

DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

A meeting of the **DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD** was held in the Consett Salvation Army Hall, Consett on Wednesday, 14 June 2017 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: **Councillors**
Derek Hicks, Ivan Jewell, Alan Shield and Alex Watson

Partner Organisations

Craig Farrage - Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, Anne-Marie Parkin - Durham Community Action, Gary Scott - Derwentside Business Network, Michael Thewlis - Northern Clinical Commissioning Group and Insp Keith Wardle - Durham Constabulary

Public Representatives

Marlene Boyles, Ann English, Rosemary Morris, Tina Townson, Justin Chilton, Jeannette Harold, Shelley O'Brien and Christine Wotherspoon

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Joanne Carr and Watts Stelling - Elected Representatives
Phillip Curran – Karbon Homes - Partner Representative
Elsie Davies, Peter Dobson, Phillip Marshall and Donna Summerson - Public Representatives

IN ATTENDANCE: Corinne Walton, AAP Co-ordinator
Helen Pinkney, Community Development/Project Officer
Lynn Dougal, Support Officer

PRESENTERS: Inspector Keith Wardle, Durham Constabulary

Members of the Public – 11

1. **Introductions**

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the Board meeting and advised that Cllr Shield would like to say a few words.

Cllr Shield said that Cllr Watts Stelling's wife, Yvonne, sadly passed away on 1 June and the funeral will take place on Friday at 10am at Brooms Roman Catholic Church. He offered his condolences to Cllr Stelling and his family on behalf of the Board and Forum members.

Corinne went through housekeeping and extended a warm welcome to the new public reps, who would take up their position on the Board in due course and welcomed Insp Wardle who was giving a presentation.

Board members were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and apologies had been received as per the above.

Board members were asked to declare an interest, if appropriate, for any agenda items being discussed. There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes of Previous AGM Board Meeting (25 May 2016)**

There were no issues raised and the minutes were AGREED

Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (15 February 2017)

P2. John O'Connor (Forum) referred to Cllr Watson's comments about discussing a town centre development Board at the next Board meeting and said he could not see this on the agenda. Rosemary Morris advised it is not on the agenda tonight and will be discussed at the next Board meeting in July.

There were no further issues and the minutes were AGREED

3. DVP Annual Report 2016/17, DVP Public Representative Presentation and AGM 2017/18

DVP Annual Report 2016/17

Corinne advised that the Annual Report is always presented at the AGM and a copy had been circulated to the Board prior the meeting. Corinne outlined the report which provides information about the DVP, some of the achievements that have taken place over the last year and highlighted the contents on page 4 which provides an overview of the key achievements. A number of projects had been funded through the 2016-17 Area Budget (AB), the Neighbourhood Budget (NB) and additional money received through Welfare Reform.

John Shaw (Forum) asked why there are no accounts produced to show the running costs of the DVP. Corinne advised that all costs relating to the AB, which is public funds used for the delivery of projects, are available in the Annual Report. The DVP has an internal admin budget of £7K that is used to cover costs such as room hire, printing, stationery, etc and this can be made available on request.

John O (Forum) referred to his comments on page 2 in last year's AGM Board meeting minutes regarding a copy of the attendance register and asked if this could be provided at each AGM. Corinne advised that this will be made available at the next AGM meetings moving forward.

DVP Public Representative Presentation

Corinne advised that 6 of the current public representatives have come to the end of their 4 year term. Marlene Boyles remains on the Board for a further 3 years as she was appointed last year.

A certificate was presented to the outgoing public representatives: Ann English, Rosemary Morris and Tina Townson.

Unfortunately Peter Dobson, Elsie Davies and Phillip Marshall were unable to attend this evening and their certificates will be sent out in the post.

Corinne thanked the outgoing representatives for their invaluable time and contribution towards the work of the Partnership and wished them well for the future.

Ann and Tina stepped down from the Board and Corinne welcomed the new representatives Rosemary Morris, Justin Chilton, Shelley O'Brien, Christine Wotherspoon and Jeanette Harold to take up their seat on the Board. Donna Summerson has also been appointed as a new public representative but unfortunately was unable to attend this evening.

AGM 2017/18

Each year at the AGM the Board decides on new Vice Chairs and the rotation of Chair takes place. Corinne thanked the current Chair, Rosemary Morris and Vice Chairs, Gary Scott and Cllr Watts Stelling for their contribution and commitment to the Partnership over the last 12 months.

Nominations were received for Vice Chairs and AGREED as follows:

Rosemary Morris - Public Representative
Gary Scott - Partner Representative
Cllr Watts Stelling - Elected Representative

Each year the Chair of the Board rotates to the next category, which is the Partner Representatives this year, and Gary Scott was nominated and AGREED as the new Chair.

Gary Scott said he is more than happy to be Chair of the DVP Board; it is a great honour and by working together to help communities, drive business and make this an even greater AAP we can achieve great things. Gary thanked everyone for their continued support.

4. Partner Updates

A presentation was given by Insp Keith Wardle on Behind Closed Doors.

Keith said this presentation was initially aimed at their partners who go 'behind closed doors' into people's homes. When the police go to an incident and see something that does not look right they have certain procedures in place and can submit intelligence reports to the appropriate service, eg Social Services, Counter Terrorism. However, there are a lot of partners and members of the public who go into people's homes and this is an opportunity to share information (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

Keith urged everyone to contact the police should they have any concerns or are aware of suspicious behaviour.

Justin Chilton asked if they scroll through Facebook on a daily basis to find counterfeit goods. Keith advised they do not look at Facebook on a daily basis as he does not have the resources. He advised that they do however run joint operations with Trading Standards - who identify people who do it on a regular basis and often bring it to their attention.

Cllr Watson asked if health visitors regularly visit new mothers, particularly those families that may be under suspicion where child abuse is concerned, and asked if they pass on information to the police. Keith advised that every organisation has an information sharing process. If they see something they would report it to Social Services likewise the health visitor would do the same, however each case is graded and reviewed individually.

Christine Wotherspoon said a few years ago health visitors regularly visited new mothers from pre-birth right up to pre-school age, now it may be two or three times. Although the universal service is reduced, specific needs, eg safeguarding, is still targeted.

Cllr Shield said as the police rely on members of the public to report any activities relating to drugs and alcohol, some people have wondered what is the point in reporting anything on 'soft drugs' when the Police, Victims and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable have a different approach to dealing with certain drugs. Also as this County does not have fixed speed cameras, a decision made by the Chief Constable, there are members of the public that would support these. He wonders how the police aim to engage the public in reporting issues around drugs when people's perception about fixed speed cameras is totally dismissed without any engagement.

Keith said regarding cannabis for example, there is a shift within the organisation to try and regulate it differently. They will act on information received around drugs but they have to use their resources wisely. They cannot justify sending police officers to investigate small amounts of cannabis use (the large scale growing of such substances will be tackled), however they would always investigate reports around Class A drugs/organised crime/large scale drugs.

With regards to speed cameras, Keith said he would like to see these installed in Derwentside. He is fortunate to have a team of volunteers that assist them, almost on a daily basis, with speed surveys, risk assessments and PNC checks. Speed cameras do not prevent speeding overall, they just tend to be effective in the short space where the camera is placed.

John O (Forum) asked if the police have enough resources to investigate major complaints / crimes. Keith said they do and in the Medomsley Detention Centre case they have a full team of officers who are dedicated to the investigation. He also said they can get government funding for extra resources relating to major/serious incidents.

Rosemary said children can be lured into all kinds of things on the internet, unbeknown to the parents, and asked if the police work with communities. Keith said they do go into schools and raise awareness but parents do have to take responsibility and put restrictions in place regarding online activity.

Justin asked how many police officers are active in the Consett area. Keith advised it varies from time to time but in Consett they have a CID unit, a Safeguarding unit, a Response team which can include a sergeant and up to 4 police officers and a Neighbourhood team – today there is 1 police officer and 3 PCSOs. In Consett we deal with an average of 35-40 enquiries in a 24 hour period; that's on top of the investigations most officers are carrying on with. However, if there was a major incident in the area, we can call on other sections such as Traffic and Armed Resources as well as resources from Durham and Chester le Street.

Gary thanked Keith for his presentation and input at the meeting.

5. DVP Budget Allocation 2017/18

Corinne advised that the AB for 2017/18 will be £100k to spend across the three chosen priorities: Employment, enterprise & training, Environment and Health & wellbeing with Children, young people and families as a cross cutting theme.

In addition to the AB we have £9,902 which is allocated to the Youth Fund (YF) with a minimum grant application of £1k and a maximum of £3k.

Corinne asked the Board to decide how they wish to administer the YF. The following proposals were made:

- To make the YF available once for organisations to apply for funding (eg Summer) or to have 2 rounds of funding (eg Summer and Autumn).
- Should applications be reviewed by the whole Board or a through a delegated Youth Fund Grant panel.

Christine asked if this was on top of the cross cutting budget for young people. Corinne advised that the YF is additional money. The £100k is allocated across the chosen priorities and is not equally split between the task groups as the Board agreed earlier this year to review projects on an individual basis. However, the task groups should include something around children, young people and families in their action plans.

Gary suggested that the Board consider one round of applications for this year as we are already into June.

Corinne said that there is the option to increase the YF through allocating of additional money, for example £10k, from the AB to boost the YF amount for example.

Justin asked if the funding is promoted. Gary advised it is promoted but we need to be clear about how much funding is available, the minimum and maximum levels and the deadline for

applications. It was noted that the fund would be promoted widely and that Board Members should take an active role in spreading the word via their own networks.

Jeanette Harold thought it would be best to wait and see what projects come in before allocating extra money so duplication was not created.

Jeanette also asked what contact we have with local employers and organisations regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As some organisations have a statement on CSR and perhaps they can be approached to top up some of our funding pots.

Rosemary said we have a lot of contact with local companies as well as with organisations further afield who are interested in employing people from this area. Regarding CSR, there is money to draw on from industry but some organisations have their own criteria that are not always in line with what we want.

Gary said we have a wide engagement with the business community, particularly small businesses through the Derwentside Business Network (DBN) as we pass on information from the Employment, enterprise and training task group through the network as well.

Christine asked if an applicant has received money from the cross cutting priority element, can they apply to the YF or will they be exempt. Corinne said we tend not to fund an organisation twice in the same financial year. Some organisations that benefit from the AB may apply for funding from the YF for a different proposal. Therefore the Board can decide to add extra criteria stating that if a group/organisation has already applied and been successful then we will not accept any further applications.

After further discussion it was AGREED to have one round of funding for this year and to set up a dedicated Youth Fund Grant panel who would review the applications. Anne-Marie Parkin (Partner Rep), Jeanette Harold (Public Rep) and Cllr Watson (Elected Rep) AGREED to be on the Youth Fund Grant panel.

Corinne advised that in addition to the AB and YF we have Welfare Reform funding of £10k to deliver on specific initiatives around employment, supporting food provision, reducing fuel poverty, etc.

Due to a number of applicants unable to deliver on their projects and some projects being underspent, £34,500.53 has been returned to the Partnership for alternative allocation, dating back as far as 2014, and this amount has been added to the current AB.

In summary, the total budget available to the DVP for 2017/18 and which must be committed by 31 March 2018 is:

AB - £134,500.34 + YF - £9,902 + Welfare Reform - £10,000 = **£154,402.53**

Shelley wondered if some of the returned money could be allocated to the YF as £154k is quite a lot to spread across the three priorities. Gary said the three priority areas are quite large and cover a broad range of topics that attract some fairly high value project ideas. He said we need to see the nature of youth projects coming through first and then review the situation.

6. Task Group Update

Corinne briefly outlined the report and said as the task groups are in the early stages, they have been focusing on their action plans and have received a number of presentations and information to move forward.

Environment

The task group has agreed the following four themes/topics for the coming year:

Environmental Cleanliness, Environmental Improvement, Promoting Public Health through the Environment and Energy Efficiency & Reducing Carbon Emissions.

There are no project proposals at this stage but the group have some potential project ideas such as energy advice, Derwent Valley Street Trees, Pumpkin Rescue, guided walks, an Environment Community Grant pot and many more.

Health & Wellbeing

This group has no project proposals at this stage but have identified a number of action plan themes such as tackling mental health and social isolation issues, increasing activity levels aimed at both older and younger residents to help them reduce excess weight and help reduce smoking and alcohol levels.

Employment, Enterprise & Training

This is always a well-attended task group with a range of businesses and educational organisations attending. The group have agreed 3 main overarching themes to focus their action plan on: employment and business, training, skills and education and opportunities for engaging people into work.

As Chair of the Task Group, Rosemary gave a brief overview on the group's work. They have concentrated on the digital industries as there is a shortage of skilled workforce in this particular industry and the group is keen to progress in this future growth area. The Code Club project was started to get young children involved at an early age and is going very well.

John O (Forum) asked why 'regeneration' has been dropped from the title of the task group as Consett Town Centre is under major threat. Gary advised that although regeneration is not in the title, it is covered in the task group meetings.

Corinne explained that the regeneration of towns and villages element was no longer linked to employment, enterprise and training. In January the Board voted in line with what residents chose in the local priority consultation and 'regeneration' was not voted as a high priority theme, however the task group do get updates on regeneration issues. The Consett Destination Plan was commissioned from last year's priorities when we had regeneration but it is not in the actual remit of the Group this year.

John O (Forum) said he emailed Corinne with a proposal relating to finding out the names and addresses of landowners in Consett town centre and Corinne informed him that as regeneration was not a selected topic, the proposal could not progress. Corinne said there were other reasons listed in the email as to why the proposal would not be considered at this point including the purpose of the exercise. She referred to a presentation, earlier this year, from Stuart Carter from the Spatial Policy Team who advised there would be a refresh of the Consett Masterplan. We are still waiting on timescales for that, therefore the task group chose not to discuss this further until they receive an update.

After further discussions around the survey such as property ownership, lack of resources in the Regeneration Team and whose responsibility it should be to commission the survey, Gary advised that we should wait until we receive the revised plan to see how this proposal would fit. Corinne said we have a dedicated department within the Council that deals with regeneration, albeit with limited resources, however the DVP do not have the authority to go ahead with regeneration based proposals without their support – this reduces duplication and a more targeted use of resources linked to current and future pieces of work.

Cllr Watson asked if would be possible to discuss a town centre board at the task group. Corinne, with consent from John O, discussed the contents of the email between them and advised that the DVP would not support a proposal around a town centre board based on the above update but the idea of a town centre board could be discussed at the next Board meeting.

John O (Forum) referred to the GVA Grimley 2010 report and said none of the recommendations have been done, including setting up a town centre board to drive regeneration and said we need to engage with the property owners first. He suggested we get this data first and advised the cost for a land search is £8 per property.

Corinne said that some of the recommendations had been implemented linked to public realm improvement works but it is the remit of the regeneration team to lead on the wider recommendations, with support from the AAP as a consultee, which may or may not come to fruition – the recommendations in the GVA Grimley report were aspirational.

Rosemary said Cllr Shield volunteered, at the last task group meeting, to talk to Ian Thompson; we are waiting for the outcome of those discussions.

Gary suggested we contact the relevant department and get as much information as possible in readiness for the next board meeting in July.

Rosemary said we need a clear plan as to why we need this information and what we want to do with those properties.

7. DVP Team Summer Outreach 2017

Corinne advised that the DVP normally host a forum in the summer months and this year the team will participate in outreach sessions and attend local events, fun days, etc. So far the team will attend Dipton Fun Day at Dipton Community Centre on 8 July and a Family Fun Day at Leadgate Cricket Club on 16 July. If there are any other events taking place, we would be happy to attend (resources permitting) and we can promote them on our Derwent Valley Life website and Facebook page, Board and Forum members were requested to send details directly to the team.

8. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting

Gary thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 19 July 2017 in the Salvation Army Hall, Consett at 6pm.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: