

DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP (DVP) BOARD MEETING

Held via Microsoft Teams on 24 November 2021 at 6pm



PRESENT:

Councillors

Kevin Earley, Kathryn Rooney, Alan Shield and Alex Watson

Partner Organisations

Craig Farrage - Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, Alison Lazazzera - Durham County Council (DCC) and Paul Moralee - Karbon Homes

Public Representatives

Marlene Boyles, Mike Clark, Jeanette Harold, Helen Marley and Shelley O'Brien

DVP:

Corinne Walton - AAP Co-ordinator, Kath Clements and Laura Sloan - Community Development Project Officers, Lynn Dougal - Support Officer and Joanne Ashworth – Towns and Villages Community Development Project Officer

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 5

PRESENTERS:

Craig Farrage – Co Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

APOLOGIES:

Partner Rep: Rachel Rooney - Co Durham Clinical Commissioning Group

Public Rep: Susan Mellor

1. Meeting opened by the Coordinator

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through the Teams functions and meeting etiquette.

Board members introduced themselves and apologies were noted as above.

Declarations of interest were from Cllr Earley (Secretary to Blackhill and Consett Park) linked to the Blackhill and Consett Park project proposal and from Jeanette Harold in relation to the Eden Miners Centre as she is a Trustee of the centre.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (29 September 2021)

Matters arising

Page 1, regarding the Eden Miners Centre (EMC) and a request for further information about the project. Corinne shared on screen the quote received from Insight Safety Ltd for improvement works and asbestos removal (£7,490 excluding VAT). It was noted that as the quote is from December 2020, costs may have increased and an up-to-date quote may be required.

The EMC would like to apply to the PGT Discretionary Fund (PGTDF) to carry out the improvement works; however, the balance of the fund is £5,975 (£4,025 previously allocated to the Roxy) and will not cover the full amount as per the quote.

Cllr Shield said there were delays in the EMC submitting the information as they were advised to get an additional quote besides Insight's and they also requested a report from SGS, who do not carry out the work but provide an analysis of the work. They then went back to Insight, some 12 months later to check on the cost status. There was also urgent work carried out on replacing the original lintels which added to the delay.

As the PGTDF amount of £5,975 does not cover the full quote, Corinne asked Cllr Shield/Jeanette Harold if they have sourced other funding to cover the shortfall. Jeanette said they have had a commitment from Banks Trust for part of the funding. Cllr Shield clarified that EMC have been awarded around £3k from Banks and that money from the EMC's small reserves will be used to cover the shortfall.

The Board AGREED to use the remaining funds from the PGTDF to fund the EMC.

Corinne advised that the DVP Team will progress the request through the PGTDF and the EMC will be contacted accordingly.

There were no further comments/matters arising and the minutes were AGREED.

3. DVP Task Group Update including Employment, Education & Training and Environment Project updates

Corinne gave an update on the work of the task groups.

Towns and Villages (T&V) Task Group – Chair Rosemary Morris, Vice Chair Marlene Boyles with support from the DVP Team and T&V Officer Joanne Ashworth

At the last task group meeting in November, the group agreed a new chair and vice chair as above and Corinne thanked Rosemary and Marlene for taking up these roles.

The group discussed the improvement works which are due to take place early next year in Middle Street and the lack of information available to inform the public of the works to be carried out. The Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) Team were contacted to enquire about any information/display boards for the public to view and as a result there will be two drop-in sessions in Consett Library on 3 and 7 December. We are also waiting to hear back from the REG Team if the plans are available online.

The group also raised concerns about the lack of local councillor involvement in the task group. As the T&V funding is for the benefit of all areas, local councillors' knowledge and input would be welcomed and the group would like to encourage more councillors to get involved.

In addition to getting councillors more involved with the task group, Joanne plans to contact the 11 local councillors in our area to offer support around any project ideas they may have relating to their ward linked to their own individual T&V funding.

The next task group meeting is 9 December, where the group plans to discuss the

community consultation process, which they are aiming to hold around Spring 2022. It is not expected that the task group will do a call out for project proposals, rather take a steer from the outcome of the community consultations.

Cllr Earley said he would be happy to join the task group and Corinne said he would be added to the distribution list.

A discussion then took place on the timings of the task group and it was felt that daytime task group meetings were difficult to attend for some councillors due to other commitments. As the chair of the task group, Rosemary Morris, was in attendance at the Board meeting, she agreed to move the next T&V Task Group on 9 December to 4-5.30pm.

Cllr Watson said he would like to put forward a proposal for a Town Centre Manager, which would be funded through the T&V Improvement Fund, at the next Benfieldside, Blackhill, Bridgehill and Shotley Bridge Partnership meeting. He said he will be asking them for their support and would consider presenting this proposal at the next T&V Task Group meeting.

Rosemary said she did not want any part of the community in the towns and villages to miss out on the opportunity to be involved. Therefore, Joanne will be contacting community organisations/partnerships in the new year to get a feel from those communities what the main issues are for them.

Corinne felt that it would not be fair to start looking at project proposals until we have gone out to consultation with the community. At the moment we have nothing to base proposal ideas on in terms of need and should wait to hear what the views are from the community before making any decisions. Any proposals we receive in the meantime could be kept for consideration until everyone has taken part in the process.

Environment (Enviro) Task Group – Chair Ann English, Vice Chair Rosemary Morris and DVP Lead Officer Corinne Walton

Following the task group's review of the 8 project proposals and responses received from the applicants, the group met via Teams on 14 and 21 October and applicants were invited to one of the dates to give a brief overview about their projects and to answer additional questions.

During the process, 2 applications (Medomsley Community Action Group and Christ Church, Consett), were withdrawn due to a lack of information for the group to make an informed decision at the scoring stage.

Individual task group members scored the 6 project proposals, against set criteria, based on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Each project proposal was given a total average score, ranked in order (from highest to lowest) and funds were allocated until the Area Budget (£78,634) was exhausted.

Based on the Task Group's review and scoring, the following outcome was recommended to the Board:

Habitat Management at Burnopfield Plantation, Durham Wildlife Trust. Funding Request: £7,400

Habitat improvements through pond and woodland management programmes and raising awareness about biodiversity through practical activities and conservation volunteering opportunities.

Greening Our Park, Friends of Blackhill and Consett Park. Funding Request: £17,000

A demonstration project that engages the community to support a green revival of its park allowing people to become involved with improving biodiversity and the mitigation of climate change.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points, Hamsterley Mill Residents Association. Funding Request: £30,000

To install up to 6 additional EV charge points in the DVP area which is in addition to those already being installed by DCC as part of their County wide programme.

***Footprint Conference, Durham Energy Institute. Funding Request: £5,000**

The Footprint Conference aims to bring members of the public together with experts from a range of backgrounds to look at how our lives can be lived more sustainably.

****Carbon Reduction at The Roxy, Watling Spaces CIC. Partial funding of £19,234**

Installation of a filtered fresh air ventilation system, an energy efficient heating system and an energy efficient hot water system for The Roxy arts venue in Leadgate.

Due to a lack of funding available the 'Young People's Green Economy' project from Building Self Belief for £9,700 was not recommended to be supported.

*Regarding the Footprint Conference, the task group would like to ask the Board if they would consider funding transport (at an additional cost) for local residents to attend the conference.

**It was noted that the Roxy also has financial commitments to the venue of £19,164 from the Covid Recovery fund, £4,025 from Project Genesis Trust Discretionary Fund, £4,024.60 from the local councillor's Neighbourhood Budget and £11,081 linked to a project from the Health and Wellbeing Task Group = £38,294.60. These have yet to be approved due to several queries relating to the building and sustainability of the building. Therefore, there is a risk that the current Enviro request becomes an underspend, along with the amounts specified above.

Cllr Shield said there have been concerns raised about how long the Roxy will be a community facility. The applicant needs to give us some assurances that when the project is finalised and open to the public, it remains a community venue for a significant period of time, at least 10 years. He said he is arranging a meeting with the applicant, David Barnes, to discuss this further.

Cllr Watson asked if the Roxy has a Business Plan and would it require a subsidy once the venue is open. Cllr Shield said the Roxy is a not-for-profit organisation and any profits made will go back into the business. There may be a cost incurred for using the venue but there is no subsidy required.

Corinne said one of the concerns was around the longevity of the lease as this needs to be clarified due to the amount of capital investment involved. The DVP Team has been working closely with the applicant and further information has been sent to Gordon Elliott, DCC Head of Service, for approval.

It was acknowledged that the Task Group had worked hard to get the projects to the Board. There were no further comments, and the Board APPROVED the Task Group's recommendations as above.

Corinne advised that the applicants will be asked to complete the full online funding application and a technical appraisal by the funding team would follow.

Employment, Enterprise and Training (EET) Task Group – Chair Mike Clark and DVP Lead Officer Laura Sloan

Following the task group's call out for project proposals on 8 September, 6 Expression of Interest (EOI) forms were received by the deadline date 8 October 2021. From the funding available (£78,634), the total funding request was £100,266.99 which was oversubscribed by £21,632.99.

Task group members met via Teams on 15 October to review the EOI forms and questions were compiled and sent to the applicants. The responses were received prior to the applicants being invited to present their projects and answer any additional questions via a Teams meeting on 28 October 2021.

During the process, 2 applications (CBS Theatre Group and Blackhill Comrades Club), were withdrawn as they did not meet the themes within the EET Delivery Plan and therefore did not progress to the scoring stage.

Individual task group members scored the 4 project proposals, against set criteria, based on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Each project proposal was given a total average score, ranked in order (from highest to lowest) and funds were allocated until the Area Budget (£78,634) was exhausted.

Based on the Task Group's review and scoring, the following outcome is recommended to the Board:

To support the 2 top scoring projects below:

Employability and Readiness for Work Programme, Derwentside Trust. Funding Request: £11,760

Delivery of a full employability programme (eg CV development, interview techniques, recognised accredited qualifications, etc) for all ages and abilities. The programme aims to develop interpersonal skills and personal development that will support individuals into employment.

Release Your ADHD Super Powers, Celebrate Difference. Funding Request: £12,000

The aim of this project is to engage 15 participants, (with a focus on women), who are unemployed, meet the criteria for ADHD and to deliver a programme of education and support to get them into employment/an apprenticeship.

Although the 2 project proposals below were eligible and scored accordingly, the Task Group Chair has recommended that the 2 lowest scoring projects are withdrawn for the following reasons:

Handcrafted Kitchen, Handcrafted. Funding Request: £16,495 (£82,475.70 match funding not secured)

- full reliance on security of match funding for project to be delivered (Stanley AAP has confirmed they are not financially supporting delivery)
- project is based in Chester le Street so concerns around accessibility for DVP beneficiaries.

Derwent Valley E-Van and E-Bike Project, Derwent Valley Car Club. Partial funding of £38,379 (Full request £48,400, £0 match funding)

- tenuous links to 'employability' themes/aims
- no match funding sources identified and we can only part fund
- less than 50% support for the project based on scoring results
- proposal better suited to Environment priority theme.

Based on the Chair's recommendation, a total request to the DVP Board of £23,760 is being made to support the 2 top scoring projects.

An underspend of £54,874 would remain linked to the EET Task Group and the group would therefore explore other options such as

- the remaining funds to potentially 'add value' to the two projects already being supported
- explore cross-cutting project development opportunities with the Environment and Health and wellbeing Task Groups
- the Task Group to develop a project proposal and commission its delivery themselves to fulfil a local EET need/gap locally
- explore the benefits of a second 'project call out' to encourage alternative proposals.

The next meeting is on 2 December where the group will discuss the options linked to the underspend.

Mike Clark said it was disappointing not to be able to put a recommendation to spend the full amount, but the group felt that they did not want to allocate money to projects if they were not consistent with the objectives of the task group.

The Chair and Task Group were complimented on their method in allocating the funding and that they did not fund projects just because the money was there. It was considered a good example that AAPs should follow to ensure that all the requirements and criteria are fully met.

There were no further comments, and the Board APPROVED the Task Group's two recommendations as above.

Corinne advised that the applicants will be asked to complete the full online funding application and a technical appraisal by the funding team would follow.

4. Partner Updates

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service presentation on the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and Public Consultation

Craig Farrage went through the presentation on the CRMP that contained community profile information, looked at all the risks they face in the community and sets out how the service addresses those risks. They have a statutory duty to publish the CRMP and also have a statutory duty to consult with the public on these plans (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

The CRMP survey is open to the public to have their say and the responses will help the service to make decisions on how they use their resources to prevent and respond to emergencies in the future.

The CRMP and Community Risk Profile is available online at: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>. The survey is available online at: [Community Risk Management Plan Consultation 2022-23 \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk) or via Twitter and Facebook: @CDDFRS.

Paper copies are available via the local Fire Station.

Craig urged everyone to complete the survey.

Closing date for the survey is 7 February 2022.

Craig pointed out that the current response standards are the minimum times that they will respond to, e.g. Accidental Dwelling Fires – 8 minutes on 70% of occasions and 11 minutes on 90% of occasions. However, in most of the areas a fire appliance will be on site well within those times.

Cllr Watson asked if the Young Firefighters scheme is still going. Craig said it is now called the Fire Cadet Scheme and is a huge success, with 7 stations across the county involved in the scheme, including Consett Station which has a very active cadet force. Many of the cadets have gone onto be retained/whole time fire fighters and some have become instructors.

Corinne thanked Craig for his presentation and asked him for any publicity relating to the survey so it can be added to the DVP's Derwent Valley Life website and Facebook page.

5. DVP Board Meeting Schedule 2022

The Board were asked to note the dates for next year's Board meetings:

- Wednesday 26 January 2022
- Wednesday 30 March
- Wednesday 25 May (AGM)
- Wednesday 20 July
- Wednesday 28 September and
- Wednesday 30 November

The above meetings will commence at 6pm but may be subject to change. Board meetings will be held via Teams until further notice, but it is hoped that face to face meetings will commence from May onwards. AAPs are exploring a hybrid option to allow those who are unable to attend a Board meeting face to face to join the meeting online via Teams.

There were no comments and the Board AGREED to the above dates.

6. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting

Alex thanked everyone for their attendance and wished a happy healthy Christmas. The next Board meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 26 January 2022 at 6pm via Microsoft Teams.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: