

East Durham Rural Corridor Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting

Tuesday 14 May 2024

Trimdon Grange Community Centre, Salters Lane, Trimdon Grange, TS29 6PB

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr David Brown, Cllr Chris Varty, Cllr Lucy Hovvels (Alternate), Malcolm Gray, Insp Sarah Honeyman, Angela Stobbart, Dave Tempest, George Storey, Mel Carr, Kester Noble, Allan Blakemore

Officer Attendance: Jane Bellis – AAP Co-ordinator
Claire Craft – Community Development Project Officer
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Presenter: Sarah Welsh - Strategic Manager (Customer Relations), Durham County Council

Forum Members

Attendance: 4 forum members attended the meeting

Apologies: Cllr Maura McKeon, Tim Dredge, Parish Cllr Sandra Dowson, Cllr Chris Lines, Mark Readman, Cllr Gary Hutchinson

A special welcome was offered to Millie and the dancers from Nuvo Wellbeing, who had been invited to come along to the meeting to perform a dance routine for us. The AAP funded this organisation for the N-Dance, Trimdon project which was delivered in Trimdon Grange Community Centre. The project aims to empower young people aged 7-16, by providing tailored dance coaching, leading to improved physical and mental wellbeing, self-esteem, and confidence.

PART 1 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1 Election of Chair 2024/25

Jane Bellis, the AAP Co-ordinator welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting of the East Durham Rural Corridor Area Action Partnership.

Prior to the Election of Chair, the AAP Co-ordinator thanked the outgoing Chair, Angela Stobbart for her commitment to the Board and for always supporting the AAP team. Allan Blakemore and Cllr Chris Varty were also thanked for acting

as Vice Chairs and standing in as Chair when needed, and for their commitment to the Board, task group and other AAP related work.

Following the report that was emailed to Board Members on 10 April, outlining the process followed in electing the Chair and Vice Chairs of the AAP, as per the Terms of Reference, it was confirmed that consensus had been reached via email that –

- Angela Stobbart will be the Vice Chair for the partners section of the Board.
- Allan Blakemore will be Vice Chair for the public section of the Board; and
- Cllr Chris Varty will be the Vice Chair for the Elected Members section of the Board.

This year the public section of the Board will hold the position of Chair. Board members were asked for consensus to the appointment of Allan Blakemore as Chair of the East Durham Rural Corridor Area Action Partnership for 2024-25.

Board members agreed to the above appointments.

The outgoing Chair praised the AAP team for their hard work and thanked the Board for their support.

PART 2 – BOARD MEETING

2 Introductions and Apologies

The meeting was passed over to the new Chair and a round of introductions followed.

Apologies [see above].

The Chair highlighted that although the names of Board and Forum members are not included in the body of the minutes; advice given in relation to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), is that the board minutes are made public, therefore should anyone wish to remain anonymous they were to state this.

Anyone present who had a conflict of interest in any item on the agenda, was asked to declare an interest at the start of the agenda item to ensure this was formally recorded in the meeting minutes.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 March 2024 & Matters Arising

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Countywide Partner Issues

4.1 Customer Access Points – a review of our face-to-face services

Sarah Welsh - Strategic Manager (Customer Relations), Durham County Council delivered a presentation on the Customer Access Points - a review of our face-to-face services.

Customer Access Points (CAPs) support residents who need help accessing our services if they are having difficulty completing their transactions online or over the phone. We currently have eight CAPs across the county located in Barnard Castle, Stanley, Seaham, Spennymoor, Durham City, Crook, Chester-Le-Street and Consett. Demand for face-to-face services in our CAPs had been decreasing over several years with 90% of resident contact now received by phone, email or online.

To have your say go to the consultation website for more information and to complete the survey online <https://www.durham.gov.uk/consultation>; or visit one of the libraries or CAPs to complete a paper survey.

The closing date for comments is 5.00pm on Sunday 28 July 2024.

Following Sarah's presentation, the meeting was opened for discussion and a comment was made around transport problems within this AAP area. Sarah was asked if transport and mobile libraries were being considered as part of the consultation; whether they had investigated why people were not accessing the CAPs and if there was a target cost saving.

Sarah was thanked for her presentation and she left the meeting.

5 Priority Updates (from Task Group and Project Leads)

5.1 Performance from Nuvo Wellbeing

As above.

5.2 Easter 2024 Fun and Food

£40,102 had been made available from the Department for Education for Fun and Food projects, for children receiving benefits-related free school meals. £3,650 had already been allocated to 3 projects, which were delivered in the Easter 2024 period: leaving £36,452 remaining for the Summer and Christmas school holiday periods.

5.3 Summer 2024 Fun and Food

DCC had secured £19,886 additional funding for our area for the summer period, from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This funding is for school aged

children not eligible for Department for Education funded places, but who had been identified as having other vulnerabilities which are:

- Children with SEND
- Children in care
- Children who are home educated
- Children with a Social Worker or Early Help Key Worker
- Children at risk of anti-social behaviour
- Children with poor school attendance and/ or exclusion from school
- Children affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
- 'Other' vulnerabilities identified by the applicant.

Fun and Food for Summer 2024 had been launched, and so far, 10 application packs had been sent out, and 4 had been submitted.

5.4 Area Budget

There is £110,000 Area Budget which includes Youth Fund and Poverty Action Funding available to allocate this financial year. This had been launched, and so far, 4 applications packs had been sent out.

5.5 Big Arts Project

£10,000 Big Arts Project Funding had been allocated from Public Health, with the aim of using culture and arts to enhance mental health, wellbeing, and resilience. Projects should support at least one of the priority groups, which are:

- Drug and Alcohol service users including those in recovery.
- Gypsy Roma Traveller communities including ethnic communities.
- Those experiencing Domestic Violence.
- Those engaged with Probation and Justice.
- The LGBTQ+ community.
- Homeless.
- Veterans.
- Those experiencing perinatal mental health.
- Those at high risk of suicide.
- Those with Protected Characteristics.

The funding had been launched and an application from Nuvo Wellbeing had been received for £10,000. Board members were happy to support this project and it was approved.

6 Co-ordinator's Report

The East Durham Rural Corridor AAP is required to monitor all area budget and towns and villages fund projects it had funded on a quarterly basis and at their completion by the AAP funding team. Neighbourhood budget projects over £10,000 are also monitored. Quarterly project progress reports are available upon request.

Jane continued to take part in other countywide groups and committees such as the Public Health Suicide Prevention Alliance, and the Teenage Pregnancy Steering Group, as well as local meetings.

In relation to the Community Engagement Review, an email had been sent to Board Members which included information on the AAPs being realigned to Economic Development with Andy Kerr as our new Head of Service. The email set out that these changes had been made with the aim that the new management arrangements, will provide an opportunity for greater synergy with closely related functions within the aligned areas. It was also announced that Gordon Elliott will retire from the end of May, and that he knows the Heads of Service outlined within the email are keen to further develop the work of the teams, and to build on the fantastic achievements that had been made during the last 15 years.

Board members wished to extend their thanks and said Gordon would be missed, appreciated his hard work, and acknowledged that he had led from the beginning of AAPs. Jane agreed to pass this onto Gordon.

A discussion will take place at Corporate Management Team on the 16 May in relation to boundaries for the Local Networks.

NEFirst Credit Union had successfully appointed Paul Robson as their Business Development Officer; a project which was funded jointly between this AAP and East Durham AAP. The project will now end on the 31 March 2026 to give the full 2 years funding due to a delay to the start date.

7 Local Neighbourhood Issues (LNI)

7.1 Locality Policing Issues

Neighbourhood Insp Sarah Honeyman provided an update on local policing issues –

- Operation Trailblazer to target anti-social behaviour continues for the next financial year.
- Paul Muir would be joining the Sedgefield team. Paul is an experienced officer and is fire armed trained.
- Discussion ensued around police recruitment.
- It was hoped that mobile cameras would be rolled out, but the force did not want to take this forward. Sarah did say there would be ways to get around this.

Update from Sgt Kevin Hall (Sherburn)

- Anyone interested in Community Speed Watch were asked to get in touch with Kevin.

Update from Neighbourhood Insp Phil Carter (Peterlee Team)

- Females had been arrested for burglaries.

- Three huge cannabis grows had been dismantled and individuals remanded.
- Big target around organised crime groups which had been in the news. Looking at long term prison sentences.

Dave Tempest, our Fire representative said there were no highlighted hotspots at present other than issues in Seaham and a recruitment drive would be happening.

8 Neighbourhood Budget Projects

The following Neighbourhood Budget projects were shared with the Board –

Name of Scheme: Salt bin – Lilac Avenue, Sedgefield
 Councillor(s): Chris Lines / David Brown
 Interest Declared: No
 Amount: £1,405 (£702.50 each)

Name of Scheme: Kelloe Traffic Calming
 Councillor(s): Maura McKeon
 Interest Declared: No
 Amount: £36,557

Name of Scheme: Active Travel, Station Road in Sedgefield
 Councillor(s): Chris Lines / David Brown
 Interest Declared: No
 Amount: £6,918.56 (£3,459.28 each)

Name of Scheme: FYCC - Install Managed IT Network System and Stage Curtains
 Councillor(s): Chris Lines / David Brown
 Interest Declared: No
 Amount: £6,773.76 (£3,386.88 each)

As there were no interests declared, Board Members noted the projects.

9 Date and time of next board meeting

Date and Time of Next Board Meeting – Tuesday 16 July 2024, 5.00 pm at Fishburn Youth and Community Centre

Subsequent Board Meetings (all starting at 5.00 pm)

- Thursday 19 September 2024 - Bowburn Community Centre
- Tuesday 26 November 2024 – Coxhoe Village Hall
- Wednesday 22 January 2025 – Cassop Community Centre
- Thursday 27 March 2025 – venue to be arranged.

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.