

## DERWENT VALLEY PARTNERSHIP (DVP) BOARD MEETING

Held via Microsoft Teams on 30 March 2022 at 6pm



### PRESENT

#### Elected Representatives

Cllrs Kevin Earley, Kathryn Rooney, Michelle Walton and Alex Watson (Chair)

#### Partner Organisations

Mark Clelland (Derwentside Trust), Craig Farrage (Vice Chair) (Co Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service), Alison Lazazzera (Durham County Council (DCC)) and Rachel Rooney (Co Durham Clinical Commissioning Group)

#### Public Representatives

Marlene Boyles, Helen Marley, Susan Mellor and Shelley O'Brien

#### DVP:

Corinne Walton (Area Action Partnership Co-ordinator), Kath Clements (Community Development Project Officer), Lynn Dougal (Support Officer), Joanne Ashworth (Towns and Villages Community Development Project Officer) and Fiona Kelly (Chester le Street AAP)

#### MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 5

#### PRESENTERS:

Anne Davison (DCC) - DCC Libraries Consultation, Alison Lazazzera and Mike Allum (DCC) - Our Big Econ-versation Consultation and Rachel Rooney (Co Durham CCG) - Shotley Bridge Community Hospital update

#### APOLOGIES:

Elected Rep: Cllr Alan Shield. Partner Reps: Paul Moralee (Karbon Homes) and Joanne Waller (DCC). Laura Sloan (DVP)

### 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. There were no Declarations of interest although Cllr Earley said, as a member of the Shotley Bridge Hospital Group, he has an interest in the Shotley Bridge Community Hospital update.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (26 January 2021)

#### *Matters arising*

Page 6, regarding the Delta North – Know Your Potential Roadshow project that was approved by the Board in January, Delta North has withdrawn the application.

Page 8, Fiona Kelly has been appointed as temporary DVP Coordinator whilst Corinne is on maternity leave and will take up her role on 18 April 2022. Fiona currently works at Chester le Street AAP as a Principal Community Development Project Officer (CDPO) and previously worked as a CDPO with the DVP.

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

### **3. DVP Core Business Items**

Corinne went through the core business items, which Board members had sight of prior to the Board meeting.

#### ***Public Representative 2022 recruitment update***

The public rep recruitment commenced on 3 February and was promoted via social media, DCC issued press release, our networks, etc. There are 5 vacancies on the DVP Board (2 of the current public reps' terms will end in May 2023).

Eleven requests were made for an application pack and by the deadline date of 28 February 2022, 5 completed application forms were returned. Due to the low number of completed applications, the deadline was extended to 21 March 2022 where we had a further 6 expressions of interest and one completed application form returned.

Applicants will be invited to an informal interview on 8 April 2022 and successful candidates will join the Board at the next Board meeting (AGM) in May.

Cllr Walton wondered if there are plans to follow up on those who asked for an application pack and did not return a completed form. Corinne said that we do not have any feedback on why they did not return their application form and once the recruitment process is complete, the DVP Team will try and ascertain why they did not apply.

#### ***AAP Priority Survey update***

The AAP Priority Survey was launched on 28 January with a closing date of 11 March 2022. As well as the online survey, hard copies of the survey were available in community venues.

To date 121 responses have been received for the DVP area (69 Consett area / 52 villages). Collation of feedback is still ongoing and a full analysis will be available at the May Board meeting which will help the DVP Board set its priorities for 2022/23.

Preliminary feedback regarding the Towns & Villages (T&V) survey question (88 responses) was discussed at the T&V Task Group on 24 March, which will assist with project development as appropriate.

## ***AAP service review***

Board members received information prior to the Board meeting about the upcoming 'Review of Community Engagement and Funding Processes'. DCC Cabinet proposed the review in March 2022 and the findings from the review will be available in Autumn 2022.

The scope of the review will look at, for example, what the AAPs do well, governance and decision making processes and how we can adapt and improve to meet our future vision and priorities. The review will be carried out by an external consultant and a steering group will be set up made of Cabinet Portfolio Holders and DCC Management.

AAP staff, Board members and Elected members will be involved in the review process, along with partners and representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

Link to the full report is available at:

<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s152585/Review%20of%20Community%20Engagement%20and%20Funding%20Processes.pdf>

## ***2021/22 Area Budget remaining funds***

### *Environment (Enviro) Task Group*

An underspend of £1,959 remains and the task group would like to recommend to the Board the following two proposals:

- ❖ Transport Costs linked to the Footprint Conference 2022 project (previously approved by the Board in November 2021). Funding request £700.

The funding would be used to transport residents from the Derwent Valley area to the Footprint Conference in Durham over the 3 day event (Friday 16 to Sunday 18 June).

- ❖ 'Switch off car engine' banners. Funding request £959.

A banner would be placed outside of primary schools and would carry a message asking people to switch off their engines whilst waiting outside of the school when picking up children. The request of £959 is for design, print and manufacturing costs.

Ann English (Enviro Task Group Chair) has contacted primary schools in the DVP area to ascertain if they would be interested in displaying a banner and 7 primary schools have responded and would like to be involved.

Shotley Bridge Primary School already has their own banner (paid for by parents), so this funding would be used to support those schools that do not have a banner. A not for profit organisation is required to progress this request/funding application.

A discussion ensued with the following comments noted:

- ❖ Although Shotley Bridge Primary School has a banner outside of the school, people still sit in their cars with the engines running.
- ❖ To have more of an impact in getting the message across, it was suggested that the children be involved in the design of the banners, for example, handprints, a message from the children.
- ❖ The schools could be approached to ask if they are amenable to running a competition.
- ❖ The winning design could be chosen by the task group or the Board.
- ❖ The task group will discuss this in more detail at their next task group meeting on 7 April.

Rosemary Morris (Enviro Task Group Vice Chair) urged everyone to go along to the Footprint Conference. Big industries such as Npower and Northumbrian Water will be presenting on the Friday and over the Saturday and Sunday the conference will cover issues connected to climate change.

The Board APPROVED to fund the above two projects from the £1,959 underspend.

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

Further to the Board agreeing to fund Delta North's Know Your Potential Roadshow project at the January 2022 Board meeting, Delta North has now withdrawn their proposal. Therefore £44,574 (includes a small underspend of £67 and the withdrawn Delta North proposal of £44,507) will go back into the Area Budget (AB).

Limited funds from the 2021/22 AB can be carried forward into 2022/23. However, the task group will be meeting on 6 April to discuss other options linked to the underspend and an update will be provided in due course.

#### ***Towns and Villages (T&V) Task Group update***

At the task group meeting on 24 March the preliminary findings from the AAP Priority Survey, and specifically around the T&V question, were presented to the group. Joanne Ashworth (T&V Officer) also contacted local community groups to find out what the main issues and priorities were in their respective areas.

To date, 8 local community organisations responded to Joanne's request and together with the findings from the T&V question in the priority survey the main issues/themes identified were:

For the local villages – traffic and road safety, environmental enhancements and community facilities.

For Consett Town Centre - ASB, better facilities, youth activities and transport.

The task group discussed a call out for projects, with projected timescales, which would commence week beginning 25 April with a deadline date for project proposals by 6 June 2022. Following the call out process, which would be undertaken by the task group, eligible project proposals would, potentially, be recommended to the Board at the July Board meeting to consider funding.

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

Corinne gave an update on the Consett Destination Development Plan (CDDP), which was developed through the EET Task Group back in 2017 to help promote the area and to deliver on the action points within the plan.

At the July 2021 Board meeting, the Board agreed to incorporate the work of the CDDP into the T&V Task Group. A working group subsequently met to review and update the plan. An updated version of the plan was presented to the Board.

Ann English (Forum) queried why the CDDP, which came from the EET Task Group, is now in the T&V Task Group. Corinne said that in 2017 the EET Task Group had tourism in their action plan, which is how the plan came about. As they no longer have tourism as a theme in their delivery plan it was felt that the T&V task group would be a natural fit and could help deliver on some of the action points.

John O'Connor (Forum) said that at the last T&V Task Group meeting, Stephen Reed (from Regeneration, Economic and Growth), outlined Section 106 money that is available for the area and said that this is a significant amount of money that should not be ignored in the planning process.

Rosemary (Forum) said as we are awaiting the outcome from the priority survey to determine which priority groups go forward, she suggested that we review the CDDP after the priorities are set to see where it might fit in.

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

Board members had received a copy of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon letter that included further links on the Guide to Taking Part in beacon events. Board members were asked if they would like to purchase a Jubilee Beacon at a cost of £490 plus VAT which would be funded from either the DVP's Admin Budget or from one or more councillor's Neighbourhood Budget Small Grants fund.

The gas fuelled beacon, which burns for approx 1 hour, would need to be assembled and located in a suitable place.

A lengthy discussion took place that included comments about where it would be located, what would happen to the beacon after the event and the quality of the beacon. Therefore the Board agreed not to fund a beacon as they felt that the money could be better used elsewhere.

#### **6. Partner Updates**

##### ***DCC Libraries Consultation***

Anne Davison, Service Manager, gave a presentation on DCC's Libraries For You Consultation and provided an overview on County Durham's libraries, membership and usage and the consultation process. (A copy of the presentation is available upon request.)

There are 39 libraries across the county, an outreach service which consists of Books on Wheels, Book Bus and a mobile library as well as online services. During lockdown e-book and e-audio book loans increased and although levels have reduced since the libraries reopened, usage is higher than before Covid hit.

To ensure our libraries meet the future needs for our communities, the public are being asked for their views on what we do now and what we should be doing in the future. There are several ways to take part in the consultation - online, paper copies (available in libraries) and a telephone helpline.

The timescales involved in the libraries transformation will be:

Phase 1 – current consultation ends on 1 April 2022. A needs assessment will be compiled and presented to Cabinet around November 2022.

Phase 2 – a further public consultation will be held in 2023 on the options available with a final report going to Cabinet towards the end of 2023.

Phase 3 – implementation begins, in 2024, on agreed recommendations from Phase 2.

Anne urged everyone to complete the survey which ends on 1 April 2022.

Following the presentation, the following comments/questions were noted:

- The last library consultation, approx 10 years ago, resulted in reduced opening hours for Consett Library. Concerns were also raised that the outcome from the current consultation may lead to some libraries being closed.  
Anne said that after the last consultation the libraries were band together with different opening hours - Durham Clayport as a central hub, town centre libraries would get 36 hours and smaller community libraries 20 hours. This was the best way at the time to maintain a level of service across the county. However, the current consultation is to support service improvement (post Covid-19), rather than to reduce facilities moving forward.
- It was queried whether the library consultation was taking place just in County Durham or in other areas too.  
Anne clarified that the consultation was focused on County Durham libraries only. There may be other library consultations taking place across the country but they are not all feeding into a national picture.
- It was noted that the hire of e-books and e-audio books had increased considerably but that it was important to still offer a venue for people to attend to hire books as the library is regarded as a good social interaction/engagement opportunity for residents.
- If the library was to close in the future, the provision of the Book Bus and Books on Wheels services to be still made available to our elderly and more vulnerable residents.
- A Board member had asked residents what they used libraries for and the response was that they mainly used it for photocopying.

Cllr Watson thanked Anne for the presentation.

## ***Our Big Econ-versation***

Alison Lazazzera, Head of People and Talent Management gave a presentation on DCC's Inclusive Economic Strategy (with support from Mike Allum, Spatial Policy Manager. (A copy of the presentation is available upon request.)

Following the new joint administration in 2021, they identified a gap in the Council's strategy framework and the need for a new economic strategy. 'Our Big Econ-versation' was launched in January 2022 and residents are being asked for their views on a wide range of issues to help make life in County Durham better for them and their community.

A 3-stage development approach has been adopted:

1. Economic review is the main evidence for the strategy – completed
2. Economic Statement is a summary of issues, evidence and structure – completed
3. Inclusive Economic Strategy is to be developed based on 'Our Big Econ-versation' – ongoing

Our Big Econ-versation runs until 22 April 2022, analysis on the feedback and drafting of the strategy is due in the Autumn with adopting the strategy due late 2022.

People can find out more and have their say by visiting the website at <https://durhamecon-versation.co.uk/>. There are three dedicated links to the survey - 'Under 18s', 'Over 18s' and 'Businesses'. People can also get involved by emailing [econ-versation@durham.gov.uk](mailto:econ-versation@durham.gov.uk) or calling 03000 260000.

Mike Allum said that we want to hear what the issues people are coming across when they are looking for work, training, etc as well as the views from businesses. The feedback will be collated and will form part of a draft strategy which will be consulted on again later this year. He encouraged everyone to get the message out about 'Our Big Econ-versation' and to fill in the survey.

Cllr Watson thanked Alison and Mike for the presentation and contribution to the meeting.

## ***Shotley Bridge Community Hospital (SBCH) Update***

Before Rachel Rooney gave a verbal update on SBCH she said that the NHS is currently going through a reorganisation. The County Durham CCG (which she is part of) is moving into an Integrated Care System, therefore the SBCH project will be led by County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT). Rachel will be working on the SBCH project until they submit an outline business case and then she will be stepping aside as a new project manager will be taking it on.

Regarding SBCH update:

- They are currently developing an outline business case and looking to submit it in May 2022 for approval. Although this is later than originally planned, the delay should not impact on delivery and anticipate that the building will be completed by 2025.

- They are working with the developer of the preferred site and they have regular meetings with DCC's planning department and the developer to make sure it goes through as smoothly as possible.
- They have recently gone out to procurement for a design and build contract.
- They are continuing with public and staff engagement.
- The first part of the design is in the final stages. However, the design process is quite lengthy but from the first round of designs they have had sign off from the Trust and sign off from the New Hospitals Programme is imminent.

Cllr Watson asked whether it is a standard model build or not. Rachel said it would be standardised as much as possible as it is more efficient and within the NHS there is strict criteria they have to follow, for example, around the design of a ward or an outpatient room.

Cllr Watson asked for a brief outline of services that would be provided. Rachel said it is similar to what is already there which includes an extension to chemotherapy services, medical investigations unit, urgent care facility, rehabilitation, outpatients, 16 bed ward, ophthalmology and a women, children and family service.

Cllr Watson thanked Rachel for the update.

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

Alex thanked everyone for their attendance. The next Board meeting will be the AGM and will be held face to face on Wednesday 25 May 2022 at 6pm at The Salvation Army Hall, Consett.