

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting

Tuesday 22 February 2022

(Virtual Meeting - held via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr Liz Brown, Ian Moore, Gary Tidbury, Alice Wilkes, Simon Bartlett, Rebecca Eves, Cllr Eric Mavin, Dave Clarke, Parish Cllr Maureen Boettcher, Cllr Richard Ormerod, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Rebecca Ashby, Paul Howard, Sarah Burns, Cllr Christine Fletcher, Cllr Lesley Mavin, Colin Stephenson

AAP Officer

Attendance: Craig Morgan – AAP Co-ordinator
Wendy Lavelle – Community Development Project Officer
Lyndsey Hunter – Community Development Project Officer
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Presenter: Mike Allum – Durham County Council

Forum Members: 6 forum members attended the meeting

Apologies Board: Cllr Lucy Hovvells, Lee Alexander, Chris Tindale

Apologies Forum: Rebecca McGarvie, Andrew Scothern, Jim Welch, Pip Cottam, Liz Jordan

1 Introductions and Apologies

Ian Moore, Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual Durham AAP Board Meeting.

Eileen Finlay, a public representative had decided to resign from Durham AAP Board and was thanked for her time on the Board.

A warm welcome was offered to Jen Straughan-Hawley and Rebecca Ashby, newly appointed public representatives on the Board. Jen and Rebecca gave some background information about themselves.

Christine Scollen, Health representative on the Board is moving to a new role. Colin Stephenson will be replacing Christine on a temporary basis.

Apologies for absence, [as above].

2 Teams Etiquette and Participation

Everyone was reminded of the meeting etiquette.

3 Presentation: Inclusive Economic Strategy

Mike Allum delivered a presentation on the Inclusive Economic Strategy which will -

- Balance economic growth with the need to reduce carbon emissions and improve socio-economic sustainability
- Define priorities for growth and recovery from Covid-19
- Enhance and create opportunities across the county
- Align with the County Durham Vision 2035, which sets the ambition of generating more and better jobs across the county

On 15th December, Durham County Council's Cabinet agreed the Economic Review and adopted the Economic Statement until the new economic strategy is completed.

The proposed framework will help the local authority to consider different aspects of the economy and have more tailored discussions with different groups of people.

The Big Econ-versation runs until the 22nd of April, however; everyone will have the chance to engage after this too. Once the feedback is gathered and looked at, the strategy will be put together and consultation will be carried out on the draft strategy in the summer. It is planned to have the strategy agreed and adopted by the end of the year.

The meeting was open for questions -

- Everyone was encouraged to have their say
<https://durhamecon-versation.co.uk/>
- Is the AAP or anyone else organising promoting this locally and encouraging people to get involved and have their views?
- Is there a desire for the AAP to hold a specific session to discuss this?
No one felt there was at this point.

Mike advised that facilitating packs had been prepared and are available upon request.

- It was commented that when the county council last had a countywide economic strategy, we were dependant on European funding. It was suggested that any new strategy should be agile and that there should be 'off the shelf' guides to the various aspects of the strategy.

The Chair thanked Mike for his presentation.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The Chair reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy. There were no matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

5 Neighbourhood Questions

Gary Tidbury and Cllr Mark Wilkes highlighted issues that had been raised by the residents of Framwellgate Moor around speeding traffic, safety concerns, lack of crossing points, parking spaces and inappropriate parking on pavements.

Julie Anson (DCC Economic Regeneration) is working on proposals and putting measures in place to improve the look of the area and improve safety and residents will be consulted upon in the coming weeks.

6 AAP Funding Update

- ❖ £142,000 of Area Budget projects had been approved or are in the process of being approved through the funding team
- ❖ If all four projects are approved (at this meeting), £192,000 will have been allocated, leaving £52,000 to allocate (which can be carried forward into next year).

7 Project Approvals / Task Group Feedback

Covid Recovery and Emerging Issues

Task Group Feedback

At the Covid Recovery and Emerging Issues Task Group meeting held on 8 February 2022, it was recommended that the following applications be brought to the Board for wider consideration.

Project Applications for Discussion

- OASES Nature and Wellbeing

An application has been received for £7,711.00 towards a total project cost of £15,199.00.

‘Forest Bathing’ sessions aim to give children a chance to experience and appreciate the nature around them. This can help children to better manage any anxieties they have. The application is to run a level 3 course that will see 12-15 school staff trained to deliver forest bathing

sessions. Several local schools from across the Durham AAP area are already interested in having members of staff trained.

The Board approved the project.

- Pittington Community Association Wellbeing

An application has been received for £18,090.00 towards a total project cost of £32,675.00.

Pittington Village Hall are looking to develop a number of sessions offering creative wellbeing activities to people who have been isolated during Covid. The village hall offers people a safe and welcoming environment that will help people reintegrate into their local community.

The programme will include regular singing, craft and wellbeing activities; a regular Creative Café for people at risk of isolation, older people and people with long term health conditions to enable them to socialise and connect over refreshments and whilst taking part in accessible creative activities; purchase equipment such as gazebos, folding tables and portable catering supplies to make the most of the indoor and outdoor space, all year round and increase the flexibility of their offer to other community users.

The applicant will commission a local CIC 'The Singing Elf Social Enterprise (TSE) to lead on the project, delivering the sessions at the hall in partnership with other local groups including Pittington Brass and Durham Area Youth (DAY).

As well as supporting people in Pittington the project will target people living in the surrounding villages of, Sherburn Hill, Sherburn Village, Shadforth, West Rainton, Carville and Belmont. Transport can be provided to help people to get to the sessions.

The Board approved the project.

- The Singing Elf Singfulness 2022

An application has been received for £18,855.00 towards a total project cost of £23,975.00.

This is new work for 2022 building on the success of previous work done by TSE. The applicant will support the mental and physical wellbeing of people in the community by delivering singing and craft creative sessions in partnership with community venues and organisations. This project will build on the projects delivered during the pandemic, making the most of

the learnings, partnerships and relationships with participants that they have already developed.

During the pandemic, online and in-person singing and craft sessions were delivered. They will build on this work by offering a programme of face to face creative sessions in community buildings. Local sessions will build towards two larger-scale community events: 1) Little Big Sing – a day-long social singing experience, and 2) The Wellbeing Retreat – an exploration of mindful creativity focussed on supporting mental wellbeing.

Sessions will include a focus on mental and emotional wellbeing, and will be dementia, neurodiverse and LTC (Long Term Conditions) friendly. Participants will be encouraged to join their social media groups to connect with each other and will receive support from their team throughout their participation.

Sessions will be delivered in all parts of the Durham AAP area.

The Board approved the project.

- Belmont Community Association Baby Sensory

An application has been received for £7,142.00 towards a total project cost of £10,406.00.

Pre-Covid the centre did offer parent/carer and child sessions. However, Covid meant these had to stop meaning parents and children were left isolated. These new sessions will help to integrate children who have not had the opportunity to meet with other children of the same age.

The baby sensory group will be weekly a 2 hour session delivered by a qualified auxiliary offering sensory stimulation to babies as well as providing the space and dedicated time for bonding with parent / carer and their baby. Funding will be used for floor mats, sensory lights, sensory toys and materials.

The Parent/Carer and Toddler Group will be a weekly 2 hour session delivered by a qualified auxiliary providing a safe place for parents/carers and toddlers to meet and connect prior at pre-school age, enabling children to develop their play and social skills and build a stronger, more connected community. For young children with SEND they will get the chance to integrate with other children and the work will provide a pathway for those children to the Cheesy Waffles Project which works with children with additional needs.

Funding will be used for tables and chairs, beakers/kitchen resources,

food and beverage, toilet aids, toys and materials and will also cover staff costs, uniform, utility contribution and storage for both projects.

The Board approved the project.

Towns and Villages Funding Update

A meeting of the Towns and Villages Task Group will take place in March to discuss the pipeline projects.

8 [Area Budget Project Monitoring Q3 21/22 \(October to December\) Report](#)

Durham AAP is required to monitor projects it has funded on a quarterly basis. The quarterly monitoring report for the period October – December 2021 had previously been circulated. Craig highlighted key points in relation to some of the projects.

9 [Neighbourhood Budgets](#)

The following neighbourhood budget project was shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: Replacement of Hall curtains with new fire-retardant curtains

Councillor(s): Kellett

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,458.40

The Board was happy to approve the project.

10 [Young Carers Charter Acceptance](#)

Durham AAP have signed up to the County Durham Young Carers Charter and pledge to support young carers. A policy and procedures document had previously been circulated for information.

11 [Co-ordinators / Chairs Update](#)

Co-ordinator's Update

Craig encouraged everyone to complete the online AAP priority survey - deadline 11 March.

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/26713/Area-Action-Partnerships-AAPs-Community-Priorities-2022-23>

The Fun and Food application deadline is next week. A panel meeting has been arranged for Monday 7 March at 2.00 pm to look at the applications.

The AAP team will be returning to the office from Monday 28 February. Our core days will be Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and working from home on a Thursday and Friday although we will be working flexibly.

Craig said he was hoping that the Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting scheduled to take place in April would be a face-to-face meeting; but this would be dependent on guidance from the Council.

A schedule of future board meeting and task group meeting dates are being looked at.

Chair's Update

There is £300,000.00 to spend covering the whole of County Durham. Three projects have been approved and funding allocated. Ian provided a brief overview on each of the projects -

- ❖ Walk and Talk Trust - £42,000.00
- ❖ Fearless Outreach Worker - £99,000.00
- ❖ Employability Connections Durham - £124,000.00

The next meeting is to be held in March.

11 [Partner Updates](#)

Smaller Councils Update

Parish Cllr Maureen Boettcher had forwarded a presentation to Board members which outlined how parish councils are set up and what they do etc. Those forum members in attendance will be sent the presentation also. Maureen was happy to answer any questions at the next meeting.

Believe Housing

Repairs and Maintenance update

We continue to face disruptions to our repairs service due to Covid and the impact that this has had on supply chains. We are still struggling to source some materials, replacement components and raw materials. High demand across the building industry is also affecting our ability to secure contractors to assist with either specialist work or to provide additional capacity.

This is not just affecting our repairs service but also our investment programme and new build development programme.

All service areas have been affected by high rates of Covid infection and the need for colleagues to isolate at home.

The bad weather that we experienced at the end of November and again at the end of January has also resulted in a large number of repairs, which are putting the service under additional pressure.

Oher service areas

We continue to experience very high demand for our homes and the number of applications for housing is very high, causing delays in processing applications. Demand for the properties that we advertise is also very high, which will mean that applicants will have to wait longer before being successful in finding a new home.

The impact of rising energy prices, the end of the UC uplift, rising inflation and tax rates are all impacting or will impact on customers and we are working with partners to help people mitigate the negative impact of all of these financial threats.

We have been working with partners to provide energy vouchers to those most in need and referrals to external advice and support agencies to provide more intensive energy efficiency advice. Our programme of capital improvements to homes to increase energy efficiency also continues.

Our new build development at St Godric's Close in Framwellgate Moor is now complete and viewings are underway. The completion date was delayed, due to the factors outlined above.

Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

Total number of incidents attended in the Durham station area since April 2021 is 750 (260 fires, 187 special services and 303 false alarms). Call outs have reached similar levels to pre-pandemic incident numbers, although special service call outs are at a 5-year record high. The service attended a lot of incidents during Storm Arwen and the more recent storm and high wind weather events. Notably we have had house fires in January at Flass Vale, Ushaw Moor and one Meadowside Grange, Meadowfield.

Deliberate fires in some areas are greater than others, these are tracked by the station and multi-agency action plans implemented to tackle local issues. No trends but a small cluster around the gymnastics centre in Sherburn village.

The fire service only attended 5 Road Traffic Collision incidents in January. RTC data is monitored for trends, but none have emerged in the last year.

Health Update

Colin Stephenson gave a verbal update on the Covid Vaccination Programme and GP Appointments.

Police Update

Face to face meetings is taking place (details on the Facebook page).

BID

Fire and Ice is taking place this weekend

<https://www.thisisdurham.com/whats-on/fire-and-ice-p1030091>

Durham University

- Covid case numbers are down
- Vaccination booster clinics on site this week
- Been working with DCC and the Police on the Anti-Social Noise Procedure. Please report any noise nuisance to 101. On community webpage
<https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/community/Anti-SocialNoiseProcedure21-22.pdf>
- Graduation 28 March – 1 April and Summer 27 June – 1 July
- Events – LGBT history month this month

12 Any Other Business

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 13 December 2021 will be sent to Board Members via email for their comments/approval.

13 Date and time of next meeting

- 23 March 2022, 6:00pm

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.