



**GREAT AYCLIFFE & MIDDRIDGE PARTNERSHIP (GAMP)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2021, 6:00PM (VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS)**

PRESENT:

Cllr James Atkinson (DCC) - Vice Chair, Cllr Alan Jordan (Middridge Parish), Julie Dudley, Simon Hocking, Chris Hutchinson, Carl Robinson, Natalie Whitworth, Daniel Blagdon (Health Representative), Andy Coulthard (Livin Housing), Insp Sarah Honeyman (Police) – Chair, Oliver Sherratt (DCC Head of Service), Malcolm Woodward (Fire Service), Brian Riley (GAMP Coordinator), Victoria Grieves (GAMP Community Development Project Officer), Paula Stockport (GAMP Support Officer), James Cook (DCC Spatial Policy Team), Jackie Donnelly (DCC Community Economic Development), Angela Blanchard (DCC Towns & Villages Team)

APOLOGIES:

Sue Cooke, Carol Gaskarth, Cllr Neville Jones, Peter Shovlin, Cllr Eddy Adam, Cllr Ken Robson, Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd, Cllr Tony Stubbs

OBSERVERS:

Mr R Adamson, Mr V Crosby, Ms K Hopper, Ms K Ward

Standard Board Meeting

1. Introductions & Apologies

Insp SH opened the meeting. BR welcomed new Public Representative Julie Dudley to her first Board meeting. Julie has replaced Sean Barnett on the Board; Sean had submitted his resignation shortly after the last meeting. BR thanked Sean on behalf of the Board for his time as Public Rep.

BR asked Board members to note the recent sad passing of Cllr Brian Hall; Brian was a valuable member of the GAMP Board since our inception in 2009, having been chair of the Board a number of times in his capacity as Town Council rep, and will be sadly missed.

BR reminded Board members of the standard Declaration of Interest item on the agenda. BR reminded meeting observers they would be welcome to comment under Item 3 and 4 on the agenda.

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

BR noted that the majority of DCC Elected Members were attending another meeting at County Hall and would endeavour to join the GAMP meeting should timings allow; this meeting was therefore not quorate in the Cllr sector.

2. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13.7.21 – Matters Arising

The draft minutes from the Board meeting held on 13.7.21 had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. There were no outstanding actions or matters arising, and the minutes of the last meeting were **AGREED** by the Board as a true and accurate record.

3. Countywide Partner Issues

BR confirmed that the planned presentation from DCC in relation to their Library Needs Assessment has been postponed again due to a delay with the consultation launch date.

3.1 DCC Towns & Villages Regeneration Update

(James Cook/Jackie Donnelly/Angela Blanchard)

Board members received a presentation in relation to DCC's Towns and Villages Strategy. The Strategy focuses on five themes:

- Strategic Investments – support for town and neighbourhood centres;
- Housing and Community - to support the accelerated delivery of the Housing Strategy, creating resilient communities;
- Environment and Health - to create local opportunities through high quality environment;
- Built Environment - to support regeneration activities within our towns and villages; find innovative solutions to underused / derelict land and buildings; support independent retailers and businesses; and to provide clean and attractive built environments that communities are proud of;
- Transport and Connectivity - to ensure connected communities through excellent connectivity for businesses and the workforce.

Information was provided specific to the GAMP AAP area, including Forrest Park, the Town Centre, the Low Copelaw site, selective licensing, tackling empty homes etc.

An update was also provided in relation to the Towns & Villages funding that has been allocated to AAPs this year; this includes a larger Area Budget pot of £210k, and each DCC Elected Member has had their Neighbourhood Budget enhanced with a further £10k to support Towns & Villages schemes. GAMP has a link officer, Angela Blanchard, who will support the Towns & Villages process.

BR confirmed that a copy of the presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes (**Action 1: BR**).

Insp SH briefly updated Board members in relation to a Countywide funding meeting she attended recently in her capacity as Chair. DCC has £300k available for countywide projects which deliver across all 14 x AAPs, and Chairs met recently to discuss and agree potential 'themes' which projects should be asked to address. The themes this year are:

- mental health, with a specific focus on young people's mental health linked to the impact of the COVID pandemic
- employability

- antisocial behaviour, with a focus on youth related ASB (including diversionary activities)

The next meeting is due to take place in October and Insp SH will keep Board members updated accordingly.

There were no additional partner updates. BR reminded partners to get in touch if they need space on a future meeting agenda.

4. Local Neighbourhood Issues

4.1 Neighbourhood Policing Update

BR reminded attendees that this is a strategic overview of policing activity in the GAMP area, and not an appropriate forum to highlight 'individual' issues; these can be picked up with Insp SH outside of the Board meeting.

Insp SH updated Board members in relation to ongoing antisocial behaviour issues, local PACT priorities, crime data, as well as current and emerging issues. Insp SH highlighted that the team are now producing a weekly blog in the Newton News and on Facebook, to help improve engagement and communication. The GAMP-funded ebikes are proving extremely beneficial to the area and Insp SH gave examples of where they've been used to make a real difference.

Insp SH highlighted that the darker nights will be with us very soon, and residents will be encouraged to think about home security and leaving a light on or setting timer switches on lamps etc after dark. The team have recently taken delivery of a number of alarms and lights etc, which will be available to residents. BR suggested that Insp SH could link with NW who is currently running a project which supports vulnerable and isolated older residents who would potentially benefit from such items.

BR confirmed a copy of Insp SH's update report will be circulated with the minutes.

5. GAMP Coordinator's Update

5.1 2021-22 Area Budget Project Callout

BR noted there had been a fantastic response to this year's project callout; 40 x application packs had been issued, with 24 x eligible projects submitted. BR highlighted the total funding request of £327,268, noting that the starting balance for this callout was £244,902.

BR confirmed that the funding subgroup panel meeting was held on 23 September, where it was agreed to realign four of the submitted projects to our Towns & Villages funding allocation, as it was felt they were a better fit with that specific criteria. These four projects totalled £84,300, leaving a total Area Budget request of £242,968 – which meant that we were in the fortunate position of being able to support all the remaining projects. In terms of the small underspend (£1,934), panel members agreed to redistribute this to a couple of the projects that were supported.

BR confirmed that all successful applicants have been informed of the panel's decision, and are now in the process of completing an Area Budget application form as the next stage of the process. These projects will then all need to be

circulated to the full Board for final approval and ratification in line with our Funding Team's requirements, before being submitted to the Funding Team for full technical appraisal. We should hopefully be looking at grant offer letters coming through before the end of this year.

BR commented that there's a great range of projects this year, which all fit well with our 'Community Recovery' priority theme, and is pleased as Coordinator with how well the call for projects has gone. There are some fantastic local groups and organisations delivering excellent projects to support our communities, and this year's increased budget has given us scope to fund more schemes than we ever have previously.

BR thanked VG and PS, and also this year's panel members for their hard work during the process.

5.2 Business Representative Role

BR informed Board members that the Business Rep we appointed recently, Caroline Fenwick from Tesco, has advised that due to an internal reorganisation she is no longer in a position to sit on the Board, so we are back in the position of needing to identify and appoint a new Business Rep. BR clarified that, when the last vacancy arose, approaches were made to Aycliffe Business Park and Business Durham, without success, hence the approach to Tesco. BR asked Board members for possible suggestions; Insp SH highlighted contacts at both Gestamp and McDonalds which could be explored. MW added that he has a contact in Gestamp who could potentially be interested, and Board members suggested that MW make an initial approach to gauge interest and then BR could follow up with further information. JD added that she has links within the North East HR Network who will have members from the Business Park, and could make an approach should the Gestamp contact not be viable. **(Action 2: MW/BR).**

Items not on the Agenda

BR clarified that the GAMP team are still currently home-based, with a view to making a return to our office base at the Pioneering Care Centre on a hybrid basis by the end of October, in line with DCC's timetable and guidelines. The plan is for all offices to operate at reduced capacity, so we will have to stagger our working days between us as a team, i.e. all 3 team members wouldn't be working in the office at the same time. In addition, once the GAMP team do get back to our office, we won't be able to accept unscheduled visitors – anyone who needs to meet with the team will need to prearrange this. BR highlighted that the team are contactable via email, Teams, telephone etc as usual.

6. Date/Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 23 November 2021, 6:00pm (venue/Teams tbc)

BR confirmed that Joy Allen (Co Durham Police & Crime Commissioner) will be attending the meeting to give an update.

Insp SH/BR thanked all attendees, and the meeting was closed.