

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

Tuesday 16 July 2024

Fishburn Youth and Community Centre, Butterwick Road, Fishburn, TS21 4ED

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr David Brown, Cllr Chris Varty, Cllr Viv Anderson, Parish Cllr Sandra Dowson, Tony Cutmore, Malcolm Gray, Neighbourhood Insp Sarah Honeyman, Angela Stobbart, 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: Dave Tempest, Cllr Jan Blakey, Tim Dredge, Cllr Gary Hutchinson, Mark Readman

1 Introductions and Apologies

Allan Blakemore (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting of the East Durham Rural Corridor Area Action Partnership, and a round of introductions followed.

A warm welcome was offered to Cllr Viv Anderson (Coxhoe Division), who had replaced Cllr Maura McKeon on the Board, and Sarah Welsh from Durham County Council who was in attendance to deliver a presentation on Improving Advice Services in County Durham.

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.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2024 & Matters Arising

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3 Countywide Partner Issues:

3.1 Improving Advice Services in County Durham

Sarah Welsh delivered a presentation on Durham County Council's Advice Services, which included managing money, debt management and access to benefits; as well as welfare, employment, housing, consumer rights and health and social care.

To have your say in how advice services are offered to County Durham residents in the future, either 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 Customer Access Points (CAP) to complete a paper survey or take a paper survey.

The deadline for feedback is 5.00 pm on Friday 20 September 2024.

Following Sarah's presentation, the meeting was opened for discussion.

Queries were raised and comments made in relation to –

- Demand data and if this had been considered as part of the consultation.
- Do you link with Age UK?
- We need to be publicising the services we offer more effectively.
- In terms of procurement, is this set-in stone or do you have contingencies in place for unknown eventualities?

Paper copies of the survey were available for those who wished to take a copy.

The Chair thanked Sarah and she left the meeting.

4 Priority Updates (from Task Group and Project Leads)

4.1 Update on the Coxhoe & Area Community Pantry & Foodbank project

Kim Lowes from Coxhoe Village Hall Association had been invited to come along to the meeting to provide an update on the Coxhoe & Area Community Pantry & Foodbank project this AAP funded. Unfortunately, Kim was unable to attend, and had asked if she could be invited to the next board meeting.

4.2 Fun and Food

£40,102 was made available from the Department for Education for Fun and Food projects to be delivered in the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holiday periods, for children receiving benefits-related free school meals. £3,650 was allocated to 3 projects, which were delivered in the Easter 2024 school holidays. 10 applications were sent out for the Summer school holiday period, and 8 were received. All 8 projects were agreed by the Fun and Food panel on the 21 May, and project proposal summary sheets for each were sent out with the Board papers for information. This leaves £11,350.60 remaining for the Christmas school holiday period.

In addition to this, £19,886 additional funding was secured for our area for the summer period, from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, for school aged children not eligible for Department for Education funded places, but who had been identified as having other vulnerabilities. 7 of the applicants applied for this element and 1 opted not to. This element of funding was also agreed by the panel on the 21 May, leaving £10,086.67 remaining for the Christmas 2024 school holiday period.

4.3 Area Budget

£110,000 of Area Budget, which included Youth Fund and Poverty Action Funding was available to allocate this financial year. This was launched on the 30 April, and the deadline for the submission of completed applications was 12 June. 8 application packs were requested and 5 were submitted totalling £47,870 which were discussed at the task group meeting held on Monday 8 July. Task group members were happy to support 4 of the projects, and recommended that they be taken to this Board meeting for agreement. A copy of the application forms had been included with the Board papers for information.

Board members agreed to support the following Area Budget projects –

1. Trimdon Village Hall, Centre Development Fund - £7,840

[Malcolm Gray declared an interest in the following application]

2. Livin Housing, BOOST (Build your Own Opportunities to Succeed and Thrive) - £5,000

3. Fishburn Youth & Community Centre, Kitchen Staff - £18,525

[George Storey declared an interest in the following application]

4. Cassop Community Centre, Making Cassop Community Centre Safe – Inside & Out - £6,980

There is £71,655 remaining and the Area Budget Project Call Out will be relaunched tomorrow. For information, it was requested at the task group that

Cassop Community Centre included some match funding to strengthen their application; therefore 20 hours volunteer time had been added by the applicant.

There was also one other Area Budget application considered at the task group meeting; however, it was not supported: Rose Cottage Community Hub CIC for the Harmony Haven project. The objectives of this project proposal included promoting mental and physical wellbeing, via sessions focusing on the five ways to wellbeing: Connect, Get Active, Take Notice, Learn and Give. The organisation was asking for £9,525, with £2,070 match; however, Nicky Williams from Wellbeing for Life highlighted that they delivered this service countywide free of charge. The applicant had been advised of the decision, and Nicky's contact details had been passed on to them as agreed at the task group meeting.

4.4 Big Arts Project

There was £10,000 Big Arts Project Funding available, and Board members agreed to approve the application received from Nuvo Wellbeing for the full amount at the last meeting. This application had been fully appraised, approved and an offer letter had been sent to the applicant. The next stage is for information on projects funded across the county to be presented to the Mental Health Strategic Partnership, and subsequently the Big Arts Steering Group.

No questions were raised in relation to any of the above.

5 Co-ordinator's Report

Quarterly project progress reports are available to Board members upon request, for any project whose lead had submitted them.

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, AAP Coordinators and other AAP staff continued to take part in workstreams in relation to this.

A big part of the AAP staffing teams time had been taken up with the office move, and they are now based at Green Lane, Spennymoor for 2 days per week rather than Sedgefield.

The Council is currently looking for residents of County Durham to serve as non-voting co-optees on three of its five Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Co-optees have a key role in shaping council services, by helping to develop new ways of working, reviewing existing policies and challenging the performance of the authority and its key partners. Applicants are required to submit a completed application form by the 9 August, and will need to go through a formal selection process. For more information, or to apply for a position as a non-voting co-optee, call either Stephen or Diane on 03000 268140 or 03000 268141 or email scrutiny@durham.gov.uk.

6 Community Engagement Review: Local Network Boundary Consultation

Jane delivered a comprehensive presentation on the above. For further information and to have your say, please visit [Proposals for new Local Network boundary areas - Durham County Council](#)

The deadline for comments is 5.00pm on 18 August 2024.

The meeting was opened for discussion and the following comments/queries were raised -

- A Sedgefield resident present said she found it worrying and concerning. Communities need to feel connected and Newton Aycliffe and Middridge have nothing in common with Sedgefield. It should be about community, not electoral boundaries.
- We don't align with Aycliffe.
- It seems they've only considered population and electoral wards and just drawn lines on the map.
- Absolutely crazy.
- We must maintain community cohesion.
- We'll lose a lot of community knowledge.
- Local Networks (LN) K & L are two very wealthy areas. Will they receive the same amount of budget as other LNs? It was suggested the LNs K & L are combined and proportion the budget with all the others.
- Not happy with the methodology and this is not a sensible geographical approach. The idea of the AAPs was to bring villages together not towns.
- Will be difficult to make projects stretch across different communities which don't warrant/need localised applications which might exclude smaller community groups from applying. Two totally different areas. How would this work?
- From a policing perspective, the concern would be that the pull will be to Newton Aycliffe and not Sedgefield.
- Will be difficult for smaller groups to justify why they need funding.
- Concern was raised around the disparity of areas as some had not been altered at all, or very little.
- Some groups need year on year funding not a 4-year plan, and they will struggle to survive.
- Will be down to strategic needs as opposed to localised needs.
- How many people know about this? Needs more publicity.
- Lines on maps are not community. More like reducing costs.
- It's about the isolation for me, and the transport issues in some AAP areas. No social cohesion. The AAP community gels well. Will be dominated by the political scene rather than the community.

7 Local Neighbourhood Issues (LNI)

7.1 Locality Policing Issues

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

Working on Teletubby land due to damage caused there; Sedgefield Show takes place on 10-11 August; need to advertise the PACT meetings; Operation Trailblazer is ongoing mainly in the Trimdon(s) and Sedgefield; getting up to scratch on countywide policing teams.

Sarah agreed to speak to Phil Carter following a comment made in relation to Durham Show and the traffic issues.

A forum member asked if there was any news on cameras for Sedgefield as issues were ongoing.

The Chair suggested that should anyone have a question they may wish to ask Sarah about a local policing issue, could they please let the AAP team know prior to the meeting.

Update from Sgt Kevin Hall (Sherburn)

They are now fully staffed and have an officer on attachment in Response.

Update from Neighbourhood Insp Phil Carter (Peterlee Team)

Local Cllrs had allocated funding towards an ANPR camera; they had been working on anti-social behaviour issues in Trimdon Colliery and had been working overnight to address overnight thefts.

8 Neighbourhood Budget Projects

The following Neighbourhood Budget project was shared with the Board –

Name of Scheme: Coxhoe & Area Community Pantry

Councillor(s): Maura McKeon

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £2,000

Board Members noted the project.

9 Date and time of next board meeting

Date and Time of Next Board Meeting – Thursday 19 September 2024, 5.00 pm at Bowburn Community Centre

Subsequent Board Meetings (all starting at 5.00 pm)

- 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.