

DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

A meeting of the **DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP BOARD** was held in Consett Salvation Army Hall on Wednesday, 30 January 2019 at 5.30pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors

Derek Hicks, Ivan Jewell, Alan Shield, Watts Stelling, Owen Temple and Alex Watson (Chair).

Partner Organisations

Mark Clelland - Derwentside Trust, Rachel Rooney - Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Gary Scott - Do Business Network (DBN), Joanne Waller – Durham County Council (DCC) and Insp Keith Wardle – Durham Constabulary.

Public Representatives

Marlene Boyles, Jeannette Harold, Helen Marley, Shelley O'Brien and Donna Summerson.

APOLOGIES:

Craig Farrage - Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service - Partner Representative.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Corinne Walton - AAP Co-ordinator, Kath Clements - Community Development / Project Officer, Lynn Dougal - Support Officer.

PRESENTERS:

Mike Allum – Durham County Council, Jon Carling – Office of the Durham Police, Crime & Victims' Commissioner (PCVC), Rachel Rooney – CCG on Shotley Bridge Hospital and Graham Wood - Durham County Council.

Members of the Public – 31

1. Introductions

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced those who were giving a presentation. Board members introduced themselves and apologies were noted as above – Cllr Temple said he would be leaving early due to another engagement.

There was one declaration of interest from Cllr Shield regarding the Welfare Reform proposal from the Durham Christian Partnership.

Cllr Watson reminded everyone that we have a very tight schedule to get through this evening and asked that each agenda item is kept to time.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (17 October 2018)

There were no issues raised/matters arising and the minutes were AGREED.

As Mike Allum from Durham County Council was delayed, the meeting moved onto the next item on the agenda.

3. PCVC Police Precept Consultation

Jon Carling, Head of Policy and Communication in the Office of the PCVC gave a presentation on the Police Precept 2019/20 and is joined by his colleague Gary Ridley, Chief Finance Officer (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

Jon said that Ron Hogg, (Police, Crime and Victim's Commissioner) sends his apologies that he could not be at the meeting as he is attending another consultation meeting.

Before the presentation, Jon gave everyone a copy of the questionnaire, which is to get the public's views on increasing the police precept and asked if they could be completed this evening.

Every January, a public consultation exercise about the policing element of council tax and the policing precept takes place. Ron has been lobbying government for a fair funding settlement for policing for a number of years and has met ministers and written to them.

Ron is proposing to increase the police precept by 13.24% which would see an increase in council tax of £16 per year for Band A properties and an increase of £24 per year for Band D properties. The proposed increase would help protect services and keep police officer numbers at the current level.

The consultation ends on 31 January 2019 and more information about Durham PCVC can be found online at <https://www.durham-pcc.gov.uk/Home.aspx>.

Cllr Shield asked what proportion of the 13.24% is going to be allocated to the shortfall within the police pension. Gary Ridley said in the coming year they are getting an extra £2.9m from the government to fund the deficit in the police pension. The increase in council tax will be spent on keeping police officer and staff numbers the same and not for the police pension deficit.

Cllr Shield also asked for clarification of staff membership in the PCVC's office as Northumberland has a staff allocation of around 11/12 whereas Durham has 18. Jon said he is not sure where those figures have come from but staff numbers in the Northumberland PCVC's office is 21.

Jeanette Harold asked what effect the reduction in police officers is having on the crime rate, prosecutions, etc. Jon said the crime rate did come down in the early part of the decade but has increased significantly over the last 2/3 years. This is partly due to the way crimes are recorded and people's confidence in the police in reporting crimes. If police officer numbers decrease further and the public are less likely to report crimes because they feel nothing will be done, then crime rates and prosecutions may increase.

Cllr Watson thanked Jon for his presentation and for attending the meeting.

4. County Durham Plan Consultation – Pre-Submission Draft Plan and Housing Strategy

Mike Allum, Spatial Policy Manager gave a presentation on the Housing Strategy, the Homelessness Strategy and the County Durham Plan (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

The Housing Strategy aims to consider housing issues across the county, work in partnership to help create sustainable places for people to live and work in and ensure the council and its partners are well positioned to access funding opportunities.

The Homelessness Strategy aims to prevent homelessness through early intervention, provide suitable accommodation and offer support services to reduce the risk of homelessness.

The Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy are out for consultation and can be viewed at www.durham.gov.uk/future. Consultation forms are also available in libraries and customer access points.

The County Durham Plan (CDP) sets out planned development, such as housing, schools, healthcare, employment, transport and the environment until 2035. The Council is consulting on the Pre-Submission Draft of the CDP, with this version of the plan only minor changes are allowed. For more information and to have your say, visit <https://www.durham.gov.uk/cdp>.

To find out more about the Strategies and the CDP, a drop-in event is being held in St Patrick's Church Hall, Consett on 15 February between 4.00 – 7.00pm.

The consultations end on 8 March 2019.

The document will be submitted to the Inspector in June 2019, the Examination in Public is likely to be in the autumn 2019 with adoption in Spring/Summer 2020.

Gary Scott said as part of the plan focuses on development of the A1/A19 corridors, he would like to see more emphasis on the infrastructure for this area. Also the DBN engages with around 120 small businesses on a daily basis and he would like to have some consultation on behalf of the small business community.

Mike said infrastructure is key and there is a focus on the A1/A19 corridors as this is where they get enquiries from investors, but it is not at the exclusion of the rest of the county. The CDP is one part of the picture as we also have Business Durham which can help employers as well. A key infrastructure they are looking at is the northern relief road which will make it easier to get to Consett from the A1.

Regarding small businesses, Mike said they are doing events at breakfast meetings across the county and if you would like them to attend, he asked Gary to get in touch.

Cllr Shield asked what the difference is between the previous CDP (which was rejected by the Inspector) and this CDP. Mike said the key difference relates to the housing numbers. In the last CDP they had a method of estimating how many houses they needed, and they built in an employment led aspect to that. There was a target of 30,000 jobs in the last CDP which was quite ambitious and was one of the criticisms the inspector had last time. For housing numbers this time, we have used the government methodology which means challenging this area would be more difficult.

Mike also said the other criticisms in the last CDP was the amount of green belt deletions and we have halved the number in this CDP as there is about 2.5k less houses in the green belt.

Cllr Jewell asked how realistic and achievable the housing figures are and noted that approximately a quarter of planning applications that were approved, were not taken up by developers. He also said that whilst a lot of people acknowledge we need more houses, no one wants them 'in their back garden'. Regarding affordable housing, he said the developer is asking the housing association to buy some of the properties to make it affordable.

Mike said regarding the housing figures, there are a lot of sites in the county that have planning permission and realise not all of them will be developed. We have a discount in there, which is quite technical, which assumes that 10% will not happen, therefore this is built into the figures. With regards to new housing, it is an emotive area and sometimes we cannot do much about that, but we may increase planting or allow areas for public access for example. Houses have to be built somewhere and we have to meet those figures, or the plan could be thrown out when we go for examination later this year. Regarding affordable housing, that is one method that the developers use. They go into partnership with housing associations to get them to deliver the affordable housing element, but it will depend on the size and suitability of the site.

Cllr Temple asked how the northern relief road will benefit people in this area. Mike said one of the options for the northern relief road would be from the A691 by Lanchester Road Hospital, across to Rotary Way at the Arnison Centre and then directly to the A690 close to the A1.

Cllr Watson thanked Mike for the presentation and for answering the questions.

5. Healthcare in Derwentside

Rachel Rooney gave a brief update on Shotley Bridge Hospital (SBH).

Rachel said back in November 2018 they had anticipated they would be engaging with the public about SBH, unfortunately they have not started the process yet.

Following feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other partners, there was concerns about the level of detail that was provided and limitations around the discussions that was planned which has caused the delay.

Rachel gave a brief overview of what would be involved in the engagement process. They anticipate going back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February/March and begin engagement with the public soon after.

In summary:

- They have identified a need for a community hospital and to provide a facility in the area.
- The area they are looking at would be in postcode areas DH7, DH8, DH9, NE16 and NE17 and happy to have discussions to see if this is the right population area.
- A lot of debate is around what we call the area and ideas include Derwent Valley and District.
- They see a need for an outpatient's services within this area and need to discuss this with the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) about ensuring those services are available locally. They have taken into consideration growing populations but in general, reliance on outpatient facilities is decreasing – regionally and nationally.
- They would like to provide chemotherapy and urgent care facilities.
- There is no fixed view on the type and number of beds that we have in the local facility.
- There needs to be a discussion about theatre provision including workforce issues and the financial element.
- Endoscopy services need to be looked into as these services have changed over the years. Endoscopy is not just used as a diagnostic tool but also used in intervention.
- They would like to provide diagnostic services, e.g. x-ray facilities and ultrasound.

Rachel said they want to ensure there is enough information for the public to make informed decisions and would like to present the data/information in a meaningful and relevant way. They will be engaging with the public through presentations and events in the near future. Rachel pointed out they will not be having a discussion around location at this stage because they cannot be specific about sites. However, in the engagement process they will be looking at access and transport links.

It is envisaged that formal consultation will begin in July for a period of 12 weeks and included in the consultation will be options around possible sites. Following the consultation period, the feedback will be analysed to ensure they can provide quality services and they are financially sustainable.

John Shaw (Forum) said at the September Board meeting he was concerned about the parallels between SBH and the location of Consett Academy consultations and his comments were not recorded. He also wondered how the results of the consultation will affect the decision-making process and how can we be sure that the comments made will not be ignored.

Rachel said the CCG are accountable to NHS England and they have a number of tests they have to meet. They have to be satisfied we have engaged and consulted extremely well and that we utilise that feedback to inform future decision making. Also, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise the process and content for engagement and consultation and if they feel we have not used the information correctly, we can be referred to the Secretary of State. Rachel referred to Rothbury Hospital where the decision made there was taken to the Secretary of State and they had to redo their consultation process.

Cllr Shield said Cllrs Jewell and Watson and himself are part of the Shotley Bridge Reference Group (SBRG) and meet with NHS officers on a regular basis. He also said at a recent meeting they discussed the funding of £16m which has been allocated for the provision and that further discussions need to take place on the location, especially as the infrastructure within this area is congested. Rachel said they do want to discuss accessibility as that is key to any future decision making.

Andy Plant (Forum) asked for clarification about the diminishing reliance on outpatients. Rachel said the data shows the number of outpatient appointments year on year, in hospitals across County Durham, are reducing. This could be due to more appointments being held in local GP practices and fewer follow up/review appointments being made. We can also utilise technology for outpatient appointments such as Skype calls or telephone calls. However, we still feel there is a need for outpatient facilities locally.

Mike Clark (Forum) asked if the post codes are going to be used for the purpose of working out patient requirements or for analysing the location regarding provision. Rachel said they have used the post codes to look at specific data around who is using services currently at SBH.

Cllr Watson said there will be further debate during the engagement process as well as at the meetings with the SBRG and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Watson thanked Rachel for her input at the meeting.

6. AAP Priorities 2019/20

Corinne went through the AAP Priorities report which gives details of the DVP priority voting consultation that took place in November 2018. Local residents and children and young people were asked to vote for their top 3 priorities for the DVP to focus on in the coming year.

The results of the voting exercise are as follows:

395 local residents voted online and at Party in the Park in July 2018:

Priority	Frequency	Percent
Children, young people and families	231	62%
Health and wellbeing	153	41%
Older people	131	35%
Community safety	117	32%
Local environment	113	30%
Employment, enterprise and training	111	30%

Supporting local groups	95	26%
Transport, traffic and roads	63	17%
Culture, tourism and heritage	59	16%
Communication, IT and technology	20	5%
Total	1093	294%

32 responses were received from children and young people, which was a disappointing result:

Priority	Frequency	Percent
Transport, traffic and roads	13	52%
Children, young people and families	11	44%
Employment, enterprise and training	11	44%
Health and wellbeing	9	36%
Communication, IT and technology	8	32%
Community safety	8	32%
Local environment	6	24%
Older people	4	16%
Culture, tourism and heritage	1	4%
Supporting local groups	1	4%
Total	72	288%

With regards to the transport, traffic and roads priority, comments made from young people included issues around road crossings and road safety.

The Board were asked to decide which priorities they would like the DVP to focus on and whether they would like to keep the priorities for one or two years.

Although we do not have confirmation on the amount of Brea budget (AB) for 2019/20, the Board were asked if they wished to split the AB equitably between the task groups or review each project proposal on its merit.

Cllr Watson said retaining priorities for 2 years had worked well and he is in favour of doing this again.

Jeanette Harold said if we are wanting to involve young people we should acknowledge that we hear what they are saying and that we will endeavour to get their concerns addressed.

Shelly O'Brien said it is disappointing to hear of the low response from the children at Consett Academy, especially as the school has received a lot of funding from the DVP.

Regarding the priority voting, Shelley wondered if 'Older People', could be funded through the Older Persons Social Isolation Fund (OPSIF) rather than the AB. She also suggested Children, young people and families, Health and wellbeing, Community Safety, Employment, enterprise and training and Transport, traffic and roads are considered as priorities to take forward.

Gary said the current priorities (Environment, Health and wellbeing, Employment, enterprise and training) are well established and wondered if children, older people and transport could be cross cutting and the task groups could focus on projects that address these priorities. He also said keeping the priorities for 2 years is more efficient and likely to have a bigger impact.

Corinne clarified the Board AGREED to retain Employment, enterprise and training, Environment and Health and wellbeing as 3 priorities with cross cutting projects linked to older people,

community safety, transport and children, young people and families within those priorities. Corinne said when the task groups develop their action plans they will come back to the Board and the Board will then need to be clear that the themes and other areas have been captured.

Regarding allocating the 2019/20 AB, the Board AGREED to split the AB equally between the 3 task groups.

Brenda Bell (Forum) said the 32 young people's priority votes came from the Explorer Scouts in Consett and St Bede's School.

7. Welfare Reform project proposals

Corinne briefly discussed the Welfare Reform proposals, which the Board had received copies of prior to the meeting. A budget of £10k is available for projects that addresses the impact of welfare reform within local communities. The Board received 2 proposals in September 2018 from Wheels to Work and Age UK County Durham and decided at the October 2018 meeting to decline both proposals and opt for a call out of project proposals.

A call out was undertaken in November 2018 with a closing date for expressions of interest on 11 January 2019.

Six project proposals were received as follows:

Name of Project	Deliverer	Project Summary	Requested Funding / Match Funding
Durham Savers	Durham County Council	To part fund a project officer to help people to manage their money and save regularly.	£10,000 / £22,000
Age UK Information and Advice Service	Age UK County Durham	The funding will be used to assist older people in welfare matters through home visits, telephone advice line and drop-in service.	£10,000 / £15,081
ALT Time Bank	The ALT Group	The funding will be used to purchase a computer and two tablets plus software and membership to Timebank UK to run using their Time Banking system.	£9,915 / £7,415
Consett Advice Hub	Advice in County Durham (DCA)	The funding will be used to create an integrated advice service in Consett under a common Advice in County Durham brand.	£10,000 / £10,000
Building Self Belief Training and Workshop	Building Self Belief CIO	The funding will be used to provide a 12-week programme for Y9 students at Consett Academy and attend workshops with their parents to help access employment through training and self-development.	£7,800 / £2,800
Foodbank Money and Debt Advisor	Durham Christian Partnership	The funding will be used to provide a debt advice service within the foodbank on two drop-in sessions a week.	£10,000 / £2,050

Not all of the projects have asked for the full £10k and the Board were asked whether they would like to part fund or fully fund a project proposal.

After a brief discussion the Board then voted on which proposal they would like to fund and AGREED to fund the Consett Advice Hub.

8. Co-ordinators report

Corinne said she will keep the format of the co-ordinators report that Derek Snaith introduced and briefly discussed the report.

DCC Vision Consultation Stage 2

DCC is looking to change the current vision and its Altogether Better themes and is seeking the views from residents, partners, elected and community representatives.

The DVP has undertaken a number of vision focus groups in 2018 and a further 2 focus groups were held in January 2019 with a presentation shown to those who attended the meeting.

Information collated from the focus groups has been submitted to the consultation process and a further consultation on the new draft 'vision' is planned for February/March 2019.

Youth Fund

A call out for projects went out in October 2018, which included the additional criteria linked to drug and alcohol misuse, with a deadline for applications of 14 December 2018.

The Board agreed to create a Youth Panel to review the applications which included Jeanette Harold, DVP Public Representative, Councillor Joanne Carr, Jessica Wray, Karbon Homes and Joy Evans, DCC Public Health. The panel met on 8 January to review the 4 applications that had been received.

The funding of £9,902 has been allocated to the following:

Consett Rugby Club - drug and alcohol awareness training, received a proportion of their request of £1,952.04,
Spartan Performance - Motivate Programme, received their full request of £2,220.00,
Building Self Belief CIO - Building Self Belief Confidence Building Programme, received their full request of £2,925.00 and
Harbour Support Services - Escape The Trap, received their full request of £2,804.96.

Task Group updates

Employment, Enterprise and Training (EET)

The task group is looking to allocate funding to a digital skills training project for people over 50 linked to the OPSIF. The training will help with employment or self-employment prospects.

A project proposal has been received which will bring a cycle festival to Consett Town Centre on 23 June 2019. The event would start and finish in the town centre and live coverage will be shown on Eurosport. Additional activities will also be held including live music and entertainment.

Health and Wellbeing (HAWB)

The task group are keen to explore data around mental health particularly suicides in Derwentside.

Regarding the defibrillator project, Corinne and Kath Clements met with Alex Mason from the North East Ambulance Service to discuss information and guidance packs and training provision for those wishing to purchase/install/maintain defibrillators. Once these resources are available, they can be shared with groups wishing to explore the provision of a defib in their community.

Environment (Enviro)

The task group would like to explore the climate change and sustainability theme within their action plan such as reducing carbon emissions, single use plastics, etc and hoping to do some work in this area moving forward.

The group is currently focusing on the OPSIF project development which will be used for local communities to apply for a small grant linked to environmental projects to engage older residents, aiming to improve mental health and wellbeing and reduce loneliness.

Public Representative Recruitment

There are 2 vacancies on the DVP Board and a recruitment campaign will commence in March 2019. The deadline for applications will be 12 April and interviews are planned for week commencing 29 April.

Information relating to the vacancy opportunities will be circulated to community groups, Forum members and partners and will be advertised in the Derwent Valley News spring edition, on Derwent Valley Life website and on the DVP Facebook page.

Area Budget expenditure

To date the Board has allocated funding to 13 projects and the balance for 2018/19 is £5,482.33.

A project proposal, within the EET task group, has been requested to fund the Consett Cycle Festival which is also linked to helping us deliver some action points linked to the Consett Destination Plan. The request is for £10k but as we do not have enough funds in the AB this year, the Board may wish to fund £5k from the 2018/19 AB and a new request of £5k could be made in the new financial year.

OPSIF (Older Persons Social Isolation Fund)

The 3 task groups have each received a share of £25k (£8,333) to support projects to tackle social isolation within the 50+ age range. The potential projects identified by the task groups so far are:

EET Task Group

- a non-accredited digital skills training
- self-employment skills training

HAWB Task Group

- supporting the development of the memory café at Consett Methodist Church
- IT training for residents
- activities and entertainment within local care homes

ENVIRO Task Group

- a community group small grants fund to deliver projects aimed at reducing the isolation of village residents via environmental activities.

John O'Connor (Forum) said Project Genesis Trust has gained a grant of £350K to create a 6.8km heritage trail from Allensford to Consett and thanked everyone involved in making this and the cycle festival happen.

Cllr Shield said DCC have been invited to host a cycle race, which he thought was the Consett Cycle Race, however it is the Velo North Cycle Race with a budget provision of £250k. He said that this area is missing out and feels we should be pushing DCC for more support for this.

The Board AGREED to contribute £5k to Consett Cycle Festival in 2018/19 and a further £5k in 2019/20.

9. Partner updates

Police update by Insp Keith Wardle

Keith briefly covered the report and said the Christmas and New Year period was a busy time with over 60 calls to the police in the 24-hour period around New Year's Eve. This was a huge demand on resources even though they deployed extra staff.

The police are seeing an increase in calls relating to mental health issues and this is using a lot of police resources on a daily basis. They do have street triage teams from mental health services who assist the police.

There has been an increase in drug related crimes in the area particularly around the use of cocaine. Vehicle theft continues to rise such as quad bikes and transit vans. Just recently criminals travelled from Lancashire to Consett and stole 2 vehicles and travelled back. However, this is unusual activity to travel great distances to obtain vehicles.

On a local and national level, fraud and scam related crimes continue to rise. Elderly people have become an easy target, for example scammers are claiming to be from Inland Revenue and threatening to take action unless they pay outstanding tax. Scammers have pretended to be police officers and people have handed over thousands of pounds. A scam called 'Ring the Changes' see people going into a bar/shop and asking for change and confusing the assistants.

We are forecasting around a 4% increase in crime in this area which is a similar figure across County Durham.

Keith said if anyone has any questions/queries, he is available after the meeting.

10. Consett Town Centre

Graham Wood, Economic Development Manager gave a presentation on Consett Town Centre (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

Graham also discussed the Board Development session held on 15 November 2018 which was arranged to explore priorities for Consett Town Centre to help improve the centre for businesses and local residents.

At the development session, Board members were split into 2 groups and identified issues and themes relating to the town centre. The issues and themes were then combined, and 3 key priorities highlighted:

1. Dealing with empty premises i.e. shops, community or residential buildings.

2. Dealing with accessibility
 - physical accessibility i.e. pedestrian links from Hermiston to the centre
 - technology i.e. town centre Wi-Fi
3. Community use i.e. different use for buildings in the town centre such as leisure.

Gary Scott said it looks like you are setting up a retail hub and the DBN is working on a business diversification project to help business get online, sell on line, enabling them to grow, etc and asked him not to do something centrally as they are already doing it locally and need more support.

Graham said they do have an aspiration for retail hubs and recognise that these are going on and they want to work with the people who have these different types of projects. Retail projects will not look the same as it depends on who is available, types of premises available and what suits a particular area.

Regarding the Board Development session, Mike Clark (Forum) said a lot of organisations would want to contribute to the process, but unfortunately were unable to attend. He asked if there is a programme to make WiFi available in town centres. He also said that organisations from the public and private sectors may be able to bid for the new government fund for town centre improvements. He wondered if the DVP would work collaboratively with the private sector to bid for some of the £670m that the government have set aside without being limited by DCC's strategy.

John O'Connor said one of the recommendations from the GVA Grimley report in 2010 was to set up a town centre board. If there is no organisation to regenerate the town centre, who will be part of the bidding process and speak on behalf of the town.

Graham said the Board Development session is not the end of the discussion and there will be opportunities to talk to other partners, including housing providers.

Regarding Wi-Fi, there is a project in Durham City through Durham City Bid. There is a European procurement bid for the rest of the county and we will be running a pilot project in Stanley and Bishop Auckland town centres. Once we have feedback from the pilot we will look at rolling it out across the county.

Regarding the High Street fund, as a unitary area we are only allowed to submit one bid therefore we need to be careful which one we go forward with in the first round. The bids are between £5-£10m each and up to a maximum of £25m for high impact/value projects. Wherever that investment goes it will be additional to the money committed from the towns and villages agenda.

With regards to the town centre board, Graham stated that DCC did not advocate the creation of another structure to lead on town centre development. Strong partnership working was encouraged locally to make and drive change, a partnership approach is still a strong aspect for managing town centres. Working with the private sector, property owners, retailers, social housing and public bodies will help to create town centres of the future.

It was suggested by the Board that a meeting be held between the DVP Chair and Vice Chairs and key partners interested in improving the town centre, so a way forward could be discussed as opposed to re-visiting information covered at previous Board sessions regarding this topic. This was AGREED, and Corinne will facilitate the meeting.

Cllr Watson thanked Graham for the presentation and for answering the questions.

11. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting

Alex thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 March 2019 at 6pm in the Salvation Army Hall, Consett.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: