

DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP (DVP) AGM BOARD MEETING MINUTES

24 May 2023, Salvation Army Hall, Consett at 6pm



Present:

Elected Representatives

Cllrs Veronica Andrews, Kevin Earley, Stephen Robinson (remains as Vice Chair), Kathryn Rooney, Alan Shield, Michelle Walton and Alex Watson.

Partner Organisations

Mark Clelland (outgoing Chair/newly elected Vice Chair) (Derwentside Trust), Allan Hobson (Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)), Acting Sgt Fiona Maddick (Durham Constabulary) and Joanne Waller (Durham County Council (DCC)).

Public Representatives

Linda Acres, Lea McConnell (newly elected Chair), Helen Marley, John Marshall, Rosemary Morris and Fraser Neill.

DVP:

Corinne Walton (AAP Co-ordinator), Lynn Dougal (Support Officer), Kath Clements and Laura Sloan (Community Development Project Officer) and Joanne Ashworth (AAP Towns and Villages Officer).

Members of the Public: 15

Apologies:

Partner Reps: Kathleen Berry (Integrated Care Board) and Philip Pollard (Karbon Homes).

Public Reps: Susan Mellor (outgoing Vice Chair) and David Scott.

1. Meeting opened by the Chair

Mark Clelland welcomed everyone to the AGM meeting and went through housekeeping.

Board members introduced themselves, apologies were noted as above and there were no declarations of interest.

Cllr Shield said that his two-year role on the Board will come to an end and as agreed Cllr Watts Stelling will join the Board from July 2023.

2. Minutes of Previous AGM Board Meeting (25 May 2022) and Board Meeting (29 March 2023)

There were no comments/matters arising and the minutes were AGREED.

3. Public representative welcome and AGM

Public Rep Update

Following the recent recruitment for 3 public reps on the DVP Board, John Marshall, Rosemary Morris and David Scott (unfortunately David was unable to attend this evening) were welcomed to the Board as newly appointed public reps.

Corinne thanked Susan Mellor – outgoing public rep for her time and input on the Board.

Announcement of DVP Board Vice Chairs and Chair for 2023/24

As the Terms of Reference state, each year at the AGM the Board elect a new Chair and Vice Chairs for the new financial year. Corinne thanked Mark Clelland (outgoing Chair) and Susan Mellor and Cllr Robinson (outgoing Vice Chairs) for their input and commitment to the Board over the last year.

Nominations were received for Vice Chairs and AGREED as follows:

Lea McConnell – Public Representative
Mark Clelland – Partner Representative
Cllr Stephen Robinson – Elected Representative

As the position of Chair rotates to the Public Rep category, Lea McConnell was nominated and AGREED as the new Chair.

4. Derwent Valley Partnership 2022/23 Annual Report

Corinne advised that the Annual Report is being prepared and will be circulated via email to Board members once it is available. The report includes projects that have been funded through the DVP's Area Budget, local Councillors' Neighbourhood Budget, Fun and Food Fund and Towns and Villages Fund. The report will also be available on DCC's AAP webpages at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/derwentaap> in due course.

5. Task Group Updates

Corinne gave an update on the 4 Task Groups.

Environment Task Group (Ann English – Chair, Rosemary Morris – Vice Chair and Corinne Walton DVP Lead Officer)

The task group met on 9 May and reviewed the themes within their Action Plan which includes reducing carbon emissions, the natural environment, recycling and food waste and green energy.

The next Environment Task Group meeting is 27 June at St Patrick's Church Hall where the group will consider whether to keep all or some of the themes. However, if anyone has any ideas around project ideas, themes or comments, the group would be interested in hearing about them.

Employment, Education and Training (EET) Task Group (Mark Clelland – Chair and Laura Sloan DVP Lead Officer)

The task group met on 20 April and received a monitoring update on the projects that were funded via the EET Task Group. They are also reviewing their Action Plan with key areas of focus likely to be on skills for the future, an Employment Forum and barriers to employment.

Due to the nature of the themes within their Action Plan, the group would like to undertake project development with their funding allocation, rather than invite project applications via a call out this year.

The next EET Task Group meeting is 22 June at Glenroyd House.

Health and Wellbeing (HWB) Task Group (John O'Connor – Chair and Kath Clements DVP Lead Officer)

The task group met on 26 April and discussed social isolation and local bus service cuts. Stuart Woods, DCC Network Planning and Transport Services Team Leader, was invited to the meeting where he discussed some of the bus service issues that included funding constraints and the impact of reduced passenger numbers following Covid.

The group also received a presentation from Jeanette Harold from Continuum who gave an update on the I am ME project funded via the 2022/23 Area Budget and the I am ME – Power Up project funded via the Healthy Relationships Fund. Jeanette was keen for the young people to present at a future Board meeting to discuss their experiences as project participants.

The group has agreed to keep their current themes of suicide prevention, social isolation, bereavement support and physical activity within their Action Plan.

The next HWB Task Group meeting is 7 June at Glenroyd House.

Cllr Watson wondered if we should have a presentation on the Link2 bus service so the public are aware of the service and how they can access it.

John O'Connor (Chair HWB Task Group/Forum) said the task group raised the Link2 bus with Stuart Woods. It appears that the Link2 bus is not operating at the moment but there are white DCC minibuses that travel around but people may not be aware of this.

Corinne advised that they could invite Stuart Woods to a future Board meeting to give an update on Link2/minibus service if the Board would like more information.

Towns and Villages (T&V) Task Group (Rosemary Morris – Chair and Joanne Ashworth DVP Lead Officer)

At the task group's last meeting in March they discussed a funding proposal from DCC's Community Economic Development Team for further funding (£25k) for Middle Street, that came to the March Board meeting for approval. The Board rejected the proposal until clarification could be sought on issues raised at the March Board meeting.

It was announced that funding for Middle Street has now been secured from elsewhere and funding will not be required from the T&V Fund. The Board welcomed this news.

Cllrs Watson and Shield said that a further £200k will be available to complete Phase 3 of the improvement works in Middle Street.

Based on the above feedback, the T&V task group has £48,225 to develop projects linked to promoting Consett Town Centre, particularly linked to events and marketing/promotional opportunities as previously presented to the Board.

A subgroup of the T&V Task Group will be set up to focus on town centre events and marketing with a meeting set for 13 June. The subgroup will feed in any ideas/ comments/ proposals at the next T&V Task Group meeting, provisionally set for 12 July, with recommendations potentially going to the July Board meeting.

Cllr Shield asked how we measure the outcomes of projects funded and the frequency of those measurements. Corinne said that all the projects that are funded have gone through a rigorous process via the relevant task groups and once approved for funding by the Board they are sent to the Funding Team for a full technical appraisal. Every project that is funded is monitored on a quarterly basis and measured against the original outcomes and performance indicators as set in the application form. This information also goes to the relevant Task Groups to see if the project has under or overachieved. The DVP Team also go out and visit some of the projects to see what has been delivered and how they are going.

Nicola Little from Celebrate Difference (Forum) who received funding from the DVP, thanked the DVP Team for the regular monitoring information they request as it helped them to keep on track and was an opportunity for them to feedback how successful the project was.

If anyone is interested in joining one or more of the task groups, they can contact the DVP Team.

6. DVP funding 2023/24

Corinne covered the report briefly and said the DVP will have funding available of £233,067 for 2023/24, made up of:

- £100,000 Area Budget (AB)
- £9,902 Youth Fund (YF)
- £10,000 Welfare Reform funding (WR)
- £48,225 Town and Villages Fund (T&V)
- £7,400 Environment funding (due to an underspend from Burnopfield Plantation Habitat Management project which was withdrawn. It is recommended that this amount stays within the Environment Task Group budget)
- £57,540 Fun and Food funding (F&F)

The AAPs will not be receiving any Young People's Healthy Relationships Funding (YPHRF) or Older Person's Social Isolation Fund (OPSIF) for 2023/24.

7. Project development process 2023/24

Regarding the funding allocations as stated in Agenda item 6 above, the AB, YF and WR funding have been amalgamated into one pot equating to £119,902. The T&V Fund and F&F Fund will continue to operate separately as they have specific criteria.

The Board were asked to decide how they would like to allocate the £119,902 DVP funding and were given 5 possible options:

Option 1 - one large scale 'project call out'. Received applications would be initially reviewed for eligibility by the DVP Team and then reviewed by our three Task Groups based on the merit of the project (rather than funding allocation).

Option 2 - to allocate each of the three Task Groups an equal share of £39,967 so three separately themed 'project call outs' can be undertaken. Received applications would initially be reviewed by each respective Task Group against their action plan.

Option 3 - to allocate each of the three Task Groups a share of the DVP Area Budget but not necessarily an equal share.

Option 4 - five separate 'project call outs'. One for each of the three Task Groups, one for the YF and one for WR. Received applications via the Task Groups would be processed as per Option 2 and applications received for the YF and WR could be reviewed by the Board or via a smaller subgroup of the Board.

Option 5 - each Task Group to undertake project development against their action plans.

With all the options above, or another variation, any project recommendations will be presented at a DVP Board meeting with funding decisions made by the Board.

The Board then discussed the options with the following comments noted:

- Each Task Group has an equal share but with a reduced amount and the remainder would be used as a contingency fund for any emerging issues not necessarily linked to the Task Groups.
- Deciding on the funding allocation as soon as possible would help the Task Groups with their planning and with how much funds they would have available.
- With any contingency fund we would need to keep an eye on it, so we are not left with money too late in the year to allocate.
- Need to be clear what the contingency fund can be used for and how it can be accessed.
- The contingency fund should still have a link to the priorities.
- To allocate funding as per Option 5 so we capture young people and could also incorporate OPSIF type projects.
- Would a Task Group be able to access more funding if they felt their allocation was not sufficient?
- Levering in match funding would allow us to use less of our funds and can make our funds go further.
- We only have a small amount of money to address local issues and holding back funds for

contingencies to tackle the bigger issues would not be necessary as funding would come via the Government or DCC.

- Working in partnership with other organisations can lever in extra funding, especially DCC as they also have a wealth of expertise and knowledge.
- Option 2 has worked well in the past and if this option is chosen, the Task Groups could decide how much goes into YF and WR projects with an overall decision made by the Board.
- The DVP Team are made aware of other funding pots, and these are shared with the Task Groups and under the Funding Opportunities menu on the DVP's Derwent Valley Life website.

After discussions around what each Task Group should receive and how much should be left in a contingency fund, the Board reached a consensus that each Task Group would receive £35k with the remainder £14,902 used as a contingency. Each of the Task Groups will be proactive in levering in additional funds and regarding the process it is at the Task Group's discretion whether they do a call out or project development.

Board member involvement within the Task Groups remains low and Board members were encouraged to join one or more of the Task Groups. Board members could, if they wish, become Board Champions and go out and visit projects.

8. Board meeting format ideas and suggestions for 2023/24

The Board were asked for their thoughts on the format and agenda items at future Board meetings, in addition to the formal processes we need to adhere to i.e. funding, decision making.

A discussion ensued with suggestions noted below:

- At each Board meeting, we have a project showcase for those that were awarded funding from the DVP.
- Photos and video presentations have more of an impact than just words.
- Board members that wish to visit a project that the DVP have funded can contact the DVP Team.
- When funding is available, encourage groups/organisations to come along and participate in Task Groups and/or Board meetings to find out what the DVP is about rather than just engaging with us when money is available.
- Attracting people to come along to a meeting with the prospect of funding could be frustrating for the community, especially with a limited budget and if we are oversubscribed.
- Holding an annual Forum event/Community Day - promote the DVP, engage with the community, encourage networking, etc.
- Groups, organisations, people, etc need to share information to encourage participation, awareness, etc.
- Invite those people who have expertise in the DVP's priorities (eg health, employment and environment) to Task Group meetings to help to give a better idea on how funding could be used in a way to make a difference.
- Prior to Covid, the DVP held regular Forum events that were well attended, they should be revisited.
- A summer Forum could include guest speakers, workshops, project applicants showcasing their projects and any other ideas would be welcomed.

9. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting

Lea and Corinne thanked everyone for their attendance.

Before the meeting close, Corinne thanked Cllr Shield, on behalf of the DVP Team and the Board, for his input and support over the years and wished him well for the future.

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday 19 July 2023, 6pm at The Salvation Army Hall, Consett.