



## **Teesdale Area Action Partnership - Board Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Held: 12 January 2022 (via Microsoft Teams)**

### **Elected Members:**

Cllr George Richardson  
Cllr James Cosslett  
Cllr James Rowlandson  
Cllr Ted Henderson  
Cllr Richard Bell  
Cllr Robert Potts  
Cllr Wendy Greenfield (Town & Parish Council's Representative)

### **Public Representatives:**

Christine Watters  
Elaine Laurie  
Linda Bird  
Robin Brooks  
Tracey Williams

### **Partner Representatives:**

Bob Danby  
David Hand  
Insp Ed Turner  
Jeff Garfoot  
Peter Locke  
Tim Viggars  
Roger Peat

### **Presenters:**

Joy Allen - (JA) Durham Police and Crime Commissioner - Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

Vicky Booth - (VB) – Community Engagement Officer - Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office

### **Officer Attendance:**

Adam White, TAP Coordinator  
Annalisa Ward, TAP Community Development Project Officer  
Emma Walton, TAP Support Officer

**Observers:** 5 x Forum Members

### **Apologies:**

Kelly Blissett  
Allan Hobson

## Teesdale Action Partnership Board Meeting

### 1. Welcome from Chair, Introductions and Apologies

**Cllr RB** welcomed everyone to the Board meeting of Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP) and reminded meeting observers they would be welcome to comment under items 4,5 and 8 on the agenda.

**EW** confirmed that apologies for absence had been received, as noted above.

**AW** informed the Board that Kelly Blissett has resigned from the TAP Board. As a result, recruitment for a replacement public representative will need to take place. **(ACTION 1: AW)**

**AW** thanked KB for her time on the Board.

### 2. Declaration of Interest and Meeting Protocol

**AW** made the Board aware of the declaration of interest procedure and informed all Board members that this is a standard item on the Agenda. **AW** informed the Board and Forum Members of 'house rules/etiquette' for the meeting. **AW** asked Board members to be aware that the TAP team weren't recording the meeting but couldn't guarantee that other attendees wouldn't be making their own recording.

**Bob Danby (BD)** declared an interest in the UTASS (Together) project, item 6.1.

### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

The draft minutes from the meeting held on 17 November 2021 have been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. **AW** reviewed the minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy.

#### **Matters Arising:**

**AW** stated that the matters arising from Graham Woods presentation have been addressed. Board members have received the following information:

- Local statistical info, via the Durham Insight web address
- A coverage map of the WIFI availability in Barnard Castle and the surrounding areas
- Fuel poverty - Information from DCC Housing on the grants and support available
- North East LEP, Digital Inclusion report - A full copy of the report from LEP has been requested
- Information relating to the North East Transport Plan

**AW** confirmed there were no further outstanding actions. The minutes of the last meeting were **agreed** by the Board as a true and accurate record.

### 4. Durham Police and Crime Commissioner

#### 4.1 Draft Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 24 – Joy Allen - Durham Police and Crime Commissioner

Board Members received a presentation from **Joy Allen (JA)**, Durham Police Crime Commissioner on the draft Police and Crime Plan for 2021 – 24. **JA** gave an overview of the plan and the PCC's Vision. **JA** stated that local consultation has taken place to identify the key priorities of the local community. The draft plan has been presented to the Police and Crime Panel and was published in December 2021.

**JA** to circulate a link to the Police and Crime Plan to **EW**, **EW** to circulate to the Board.  
**(ACTION 2: JA/EW)**

As a result of the consultation the top 5 pre-election priorities identified were ASB, drug use or dealing, fly tipping, speeding and vandalism. **JA** highlighted the work that has taken place to address these issues by using the strategic priorities which are to prevent, protect, deter and pursue.

The six key themes identified were safer communities, safer businesses, safer online, safer people, safer roads and a safer countryside.

**JA** stated that Operation SNAP is in place to support the key themes. Operation SNAP is a response to increasing submissions of video and photographic evidence relating to driving offences that members of the public have witnessed.

**JA** highlighted that AAP's have invested in several community safety schemes across the county including purchasing speed watch vehicles, CCTV and the delivery of target hardening programmes. **JA** referenced projects within the TAP area.

**JA** reported that a recruitment process for officers and PSCO's is now live.

A Q&A session took place, and the following points were noted:

A **forum member** asked how often will you be consulting with the local councillors and the police inspectors to discuss rural issues. **JA** stated she has attended several meetings at UTASS with the local inspectors and PCSO's and has also attended 2 check point meetings to discuss rural issues. In addition, a visit has also taken place with the Shadow Minister to Stanhope. **JA** reported that the Rural Minister will be attending a national meeting next week. This meeting will provide an opportunity to raise any rural issues identified by local officers. A **forum member** stressed the importance of rural proofing any future delivery plans.

**JA** offered to attend any local organisations / groups, if required.

A **forum member** raised concerns that due to the recent storm that the ability to call the emergency services was lost as a result of some telecom companies moving to digital call platforms. **JA** echoed these concerns. **JA** stated work is taking place with the Council, the Town and Parish Councils, local group's and organisations to develop contingency plans.

**Cllr RP** raised concerns with regards to the resources and time required when transporting an offender to the new custody site. **JA** stated that since being in post she has visited each of the existing custody suites. **JA** gave an overview of the issues and concerns that were raised by staff and custody officers. **JA** informed the Board that further information on the decision to centralise the custody site can be found on

YouTube. **JA** to circulate the YouTube video to EW, **EW** to circulate to the Board.  
**(ACTION 3: JA/ EW)**

**AW** highlighted the link to the 2022 Police & Crime Commissioners precept consultation has been circulated to Board members. **JA** stated the precept is now live and is seeking views of the public regarding the budget for Durham Constabulary for 2022/23. It is proposed that there will be an annual increase of £10 for a band D (the average) property.

**Cllr RB** asked what the percentage increase to the police precept is. **JA** stated there will be a 4.3% increase.

Board members were encouraged to respond to the police precept consultation. Further details in relation to the consultation are available via the website: <https://DurhamPCC.welcomesyourfeedback.net/x3xzq9>

**Cllr RB** thanked **JA** for the presentation.

## 5. Durham County Council Budget Consultation

### 5.1 Durham County Council Budget Consultation – Jeff Garfoot (JG) - Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial Services - Durham County Council

Board members received a presentation on 2022/23 County Council Revenue Budget Consultation. **Jeff Garfoot (JG)** gave an overview of the following:

- Council Budget and Council Tax Position
- 2022/23 Council Budget Current Position / Considerations
- The risks and issues
- 2022/23 to 2025/26 Medium Term Financial Plan.

**JG** stated that the Budget report will be presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2022. The Cabinet report will then be presented to Full Council on 23 February 2022 where budget approval and council tax for 2022/23 will be sought.

**Cllr RB** stated that the finance paper is available on the Council's website.

The Board were encouraged to feedback their comments on the following question:

*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?*

**JG** agreed that additional questions/comments could be submitted, to AW, until early next week. **(ACTION 4: Board Members/AW)**

A Q&A session took place, and the following points were noted:

**WG** stated that by changing the lighting across the council to LED lights, this will have reduced the Councils energy bills significantly, and asked how these savings have been allocated?

**JG** explained that around £40 million has been invested into LED lighting across the Council. The work was carried out by using an invest to save strategy. The savings that have been obtained through this investment has massively reduced the Councils energy costs. However, these savings have paid for the borrowing of the £40 million and in addition have generated savings which been used to protect frontline services.

The Council has a net zero carbon policy and will be required to reduce their carbon emissions by 80% by 2030. **JG** gave an overview of the initiatives in place to meet this target

A **forum member** asked how much of the Council's spend is discretionary and how much is statutory.

**JG** stated that many statutory services such as adults and children's social care are targeted at small numbers in our communities whilst discretionary services which include road maintenance, libraries, leisure centres, winter maintenance etc are universal services which tend to be provided to everyone. To date the council have not had to explore this option to make savings.

A **forum member** asked can council tax be increased by 7%. This increase will allow the council to invest in capital expenditure to deliver a more efficient service across the council. The forum member suggested investing in public transport and broadband.

**JG** stated that for this to be agreed a council tax referendum would be required. **JG** stated that the council has many invest to save capital schemes. These schemes are funded through the savings they generate and not by increasing council tax. The council has invested millions in match funding BT to ensure a good coverage of broadband across the County.

A **forum member** commented that investments across the council will increase economic activity, increase family's incomes that in turn will increase the number of households paying council tax.

**JG** stated that due to significant base budget pressures that there are limits on service improvement investments. There is a small amount of funding available for new investments next year. These investments are expected to be mainly in Neighbourhood services and will ensure maximum impact across the council.

**Cllr RB** thanked **JG** for the update.

A copy of the presentation will be circulated to Board members (**ACTION 5: EW**).

## 6. Area Budget

**AW** confirmed that a copy of the full Area Budget application has been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. **AW** highlighted that Board members were given the opportunity to provide any comments to the TAP team in advance of tonight's meeting. No comments were received.

The application has been considered by the Board Expression of Interest Group and relevant service provider and is recommended for Board approval.

**BD** left the meeting whilst the application was considered.

- **UTASS – Together Project**  
**Area Budget request: £17,600**

There were no comments or queries and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

**AW** to forward the AB application to the Funding Team for technical appraisal. (**ACTION 6: AW**)

**BD** returned to the meeting.

## 7. Neighbourhood Budget

**AWard** confirmed that a summary sheet for the NB proposal had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. **AWard** gave a brief outline of the proposal.

- **Evenwood Ramshaw and District History Society – Equipment Project**  
NB is £2,160 (£1,080 each from Councillors Potts and Coslett) - no declaration of interest.

No comments or queries were raised and the proposal was **approved**.

**AWard** to forward the NB application to the DCC Funding Team for technical appraisal. **(ACTION 7: AWard)**.

**AWard** stated that another Neighbourhood Budget summary will be circulated to the Board shortly, for information purposes only.

In addition, **AWard** also gave an overview of each of the Councillors Neighbourhood Budget spend to date and highlighted their remaining balances. **AWard** confirmed that each elected member is permitted to carry forward their funding into 2022/23.

## 8. Local Neighbourhood Issues

**Insp Ed Turner** gave an update on the main issues for the TAP area:

- There was no increase in crime rates over the Christmas period
- COVID has had and continues to have an impact on the service and its delivery.
- There have been around 280 incidents per month with around 80 incidents directly relating to crime. Further information on the incidents reported are available on the police website.
- ASB continues to be an issue in the TAP area.
- Board and Forum members were encouraged to be vigilant. This included locking doors and not leaving valuables on display.
- As stated, above JA will be raising several key issues with the Rural Minister next week. Issues include poaching, livestock, pressures on manufactures to make quad bikes more secure etc.
- The Ruralwatch scheme continues to work well and is very productive.

**AW** confirmed there were no further Neighbourhood Issues raised by residents in advance of the meeting.

A **forum member** asked for an update on the data from the Barnard Castle Wi-Fi project. **AW** reported that the system is offline due to a number of technical issues. Kathryn Watson, Durham County Council will be attending the March Board meeting to provide an update on the project.

A **forum member** raised concerns with regards to receiving relevant Board papers on the day of the TAP Board meeting, and also the ability to access previous notes and

information through the AAP website. In addition, asked how Board meetings are being promoted.

**AW** stated that the AAP websites are currently being reviewed corporately. **AW** highlighted that Board meetings continue to be promoted to the TAP Forum through; newsletters, emails, Teesdale Mercury and through social media. In addition, a Board summary is produced and circulated to the wider Forum through emails and social media. The summary also states the date and time of the next meeting. **AW** stressed that previous meeting papers are available on request. **AW** also highlighted, since holding Board meetings via MS Teams Forum member attendance has increased. Forum members, that register to attend the meeting, receive their papers on the morning of the meeting instead of on the evening. This was the case when holding face to face meetings (pre COVID).

## 9. Partner Update

An update was provided from the following:

### ➤ County Durham Partnership Event

**Cllr RB** gave an update on the recent environmental focused County Durham Partnership Event that he attended on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Board and Forum members were encouraged to visit the new website that has recently been launched. **Cllr RB** gave an overview of the meeting and informed the Board of key information presented. **Cllr RB** reported that the climate emergency response plan will be available in spring and suggested receiving an update on the plan at a future TAP Board meeting. **(ACTION 8: AW)**

The press article providing a summary of the event has been circulated to Board members.

**AW** stated that a report from County Durham Partnership has been requested.

A **forum member** highlighted the vulnerability of local infrastructure on the back of Storm Arwen. The forum member also felt that climate change will also result in events like this becoming more common. For information **AW** stated that a review of the council's response to Storm Arwen is in development.

A **forum member** thanked AW and Cllr RB for the update.

## 10. Coordinators Update

### 10.1 Area Budget Spend Profile

The Board were provided with the Area Budget Spend Profile for 2021/22. The report includes the status of each project. A copy of the spend profile was circulated, in advance of the meeting, with the meeting papers.

**AW** gave an overview of the projects supported and the funding allocated.

**EW** to circulate the spend profile to those Forum members in attendance. **(ACTION 9:EW)**

**Cllr RB** congratulated the TAP team on the ongoing work taking place. **Cllr RB** also highlighted that all TAP spend is fully documented within the Annual Report.

## **10.2 TAP Q2/ Q3 Monitoring Updates**

**AW** confirmed that the quarter 2 updates (July – Sept 2021) will be circulated to the Board, for information shortly. The report provides an update on the progress for all 'live' projects.

**AW** stressed; if any Board members would like to submit individual comments for circulation that they are more than welcome to do so.

The next round of quarterly monitoring has been circulated to project leads. An update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

## **10.3 Priority Voting**

The AAP priority voting is awaiting sign off. The survey will take place online and be live for approximately 6 weeks. Once the voting is live the Board will be updated accordingly.

**AW** highlighted that work will be taking place countywide to engage with key partners and locally with key organisation, for example, schools, and community groups.

Board members were encouraged, once live, to promote the priority survey through their networks.

**AW** stated paper copies will be available upon request and delivered to key community locations.

**LB** stated she was happy to support the TAP team in actively promoting the priority voting and seeking votes.

## **10.4 TAP Press Articles**

The Board were provided with an update on the press coverage TAP has received in Teesdale Mercury over the November - December 2021 period.

## **10.5 TAP Office**

**AW** reported that in accordance with corporate guidance and policy, AAP teams have returned to homeworking until further notice however, unlike previously, the TAP Team are able to attend community meetings where it is not possible for them to take place online.

Board meetings will remain online until further notice.

## **11. Date/Time/Venue for Next Meeting**

**Cllr RB** thanked Board members for attending the meeting.

The TAP Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 March 2022, 6pm on Microsoft

Teams.