



## **4 Together Partnership Area Action Partnership (AAP) Minutes of the Board Meeting Wednesday 6 July 2022 Ferryhill Sport & Education Centre**

### **PRESENT:**

Justin Parry – Fire Service, Angela Smurthwaite – Livin Housing, Carole Atkinson, Liam Fellows, Susan Kirby, Oliver Peeke, Dennis Ramsey (**Vice Chair**), Andrew Shaw, Cllr Peter Atkinson – DCC, Cllr Julie Cairns – DCC (**Chair**), Cllr Pauline Crathorne – Cornforth Parish Council, Cllr Joe Makepeace – Ferryhill Town Council, Cllr Elaine Peeke – DCC, Callum Aitchison – Principal Community Development Project Officer, Paula Stockport – AAP Support Officer, Angela Blanchard – Towns & Villages Community Devt. Project Officer, Greg Burke (Community Pharmacy County Durham), Gillian Bell (Community Pharmacy County Durham)

### **APOLOGIES:**

Insp Mike Sammut, Cllr Joe Quinn, Cllr Curtis Bihari, Mark Booth, Mary Readman, Nigel Jones, Lee Copeland, Paula Nixon

### **A1. Introductions & Apologies**

Cllr JC welcomed everyone to the meeting of the 4 Together Partnership Board. Apologies for absence were noted, as above.

### **A2. Agreement of Minutes from Previous Meeting (4.5.22) - Matters Arising**

CAi reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy. In terms of the previous actions, CAi confirmed the following:

- In relation to Action 1, Mary Readman has submitted apologies and therefore an update on the figures relating to financial support previously requested by Cllr JM (numbers of people turned down or failing the process, prosecutions and how the means-testing system is vetted) is unavailable, CAi will follow this up with MR (**Action 1: CAi**).
- In relation to Action 2, Insp Sammut has submitted apologies and therefore an update on current police staffing levels is unavailable; Cllr JM requested that this action is left standing for follow-up at the next meeting.
- Cllr PA had highlighted an issue previously in relation to lack of appropriate representation from DCC at the Safer Streets meetings taking place in Ferryhill, and Cllr Bihari had been requested to provide an update on future meeting dates so that Paula Nixon could ensure an invitation was passed on to the appropriate contact within DCC; CAi understands that this issue has

now been resolved, but an update will be requested from Cllr Bihari at the next meeting.

There were no other matters arising, and the minutes were **AGREED** as a true record.

### **A3. Countywide Partner Issues**

#### **A3.1 Community Pharmacy County Durham (Greg Burke / Gillian Bell)**

Board members received an update presentation in relation to Community Pharmacy County Durham:

- local organisation for community pharmacy
- works locally with stakeholders to plan healthcare services
- negotiates and discusses pharmacy services with commissioners
- independent and representative group
- source of information and advice

GBu outlined the background to Community Pharmacy County Durham, and the various services they can provide, some of which are compulsory for all pharmacies, i.e. dispensing and disposal of medicines, whilst others aren't, e.g. smoking cessation, substance misuse and sexual health services. The community pharmacies in the 4 Together AAP area provide a good range of the non-compulsory services.

Questions/comments were invited from Board members and the following points were noted:

- Cllr JM asked whether pharmacies are governed by the same supplier contract restrictions as the wider NHS in terms of purchasing medicines, and whether there is any scope for any cost savings. Gill explained that the choice of supplier is at the discretion of individual pharmacies, adding that NHS services purchasing large quantities of medications can often achieve good cost savings.
- AB asked about the current position in relation to the COVID vaccination service. Greg explained that further information is awaited on the next stage, explaining that there will be community pharmacies on standby for the next round of vaccinations. Gill added that, as with the flu, COVID strains will continue to change and therefore the vaccine will need to be tweaked accordingly.
- OP asked whether the increasing range of online service providers are seen as a threat to the community pharmacies and whether there's potential for provision in villages to diminish as more people choose to go online. Both Greg and Gill reinforced the importance of the community pharmacy, they aren't there to simply put tables into a bottle, they provide wider services such as counselling and signposting, which you can't get from an online provider. They are a vital service in local communities and many people still prefer to speak to someone in person.

CAi confirmed that a copy of the presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes for information. CAi also suggested that the AAP could circulate any relevant promotional literature through our networks to support the Community Pharmacy service in future as needed.

Cllr JC thanked Greg and Gill for their attendance, and they left the meeting.

### A3.2 County Durham Partnership Forum Meeting Update (Cllr Julie Cairns)

Cllr JC confirmed that she attended the recent County Durham Partnership Forum meeting on 17 June on behalf of the AAP. There were 2 key items discussed at the meeting; the Council's review of community engagement, funding and processes (including AAPs), and information around the Council's Levelling Up proposal.

In terms of the community engagement review, external consultants have been appointed who will look at how the AAPs operate, how they engage, processes etc. The consultants will be liaising with AAP board members, residents etc as part of the review.

In relation to the Levelling Up proposals, part of this includes a proposal to improve Newton Aycliffe town centre. The reopening of the train station at Ferryhill isn't included as part of the proposals and is being dealt with as a separate item through the Transport Agency.

Cllr JC will pass on a copy of the presentation slides to CAi for circulation (**Action 2: Cllr JC/CAi**).

CAi highlighted some information received earlier this week from Mark Booth (CCG) in relation to the number of GP appointments in Co Durham, with the headline points being:

- huge, unprecedented demand for GP appointments;
- COVID has understandably seen a big shift from face-to-face appointments to telephone appointments, however face-to-face numbers are increasing;
- Co Durham has the highest demand for appointments in the whole of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC);
- Co Durham GPs are currently doing the most face-to-face appointments in the whole of NENC, not quite at pre-pandemic levels yet but getting towards it.

CAi confirmed that a copy of the update from Mark will be circulated to Board members with the minutes for information (**Action 3: CAi**).

### **A4. Local Neighbourhood Issues**

CAi confirmed that no local neighbourhood issues had been submitted to the AAP team to bring to the Board.

DR requested an update in relation to the ongoing problems with off-road bikes at West Cornforth. He highlighted that there are 18 drain covers missing on the bypass road, which is causing a clear hazard; bollards have been put in place, but this is clearly still very dangerous. DR will email the full details to CAi for this to be looked into (**Action 4: DR**).

DR highlighted problems with overgrown grass in the Linden Road/Chester Crescent area of West Cornforth, adding that it hasn't been cut at all this year. DR is unsure of land ownership in this area. AS will pick this up on behalf of Livin (**Action 5: AS**).

Cllr EP highlighted that around 15/20 boulders should shortly be put in place in various locations in West Cornforth to try and prevent access for the off-road bikes which continue to cause problems. Melissa Edgar (PCSO) is aware of all the locations, and it is hoped that these will be installed soon.

Cllr PA commented that he attended a residents association meeting recently where an issue with a block of garages in Dean Bank (next to Blandford Street) was highlighted; these are in a really bad state, with lots of rubbish, overgrown shrubbery and some with missing doors. Cllr PA has sent an enquiry about this via Livin's 'Open Spaces' contact page. AS suggested that any future issues be reported to either [feedback@livin.co.uk](mailto:feedback@livin.co.uk) or [contactus@livin.co.uk](mailto:contactus@livin.co.uk) so they can be recorded and passed on appropriately.

#### A4.1 Neighbourhood Policing Update

Item deferred (Insp Sammut not present). If any Board member has any items they wish to raise, please feel free to get in touch with Insp Sammut directly (contact details available via the AAP team).

### **A5. Area & Neighbourhood Budget Update**

#### A5.1 Area Budget Update

CAi briefly updated Board members on behalf of Paula Nixon; all but one of the 2021-22 Area Budget projects are now with our Funding Team for technical appraisal. One project is still awaiting some additional paperwork before it can be passed for appraisal.

In terms of the 2022-23 Area Budget callout, Paula will be launching this towards the end of July; CAi asked Board members to keep an eye out for this and promote to local groups, through networks etc once it's been launched.

#### A5.2 Neighbourhood Budget Update

CAi confirmed that Cllrs have been spending well in relation to their Neighbourhood Budgets, with a variety of projects supported across the area. CAi highlighted that a couple of projects have recently been emailed to Board members for comment, and so email responses to confirm approval or DOIs would be greatly appreciated.

CAi highlighted that Cllrs received a small budget earlier this year to support projects related to the Queen's platinum jubilee; all Cllrs have allocated either part or all of this budget.

If any Board member has any further questions in relation to Neighbourhood Budgets, please contact CAi.

#### A5.3 Towns & Villages Funding Update

AB updated Board members in relation to the AAP's Towns & Villages funding allocation. The request for project ideas was launched on 25 March and promoted through a wide range of sources, with a deadline of 20 May. In total 13 x Expressions of Interest were submitted, with a good geographical spread across the AAP area, and a total funding request of £564k – so well oversubscribed for the available £210k.

AB advised that a subgroup meeting of interested Board members was held on 15 June to discuss the EOIs. As a group there were too many Declarations of Interest and therefore no decisions were made on which projects to take forward to the next stage. Through discussions at the meeting it was apparent that further information was needed from applicants, and it was therefore agreed by the group that AB would go back to everyone and give them an opportunity to provide further information; the deadline for this is 13 July.

An independent panel of board members who have no DOIs has been established, and they will look again at the 13 EOIs, as well as any supplementary information provided by applicants. The panel meeting has been arranged for 20 July, and at this meeting it's hoped that decisions will be made on which projects to put forward to the next stage (after full Board approval), i.e. full application and final appraisal by the Funding Team. Board members **AGREED** with this approach.

#### A5.4 Fun & Food Funding Update

CAi briefly updated Board members in relation to progress with the Fun & Food funding. Four projects were supported in the 4 Together area for the upcoming summer holiday period, further information is available via CAi if needed.

In terms of future holiday periods, applications will be invited for the October holidays from 18 July, and the Christmas application period will launch from 19 September. Please signpost any prospective applicants to the AAP team for further information.

#### A6. **Any Other Business**

- Cllr JM commented that there are a number of public reps on the Board who also represent Ferryhill Town Council, and asked whether this is permitted in terms of AAP governance arrangements. CAi clarified that Town & Parish Councillors are eligible to sit on AAP Boards in the public rep role.
- Cllr PC commented that there had been discussion at the last meeting around inviting local groups to come along to a future Board meeting to present on what they're doing, and to update on AAP-funded projects etc, and she would very much welcome this. CAi will look into this for our September meeting (**Action 6: CAi**).
- OP asked about the 'ranking/judging' process for reviewing the Towns & Villages Expressions of Interest, and whether there will be valid reasons for rejection minuted at the meeting. AB clarified that the panel will consider each project as a whole, looking at areas such as future sustainability, evidence of need, timescales for delivery, how well they fit with the criteria etc. Cllr JC added that all funding recommendations will need to come back to the full Board for approval. OP stated his view that even where a panel member may have a Declaration of Interest, he believes they should still be able to take part in the process. AB clarified that with the original T&V subgroup, comments were still invited and discussion took place with all members even where there were DOIs, and all feedback gathered from this meeting will be considered by the independent panel of Board members at the next meeting, but in the interests of working to a completely fair and transparent process initial decisions should be made by members who do not have a DOI. Cllr PC added that the 4 Together Partnership has always been open and transparent and that no members with Declarations of Interest have sat on any panels. Cllr PC added that she feels this is an important point; it could leave the AAP open

to criticism if a Board member with an interest sits on a panel and funding is awarded to a group they have an interest in; people could then suggest that funding is only awarded because he/she is a member of that group, which Cllr PC feels isn't right.

**A7. Date & Time of Next Meeting:**

**Wed 7 September 2022, 6:00pm (venue tbc)**

Cllr JC/CAi thanked everyone for their attendance, and the meeting was closed.