

DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

A meeting of the **DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD** was held in the Consett Salvation Army Hall, Consett on Wednesday, 19 July 2017 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors

Ivan Jewell, Watts Stelling, Owen Temple and Alex Watson

Partner Organisations

Phillip Curran - Karbon Homes, Joanne Waller - DCC, Anne-Marie Parkin - Durham Community Action, Gary Scott - Derwentside Business Network and Insp Keith Wardle - Durham Constabulary

Public Representatives

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

APOLOGIES:

Cllrs Derek Hicks and Alan Shield - Elected Representatives, Craig Farrage - Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service and Michael Thewlis - Northern Clinical Commissioning Group - Partner Representatives and Donna Summerson - Public Representative

IN ATTENDANCE: Corinne Walton, AAP Co-ordinator and Lynn Dougal, Support Officer

PRESENTERS:

Michelle Gibson, Wellbeing for Life Co-ordinator - Wellbeing for Life Service, Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health - Durham County Council and Graham Wood, Economic Development Manager - Durham County Council

Members of the Public – 7

1. Introductions

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the meeting including Joanne Waller from Durham County Council as a new partner representative and introduced those who were 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. Gary Scott declared an interest in one of the project proposals under the Employment, enterprise and training task group.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (14 June 2017)

P3. Christine Wotherspoon referred to her comments regarding health visitor visits to new mothers and said it should be a 'few' years and not 'many' years and added that although the universal service has reduced, specific needs are still targeted. An amendment has been made to the June minutes to reflect this.

There were no further issues raised and the minutes were AGREED

3. Partner Updates

Michelle Gibson gave a presentation and update on the Wellbeing for Life Service

Wellbeing for Life (WBFL) deliver services in the community to help support people with their health and wellbeing (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

Michelle said if anyone is interested in getting involved with the service or you would like us to deliver something in your community, please get in touch. To contact the Wellbeing for Life service or for more information: telephone: 0800 8799887, email: cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net or visit the website www.wellbeingforlife.net.

Cllr Watson asked if the referrals include those with mental health issues. Michelle said they have health specialist trainers for those who are more in need of support and also do targeted work with particular groups.

Cllr Jewell wanted to know how they encourage sustainability, as people initially access the service through a supported culture and then move on to independence. Michelle said regarding individual clients, they offer people a lot of support and help build up their confidence so they can move on themselves and also signpost people to other services. Regarding groups, from the start they are looking at sustainability in the community by involving Durham Community Action (DCA) and would look at volunteers within a particular group that could keep it going.

Justin Chilton asked how people are made aware of the service. Michelle said they promote the service in a variety of ways such as on buses, a radio campaign, presentations (e.g. AAP meetings) and community groups. We have done targeted leaflet drops (i.e. in a specific area) and get lots of referrals through word of mouth. If anyone has any ideas to help promote the service – we would welcome them.

Brenda Bell (Forum) said the Durham Christian Partnership who runs the Foodbanks work in partnership with WBFL and often refers people to the service. The foodbanks also provide information on other services and signpost people.

Gary thanked Michelle for her presentation and input at the meeting.

Amanda Healy gave a brief talk on her role as Director of Public Health within Durham County Council

Amanda has been in post since the beginning of May and her role encompasses improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of County Durham's residents. Public Health also looks at the environment such as healthy play and how that is developed; preparing for hazards and emergencies, i.e. measles and working with the NHS, ensuring the NHS is prepared as well as commissioned dedicated services such as NHS health checks and school nurses. Her role also includes being an advocate for local residents and advising elected members on health priorities.

Gary thanked Amanda for coming along and introducing herself and hoped that Amanda could link in to the AAP in relation to their current health and wellbeing work.

4. Task Group Update and Project Proposals 2017/18

Corinne gave a brief update on the three task groups and highlighted the contents of the report.

Environment

The task group has explored and chosen a number of themes to develop their action plan and have identified specific project ideas under each theme. A call out for project ideas will go out on 21 July with a deadline for project proposals by 5pm on Friday 8 September 2017. The task group will meet on 19 September and recommended project proposals will be presented to the Board in September for consideration where appropriate.

Health & Wellbeing

This group has identified specific topics against each action plan theme and a call out for project ideas was sent out on 12 July with a deadline for project proposals by 5pm on Friday 1 September

2017. The next task group meeting is 13 September and recommended project proposals will be presented to the Board in September for consideration where appropriate.

Employment, Enterprise & Training

Further to a recent meeting, this group has a number of project proposals that the Board were asked to consider and Rosemary, as Chair of the group, went through the proposals individually:

1. *Primary School and Consett Academy Coding Clubs* – the existing Coding Club project, ran in 10 primary schools in the Derwent Valley area in 2016/17, is highly successful and this project aims to support the remaining 5 primary schools in the DVP area and also Consett Academy to develop an after school Code Club. Funding will be used for training sessions, room hire and equipment (e.g. Microbits, starter kit, inventor kit, essentials kit).

Funding request of £6,600 from the 17/18 Area Budget

Christine asked how much is funded from local education. Rosemary said about 20-25 years ago schools stopped teaching programming, although ICT/computer science is still taught they are not learning how to code. The future is with robotics e.g. in the car industry, robotic surgery, and programmers are needed in this industry. It should be part of the core curriculum but it is not; this project is additional to what they do at school. Other areas in the north east are interested in what we are doing, and in South Tyneside they want to follow our model.

Phillip Marshall (Forum) asked how they will ensure the pupils at Consett Academy (CA), who participate in the project, do not drop off. Rosemary said there are at least 2 representatives of CA who attend this task group and there is a strong development link building with the Academy. Many year 6 children are hoping to carry this on when they go to CA and the Academy want to make as smooth a transition as possible.

Jeannette Harold asked if there is anything we, as an organisation, can do to lobby a curriculum change. Rosemary said there is a major emphasis to change the curriculum and the success of the Coding Club project has spread across the North East, particularly to businesses such as Sage and Accenture and businesses are good at lobbying the Government.

The Board AGREED to fund the above project.

2. *Derwent Valley Leading Businesses Programme* – building on the success of the previously ran project with Derwentside Business Network (DBN) in 2016/17, this project will support small businesses in the Derwent Valley by delivering expert mentoring to accelerate business growth.

Funding request of £9,625 from the 17/18 Area Budget

The Board AGREED to fund the above project.

3. *Girls in Science* – run by RTC North, this project aims to increase girls' interest in science at Consett Academy through a mentoring programme. Students will undertake a 30 week programme (term time) and be matched with an adult female mentor from a science industry or HE who will offer one to one mentoring sessions.

Funding request of £5,750 from the 17/18 Area Budget

Rosemary said girls are underrepresented in life sciences and advised that no girls have enrolled on Physics A' Level at CA. This scheme has been successfully piloted in Central High School, Newcastle and Monkseaton High School.

Shelley O'Brien stated it is a great idea and is shocked to hear that no girls are doing A Level Physics. Shelley enquired about the cost of £350 per head regarding the adult female volunteer,

as volunteers are not normally paid. Rosemary said although the volunteer's time is free, the breakdown per person is as follows: to recruit mentors - £20 (for publicity, travel expenses); training of mentors, venue hire and refreshments - £80; launch event for each person - £15; celebration event - £15; admin costs (monitoring, DBS) - £150; workbook production and printing - £50 and an evaluation report for schools and individual students - £20.

Christine said there is no match funding and no costs for teachers' time. Rosemary said there is a cost for travel that relates to visits and the match funding is from the teachers' time.

Cllr Temple said the amount of teacher time dedicated to projects, i.e. Coding Club, outside of teaching hours is very valuable and as AAPs are targeted on match funding, we need to build in the value of teaching and volunteer time. Corinne advised that when project deliverers complete the full application they are encouraged to include 'in kind' funding where possible.

The Board AGREED to fund the above project.

4. *Start, Sustain and Grow* – delivered by CDC Enterprise Agency, this project provides one to one coaching, training, advice and guidance to assist individuals to overcome barriers to self-employment, business sustainability and growth.

Funding request of £15,750 from the 17/18 Area Budget

Gary clarified the difference between this project and the DBN *Derwent Valley Leading Businesses Programme* above, and said CDC Enterprise Agency's function is to help start up new businesses. They will support businesses for up to 12 months the first time they do anything such as employ staff and buy advertising, whereas DBN support existing businesses with growth potential.

Jeannette asked how they know there is no duplication. Gary said they work closely together and share information to ensure they do not target the same organisations.

Phillip (Forum) wondered if the two projects (Nos 2 and 4 above) could come together as one project. Gary said they are different projects as the 4th project is about supporting start up business whereas the 2nd project is about supporting existing (2 years+) businesses. The completed project application forms will clearly show the differences in these 2 projects

The Board AGREED to fund the above project.

Gary thanked the Chairs of the three task groups for their time and effort in getting projects to the Board.

Communication

Although communication is not a priority for 2017/18, Corinne asked the Board to consider funding the current and well utilised Derwent Valley News magazine from the Area Budget for another 12 months.

A funding request of £9,000 would cover Winter 2017, Spring and Summer 2018 editions.

The Board AGREED to fund the above project.

5. Consett Town Centre Partnership Board

Corinne opened the item with a brief summary regarding a Consett Town Centre Partnership Board (TCPB) which was mentioned in the report created by GVA Grimley consultants back in 2009/2010. The report details that a TCPB would help to implement the Consett Masterplan from a marketing perspective, responsible for developing a marketing strategy, seeking development partners and engaging with national retailers and could also consider planning applications and development proposals. However the report does not set out any specifics in relation to how this

new 'Board' would function or who should be involved. As there is to be a refresh of the Consett Masterplan, led by the Council, it is recommended that the AAP wait for the refresh to see what it produces before any discussions with the community.

Corinne also said a number of Town Centre Panels existed across the County but were wound down prior to the Unitary Council and the development of the AAP structure in 2009. Back in 2013 the DVP helped create a Traders Association for the town centre to help improve the retail offer and increase footfall. It ceased to exist in late 2014 when it felt it had exhausted its aims and achieved what it wanted to do.

Although the DVP does not have regeneration as a priority, the DVP would act as a consultee in the process should our partners wish to take this forward in relation to town centre development.

Graham Wood gave an update on the masterplans and said we are waiting for confirmation on the timeline linked to the Government's Housing Bill to update the County Durham Plan (CDP) as this is the driver for the refresh of the masterplans. The masterplans should be fairly straight forward to refresh as we have been recording a range of information on a quarterly and annual basis, e.g. annual town centre surveys. However as every town is covered by a masterplan we are working on batches of 3 or 4 at a time.

In 2008/09 there were some town centre partnerships around the County but as some of the bigger issues were resolved and retailers faced other pressures, attendance became low and they eventually disbanded. Without a high level of retailers and property owners from the town centre involved, you soon have inertia.

Cllr Stelling said as we cannot do anything until we get confirmation from the government on housing to update the CDP, we need to move on and commented on how poor Consett market is and that a lot of businesses in the town centre are closing. Graham said background work is ongoing in preparation for the refresh of the masterplan and said they will inform AAPs of any updates and timelines in terms of the refresh. He advised that the masterplans are completed internally by the Planning and Policy team and not GVA Grimley.

Regarding Consett market there is an aspiration for a higher quality market and the introduction of a specialist market to supplement the current one. The market is not making as good a contribution to the town centre as it should be and moving forward this will be one of the priorities his team will be making to improve town centre regeneration.

Town centres are changing with a lot of high street names disappearing, especially over the last 10 years. Many retailers are investing in click and collect so there will be opportunities to bring people into the town centres. On another note, regarding the registered vacancy rate across County Durham, he said Consett sits in the middle with a vacancy rate recorded in November 2016 of 8.3% with the GB average around 12.3%.

John O'Connor (Forum) enquired about getting a list of property owners in the town centre. The owners are the capital investors and if there is a revamp of the town centre they could potentially put money in to enhance their own property. Graham said they do contact property owners and through the town centre regeneration strategy and business improvement scheme, a number of jobs have been created in bringing empty buildings back into use.

The discussion then turned to the possibility of setting up a TCPB: who would administer it, who the members would be and what other areas in the county have a TCPB. After a lengthy discussion around the TCPB, no agreement was reached, however a proposal was made for the Board to meet at a one off session, outside of the Board meeting, to discuss this further. Corinne will email the Board with dates.

Gary thanked Graham for his time and input at the meeting.

6. Derwent Valley Partnership Events 2017/18

Due to the meeting not running to schedule, this item will be discussed at the next Board meeting in September, in the meantime, it was agreed that Corinne would circulate an e-mail to all Board members requesting comments/suggestions for forthcoming DVP events such as the Forum and Christmas in Consett. Feedback could then be considered at the next meeting.

7. Any Other Business

DVP priorities for 2018/19

Gary said he attended the County Durham Partnership Forum recently where they discussed, amongst other topics, local priorities/voting and public rep recruitment. At the Forum they considered the possibility of the AAPs retaining their local priorities for 2 years rather than for one year. Gary asked the Board what their thoughts were on this and the Board AGREED they would like to keep the priorities for 2 years so further detail could be explored in relation to each priority and so work could be embedded over a long period of delivery time.

Open Space Survey - AAP Consultation

Corinne advised that DCC is working with Ethos Environmental Planning to undertake an open space and outdoor recreation study, to collect information about how much and what type of open space and recreation facilities are required to meet the needs of local people.

The Board received a copy of the questionnaire in the Board papers and were asked to send any comments to the DVP as soon as possible. From the completed questionnaires / comments, a single response will be sent on behalf of the AAP to Ethos by the closing date on 31 July 2017.

Jeanette asked if the DVP link in with other local partnerships. Corinne advised there is a separate list held by the DVP which details representatives of each of the community partnerships operating within the area, including Leadgate, who are sent information, meeting invites, etc. and the team offer to go to Partnership meetings, fun days, events etc.

Cllr Stelling said the Fun day at Leadgate Cricket Club on Sunday 16 July was a great success with around 3k people attending throughout the day.

Brenda (Forum) said regarding the open space survey there is no mention of the Pont Valley Network, orienteering on the Grove site and the Land of Oak & Iron. Corinne stated that she would supply Brenda with the information so a consultation submission could be put forward by those groups if they wished.

8. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting

Gary thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 September 2017 in the Salvation Army Hall, Consett at 6pm.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: