



**GREAT AYCLIFFE & MIDDRIDGE PARTNERSHIP (GAMP)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY 19 JULY 2022, 6:00PM (WOODHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE)**

PRESENT:

Cllr Eddy Adam – DCC, Cllr James Atkinson – DCC (Chair), Cllr Neville Jones – DCC, Cllr Tony Stubbs – DCC, Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd – DCC, Cllr Tony Towers – Midridge Parish, Simon Hocking, Chris Hutchinson, Peter Shovlin, Natalie Whitworth (Vice Chair), Daniel Blagdon – Health Representative, Andy Coulthard – Livin Housing Representative (Vice Chair), Carol Gaskarth – Voluntary & Community Sector Representative, Insp Sarah Honeyman – Police Representative, Oliver Sherratt – DCC Head of Service Representative, Brian Riley – GAMP Coordinator, Victoria Grieves – GAMP Community Development Project Officer, Paula Stockport – GAMP Support Officer, Angela Blanchard – GAMP Towns & Villages Community Development Project Officer, Debra Kitching – DCC Strategy Team

APOLOGIES:

Sue Cooke, Cllr Ken Robson, Julie Dudley, Kate Hopper, Malcolm Woodward

OBSERVERS:

Mr B Adamson

Standard Board Meeting

1. Introductions & Apologies

Cllr JA opened the meeting, and a brief round of introductions was given. Cllr JA reminded observers they would be welcome to comment under Items 3 and 4 on the agenda. Cllr JA also reminded Board members of the standard Declaration of Interest item on the agenda.

Cllr JA welcomed Cllr Tony Towers to his first Board meeting, representing Midridge Parish Council and replacing Alan Jordan.

BR confirmed that apologies for absence had been received, as noted above.

2. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24.5.22 – Matters Arising

The draft minutes from the Board meeting held on 24.5.22 had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. There were no outstanding actions or matters arising, and the minutes of the last meeting were **AGREED** by the Board as a true and accurate record.

3. Countywide Partner Issues

3.1 Poverty Action Plan Update (Debra Kitching)

Board members received a presentation in relation to the Council's Poverty Action Plan, including the background to the Poverty Action Strategy, the scope of which

was broadened in 2020 to include the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. DK also touched on the emerging issues and challenges that need to be considered as part of the strategy.

The overall vision for the revised strategy and action plan is: ***To work together with communities so fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation in the county.***

The four key objectives of the strategy are:

- ***Objective 1: Use intelligence and data to target support to low-income households***
- ***Objective 2: Reduce the financial pressures on people facing or in poverty***
- ***Objective 3: Increase individual, household and community resilience to poverty***
- ***Objective 4: Reduce barriers to accessing services for those experiencing financial insecurity***

DK requested that Board members review the draft [Strategy and Action Plan](#) document with a view to providing feedback/comment. The consultation response deadline is 26 August 2022.

A brief Q&A session was opened, and the following points were noted:

- Cllr DSL commented there are clearly a lot of issues to address, which could potentially lead to overload and that clear pathways are needed for people to link into what's available, what's being done on that? DK explained that milestones will be put in place, but all feedback is needed first, which will go back to the Council's Poverty Action Steering Group, which has a wide range of reps. DK acknowledged that this is a diverse subject area with a lot of variables, adding that a rep from DCC would be happy to come back to a future Board meeting to give an update on progress.
- AC commented that the escalating cost of living impacts will be huge, adding that Livin is currently carrying out consultation work with tenants around this, which it is hoped can be fed into this consultation.
- Cllr EA commented that he feels there is insufficient information included in the presentation slides in relation to the cost of living crisis to give a balanced view on the Strategy. Cllr EA's view would be that more needs to be done now rather than waiting on the other objectives (whilst laudable); some of these will take too long to come to fruition, i.e. jobs etc, and some points are longer-term. Cllr EA added that there's no mention of disability groups; what action will be taken to encourage their standing in the community, for example in terms of people who may not be able to get out of the house? DK explained that disability groups have been highlighted as an area to work on, and all actions will be cross-referenced to make sure this is covered. The PASG will prioritise actions in terms of what needs dealing with now.

Cllr JA thanked DK for attending, and she left the meeting.

3.2 Livin Housing – Western Area Update (Andy Coulthard)

AC updated Board members in relation to ongoing work being done by Livin to look at the potential to develop and improve the Western area in Newton Aycliffe with the development of a long-term business plan. Livin will be carrying out local community consultation to seek views on what people want in their local community in terms of housing standards, environment etc. Livin are conscious of

the decarbonisation agenda, accepting that this could potentially span across 5/10/15 years. AC advised that this isn't just about housing, but more about the 'whole place', i.e. not just homes – it's the people, the place, their environment etc. Over the next few months, community conversations will be taking place, and a range of partners including the police, the Town Council, Groundwork North East, local County Councillors etc will all be invited to get involved.

Cllr JA asked if Livin have set aside any funding to look at this. AC clarified that Livin do have funding set aside for capital development in relation to 'place making' work, but nothing is firm at this stage.

Cllr EA asked what work has been done to build community confidence that Livin will deliver. AC confirmed that Livin have been working hard particularly over the last 3 years to develop a partnership approach on the estate, which includes residents and tenants. £1.5m has been invested during this time, but not really made a noticeable difference, and so Livin are aware that more work is needed and are very keen to get the local community involved through focus groups, newsletters etc.

OS commented that the Government is set to launch wave 2 of their Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund at the end of August; DCC were successful in securing £6m funding in wave 1 to update some housing stock, and this could be something Livin may wish to look at if not already aware.

Cllr TS asked if this initiative is a pilot for other areas, or has it been done elsewhere? AC clarified that this type of Plan hasn't been done previously, but improvements have been made to other areas including Spennymoor, Shildon and Ferryhill.

Cllr DSL asked if the Plan will solely focus on the Western area or extend to other parts of Newton Aycliffe. AC clarified that Livin will be concentrating their efforts in terms of capital investment to target the Western area & Jubilee Fields (both areas being data driven), but wouldn't exclude other areas from the wider scope of their ongoing work.

3.3 County Durham Partnership Forum Update (Cllr Jim Atkinson)

Cllr JA confirmed that he recently attended the County Durham Partnership Forum meeting on behalf of GAMP, which has representation from all 14 x Area Action Partnership Chairs, as well as other partners and stakeholders. One of the key points for discussion was the Council's review of community engagement and funding processes, which includes the AAPs. A consultancy firm, ERS, has been appointed to conduct the review, and they will be looking to engage over the coming weeks with a range of stakeholders, including AAP Board members.

Cllr EA stressed that it will be important for the consultants to meet with a wide range of people to ensure a good balance of comments.

BR added that we will be receiving a presentation from the consultants at our September meeting, with further information in relation to the review. BR added that all GAMP Board members' contact details have been provided to the consultants, and they may be contacted over the coming weeks as part of the process.

BR confirmed, for the minutes, that the following information had been circulated to Board members by email since the last meeting:

- A167 Active Travel Consultation (20.6.22)
- Children, Young People and Families strategy – Growing up in County Durham consultation information (23.6.22)
- GAMP Ebulletin (8.7.22)

There were no additional partner updates. BR reminded partners to get in touch if they need space on a future meeting agenda.

4. Local Neighbourhood Issues

4.1 Neighbourhood Policing Update

Insp SH updated Board members in relation to ongoing antisocial behaviour issues, local PACT priorities and meeting dates, crime data, as well as current and emerging issues.

Insp SH updated Board members in relation to the GAMP-funded CCTV cameras, which are now all in place and paying off with a number of good results already.

Insp SH also highlighted the upcoming Blue Light event which will be taking place in the Town Centre this Saturday, with a number of partners attending, e.g. police, fire, health services etc – and encouraged Board members to pop along if they're free.

BR confirmed that a copy of Insp SH's update report will be circulated with the minutes.

5. GAMP Coordinator's Update

5.1 2022-23 Area Budget (AB) Update

BR gave Board members a brief update in relation to this year's Area Budget project callout which was launched recently, and closed on 17 June. BR confirmed there had been a fantastic response this year; 29 application packs were issued in total, with 23 eligible Expressions of Interest submitted, and a total funding request of £282k – so well oversubscribed for the funding we have available.

BR has arranged a panel meeting of Board members, and thanked those who had kindly volunteered to take part; the meeting is scheduled later this week, where projects will be ranked to determine which ones are successful.

Board members will be kept updated after the panel meeting with further information.

5.2 Towns & Villages (T&Vs) Funding Update

BR gave Board members a brief update in relation to the Towns & Villages funding. He clarified that each AAP was given an additional budget of £210k last year, which we have until 2023/4 to allocate.

BR confirmed that Cllrs' Neighbourhood Budgets were also enhanced with an additional £10k to support T&Vs schemes.

BR gave a brief recap of the T&Vs projects which have been approved by the subgroup to date:

- Burnhill Way Footway Lighting (DCC Highways) – this project is now complete.

- School Aycliffe Community Centre Disabled Toilets – this project is now complete.
- Newton Aycliffe Cricket Club Replacement Changing Rooms – this project is awaiting Building Regs confirmation and should then be good to go.
- Gardeners Guild (£22,800) – this group is currently working on a revised planning application before the project can progress.
- Byerley Park Footpath Improvements (DCC Highways) – the application is currently with our Funding Team for technical appraisal.
- Western Area Footbridge Replacement (DCC Highways) – the application is currently with our Funding Team for technical appraisal.
- Local Nature Reserve (SUDS) Improvements (DCC Ecology Team) – this project has been approved by the subgroup and the applicant is working on their application form which will be circulated to the full Board in due course for final approval and ratification before being passed for technical appraisal.

BR confirmed that, assuming all of the above projects progress satisfactorily, this would leave a T&Vs funding balance of £51,926, and there are a couple of proposals still under discussion via the subgroup. BR is hopeful the remaining funding should be fully allocated soon.

Board members will be kept updated on progress of spend with this funding going forward.

5.3 Quarter 1 Project Monitoring

BR confirmed that the GAMP team are currently coordinating the Q1 (April-June 2022) project updates that have been received from project leads, and these will be circulate to the Board as soon as possible.

BR reminded Board members they are more than welcome to visit any GAMP-funded project to 'see it in action' – if anyone is interested, please get in touch with the GAMP team. BR highlighted that he had recently visited the Prison Me No Way project with Victoria to observe sessions at both Greenfield and Woodham schools, and he also attended with Cllr Atkinson recently to observe some sessions delivered in local primary schools by UTC South Durham as part of their 'Lets Get Magnetised' project, both of which had been great.

5.4 Locomotion No. 1 Development

BR confirmed for information that a meeting had called in June to discuss the Locomotion No1 site in Newton Aycliffe, led by Cllr Richard Bell from DCC, supported by DCC officers and attended by our local MP Paul Howell, as well as local Cllrs Atkinson & Sutton-Lloyd. Attendees were given an update on the background of the Locomotion No. 1 site and the currently closed pub. The Stockton & Darlington Railway Line group are looking at all visitor attractions along the route and they feel this is a prominent location on the line where there could be potential for some future development. They are currently looking at ownership issues of the former pub and whether this could be sold, and a condition survey is being completed with the possibility of developing a feasibility study and business plan in future for the whole site. BR confirmed that the group could be looking to apply for AAP funding in future, and there may be an update presentation given on this at some point at a future Board meeting. BR will keep Board members updated on any relevant progress in future.

5.5 Public Representative Recruitment

BR confirmed that unfortunately Kate Hopper has resigned from her position as Public Representative on the GAMP Board. BR will be launching a recruitment exercise locally to identify a replacement rep, and ideally to appoint a couple of reserves if possible. This will be launched soon, with interviews planned for September.

BR asked Board members to assist with promotion of the vacancy once it's been launched and to signpost any potential interested parties to the GAMP team for more information.

BR thanked Kate on behalf of the Board for her time back with us, and wished her well for the future.

6. **Date/Time of Next Meeting:**

Tuesday 27 September 2022, 6:00pm, Oakleaf Sports Complex

BR confirmed that a representative from ERS consultants will be attending the September meeting to give a presentation.

Cllr JA/BR thanked all attendees, and the meeting was closed.