable persons of our communities, the ones nearest complete breakdown or worse.

So, I would like to thank the Board of the AAP giving me this opportunity to begin the work of raising the profile of SHAID, the work we do and the impacts we can clearly demonstrate with 1,000s and 1,000s of cases over a 20 year period.

## **Neighbourhood Budget Summaries**

Andrea advised she was inundated with Neighbourhood Budget projects and applications. A report would be brought to the next meeting

## **Pre-notified Any Other Business:**

Cllr Lyn Boyd advised she had been approached by several residents with regards to the poor Christmas Lights. She also was asked what happened to the Christmas Tree.

Daniel advised he would make enquiries with James Black, Stanley Town Council.

**Action: Daniel**

Daniel advised that Darren McMahon had received an MBE for his work in the community. The Board asked that Daniel write a letter from the Board congratulating him.

**Action: Daniel**

## **Next Meeting**

The Next Board Meeting will be held on:

Wednesday 10th March at 1pm on Stanley AAP's dedicated Teams page.

For further details about these minutes please contact Stanley AAP office, Tel: 03000 265323.