

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting
Wednesday 26 October 2022
Newton Hall Community Centre, Kira Drive, Pity Me, Durham, DH1
5GU

Board Members

Attendance: Sam Humble, Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Cllr Lesley Mavin, Chris Tindale, Cllr Liz Brown, Ian Moore, Paul Howard, Rebecca Ashby, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Mark Mallatratt

AAP Officer

Attendance: Craig Morgan – AAP Co-ordinator
Wendy Lavelle – Community Development Project Officer
Lyndsey Hunter – Community Development Project Officer
PJ Harding – Community Development Project Officer (Towns and Villages Team)
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Presenter: Jeff Garfoot - Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Services

Apologies Board: Sarah Burns, Gary Tidbury, Victoria Ashfield, Cllr Eric Mavin, Joe McGarry, Rev Joanne Thorns, Hannah Shepherd, Alice Wilkes, Lee Alexander, Cllr Richard Ormerod

Forum Members: 9 forum members attended the meeting

1 [Welcome, Introductions and Apologies](#)

Cllr Liz Brown (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Durham AAP Board Meeting.

Apologies for absence, [as above]. A round of introductions followed.

2 [Presentation: Durham County Council Budget / Medium-Term Financial Plan](#)

Jeff Garfoot, Head of Corporate Finance & Commercial Services delivered a presentation on Durham County Council's Budget/Medium-Term Financial Plan.

The current financial climate and the increases in inflation, energy costs and fuel prices are creating significant pressures on council budgets. A recent update on the Medium-Term Financial Plan set out a requirement to identify additional savings of more than £52 million between 2023/24 and 2026/27, with £37 million needing to be saved in the next financial year. This has added challenges to the budget setting process; however, a proposed approach had been developed on how the council will make some of these savings.

Durham County Council are consulting on a strategy of potential council tax increases, a range of savings proposals and the use of significant levels of reserves to balance the budget next year, which is a temporary measure and will only buy the authority some time to develop more sustainable budget solutions if no significant uplifts in Government funding is received.

On Monday 25 October, a four-week public consultation was launched asking members of the public to give their views on this proposed approach. Residents can take part in the four-week consultation by completing an online survey <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/28340/Consultation-on-our-budget-proposals-for-2023-24> or alternatively, by completing a hard copy which can be collected at one of the libraries or Customer Access Points.

The consultation will close for comments on Tuesday 22 November, however feedback from AAP Board meetings held after this date will still be gathered. Feedback from the budget consultations will be taken to Cabinet in January 2023 and a budget report will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2023. The Cabinet budget proposals will then be presented to Full Council on 22 February 2023 where budget approval and Council Tax for 2023/24 will be set.

Further work is underway to identify further budget savings to meet the shortfall expected for the MFTP 2023/24 - 2026/27 and further extensive consultation in 2023 to help formulate the council's budget plans for 2024/25 and the MFTP 2024/25 - 2027/28.

The meeting was opened for discussion -

- How much are the reserves and is there a minimum you must keep?
Nothing legal, it's the general reserve that is important. Most of the reserves are earmarked and these are being reviewed.
- Do you have a legal responsibility to set the budget?
Yes, it's a statutory responsibility.
- What sort of things do you mean by 'capital investment'?
Jeff gave some examples – road maintenance schemes, Belmont School rebuild, investing in assets.
- Are reserves invested.
Yes but shrewdly, and this does create part of the council's income.
- Concern was raised in relation to the pressures on the voluntary sector.

3 [Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 29 September 2022. Agreement and Matters Arising](#)

The Chair reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy.

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

John Lowe reminded everyone that on 5 November the City of Durham Trust will host a conference: Perspectives on the World Heritage Site. This will take

place in the Pemberton Rooms on Palace Green and will feature a range of speakers from local residents to the President of World Heritage UK. It's free and there are a few places left. To book a place at the conference simply email chair@durhamcity.org. It will also be available via Zoom. To request the link simply email zoom@durhamcity.org a few days in advance.

County Durham Community Foundation had launched funding towards to the Warms Hubs Initiative and 55 applications had been approved so far. If anyone know of a local organisation that were struggling and needed extra support, they were asked to contact the AAP office.

The Board had agreed to top up the Fun and Food Scheme meaning that 7 projects were running in the Durham AAP area during October half term.

4 AAP Funding Update

A paper had been prepared setting out the funding for 2022/23 and included Towns and Villages Fund projects and Area Budget projects that the Board had approved.

There is £139,673 of Towns and Villages fund to allocate and £107,038 of Area Budget* remaining (less £7,343.00 of funding that was approved to meet the Fun and Food shortfall which had been omitted from the paper circulated.

**[This figure may change depending on the outcome of the Board's decision on the application being considered at this meeting – see item 5 below]*

5 Task and Finish Group Feedback and Project Approvals

Covid Recovery

The meeting of the Covid Recovery Task Group scheduled to take place on 11 October 2022 had been cancelled.

The Newton Hall Dog Exercise Area application was not ready to come to this meeting as the AAP were waiting for information on the consultation which the Board requested.

- **Durham Palatinates Netball Club**

An application had been received for £15,720.00 towards a total project cost of £38,480.00.

The club wants to do more to attract young people and give them opportunities to play netball for fun and competitively. They are applying for funding for equipment, match fees and for training and courses for new and existing coaches.

At the last Board meeting, the Board agreed that this application be brought to this meeting pending satisfactory responses to questions that had been raised and these had been received. Craig reminded the meeting of the questions that had been raised and talked through the answers the applicants had come back with. The Board had had sight of the feedback prior to the meeting.

The meeting was opened for discussion and some Board members still had their concerns about this application. Further queries were raised in relation to the membership fees, the cost of the project and felt there should be an opportunity for both girls and boys to participate.

The Board agreed to reject this project and the Chair asked if the AAP team could signpost the applicant to other funding sources and provide them with the feedback following the Board's decision.

As there was still a substantial amount of funding left to allocate, it was suggested that a project call out be launched. Craig agreed to speak to the Chair and Vice-Chairs and AAP staffing team to take this forward.

Improving Our Villages and City

The meeting of the Improving Our Villages and City Task Group scheduled to take place on 13 October 2022 had been cancelled.

6 [Neighbourhood Budgets](#)

The following neighbourhood budget projects were shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: Energy Efficiency

Councillor(s): A Hopgood / M Simmons / M Wilkes

Interest Declared: Yes - Cllr Mamie Simmons is a trustee of the organisation

Amount: £3,000.00

Name of Scheme: Gents Toilet Refurbishment

Councillor(s): B Kellett

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £4,300.00

Name of Scheme: Access to Shincliffe Park Feasibility Study

Councillor(s): D Stoker

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £2,500.00

Name of Scheme: Changing rooms/Facilities Feasibility Study

Councillor(s): D Hall

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,000.00

The Board was happy to approve the projects and the interest as declared.

7 Project Monitoring Report – Quarter 2, 2022/23

Durham AAP is required to monitor projects it has funded on a quarterly basis. The quarterly monitoring report for the period 1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022 had previously been circulated. Craig delivered a presentation and highlighted key points in relation to projects that were currently being monitored.

8 Chair and Coordinators Update

Cllr Liz Brown (Chair) said she had been unable to visit the Fun and Food schemes that ran in Summer 2022.

Craig Morgan (Durham AAP Co-ordinator) highlighted some of the work he had been working on –

- Durham University Community Fun Day which was happening this weekend.
- AAP staff had attended the Community Engagement Review Visioning Events and focus groups that had been arranged.
- Craig had attended a Durham Action on Climate Change meeting.
- He had been involved in Visit Durham's crime and punishment themes.
- The social value idea continues in Belmont and the contractor had been keen to look at options to support the community regarding the school rebuild. Craig and the contractor had arranged a tour of the area visiting various groups/organisations from which he had, had positive feedback.
- Work continues of the Social Value – Belmont School.
- As Chair of the Community Resilience Group, work continues to ensure efficient plans are in place to support the local community following last winters storms.

9 Partner Updates

Paul Howard from Durham BID reported that footfall in the city was back to Pre-Covid levels and highlighted events that were happening over the coming months (all of which can be found on the website).

Ian Moore, the Fire representative on the Board reported that the service were working in partnership with the Police and Durham County Council's Clean and Green Team as bonfire night approaches.

Mark Mallatratt, who attended on behalf of Dave Clarke provided information on local policing issues.

- On Friday 28 October a Halloween Party will be held between 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm Ludworth Community Centre
- Recruitment for PCSOs is open until 4 December
- Officers will be visiting stores during retail crime week
- Problems with youths smoking cannabis in Framwellgate Moor area. Officers are working with the college and pupils around the danger of smoking cannabis.

- A man had been arrested for a burglary in Mistletoe Street
- Mark emphasised how important it was to not leave your house in darkness
- A man had been charged with kidnap after a family car was stolen while a child was sitting in the back seat.

Sam Humble from believe housing said they were seeing a number of residents moving back in with their families due to the cost-of-living crisis; 'heat or eat' was a big concern and they were referring people to foodbanks; there had been problems with anti-social behaviour and fly tipping and were working with partners as bonfire night approaches

10 Any other Business

None.

11 Date and time of next meeting

24th November 2022, 2.00 pm, Online

Subsequent Meetings

- 13th December, 6:00pm, Durham Town Hall
- 26th January 2023, 2:00pm, Online
- 21st February 2023, 6:00pm, Durham Town Hall
- 29th March 2023, 2:00pm, Online

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.