

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting

Monday 16 May 2022

(Virtual Meeting - held via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr Liz Brown, Rebecca Ashby, Cllr Eric Mavin, Cllr Lucy Hovvells, Cllr Bill Kellett, Parish Cllr Maureen Boettcher, Rebecca Eves, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Sam Humble, Cllr Richard Ormerod, Paul Howard, Colin Stephenson, Rev Joanne Thorns, Chris Tindale

AAP Officer

Attendance: Craig Morgan – AAP Co-ordinator
Wendy Lavelle – Community Development Project Officer
Lyndsey Hunter – Community Development Project Officer
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Apologies Board: Dave Clarke, Cllr Lesley Mavin, Sarah Burns, Matthew Mills, Ian Moore, Lee Alexander

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Cllr Liz Brown, Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual Durham AAP Board Meeting.

Apologies for absence, [as above].

2 Teams Etiquette and Participation

Everyone was reminded of the meeting etiquette.

3 Workshop Discussion on Priorities and Funding Priorities Report

The Chair referred to Item 5 of the report and the meeting was open for discussion -

- The priorities survey showed that environment and climate change was important to a lot of people and should be a main priority for the AAP.
- It was commented that a lot of people are still suffering from long Covid. It was said that Environment and Climate Change would fit in with the Towns and Villages funding. Community safety, mental health and transport are also issues in some communities.
- It was suggested that cost-of-living/impacts of poverty was added to the list of themes? This was agreed.

Considering the statistics and comments from the survey and Board members personal experiences in local communities, the Board agreed to continue with the single priority of 'Community Recovery' and the key themes under that. It was agreed that we should enhance the food provision aspect by including the cost-of-living crisis. Given the comments around environment and climate change it was agreed to include this as well as issues linked to community safety.

Funding Discussion Paper

The Board had been asked "do we stick with our current approach or look at something different like a call for projects." The meeting was open for discussion –

- Can we work towards a call for projects and have two deadlines?
- If what we are doing is working, why change it?

Discussion ensued around the number of Board meetings held throughout the year, and the consensus of those present felt the frequency of monthly Board meetings worked well for Durham AAP. It was agreed to alternate the meetings between online and face to face.

The Board agreed that we continue to work towards a first come approach to funding.

In relation to running a Participatory Budgeting event this year, Craig firstly explained what a Participatory Budgeting event was and the meeting was open for discussion –

- Some Board members said they didn't like them. They felt it was demoralising for those groups/organisations who didn't receive any funding. They felt we needed to make it a fairer process and thought it was too competitive.
- Those groups/organisations who are not good at engaging are disadvantaged. Can the AAP help those who are not good at this? Supporting people in presentation skills is very useful. The AAP Team agreed this support would be offered if needed
- Is it about funding or raising the profile of the groups and the AAP? It is really a bit of both.
- Do we limit the types of groups/organisations that apply?
- It was suggested that everyone who applied would get something.
- There are people that spend a lot of time applying/attending and this needs to be considered before a decision is made.
- Has there been any formal evaluation done on events in the past?

There were mixed feelings amongst the Board, and it was agreed that a decision on whether Durham AAP hold a Participatory Budgeting event during 2022/23 be made later in the year.

The next question for discussion was “Do we want to top up our small grants fund?”

Craig explained that the Smalls Grants Fund was topped up with £15k last year and is administered through the County Durham Community Foundation. He highlighted that he needed to have further discussions with management on topping up the fund for this year.

The Board asked if there was any movement on moving the £5k limit as there were lots of applicants that would like to apply for less than this amount. Craig explained that £5000 remained the minimum amount and lower amounts would only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Taking advice from the AAP Co-ordinator, the Board agreed in principle that as the Small Grants Fund worked well, it be topped up. Craig agreed to get an update on how it had been spent and the Board will discuss this further at the June or July Board meeting.

4 Neighbourhood Budget

The following neighbourhood budget project was shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: Ludworth Programme of Events 2022

Councillor(s): Hovvels / Varty / Miller

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,650.00

The Board was happy to approve the project.

5 Any other Business

Board dates for 2022/23 had been set and venues booked.

Craig had emailed the Chairs of the task and finish groups; once they respond, dates of meetings will be circulated.

The Fun and Food applications will be circulated to all Board members. A panel will be meeting on Thursday morning to go through the applications. It was noted that applicants could apply for both Summer and Christmas 2022.

6 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 16 June 2022, 6:00 pm – Framwellgate Youth and Community Centre

Subsequent Meetings

- 12th July, 2:00pm, Online
- 24th August, 6:00pm, Sherburn Hill Hub
- 29th September, 2:00pm, Online
- 26th October, 6:00pm, Newton Hall Community Centre

- 24th November, 2:00pm, Online
- 13th December, 6:00pm, Durham Town Hall
- 26th January 2023, 2:00pm, Online
- 21st February 2023, 6:00pm, Durham Town Hall
- 29th March 2023, 2:00pm, Online

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.