3 Towns Partnership  
Regeneration and Safety of Towns and Villages  
12 May 2016, St. Cuthbert’s Centre, Crook

Present:  
Cllr Maureen Stanton  
Wendy Benson  
Graham Tomaszko  
Sandy Denney  
Nicola Woodgate  
Claire Craft

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| 1 | Welcome and Introductions  
MS opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Introductions were made as above. |
| 2 | Terms of Reference  
Terms of Reference and Declaration of Interest reports were provided but not needed as all members of the Task and Finish Group had attended previous meetings and were therefore aware of these already. |
| 3 | Funding Allocated 16/17  
SD informed the group that this year funding available was as follows:  
- £100,000 Area Budget – subject to £76,000 Revenue, £24,000 Capital split  
- £10,000 Welfare Reform monies to address projects with a welfare reform focus. |
| 4 | Priority Investigation  
\textbf{a) Comments from the Priority Vote}  
SD directed attendees to the spreadsheets in their packs showing comments received as part of the priority vote. She explained that the comments were from people who had chosen Crime and Community Safety or Regeneration of Towns and Village Centres as a priority and showed the towns they were from as well as the voting method they used to complete the survey.  

CT provided the group with a list of the main and most recurrent comments from the spreadsheet.  

GT said that a lot of the things listed were things that we wouldn’t be able to do within the budget we had.  

The group started to split the priorities into sections grouping the main themes together. |
b) What work is going on already – known current plans/initiatives
The group discussed other work that is currently ongoing such as:
- 2 new supermarkets in Crook town centre
- Glenholme Park
- MUGA lights

SD showed the group the Crook Town Centre Community Street Audit Report. MS said that we should improve some of the issues mentioned in the report and feed back to them. She requested that the report is circulated to the group.

**ACTION: SD to seek authorisation and circulate the Community Street Audit Report to the Group.**

WB said the two new supermarkets in Crook town centre might attract new clientele to the town. She added that one is now onsite and the other is still being developed.

MS commented that the market in Crook town centre is more like a car boot sale and is marketed as one by Nobles. WB informed the group that through the Market Strategy, all of our markets will go out to tender to improve their appearance and this has been piloted at Chester-Le-Street and Stanley. She added that funding for the market stalls will look to work with stall holders and improve the appearance of the stalls themselves.

MS commented that the current stalls in Crook don’t encourage new stall holders to come to Crook market as it doesn’t look inviting with vans parked on the market place and items laid out in front of them.

GT said that from an outside perspective the appearance of our local villages such as Crook and Willington are very unattractive and in stark contrast compared to other local towns such as Barnard Castle and Wolsingham. He asked the group how we could improve the look of the shops.

MS asked if we could advertise the shop fronts that had already been improved to encourage others to follow.

WB said we could but the funding pot is now countywide and to be eligible for funding applicants would need to fit into one of the following criteria:
1. Applicant must be a new business
2. The premises in question must be currently empty
3. The business must be creating new jobs

GT said that it is the first impressions of an area that is important to bring in new people.

c) Additional information/data required
GT asked if there are enough bins in Crook due to the amount of litter there is which led the group to discuss a previous scheme whereby nominations could be made where seating was required in villages.

SD said we could find out if there had been any complaints regarding litter
through our CRM system.

**ACTION:** SD to provide information to share at the next meeting.

SD asked if the group thought it would be helpful to find out what other AAPs who had Regeneration as a priority used their funding for. The group thought this would be useful for further discussion points.

**ACTION:** SD to provide the above information at the next Task Group.

WB said there are other funding pots she could potentially bid for in addition to the Area Budget we currently have for 2016/17.

d) **Additional People/Organisations to involve**
The group discussed additional people/organisations which should invite to the next Task Group and agreed to invite the following:

- Traders Forum (through their Facebook page)
- Larger employers from the area e.g. Bonds and Banks
- More local people - GT suggested creating a colourful poster to be used in shop windows to advertise future Task and Finish Groups and drum up further interest in the meetings.

**ACTION:** SD suggested that GT has a look at creating a draft poster for shop windows before the next meeting.

- Chairs of the PACT meetings - Betty Wood from Howden-le-Wear and PACT organisers from Crook and Tow Law.
- Julie West from Durham Employment and Skills who provides training for retailers.
- Representatives from Willington Town Council and Tow Law Town Council.

SD suggested that it might be useful to have an evening meeting next time to encourage more people to come who may not may able to attend during work hours.

### 5 Project Updates

WB said that she is currently looking at what we have done as part of the Masterplan for Crook from 2012 and will update. She added that there are certain parts of Crook that are not suitable for retail. The information will feed into the refresh of the Masterplan.

### Date and Time of Next Meeting:

**Thursday 9 June 2016 10:30am – 12 noon at Howden-le-Wear Village Hall**