

## Chester-le-Street & District Area Action Partnership (AAP) Board Meeting Minutes of Meeting held Monday 24th January 2022 via Microsoft Teams.

Present:

**Councillors:** Councillor Beaty Bainbridge (standing in for Councillor Craig Martin), Councillor Alison Batey, Councillor Alan Bell, Councillor Bill Moist, Councillor Emma Waldock, Councillor Tracie Smith, Elsie Forrester (Parish Council Representative)

**Partner Organisations:** Graeme Carr (Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service), Suzanne Jobson – (Karbon Homes), Graeme Carr (Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue), Lee Morris (Durham Constabulary), Dave Wafer (Durham County Council) Joanne Malki, Business Association Representative.

**Public Representatives:** Derek Briggs, Clare Todd, Howell Davies, Jake Rollings (Chair) Khaled Malki and Janice Rokni.

**Officer Attendance:** Michael Wilkes (AAP Principal AAP Co-ordinator), Fiona Kelly, (Principal Community Development Project Officer, Allyson Rose (Community Development Project Officer), Laura Sloan (Community Development Project Officer), Bill Lightburn (Towns & Villages, Project Officer), and Lesley Lines (AAP Support Officer).

**Presenters:** Dave Wafer (DCC) and Graeme Carr (DDFRS).

**Apologies:** Joanne Pugh (Public Representative), Jon Quine (North Durham Clinical Commissioning Group), and Councillor Craig Martin.

**Public Attendance:** Five members of the AAP Public Forum were present at the meeting.

[Introductions, Apologies and Virtual Housekeeping Code of Conduct/Protocols](#)

Cllr Beaty Bainbridge noted that she was standing in for Cllr Craig Martin. Apologies are noted above.

[Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting held on 29th November 2021 & Matters Arising](#)

Cllr Batey clarified point 3.1. The minutes were then agreed.

[Matters Arising](#)

**Masterplan** – Michael advised he would chase Graham Smith to contact Councillors in relation the queries they raised at the last Board Meeting.

**Neighbourhood Issues** – Lesley advised that no issues had been received prior to the meeting. Clare Todd highlighted the increase in litter and drug paraphernalia around the Front Street area

and indeed the whole area.

Lee Morris highlighted that work was ongoing with the Police, DCC Clean & Green, and DCC Street Wardens. Lee highlighted that DCC Safer Communities Officers and ASB Officers were also involved in dealing with these issues.

Cllr Moist noted the need for Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour Officers to be invited to the meeting. Michael advised he would invite them to a future meeting. **Action: Michael**

It was highlighted that using Crimestoppers to report crime was the best way of reporting these issues. Insp. Morris advised using 101 was the quickest way.

Michael advised, due to the many issues discussed in relation to drug issues, he would invite Jane Sunter (DCC's Commissioner for the Drug and Alcohol Service), to a forthcoming meeting to provide further information on services available within the Chester-le-Street & District AAP area.

**Action: Michael**

Cllr Bell enquired why Consett was awarded £1 million to tidy up their Front Street whilst Chester-le-Street did not? Michael advised he would speak to the DCC Regeneration Team to clarify what this was in relation to.

**Action: Michael**

Cllr Batey advised that DCC Officers needed to keep Councillors informed, regarding needles being found in their wards.

Cllr Smith noted that she had seen, first-hand, the litter left behind by those children attending Park View School on a lunch time. Cllr Smith suggested a litter pick be organised, involving Park View School, in an effort to educate children not to drop litter.

**Action: Michael**

## Presentations

**DCC Medium Term Financial Plan** - Dave Wafer, Head of Transport & Contracted Services gave an overview on the 2022/23 Budget – Current Position / Considerations.

**Question to AAP Board Members** What is the AAP view on balancing the 2022/23 forecast budget shortfall from council tax increases vs reductions in services or one-off use of reserves which would increase the savings required in 2023/24?

An observation from Cllr Batey stated that it was unfair to ask for comment without being given time to digest this information. It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to Board Members and any observations be sent to Michael in time to be presented to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> February.

**Action: Michael**

**Integrated Risk Management Plan** - Graeme Carr, Durham & Darlington Fire Service gave a presentation on the Fire Services Risk Management Plan. He advised that from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 to 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 the Fire Service were asking residents to get involved with the consultation, by letting them know their thoughts about future plans.

More information and links to the online survey can be found at [www.cddfrs.gov.uk](http://www.cddfrs.gov.uk)

The closing date for comment is 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

The Chair thanked both Graeme and Dave for their presentations.

### Task & Finish Groups

**Town & Villages Task Group Update** - Michael presented the report and gave an update summarising key notes and actions from the Town & Villages Task Group meeting which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

It was noted that currently, AAP Officers were working with Elected Members on several projects across the AAP area. A lengthy discussion took place regarding options for use of the fund.

Cllr Batey highlighted The Fleece, Pelton Front Street as a potential project. Bill Lightburn advised he would be happy to facilitate a broader discussion. **Action: Bill Lightburn**

**A167 Roundabout Public Art** – It was noted that the artwork is due to be installed in the early part of 2022.

**Defibrillator Project** – It was noted that, due to issues with locations, alternative sites were being considered. Michael advised he could invite NEAS (North-East Ambulance Service) to a forthcoming meeting to discuss awareness raising and the locations of defibrillators

**Action: Michael**

**Town Centre Public Art Scheme** – It was noted that there was £60,000 available for the project with a desire to raise that amount to around £100,000. Guidance was brought to the group from DCC Procurement. It was noted that AAP do not have the expertise or capacity to project manage the scheme. It was clarified that, currently, alternative project management and further funding opportunities are being explored.

**Town Centre Events – Christmas 2022** – It was noted that the recent event had been well received, under challenging circumstances.

**Town Centre Marketing Project** – It was noted that funding was already agreed and that the start of this project is imminent.

**Recommendation** - That Board Members consider the outline process for allocating the £210,000 Towns and Villages Funding aligned to AAPs as per the report.

Michael noted the recommendation to move forward, and that Bill Lightburn would be contacting the relevant Elected Members to provide clarity on the fund and to look at schemes in their respective areas. **Action: Bill Lightburn**

**Holiday Activities with Healthy Food** - Allyson Rose noted, as an AAP, we had been initially allocated £3,853 for the February Half Term. The closing date for receipt of applications was 12 noon on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022. In total, six applications had been received, totalling

£7,934. This was an overbid of £4,081.

The AAP Holiday Activity with Healthy Food Task Group met on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January to consider the applications submitted. All approaches were discussed but, unfortunately, a full decision could not be taken as a response was awaited from the Fun & Food Team regarding extra contributions to cover the overbid amount (provided via DCC Public Health). A full update on allocations would follow in due course.

Michael highlighted that the February allocation of DCC funding had a short timescale but due to DCC's success in attracting a new allocation from the DfE for three years, this would give DCC more time to plan the programme in the future. A new process would be developed which would be shared in due course.

It was noted that organisations need to return their monitoring information quickly, so that feedback could be provided to the DfE, which in turn would speed up the release of each round of funding. Michael advised that Lindsay Davison, who leads on the Fun & Food Programme, could be invited to a future meeting, where the future process for allocating monies would be fully explained.

**Action: Michael**

**Open Water Safety** - Michael highlighted that the group would be meeting on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January. An update on the action plan would be brought to a future Board Meeting.

**Action: Michael**

#### [AAP Budget & Finance Update Report](#)

Fiona presented the report, to seek a final decision on the Handcrafted project proposal and to provide an update on the current AAP Budget position.

The Board had previously opted to support the Handcrafted project in principle, pending clarification regarding the match funding sought from two neighbouring AAPs (Derwent Valley and Stanley).

It was noted that, both the Derwent Valley and Stanley AAPs had taken the decision not to support the original proposal.

Handcrafted were contacted to discuss the options for the project, moving forward. This was on the understanding that the proposal would need to return to the AAP Board for a final decision.

Fiona highlighted the new application and requested a Board decision. A lengthy discussion then took place, where Board Members were then asked by the Chair to vote.

#### **Suzanne Jobson declared an interest**

**After due consideration it was agreed that the Handcrafted Training Kitchen proposal would not be funded.**



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Fiona advised this then leaves an outstanding balance, which will be carried forward into the next financial year.

Fiona advised that the OPSIF allocation of £25,000, must be defrayed by the end of this financial year (31<sup>st</sup> March 2022). The call-out for OPSIF projects was launched at the end of 2021, with the deadline for submission of applications being 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It was noted that the applications will be discussed by the appropriate Task Group, with recommendations brought to the next AAP Board Meeting.

### Neighbourhood Budget

**Councillors Beaty Bainbridge – DCC Neighbourhoods – Installation of a long border at Riverside Park** - The aim of this project is to install a long border at Chester-le-Street Riverside Park. This work will include the planting of flowers to enhance the herbaceous walk through the park area.

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**NB Allocation: £2,499**

**SUPPORTED**

### Neighbourhood Budget Small Grant Allocations

**Councillors Emma Waldock and Simon Wilson – Sacriston Youth Project – Reconnecting the Community** - The aim of this project is to support the youth project to enable an evening of entertainment for the community with games.

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**NBSG Allocation: £500** (Split equally between Cllrs Emma Waldock and Simon Wilson of £250 each)

**SUPPORTED**

**Councillors Emma Waldock and Simon Wilson – Durham Constabulary – Santa in the Van**  
The Funding to support Santa in the Van Christmas event at the Fulforth Centre on the 11/12/2022.

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**NBSG Allocation: £100** (Split equally between Cllrs Emma Waldock and Simon Wilson of £50 each)

**SUPPORTED**

### Towns & Villages Councillor Allocations

**Councillor Karen Fantarrow-Darby – DCC Neighbourhoods – Installation of seating and associated works across Chester West/Central Ward** - The aim of this project is to install a number of seats across the ward of Chester West / Central. This is due to requests from residents for further seating in the area. The work will also include associated work regarding fitting. All works to be undertaken by DCC Neighbourhoods.

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**NBTV Allocation: £7,500**

**SUPPORTED**



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Pre-Notified Partner Updates – Key issues that need to be communicated at the meeting on any initiatives relevant to the area:

**Police** – No Update

**Clinical Commissioning Group** – No Update

**Fire & Rescue Service** – It was noted that Storm Arwen had seen 350 calls into the service with regards collapsed structures, Police requiring assistance, fallen trees, as well as RTAs.

**Karbon Homes** – It was noted that consultation had taken place at Hollyoake regarding the Chester-le-Street Forum.

**Business Sector** - No Update

**Voluntary Sector** - No Update

**Durham County Council** - No Update

[AAP Co-ordinators Update](#)

**AAP Board VCS Representative** – Michael advised that interviews had taken place the previous week and that the panel had appointed Mr Ian Heaviside as the VCS representative.

**OPSIF Funding** – It was noted the call out for this funding is currently ongoing.

**Public Representative** – It was noted that this would be launched soon. It was stated information would be sent out to Board and Forum Members, advertised on the AAP's Facebook page and various other channels including a press release from DCC.

**AAP Priorities** – It was noted that the priority survey was now online. Closing date Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Information would be forwarded to the Board and Forum in due course.

**Date and Time of the next meeting**

TBC