

Notes of the Weardale Area Action Partnership Board Meeting – 20th October 2022

Eastgate Village Hall



ATTENDEES

Board Members

Public Representatives: Ian Hirst (IH)
Adrian Holden (AHo)
Richard Lawrie (RL)
Alison Humble (AHu)
Will Wearmouth (WW)

Partner Representatives: Damian Pearson (DP) – Believe Housing – **CHAIR**
PCSO Chloe Gilding (CG) – Durham Constabulary
PCSO Joshua Roberts (JR) – Durham Constabulary
Adam Heslington (AHe) – Fire & Rescue Service
Jeff Bell (JB) – Business Representative
Julian Haynes (JH) – Voluntary Sector
Sarah Lee (SL) - Health

Elected Members: Cllr Anita Savory (AS)
Cllr Helen Barrass (HB) – Muggleswick Parish Council
Cllr Angela Hawkes (AHa) – Stanhope Parish Council

Officers Angelina Maddison (AM)
Fiona Barber (FB)

APOLOGIES

Public Representatives: Joan Warriner
Kevin Roddam

Elected Representatives: Cllr David Sugden – Wolsingham Parish Council
Cllr Olive Wilson – Witton-le-Wear Parish Council

Officers: Tracy Edwards (TE)

BOARD MEETING

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

Apologies are recorded above.

2. Declaration of Interest

The Chair asked that Board members declare any interests as they arise on the agenda.

3. Agreement of Notes from Board Meeting held on 8th September 2022 and Matters Arising

The notes of this meeting, as circulated, were **AGREED** and confirmed as a true record by those present.

RL asked for the email address of the consultant that attended the meeting on 8th September – **Action: WAP Team to resend to Board members.**

There were no matters arising.

4. Weardale Action Partnership Update

Agricultural Shows

AM advised that the team and Board members attended all three Agricultural shows over the summer. Attendees were asked how we can make Weardale better for both residents and visitors. The 5 main themes that arose from these discussions were:

- Tourism / walking
- Young people / families
- Older / vulnerable people
- Training
- Food banks / Fuel poverty / cost of living

Those that the team spoke to felt that Weardale is a hidden jewel in County Durham's crown. She also advised that Weardale has high indices of fuel poverty due to building construction and a high number of properties using oil as the primary heating source. AM also reflected that it was useful to be able to direct people to the Police who were in attendance when concerns regarding speeding vehicles were raised.

Art Workshops

Board members were shown quotes from attendees at the recent free art workshops which took place in Weardale with funding from WAP. The Coordinator advised that there will be a report produced in due course.

Warm Spaces

AM reminded Board members that they have been emailed a copy of information from Durham County Council regarding the Warm Spaces scheme which is providing

grants of £1,000 for community buildings who will open up to offer a Warm Space over the winter months.

AM advised that the WAP Team have been visiting community buildings to gain an understanding of what is needed and what they currently offer. The aim of this is to obtain an interview of community provision and to see what is needed to help buildings to continue into the future.

AM shared that the biggest problem faced by all community buildings is lack of volunteers and aging management committees. The buildings themselves are well-maintained and well looked after.

Board members raised queries about the Warm Spaces scheme including

- Anticipated usage – particularly in bad weather
- Transport problems
- Availability of volunteers

AM acknowledged these issues and stated that there are some things that can not be predicted but the WAP Team will be on hand to assist with any concerns groups have.

AHa shared that Durham Community Action have training available to support volunteers.

AS commented that it is likely that numbers of participants will increase as time goes on as word-of-mouth spreads and more people hear about the opportunities to go out.

Launch of Small Grants Fund

FB talked about the new Small Grants Fund which has launched. Applications for grants of £500 can be made and the deadline for the first allocation of funding is Monday 7th November. An Appraisal Panel has been set for Monday 21st November at 1:30pm in the WAP Office. Once the Appraisal Panel has made their decision the fund will re-open for applications.

Faith and Wellbeing Event

AM shared that there are a number of faith groups which work in isolation on some great projects. The idea of this event is to try and create a network. AM encouraged Board members to share details of the event with people who may be interested in attending.

5. Towns & Villages Funding Update

AM gave a brief update on the various projects which are being considered for Towns and Villages funding. She encouraged Board members to consider ring-fencing funding to ensure projects can receive funding.

Ashcroft MUGA / Play Area Refurbishment

Application is currently being appraised. Project is anticipated to complete in Spring 2023.

Application APPROVED by the Board following email circulation.

Champing in Muggleswick – HB declared an interest

AM reminded the Board that they ring-fenced £50,000 in July. Awaiting Diocesan approval for the proposed works. Once granted a full application will be made.

Weardale Museum

Following a meeting with Museum representatives on 19th October a decision has been made to realign the EOI to request funding to replace the windows in High House Chapel.

Board members requested further information regarding this project to include:

- Confirmation of local community engagement and support
- A plan of action for the entire project
- An indication of the views of the planning department given the project is within a conservation area
- An understanding of any personal benefit / declarations of interest.

AM advised that this will be passed onto the applicant.

Weardale Open Air Swimming Pool – JH declared an interest

Project is currently in development and awaiting decisions from the committee as to how to progress.

Witton-le-Wear Community Centre

Project is currently in development although the application process is on hold until other priority issues have been addressed. The centre also needs a strong management committee in place in order to be able to take control of the work that is needed. AM advised that the DCC sports team is to check the MUGA and play area to ensure safety.

St Thomas' Church Hall – NEW – JH declared an interest

Funding request received for potential building improvement works to maximise the use of spaces within the building. More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

6. Area Budget Update

Small Grants Fund (2019/20)

FB talked through the Small Grants Fund report provided. She noted that 32 projects received funding and they attracted almost £50,000 of match funding. FB shared a map showing the distribution of funding throughout the Dale. AHa commented that some of the more rural settlements don't appear to have received funding. FB explained that these areas have received funding in the past and are aware of the Small Grants Fund. Due to their small size, it happens that some years there are no applications from these areas as the groups are running on a self-sufficient basis.

Application for Approval – Weardale Together CIC

FB talked the board through an application to the 2019/20 Small Grants Fund from Weardale Together CIC to provide Youth Activity Sessions in Stanhope as a pilot programme. Board members had received the application in advance and no queries were raised.

The Board APPROVED the application and awarded £500.

Sports Apprentices

AM advised that the advert for the 2 apprenticeships went out four times. Although one apprentice was appointed, they left after a few weeks to take up another trade apprenticeship. AM advised that none of the funding has been lost and that enquiries are being made to see how this funding can be rechannelled to a different project. IH offered that he has had similar difficulties with recruitment and retention.

Budget Overview Allocation

Stanhope Market Place – Installation of Infrastructure & Lights

AM advised that NPG have put work back as they are still playing catchup following on from Storm Arwen. She stated that the electrical supply won't be in place this year and will instead be battery operated.

Killhope Tales – RL expressed an interest in being a Board Ambassador.

Wolsingham Parish Council & Wolsingham Wayfarers – Family Walk Interpretation Panels and Noticeboard – AS & JB declared an interest

Welfare Reform Funding - £10,000

An Expression of Interest has been received regarding the Weardale Accessible Advice Service. This has been circulated to Board Members for comment.

The Board requested that the applicant be invited to submit a full application.

Youth Fund - £9,902

AM advised that both Witton-le-Wear Youth Club and Weardale Together CIC are options for this funding.

Older Peoples Social Isolation Fund - £25,000

AM advised that an Expression of Interest is being compiled for funding for the Community Wellness Coordinator.

Young Peoples Healthy Relationships - £10,000

AM confirmed that this is still in the early development stages.

Fun & Food

AM advised that some usual providers – Witton-le-Wear Youth Club, Harehope Quarry – did not want to apply for funding for Christmas delivery. She also advised that ATOMS had not had the same success in Weardale as they have had in other AAP areas.

AM also related some of the frustrations experienced by providers with the paperwork and demands put upon them.

7. Neighbourhood Budget

Cllr Savory - Winter Warmers – AS & DP declared an interest

AS spoke about the project describing how it engages both the older and younger generations as catering students are involved. School staff are also volunteering their time to host this event. Places for 12 people are available with a final capacity of 24. AS advised that Lisa, the Community Wellness Coordinator, will attend some sessions to check in and make connections.

Cllr Savory

Small Grant Fund

- Wolsingham Nursery – Repairs to Castle
- Eastgate Village Hall – Printer
- Weardale Flower & Garden Club – RHS event, Newby Hall
- Weardale Community Hospital – Purchase and printing of Tea Towels
- Blind Life – New Age Curling Competition

Cllr Shuttleworth

Rookhope Village Hall – Electrical Update

AM advised that this has been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting and has been approved. No additional issues were raised and so this decision was ratified by the Board.

Neighbourhood Budget

- Stanhope Photographic Society – Equipment
- High Pennine Horticultural Society – Support to group
- Weardale Agricultural Society – Weardale Show
- Wear Rivers Trust- Bash the Balsam
- Rookhope Village Hall – Electrical Update -Ratification at Board meeting as electronic circulation

Small Grant Fund

- Rookhope Village Hall – Leek Show
- Cowshill Village Hall – Leek Club Running costs

Both Cllr Savory and Cllr Shuttleworth have further ideas in the pipeline that are currently being developed.

8. Neighbourhood Issues

Speeding lorries – Castleside

CG & JR advised that the Speedwatch van with volunteers has been deployed on Castleside bank to monitor the situation. They advised that 99% of the time the issue was perception of speeding rather than speeding itself. They also observed that empty wagons in particular can make a lot of noise. CG & JR explained some of the issues they face when deploying the Speedwatch van but reiterated that it is available for deployment in areas suggested by local residents. AS offered to arrange for a speed survey for Crawleyside to add to the evidence gathering.

Board members discussed how different factors e.g. multiple speed limits over a short distance of road; echoes of traffic noise etc. enhanced the perception of speeding.

CG and JR advised that they are working on publicising information gathered by the Speedwatch van more on their social media feeds in order to provide perspective. AM suggested that this information could be sent to the WAP team for inclusion in the e-bulletin.

AS shared that she had spoken to the Quarry manager who had pointed out that every driver relies on his job to provide for themselves and their family – it is not in their interest to speed.

HB spoke about issues in the Muggleswick / Waskerley area. JR suggested that they could look at deploying the Speedwatch van there.

CG & JR explained that it isn't just the speeding that is an issue, they also have to consider the noise and when the level becomes anti-social. There are difficulties around testing noise levels and with the ability to determine legality.

9. Countywide Partner Issues

believe housing

DP advised that they have closed down their Small Grants Fund and reprovisioned it into a 'Keep Warm, Keep Well' Community Fund in response to the energy crisis. Grants are available to support warm hubs / foodbanks etc. Grants of £500 are available and applications can be made at <https://www.believehousing.co.uk/your-community/community-funding/>

Fire Service

AHe observed that Bonfire Night is approaching. Visits have been made to local primary schools to raise awareness.

Weardale Community Hospital

AS shared that the Friends of Weardale Community Hospital are constantly fundraising for medical equipment and other items that will help families to feel comfortable when their loved ones are in the hospital. She advised that the Hospital are in the final round for funding from the Co-op. She encouraged anyone who is a member of the Co-op to vote for the hospital to receive funding and anyone who isn't a member to become one so that they too could vote.

Stars in Their Eyes

This event is now in its 21st year and will be held on Friday 9th December at Wolsingham Sports Hall. If anyone would like a ticket, please contact Cllr Savory.

10. Dates and Times of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Weardale Action Partnership Board will take place on Thursday 1st December, 6:00pm in Eastgate Village Hall.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Applications APPROVED by Board following email circulation due to the early closure of the Board meeting on 8th September 2022 on the news of the death Her Majesty the Queen.

Towns & Villages Funding

Stanhope Parish Council Ashcroft MUGA

Area Budget

Wolsingham Wayfarers Family Walk Interpretation panels and village noticeboard

Neighbourhood Budget

Wolsingham School Winter Warmers

These applications were forwarded to the appraisal team.