

**East Durham Area Action Partnership Annual General Meeting & Board Meeting
6pm on Wednesday 11th May 2022 at The Lisa Dixon Centre, Haswell**

PRESENT:

Partner Organisations

Graham Easterlow (GE)
Chris Williams (CW)
Insp Gary Smith (GS)
Insp Joanne Eales (JE)
Joanne Angus (JA)

Elected Members

Cllr A Surtees (AS)
Cllr J Miller (Cllr JM)
Cllr I Cochrane (IC)
Cllr T Duffy (TD)

Public Representatives

Rona Hardy (RH)
David Blackwell (DB)
Danny Dickinson (DD)
Alison Paterson (AP)

Co-opted Members

Amanda Moon (AM)
Edna Connor (EC)

Officer Attendance:

John Murphy (JMurphy) – AAP Coordinator
Laura Towers (LT) – AAP Support Officer
Ian Moran (IM) – Community Development/Project Officer
Kaye Stephenson (KS) – Community Development/Project Officer
PJ Harding (PJH) – Towns & Villages Community Development/Project Officer

Presenters:

Nichola Pitt, Domestic Abuse Systems Coordinator, Public Health, DCC

Mary Readman, Head of Transactional and Customer Services, DCC

Public Attendance:

1 member of the public was in attendance

Apologies:

Cllr Leanne Kennedy, Cllr Stacey Deinali, Cllr Julie Griffiths, Cllr Isabella Roberts, Ian Porter, Susan Robinson, Jim Murray, Andy Cammiss, Rachel Payne, Jim Shand, Gill Rodgers, Bill Smithson

Annual General Meeting

Introductions & Apologies

AS welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity at one of the first in-person meetings since Covid to thank all of the AAP staff for their work. AS extended this thanks to the community and volunteers who came together to support residents. AS also thanked all Board Members for their contributions.

Introductions were made and apologies were noted, as above.

AS handed over to AAP Coordinator, John Murphy.

2. AGM

Notification of Vice Chairs & Agreement of Chair

JMurphy advised that the following Board Members had been nominated as Vice Chairs:

Cllr A Surtees (Elected Members)
Graham Easterlow (Partner Representatives)
Rona Hardy (Public Representatives)

JMurphy confirmed it was the turn of the Partner Representatives to take the Chair and this would be offered to Graham Easterlow.

All in agreement. GE accepted and took the Chair.

Co-option

The Board agreed that Edna Connor and Amanda Moon should remain as Co-optees to the Board for another year.

Priorities & Budgets

An AAP Priorities Survey for 2022/23 was undertaken earlier this year. The results across the county were overwhelmingly in favour of keeping Covid recovery as a priority. Therefore, the Board agreed that the three current priority groups – Maintaining the Social Fabric of our Communities (MSFOOC) Covid Recovery, Towns and Villages and Children, Young People and Families - should continue.

AS proposed that the cost of living crisis should form part of the MSFOOC group as a key priority. GE agreed that recovery can't be made until these issues are addressed. The Board agreed.

The following priority group Chairs were agreed by the Board:

MSFOOC Covid Recovery – Cllr Angela Surtees
Towns & Villages – Graham Easterlow (to look at Vice Chair also)
Children, Young People & Families – Rona Hardy

The Board agreed and the Chairs accepted.

Board Meeting

1. Previous Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous Board Meeting on 9th March were approved by the Board as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

GE asked whether a further update on Libraries would be possible.

Discussion took place around online, hybrid and face-to-face meetings. It was noted that hybrid/online meetings are useful when people are moving between several meetings and it is a way to engage more people.

Some concerns around hybrid meetings were that it was more difficult to facilitate a hybrid meeting and it works more effectively if the majority of people are in the room. Online/hybrid could be an option when the weather is bad.

Action: The options are to be looked at further with the AAP staff.

2. Presentations

Domestic Abuse (DA) Update – Nichola Pitt, Domestic Abuse Systems Coordinator, DCC

NP delivered a presentation updating on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and gave an overview of the situation in County Durham. In the 12 months up to 31st December 2021, 14,254 DA-related incidents were reported in Durham, which accounted for 20% of reported crime in Durham.

NP also highlighted Child Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) where children and adolescents cause harm towards parents and family members. This is a serious issue and evidence suggests it is increasing. Recent research shows that about 20% of teenagers cause harm to their parents and about 10% seriously so. It is a growing issue in County Durham with an increasing number of referrals.

The aims of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 are to protect and support victims, including children and young people, transform the justice system, improve performance and promote awareness. The time scales are staggered for each element of the Act.

The Act provides solid legislation around DA, including coercive control and economic abuse which are highly prevalent. For the first time, children are also recognised as victims of DA and should be treated as such. Victims have the right to give evidence by video link. There is a national independent DA Commissioner who holds DA services to account.

The requirements of the Act are to establish Local Domestic Abuse Partnership, carry out needs assessment, Safe Accommodation Strategy development, to commission services, to develop performance indicators and an annual review.

Processes are being reviewed to find out what works. A Victim Voice worker has been appointed. A commissioning plan was undertaken for New Burdens Funding.

GE thanked NP for the presentation and welcomed any questions.

Cllr JM asked in relation to the high numbers for 2021 whether any area in the county was higher, whether there is anything the county could do for prevention and whether there is an adequate

number of safe places. NP advised that one priority is around data. Some New Burdens funding has been spent to create a dashboard to identify areas where it is more prevalent to better inform preventative going forward - this is key. We know there are high prevalence figures in the East, however, until the dashboard is developed, we can't factually provide data on prevalence. We must also remember much domestic abuse is not reported and therefore data does not always reflect the true picture.

Some funding has been used for education for young people on work around healthy relationships. There is some campaign work later this year around coercive control. The refuge provision is enough, but more dispersed properties are required. This is currently being worked on.

AP asked whether the video link to give evidence in court is live. NP confirmed it is live so questions can be asked. AP will contact NP outside of the meeting re work with Changing Relations.

DB noted that DA is not isolated to one socio-economic group. How does East Durham fare in comparison to the whole of County Durham and the UK? If levels are high, does funding follow the need? NP advised that the information on cases being high in East Durham comes from police data, however, again we must remember that not all domestic abuse is reported.

New Burdens funding is for spend around 'Safe Accommodation'. Things are piloted to see where funding will be best utilised. The £10K for AAPs is a 12-month pilot. Some further investment may be considered if this works well.

AS highlighted that Durham was ahead with an impact needs assessment, so they knew where the money was needed. It is good to have NP's role and that funding is being directed to refuges and interventions in other areas. NP added that a VCS Forum was being developed. Operation Encompass is in place in County Durham where schools receive information to support children at school when an incident has occurred.

Action: LT to circulate presentation. Any questions to be sent direct to NP outside of the meeting. Ask & Act training is available for anyone wanting more information about child adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA).

Poverty Action Plan – Mary Readman, Head of Transactional & Customer Services, DCC

MR delivered a presentation on the Poverty Action Plan. MR is the Poverty Lead and would like to hear people's views and consult on the draft plan. MR to send link.

There has been a Poverty Action Strategy and Plan for County Durham since 2014 and this is reviewed regularly. The 2020 review broadened the scope to include the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and deliver targeted interventions. Partnership working has been key during Covid. There has been an increase in terms of discretionary benefits. There has also been an impact on volunteering and some impact in terms of recruitment in general. The approach needs to be more joined up and work done on improving data-sharing. More needs to be done at the preventative end to avoid people getting into difficulties. It builds on where we've been and where we want to get to, embracing new ways of working, rapid responses, collaboration between services, good information about our communities, a sense of public confidence in what we were delivering and Voluntary Sector partnerships.

The vision is to work together with communities so fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation in the county by using intelligence and data to target support to low-income households, reducing the financial pressures on people facing or in poverty, increasing individual, household and

community resilience to poverty and reducing barriers to accessing services for those experiencing financial insecurity.

GE thanked MR for the presentation and welcomed any questions.

AM noted that a lot of the people at the moment have not previously been in financial difficulties and it is vital that they get support. AM also highlighted the presentation in the CYPF meeting from David Timmouth on financial ability sessions – could these be promoted? MR advised that there is information on the website - Help With Money - to help people break down the areas where they may be struggling.

DD asked whether this is linked in with the Regional Child Poverty Network and has there been anything on fuel poverty and energy poverty. How can vulnerable people be engaged with? MR advised that this is linked and the Economic Strategy consultation has been going on at the same time, so this will be aligned. Feedback will come from that in terms of poverty and young people.

AP highlighted that it is important that the approach is joined up and information should be shared with community centres. AP would welcome a conversation with MR's team. MR asked the Board to take a look at the action plan and to let MR know of any gaps.

EC noted that Bread and Butter is a great scheme, but not all community centres were given the choice. MR confirmed that more hubs are being looked at as well as a second van.

Further discussion took place around reaching vulnerable people, which can be even more difficult in winter, and gathering this information to get a front-facing element on the streets. Areas should be targeted which are most in need rather than addressing the county as one. Focus is needed on coordination. Cllr JM felt that the plan needed more substance.

MR advised that telephony is the preferred contact method and partnership work is key. It is difficult when someone does not have access to a telephone or the internet. Data intelligence is needed on target areas to ensure no-one is missed.

GE summarised that the plan must structurally identify areas of need. Funding should follow need. Place-based investment and resourcing community-based services is required to avoid people falling into difficulties at all. GE will send feedback to MR.

3. Police & Fire Reports

GE handed over to Inspector Gary Smith and Inspector Joanne Eales to provide their police reports and to Chris Williams to provide a fire report.

Inspector Joanne Eales – Seaham & Easington

A cannabis grow was seized from Seaside Lane worth around £127,500. One man was arrested on suspicion of the cultivation of cannabis and abstraction of electricity and has since been charged and remanded in custody.

The CAT Team are continuing their work in Easington Colliery. Litter picks and some environmental work has been done.

There was an underspend on the Safer Streets Round II funding. Currently considering innovative ways to spend. Some businesses have been approached regarding CCTV installation to give them reassurances.

Two people were arrested for a spate of thefts and burglaries in Murton and given a Rehabilitation Order and fine.

Some funding has been received for the Murton community garden. This will be used for a classroom base to engage children and young people and this will give produce to the community.

There has been a small spate of burglaries in the Seaham area. Two people from the Darlington area were found to have committed these crimes.

Inspector Gary Smith – Peterlee

It has been a busy month. There was a spate of burglaries last month, including an increase in the number of commercial burglaries in the Shotton and Peterlee.

Operation Trident is ongoing in response to ongoing issues in Peterlee and Seaham.

A man who tried to gouge a police officer's eyes out while being challenged over burgling a house has been jailed. Another individual has been charged for nine offences.

There has been a spate of social club and pub burglaries in Horden and Peterlee involving a team targeting these premises, with one person at the centre of this. Evidence was identified and stolen property was found. An individual is to appear in court in June.

The numbers failing to appear before court have reduced to 10.

Work is being done with the bus companies on anti-social behaviour. CCTV has been used and a ringleader has been identified.

GE noted that he had taken part in a walk around Horden today as part of Levelling Up. A warrant was being delivered in Horden. Some interesting conversations took place around crime.

Chris Williams – CDD Fire & Rescue Service

There was the largest increase in fires since 2021 in this quarter with hotspots in Horden, Easington Colliery and Murton.

There is an opportunity for people to do online fire safety checks.

Some funding challenges for the Fire Service are likely which may affect the East.

4. Neighbourhood Issues

None noted.

5. NBs for notification or endorsement of a declared interest

JMurphy notified the Board of the NB projects and highlighted those where there is a conflict of interest. The Board agreed to these projects.

Project Name: Murton Community Defibrillator

Councillors: Adcock-Forster & Griffiths

Project Cost: £1,529.36

NB Amount: £1,529.36

Description: DCC Street Lighting are applying for funding to install a column to mount a defibrillator in the Wembley area of Murton. The costs are the installation of the infrastructure only and not the defibrillator. The defibrillator itself has been provided from funding raised by the public subscription.
No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Murton Banner Group

Councillors: Adcock-Forster & Griffiths

Project Cost: £2,250.00

NB Amount: £900.00

Description: Sale Band to attend the Big Meeting.

Conflict of interest declared by Cllr Griffiths. Cllr Griffiths is a member of the Banner Group. The Board approved this project.

Project Name: Junior Strips

Councillors: Boyes & Surtees

Project Cost: £1,050.00

NB Amount: £999.00

Description: Easington Colliery Cricket Club are applying for coloured strips for the junior team.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Grass Cutting & Maintenance

Councillors: Batey & McKenna

Project Cost: £700.00

NB Amount: £700.00

Description: The Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre are applying for funding for a year's worth of grass cutting and maintenance at the centre.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Electrical Works

Councillors: Adcock-Forster & Griffiths

Project Cost: £9,000.00

NB Amount: £7,500.00

Description: St Paul's Methodist Church in Murton is applying for funding to carry out electrical repairs in the church hall.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre Defibrillator

Councillors: Batey & McKenna

Project Cost: £1,898.00

NB Amount: £1,898.00

Description: Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre in the Seaham are applying for funding to purchase and install an externally mounted defibrillator onto the building.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Cleveland Place Parking

Councillors: McDonnell

Project Cost: £5,771.60

NB Amount: £5,771.60

Description: Highways are applying for funding to carry out a small parking scheme.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Park House Refurb - Youth Provision

Councillors: McLean & Roberts

Project Cost: £20,458.00

NB Amount: £9,920.00 (£4,960 each Cllr)

Description: Park House, a domestic property in Horden Welfare Park, previously used as a home for an employee has been vacant for 16 months. Creative Youth Opportunities CIC, a not for profit, social enterprise who work with young people to create stronger communities were looking for a permanent base in Horden, as the majority of their young people are from Horden. As Park House is vacant, with no plans for a tenant, it was an obvious choice, also given the fact it meets with The funding will be used to convert a vacant domestic property to a safe and welcoming space for young people. Horden Recreation Ground Charity Objectives.

Conflict of interest declared by Cllrs McLean & Cllr Roberts. Both are Horden Parish Councillors and the Parish Council is the applicant. The Board approved this project.

Project Name: Dawdon Cricket Club Support

Councillors: Kennedy & Shaw

Project Cost: £11,347.80

NB Amount: £11,347.80

Description: Dawdon Welfare Cricket Club are applying for wicket covers, CCTV, and a sound system. This project was sent to the board in April but is included here as the costs have risen.

Conflict of interest declared by Cllr Kennedy. Cllr Kennedy is a social member and her son is a junior member. The Board approved this project.

Project Name: Open Water Swimming

Councillors: Charlton-Lainé & Purvis

Project Cost: £1,500.00

NB Amount: £1,500.00

Description: Seaham Marina Activity Centre are applying for funding to delivery introductory open water swimming safety sessions.

No conflict of interest.

Project Name: Centre Worker

Councillors: Higgins

Project Cost: £4,940.00

NB Amount: £4,940.00

Description: To employ an additional member of staff to support centre users to feel safe and relaxed when attending the centre to reduce social isolation.

Conflict of interest declared by Cllr Higgins. Cllr Higgins is a member of the management committee who are the applicants. The Board approved this project.

Project Name: Storage Container

Councillors: Batey & McKenna

Project Cost: £1,500.00

NB Amount: £1,500.00

Description: Seaham Rugby Club are applying for funding for a container to store junior playing kit at Seaham Park Sports Facility.

No conflict of interest.

6. Any Other Business

AP highlighted that there is a £200 CISWO fuel payment available to ex-miners who meet certain eligibility criteria. AP to send information to LT to circulate.

Discussion around releasing funding more quickly for NB applications and funding under £5,000.