

# DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP (DVP) BOARD MEETING

Held via Microsoft Teams on 26 January 2022 at 6pm



## **PRESENT:**

### **Elected Representatives**

Cllrs Declan Mulholland, Kathryn Rooney, Michelle Walton and Alex Watson (Chair)

### **Partner Organisations**

Mark Clelland (Derwentside Trust), Paul Moralee (Karbon Homes) and Joanne Waller (Durham County Council (DCC))

### **Public Representatives**

Marlene Boyles, Mike Clark, Jeanette Harold (Vice Chair), Helen Marley, Susan Mellor and Shelley O'Brien

## **DVP:**

Corinne Walton (AAP Co-ordinator), Kath Clements and Laura Sloan (Community Development Project Officers), Lynn Dougal (Support Officer) and Joanne Ashworth (Towns and Villages Community Development Project Officer)

## **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 8**

**PRESENTERS:** Joanne Waller on DCC's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Consultation

## **APOLOGIES:**

Elected Rep: Cllr Alan Shield

Partner Reps: Craig Farrage (Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service (Vice Chair)) and Rachel Rooney (Co Durham Clinical Commissioning Group)

## **1. Meeting opened by the Coordinator**

Corinne Walton welcomed everyone to the meeting, went through the Teams functions and meeting etiquette.

Board members introduced themselves and apologies were noted as above.

Declarations of interest were from Mark Clelland regarding the Glenroyd House application and from Cllr Watson regarding the Delta North project proposal as he is the Chair of Delta North.

## **2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (24 November 2021)**

### *Matters arising*

Page 1, John O'Connor, on behalf of the Project Genesis Trust Discretionary Fund (PGTDF), recently presented a cheque for £5,975 to the Eden Miners Centre (EMC). Jeanette Harold (a Trustee of EMC) said they were delighted with the cheque and thanked PGT for their contribution.

Corinne thanked PGT for the fund and confirmed that the discretionary money (£10k) had now been used up to support local venues.

Page 4, regarding the Roxy and the queries relating to the building and sustainability of the building, these have now been resolved and the Roxy has received funding from the Covid Recovery fund, PGTFD and the local councillor's Neighbourhood Budget towards the installation of the new lift. The funding requests linked to the Roxy from the Health and Wellbeing and Environment Task Groups more recently, have now been progressed to the Funding Team for appraisal.

Page 7, a reminder was given about the online survey, which is still open, relating to the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan and Public Consultation. Closing date for the survey is 7 February 2022.

There were no further comments/matters arising and the minutes were AGREED.

### **3. Partner Updates**

*Presentation by Joanne Waller, Head Of Community Protection Services, DCC on the Durham County Council Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Consultation*

Joanne went through the presentation which gave an overview on the Council's Budget and Council Tax position and the MTFP up until 2025/26 (a copy of the presentation is available upon request).

The Board and Forum were asked for their views on the 2022/23 forecast budget shortfall: increase council tax, make a reduction in services or use reserves which would increase the savings required in 2023/24. Joanne advised that any comments from this meeting would feed into the current consultation exercise.

Following the consultation, a budget report will be presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2022 and subject to agreement it would then be presented to Full Council on 23 February 2022 where budget approval and council tax for 2022/23 will be sought.

John O'Connor (Forum) asked in the chat facility '*is DCC committed to retaining AAPs*' which Cllr Watson said that it is his understanding that they are, and asked Joanne if there was anything different to his comment. Joanne said she is not aware of any issues in relation to the future funding of the AAPs but will clarify and provide a response in due course.

Cllr Watson said it was a reasonable approach to increase Council Tax to maintain services, the Council want to make improvements in some service areas but simply maintain others.

Mike Clark said that some service areas can be improved without the need to increase Council Tax. For example, the poor performance in relation to the recycling service which is caused by residents not recycling items correctly. He wondered if there were any concentrated efforts to help drive improvement in these poor performing areas (e.g. via a local campaign with the assistance of the AAP and its Environment Task Group)

which will help to address service inefficiencies, and therefore be better long term for the Council budget/purse.

Joanne said there are ongoing campaigns aimed at getting members of the public to improve the way they recycle, and it is a regular feature in the Council's communication plans and strategies. She also said she would feed back Mike's comments around focusing on that type of efficiency and highlight the impact that would have on the purse/council tax if everyone improved the way they recycled.

There were no further comments. Cllr Watson thanked Joanne for her presentation and input at the meeting.

#### **4. DVP Public Representative Recruitment Process 2022**

Corinne advised that the current public reps' term on the DVP Board (of 4 years) will end in May 2022. Some public reps remained on the Board beyond their term, due to Covid-19, and they were thanked for extending their term.

The DVP Team will shortly be advertising for 7 new public reps which will be promoted through social media, our networks and a press release.

Corinne shared on screen and went through the public rep recruitment documents, which Board members had received prior to the meeting, that included a publicity flyer, application form, guidance notes, recruitment process and role description.

Anyone aged 16 years and over who lives, works, studies or volunteers in the Partnership area can apply. Applicants should have a keen interest in their community, a desire to take part in our local partnership, attend at least 6 Board meetings per year and ideally join one of our task groups.

The public rep recruitment will be promoted at the beginning of February with a closing date of 28 February 2022. Expressions of interest will be made directly to the DVP team, who will keep a record and issue the application packs.

Current public reps are able to reapply, however if, during the selection process, candidates have similar experience levels then preference will be given to the candidate who has not previously sat on the DVP Board. This is to ensure that an opportunity is given to as many people as possible to potentially join the Board.

The Board discussed the public rep recruitment with the following comments/questions noted:

- The application form asks for the applicants age – why do we need to know their age?  
Although the date of birth section is not compulsory, we need to know that the applicant is 16+. The Equality Monitoring Form is optional but if it is completed, we can see at a glance the diversity/demographics of those applying.
- From previous recruitment rounds, have there been any sectors of the community that are under-represented, and do we need to do a targeted recruitment campaign, i.e. young people, from diverse backgrounds?

The aim is to promote the public rep recruitment to attract a range of people from all backgrounds, age, geographical areas, etc. We would like to attract young people to apply to be on the Board and could try and link in with Derwentside College, Consett Academy and youth groups.

- When the applications come in, who is part of the selection panel?  
The DVP Team will review the applications for eligibility initially. Eligible candidates will be invited to an informal interview, either online or face to face, with the selection panel consisting of the DVP Coordinator (Corinne), DVP Chair (Cllr Watson) and DVP Vice Chairs (Craig Farrage and Jeanette Harold). Unsuccessful candidates will be encouraged to be involved in the DVP via the Forum, invited to Board meetings and/or to join one of our Task Groups.
- Are there any plans to have a youth element of the AAP?  
To encourage participation from young people it could be beneficial to give a talk/presentation to youth groups i.e., Girl Guides, Cadets, Boys Brigade on how to get involved in their local community via the DVP.
- To include in the public rep documentation an example of the work public reps have been involved with in the local area, e.g. part of the decision making process in supporting a local project through funding.
- Public rep involvement in local work via the Board could be included in the press release.
- Having a formal debrief from the leaving public reps so they can share improvements, suggestions, etc.
- Comments from the current public reps included that they have enjoyed their time on the Board, it has been a great learning experience, it makes them feel part of a community and happy to discuss the role with prospective applicants.
- Having young people on the Board would be a good asset, however young people might not always want to get involved in these types of meetings and processes in their current format.
- Being a public rep is a big commitment but very rewarding. However, people's circumstances do change and if they find they cannot attend meetings over a prolonged period, they should resign so others can be appointed.
- In previous recruitments, the DVP has had more candidates than positions and they have been kept on a reserve list.
- It would be useful if candidates had an interest in joining/chairing a task group and if we are considering a targeted approach as well, target people with specific skills and knowledge who would be willing to chair a task group.

Mike, who is chair of the Employment, Enterprise and Training Task Group, said that he will be taking up a position with a homelessness charity which will be quite time consuming and has given notice to Corinne that he will be resigning as chair of the task group. Corinne thanked Mike, on behalf of the DVP Team, for his support and commitment to the Board and the Task Group and wished him all the best in his new role.

## **5. DVP Budget 2021/2022 Update**

Corinne gave an update on the Area Budget (AB), the Fun & Food Programme and the underspend linked to the Employment and Environment task groups.

## *Area Budget*

In 2021/22 all funds were amalgamated into one AB pot totalling £244,902. Corinne shared on screen a spreadsheet showing a snapshot of the projects supported and the funding allocated to date which totalled £188,369 (the underspend of £56,533 is discussed further down under the Employment and Environment Task Groups).

## *Fun & Food Programme*

As per previously reported to the Board, DCC received funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for AAPs to provide funding for deliverers to provide activities with healthy food during the 2021 Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays. The fund is targeted at those children and young people who would normally be eligible for free school meals. Corinne provided an overview of the projects that had been funded to date using both DfE and DCC funds as briefly outlined below:

### October 2021

Four project deliverers received funding to deliver fun & food activities in our area during October half term totalling £5,845.

### December 2021

Two project deliverers received funding to deliver fun & food activities in our area during the December Christmas period totalling £8,700.

### February 2022

The closing date for the forthcoming February half term holiday was 19 January. Five applications were received totalling £4,979 creating an oversubscription on £1,547. The shortfall may be funded centrally from the Poverty Action Group and if not, one or more of the projects may not be supported. Options were still being explored with regards to acquiring additional funds to address the shortfall.

DCC's bid for extra DfE money for 2022 has been successful, with £725k allocated to the 14 AAPs to continue the Fun& Food Programme during Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays in 2022. The DVP's allocation is £51,651 and that amount is calculated on the number of children eligible for free school meals in our partnership area.

Susan Mellor commented in the chat facility '*How do you ensure that the children attending are the ones we are aiming to reach?*' Corinne said the application form is very detailed and specific about how the applicant will target the children who we are aiming to engage. Also, the monitoring process is quite in-depth, especially for DfE money as there is strict criteria attached to this, and if we were not able to evidence how we were targeting the right children we would not receive further funding.

Mark Clelland, who has received funding on behalf of Derwentside Trust as part of the Fun & Food programme, agreed that it is a rigorous process but a good process. Stating that each applicant has to give details of every person that engages with the Fun & Food project and demonstrate that they are working with different partners.

John (Forum) asked in the chat facility if the Fun & Food fund could be linked to the Queen's Jubilee in the summer holidays. Corinne said that the majority of activities linked to the Jubilee are around the extended Bank Holiday weekend in June, rather than

an official 'school holiday', so activities during that time would not be eligible based on the current criteria.

Paul Moralee commented in the chat facility, that the Eden Project is organising the Big Lunch to coincide with the Jubilee <https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-jubilee-lunch>.

Marlene Boyles asked in the chat facility if there were plans for a Party in the Park for the Jubilee. Due to the timescales involved (at least 6 months lead in time) Corinne said unfortunately there will be no Party in the Park during 2022.

### *Employment, Enterprise and Training (EET) Task Group*

Following two EET project proposals (below) supported at the last Board meeting, an underspend of £54,874 remained. The task group had met to discuss the options linked to the underspend and would like to recommend to the Board, additional funds to add value to the following two projects:

**Celebrate Difference – Release Your ADHD Super Powers, additional request of £4,500** (original request £12k) for the following:

- extend project delivery by 3 months, 5 additional beneficiaries, accredited training (£1.5k), training materials and content (£1k) and enhanced evaluation (£2k).

**Derwentside Trust – Employability and Readiness for Work Programme, additional request of £5,800** (original request £11,760) for the following:

- 3 month project delivery extension, 35 additional beneficiaries, exam papers (£2,100), room hire (£1,430), printing, workbooks and stationery (£700), delivery costs, registration, certification, postage (£3,150) and the applicant will provide match funding of £1,580.

The Board APPROVED the additional funds of £4,500 and £5,800 for the above projects.

With the remaining underspend the task group would like to recommend to the Board a project proposal from Delta North Consett. Corinne shared on screen the Expression of Interest form received from Delta North which had recently been presented to the task group for consideration.

**Delta North - Know Your Potential (KYP) Roadshow. Funding request: £44,507**

Support and guidance to young people aged 16-24, furthest from the job market, through group and individual seminars to build on their knowledge and understanding of the local business community. The project will work with up to 90 young people to help them reach their full potential and gain employment. The project would also work on addressing barriers to employment and increasing the confidence of the young people. The project would be delivered in partnership with Durham Works.

Susan Mellor asked in the chat facility 'Is this for the current users of Delta North or new young people?' Corinne said it would be for new young people referred to Delta North from other agencies/organisations.

Susan also asked about the requested room rental costs. Corinne said that while the room is in use by the project, they will not be able to generate income from other users who would have potentially hired the room otherwise, hence room hire costs have been included

Ann English (Forum) asked whether Delta North School is state or private owned, and if it is private is it a fee-paying school as it is not made clear on their website? Cllr Watson said it is a registered charity and non-fee-paying school. Young people who cannot be taught in a mainstream school, for various reasons, attend Delta North. They are in a class size of around 8 young people and offered additional support.

Mike said it is defined as a private school but not in the same way as a private fee-paying school where parents pay for their children to attend. Delta North School takes young people from state schools that have been excluded that have little chance of personal development and helps to bring them back into education. The fees to Delta North come from the educational establishment that cannot teach the child, or through the Local Authority Education service. If Delta North did not exist, there would be no educational opportunity for these young people at all.

Marlene asked in the chat facility if the minibus hire is the minibus we provided? Corinne said that a number of Councillors funded a minibus for Delta North via their Neighbourhood Budget some years ago but it was not funded via the Area Budget; however, we did fund one for the Consett Churches Youth Detached Project which remains in use.

Shelley O'Brien asked in the chat facility if the total cost of £22k for the Development Worker would cover all the time on this project? Corinne said that this is an annual salary for the worker for the project.

John (Forum and Chair of Health and Wellbeing (HAWB) Task Group) said that this project has elements of cross cutting priorities, for example health and wellbeing. Many of the excluded young people have mental health issues that can lead to self-harm and suicide and speaking on behalf of the HAWB Task Group the project has their support.

The Board APPROVED Delta North's KYP Roadshow project proposal at a cost of £44,507.

Corinne advised that the applicant will be asked to complete the full online funding application and a technical appraisal by the AAP Funding Team would follow to address any queries. Given the amount of funding being requested, the project would need to be signed off at Head of Service level.

A balance of £67 for the EET Task Group will be carried over into the next financial year.

#### *Environment (Enviro) Task Group*

Corinne stated that there was a small underspend linked to this Task Group due to the Roxy's Carbon Reduction project (which was agreed at the November 2021 Board meeting) coming in under the anticipated cost of £19,234 (the amount requested for the project is now £17,575 leaving £1,659 in the budget).

At the next task group meeting in February, the group will discuss the different options linked to the underspend such as adding value to an existing project or to fund transport costs for people from our area to attend the Footprint Conference in Durham, for example. An update will be provided at the March Board meeting.

### *DVP Priorities 2022/23*

The AAP Priority Survey will be available online from 28 January 2022. All AAPs will be asking residents, partners and voluntary and community organisations which priorities their AAP should focus on in 2022/23. The results of the survey will not only determine what priorities the DVP should tackle but will also feed into our accompanying towns and villages work.

The survey will be sent out via our networks and promoted on social media and Corinne asked the Board and Forum to share the survey through their own networks to help generate as much interest / responses as possible.

The closing date for the survey is 11 March 2022. Reminders will be sent out periodically.

## **6. Consett Destination Development Plan Review Update**

Due to the Board meeting running over time, this item has been deferred to the next Board meeting in March. In the meantime, it was agreed that Board members could send any comments relating to the Plan back to the DVP team to feed into the discussion at the March Board meeting.

## **7. DVP Staffing 2022**

Corinne advised that she will be going on maternity leave from mid-April and that recruitment for her position, on a temporary basis, will start in due course. A further update will be provided by Corinne at the next meeting.

## **8. HM Queen Platinum Jubilee Beacon – June 2022**

Due to the Board meeting running over time, this item has been deferred to the next Board meeting in March.

As an aside to the 'Beacon' information, Corinne said there is funding available for community organisations to hold jubilee related activities/events and if anyone would like more information on the funding opportunities available, please contact the DVP Team.

John (Forum) said that on Friday 3 June, Consett Rugby Club is holding an event to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, publicity would be circulated in due course and a dedicated Facebook page is being created for the event.

Ann (Forum) advised that Medomsley has its own beacon by the primary school.

## **9. Meeting Close and Date of Next Meeting**

Alex thanked everyone for their attendance. The next Board meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 6pm via Microsoft Teams.

Signed as a correct record: .....

Date: .....