



Minutes of Board Meeting

Board Members Present:

Cllr A Laing
 Cllr L Taylor
 Cllr A Napier
 Cllr A Surtees
 Cllr L Kennedy
 Parish Cllr M Oliver
 D Liversidge
 B Smithson
 J Lane
 M Fallow
 S Robson
 T Balbach
 S Baxter
 J Griffiths

Also in Attendance: I Moran, L Wolfe

Forum Attendance:
 J Baxter, S Mcinally, S Scotchbrook, C Gebski, A Moon, C Bell, S Bell, A Liversidge, C Wilson

Apologies:
 Cllr S McDonell (dispensation)
 R Hardy
 E Connor
 L King
 M Doyle
 P Innes

Topic / Discussion / Actions

AAP Board Meeting

1. Introductions and Apologies

AS opened the meeting, started the introductions and welcomed today's presenters.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed as an accurate account - Seconded by Cllr Audrey Laing.

2a. Matters Arising

AS brought item 6.c from page 8 of the previous minutes regarding the Business Representative Vacancy. Due to sick leave and holidays, this item will now be discussed at the October meeting.

Following on from the same point AS introduced Julie Griffiths, from Murton Community Club to the Board as the new Public Representative Co-optee.

3. Presentations

3.1 Welfare Reform – Cllr Jane Brown



item 3.1 East
Durham AAP - Welfa

- Countries highest rates of unemployment are in the north east, coupled with slow economic growth and lowest disposable Income less than the national average leaving families in fuel poverty and a widening child poverty gap are just some of challenges faced by DCC in the face of austerity and welfare reform.
- Durham works created to tackle unemployment and promote employment opportunities, AAP's supporting wheels to work scheme and DCC have created 51 apprenticeships across all areas of the county.
- Advice in County Durham Partnership supported to promote social inclusion and Citizens advice funded.
- Economic growth and investment can be seen in Hitachi and Netpark Sedgefield. 43% of all recent inward investment has been in the east of the county.
- DCC are only one of 2 councils still to fund the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and there were 8500 Discretionary Housing Payment awards made with DCC providing a £100,000 top to up to the scheme as it was overspent.
- Welfare rights funding was increased.
- Family and Child poverty go hand in hand, a child cannot be in poverty unless family are too. Many schemes are in place to tackle this i.e. specialist welfare assistance project officers, Recycle School Uniforms, Holiday hunger programme and work being carried out regarding the take up of free school meals.
- Welfare assistance also continue to provide food baskets where residents can pick items ranging from food, sanitary products and nappies – a scheme other councils have abolished.
- Universal Credit – DCC has completed a lot of research into this with all staff fully trained. DCC provide IT Access, sign posting, advice and form completion for residents. Since the roll out 5027 residents have been helped which includes 616 in Peterlee and 418 from Seaham. Cllr Brown feels staff should be commended on their work and praised the joint working of DCC and the DWP.
- Cllr Brown is very proud of what DCC have committed to and achieved with the assistance given to residents as it's the right thing to do.

Questions were requested from the Board :

Cllr L Kennedy:

Q: Are any residents eligible for the Wheels to Work scheme?

A: No – this scheme is for Durham Works clients only.

Q: With regards to Discretionary Housing Payments and Housing Solutions service—are those with Mortgages eligible for help?

A: SR, absolutely, Housing Solutions welcome any referrals and can support all residents.

Cllr A Napier

AN thank JB for her presentation and spoke to group to warn that welfare Reforms were introduced to cut public spending. Since the reforms, words like foodbanks and destitute have become commonplace. As a council moving forward, faced with further cuts, this will exacerbate current problems and budget cuts will have a knock on effect on our capacity levels to deliver assistance to the most financially vulnerable in society. We will become more reliant on the VCS to fill this gap, and he cannot see a solution to the problem and feels we are being stretched more to the tipping point.

AS thanks JB for her presentation and is comforted by the Support Services DCC have put in place.

3.2 Advice in County Durham Partnership – Sam Scotchbrook



item 3.2 AICD
Presentation - Septe

- Advice in County Durham is a partnership of local advice providers, committed to working together to improve the provision of advice across County Durham.
- Partnership board members are Durham Community Action, Durham County Council, Citizens Advice County Durham, Age UK County Durham, Durham Christian Partnership (Durham Foodbanks and Durham Money Advice Centre), and representatives from the housing sector.
- There are 170 networking partners within the organisation whom they can refer the public to for advice.
- All of these organisation's offer free and independent advice on issues including debt, welfare benefits, employment, discrimination and housing.
- The partnership aims to redesign access routes to advice by joining up provision in simple pathways to ensure that there is 'no wrong door' when it comes to helping clients. Ensuring earlier intervention, reduced waiting times and faster response.
- Monthly training is arranged for members to raise the quality of advice / signposting for UC, Benefits, ESA, PIP etc.
- Bi-Monthly networking meetings are held to promote the joint working which is at the heart of the partnership.

- Joining is completely free and allows access to the safe and secure online referral portal. This avoids duplication for the individual, promotes joint agency working and offers a seamless transition between partners.
- 400 referrals were made through the portal last quarter with 60 organisation's taking referrals via the portal.
- A recent success has been the co-location of services in the 'Stanley Advice Hub' which includes Citizens advice, welfare rights and Durham Money Advice Centre.

3.3 Welfare Rights – Scott McNally



Item 3.2.1 Welfare Rights- East Durham

- The Welfare Rights team works across the county and is made up of the following Welfare Rights Officers:
- Campaign Team – currently taking a pro-active approach by contacting residents with regards to ensuring they have the correct pension credits in place. 600 have been contacted so far with 30% of those now securing the correct pensions credits. From these phone calls the whole family are being offered a full benefit check.
- Housing Solutions, Suicide Prevention, McMillan Partnership Working, YP Services, Supported Accommodation / Learning Disabilities and Casework and Appeals Officers all complete home visits, telephone support, form filling handholding and promote joint working for the benefit of residents.
- The Casework/Appeals officer has raised over £5m
- Universal Credit/PIP are the main issues for residents due to the big recent changes and the consequences they have brought.
- Training provided around UC has been fundamental in equipping staff to deal with all changes.
- Scott gave praise to East Durham Trust for the work they carry out for East Durham residents.

Questions:

Cllr Alan Napier :

Q: How does the campaign team get past the issues of privacy when contacting people regarding pension credits, as some residents are often unwilling to discuss this.

A: Officer ask if person is in receipt of Attendance Allowance as way in, as this is a gateway benefit.

AN gave thanks to for the presentations and would recommend the welfare rights training sessions.

Cllr Angela Surtees

A: How many members of Advice in County Durham are within the East Durham Area?

Q: Sam did not know but will obtain figures and forward on. - **Action**

Leanne Kennedy

Q: is the Stanley Advice Hub a 5 days a week service?

A: No the advice hub offers 3 drop in sessions per week, Mondays, Tuesday's and Thursdays. Details are taken and then referrals are made.

Q: Are you looking to open a similar hub in East Durham?

A: No – as this initiative is funded by Stanley Town Council
SB thought that the integration of the models of the Advice Hub and the PACT House which is also in Stanley, could work for East Durham.

Cllr Alan Napier –

Due to varying tiers within our society and increasing pressure on capacity levels, DCC priorities will need to be reprioritised due to cuts. The services talked about have massive positives and going forward there will be more potential / reliance on the VCS.

Cllr Angela Surtees

Q: Can income or contributions based ESA, which is a legacy benefit still be applied for or is this now under Universal Credit?

A: If using the helpline this would lead to the person having to apply for UC only however Welfare Rights, having supported people with this in the past and have now a form which can be completed to apply for ESA only.

Q: It is clear the system is not right for all the people. All should become members of the Advice in County Durham, the information is invaluable.

3.4 ED Solutions Community Coaches Update – Malcolm Fallow



Item 3.3 East
Durham Solutions C

- 2nd year of Project – going well.
- Year 2 Coordinator Ian Thubron recruited
- 11 New volunteers recruited from a target of 16
- 157 interventions to date since April with a target of 300 for the year
- New venues identified for coaches
- 10 existing Community Venues supported
- Regular referrals made to and from many different services
- Project is funded by the AAP

MF discussed a case study of a client and her husband who was injured serving aboard and needed to be re-homed and subsequently moved onto Universal Credit. This left the family with no money since June. The community Champion supported family with food parcels, advice and now will have their first UC payment on Tuesday. This case study highlights how one issue throws light on many more such as families' lack of money for school uniform or bedding etc. The VCS are needed to be more involved than ever to support these issues and the Community Champions were derived from this. Local people trust local people and a large proportion of the community will not ring help lines or go on websites so trusted face to face support is invaluable.

MF: gave thanks to the AAP Board for having the foresight to fund this project and will be trying to seek other funding to carry the project into the 3rd year.

AS: gave thanks to MF for co-ordinating this worthwhile project which goes above and beyond especially with the investment and training in the volunteers.

BS: highlighted his Café Together project in Easington

- AAP Supported
- Provides 35 adults on Thursdays with a hot meal
- Regular contact with Children
- During the summer holidays this increased to 64 – 78 people
- This has grown from an initial 12 people.
- This highlights the growing reality of food poverty in East Durham.

AS: This is only one community out of many in East Durham, where by the locality of the project suits the residents.

AN: Can you imagine if these projects were not in place? This has been the foresight of the trust and board to put these in place, Money to spend is a starting point but a collective approach is need with regards to affordability / sustainability and how to address current priorities to protect the most vulnerable in society.

AS: gave thanks to all for their time and excellent presentations.

4. Police Feedback – Sara Baxter Acting Neighbourhood Insp. Peterlee Police

- It has been a busy summer seeing successful operations on drug dealing in Horden. This has been a focus for the police to remove people who are causing problems in identified areas such as the numbered streets.
- Wingate has seen high levels of violence and lots of work has been completed around this, which has been well received by residents.
- With the onset of the dark nights, there has been an increase in burglaries, in particular those to sheds in Murton. 2 suspects were arrested but unfortunately subsequently released. SB urged community to ring police or crimestoppers as more evidence is needed. Patrols have been increased the Murton area.
- A more pleasing statistic is victim based crimes are down slightly.
- All Staff are to be directed towards dark night issues, as this can have an impact on the number of burglaries etc. Trying to be pro-active rather than reactive.
- Some issues are connected to Universal Credit SB would be interested to see how this has impacted figures on anti-social behaviour, burglaries etc.

Questions

Cllr Leanne Kennedy

Q: Seaham and Dalton le Dale councils have applied for funding to install solar powered CCTV, hopefully this will help with reduction in crime

A: SB said this has helped in other areas. Fencing has been installed to alleviate run offs from off road bike issues. Partnership working is necessary with regards to anti-social crimes as intelligence is needed.

Cllr Alan Napier

Q: With regards to public response as there is a lack of return as they believe they are not seen as a priority.

A: This is due to underfunding and having to prioritise incidents. Threat to life incidents are always attended and 80% are within time scale. Off-road biking not seen as a main issue, vulnerable victims are. Force are held to account over these statistics and they cannot please everyone in today's climate but a target of 5-9 days has been set to contact victims back. Chaotic families take up a lot of police time. We do need information so please keep ringing in to the 101 number.

5. Questions from the public/Emerging Community Issues

Questions to be taken but answered at next meeting.

6. Priority Group Feedback

- 6a) **Children and Young People** – Nothing to report as No CYP Priority group has been held since last board meeting.
- 6b) **Maintaining the Social Fabric of Our Community** - Nothing to report as No MSFOOC Priority group has been held since last board meeting.
- 6c) **Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing** – Apologies were received from E Connor however a meeting took place on the 4th September, the minutes were read accepted as a true record.

6. AAP Admin

Board welcomes Ian Moran standing in for John Murphy and presenting the co-ordinators report and answer any questions.



September 2018 NB
Summary.xlsx

a) Neighbourhood Budget applications requiring approval

- **Project name:** Storage Containers for Groups
Councillors : Cllr A Napier, Cllr J Maitland
Project cost : £2,800 NB request £2,800
Background : To purchase a storage container for the use of community groups to store their equipment. To be sited in Murton Welfare Park.
Conflict of Interest: – Cllr Napiers wife and Cllr Maitlands husband is on the parish council.
Outcome: Conflict of interest noted and approval given
- **Project name:** External defibrillator & seating
Councillors : Cllr S Morrison, Cllr G Bleasdale
Project cost : £4,350 NB request £4,350
Background : To purchase/ install an externally public access defibrillator at the Seaham Town Hall. Project includes installation of picnic benches in the Town Park.
Conflict of Interest: – Cllr Bleasdale is also a town councillor
Outcome: Conflict of interest noted and approval given

b) Neighbourhood Budget Applications noted :

- **Project name:** Horden Methodist Church Window Improvements Phase 1
Councillors : Cllr J Clark, Cllr I Mclean
Project cost : £4,968 NB request £3,000
- **Project name:** Replacement Instruments
Councillors : Cllr E Huntington
Project cost : £1,500 NB request £1,500
- **Project name:** Castle Eden Cricket Club Grass Cutter
Councillors : Cllr R Crute, Cllr L Pounder
Project cost : £2,650 NB request £2,000
- **Project name:** Building Improvements
Councillors : Cllr A Surtees, Cllr D Boyes
Project cost : £1,000 NB request £1,000

c) Area Budget



EDAAp area budget
PDF.pdf

Two applications are to be presented tonight and were sent out within the board papers on Monday. These are for Durham Deafened Support and Supportiv Volunteer Drivers scheme. We are happy to take discussion tonight or we can defer to the next

meeting to allow everyone more time to have been received for the area budget, they are

Discussions took place around timescales of bids and previous practice of a having a board funding group in place which consisted of the Chair and 2 vice chairs whom would meet prior to board meeting to discuss benefits and ratify any bids received.

Action: Following discussions the board decided to defer the 2 applications to the next meeting with and look to form a funding group before the next board meeting.

d) Co-ordinator Report



Item 7 Coordinator
Report.docx

OPSIF

Building on comments made at the last board meeting the following two proposals are in place:

1. The Way Forward for this fund is to create a Panel of 5 Chairs of MSFOOC Health and 1 other from each group along with the AAP Chair
2. Commission a piece of research to map existing support, hotspots of isolation, what barriers they face, perceptions of isolation and outcomes. This would allow the panel of 5 to have a better understanding and direct projects. Durham University have approached with an idea on how to gain this information.

AN: agreed that an independent view point would be of benefit – board in agreement to progress with the research proposal.

IM: asked board to discuss and agree costs and methodology at the October meeting.

JL: Equal methodology should be used across all AAP areas. With group having overview regionally for fairness.

TM: offered to sit on the sub group if needed.

IM: Money for research could come from the OPSIF monies or the area budget with up to £10,000. Would the board like to give direction on the amount ?

AN: Flexibility is needed with this, go back to the funders and ask where they see this money coming from. **Action**

MO: If a PHD student is there – this research could be for free.

AS: the impact of Universal Credit etc. on social isolation could also be included. In other areas wellbeing for life have been completing work like this. Existing provision/research could also be explored.

Action: IM to bring updated plan for the OPSIF funding including research costs to the October meeting.

Year of culture steering group

Following a brief discussion around this no interest was shown.

Action: AS will put her name forward for the group.

World Heritage Site

University of Durham are conducting research into how people feel about Durham becoming a world heritage site and volunteers are sought for a focus group. A cohort of 4 people spending 1 – 1.5 hours having a conversation around Durham Castle / Cathedral and feeding into views/information. East Durham could assist with this and Durham University will pay room hire costs etc. Could be interesting for local historical groups to become involved.

Action: John Lane and B Smithson registered their interest in being involved with this. LW to ask forum members also.

It's Up to You – PB Event

John Murphy would like to propose a potential Forum "It's up to you PB event" Would the board be interested in this? The last PB event in the area was 2013.

AS: discussions on this to be deferred to October meeting.

AAP Priority Survey's

These are now live for completion on the DCC website. It was also discussed to provide local venues with paper copies to maximise participation. **Action**

5. Any Other Business

AS: The County Durham partnership forum meeting is to be held 10th October 9:30 – 12:30. Which has a Mental Health and Childrens and Young Peoples theme. 2 places have been reserved with AS attending, if anyone else would like to attend with her please ring the office.

DL: The Hazelwell Centre of are having a display on the 28th September commemorating the 95 men and boys whom lost their lives in the pit disaster.

Action: DL to pass on information and LW to share with the forum.

10. Time and Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 10th October 2018 6:00pm – 8:00pm
The Hazwell Centre, Haswell, DH6 2DY

Summary of Actions:

- **SS:** To obtain figures on East Durham Members of Advice in County Durham and forward on to AS
- **IM:** Following discussions the board decided to defer the 2 applications to the next meeting with and look to form a funding group before the next board meeting.
- **IM:** to bring updated plan for the OPSIF funding including research costs to the October meeting. IM to also ask OPSIF Funders where the research money should come from.
- **AS:** Put name forward for the steering group on Year of Culture.
- **LW:** J Lane and B Smithson registered their interest in being involved with the world heritage site. LW to ask forum members also.
- **IM/LW:** provide local venues with paper copies of AAP Priorities Survey to maximise participation.
- **DL:** to pass on information on Hazewell centre events and **LW** to share with the forum.