



4 Together Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting Wednesday 1 September 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams)

PRESENT:

Mark Booth – Health Representative, Nigel Jones – VCS Representative, Mary Readman – DCC, Insp Mike Sammut – Police, David Stothard – Business Representative (Outgoing Chair), Carole Atkinson, Tony Cutmore, Dennis Ramsey (Vice Chair), Cllr Peter Atkinson – DCC, Cllr Brian Avery – DCC (Vice Chair), Cllr Julie Cairns – DCC, Cllr Pauline Crathorne – Cornforth Parish Council, Cllr Joe Makepeace – Ferryhill Town Council, Cllr Elaine Peeke – DCC, Cllr Joe Quinn – DCC, Lee Copeland – Principal AAP Coordinator, Callum Aitchison – Principal Community Development Project Officer, Paula Nixon – Community Development Project Officer, Paula Stockport – AAP Support Officer, Joy Allen – Durham Police & Crime Commissioner, Vicki Booth – Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office, Rachel Tyndall – DCC Antisocial Behaviour Interventions Officer

APOLOGIES:

Justin Parry, Angela Smurthwaite

Standard Board Meeting

A1. Introductions & Apologies

LC/DS welcomed everyone to the meeting of the 4 Together Partnership Board, and a round of introductions was made. LC welcomed the two new Town & Parish Council representatives to the Board; Cllr Pauline Crathorne and Cllr Joe Makepeace. Apologies for absence were noted, as above.

A2. Election of Chair & Vice Chairs for 2021-22

LC briefly recapped that decisions on this year’s Chair & Vice Chairs had been delayed at our AGM until confirmation of the Town & Parish Councils reps had been received. LC has now contacted the Elected Member and Partner sectors of the Board by email to seek nominations (LC clarified that the Public Rep sector would be delayed until the recruitment process for the current vacancies has been concluded; the interviews can progress now that the T&PC reps have been appointed – **Action 1: LC**). LC also clarified that, as previously advised, the Chair for 2021-22 will rotate to the Elected Member third of the Board. LC confirmed that David Stothard had been nominated from the Partner sector, and Cllr Brian Avery had been nominated from the Elected Member sector; both roles were **AGREED** and ratified by the Board. LC further clarified that Cllr BA will therefore take the Chair for 2021-22. LC thanked everyone for their input with this process, and also thanked DS for his time as Chair on behalf of the Board and staff team.

A3. Agreement of Minutes from Previous Meeting (7.7.21) - Matters Arising

LC reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy. The following points were noted:

- Cllr JC updated on progress with the issues previously highlighted in relation to the GP's surgery at Ferryhill and Chilton; Cllr JC and Cllr PA have met with representatives from the surgery recently. The meeting was really positive, and it is hoped that regular meetings will continue in future to help maintain continued open dialogue and communication. Cllr JC will forward a copy of the meeting notes to LC for onward circulation to the Board (**Action 2: Cllr JC/LC**).

There were no further matters arising, and the minutes were **AGREED** as a true record.

[Cllr JM joined the meeting]

A4. Countywide Partner Issues

A4.1 Durham Police & Crime Commissioner's Update (Joy Allen)

JA updated Board members in relation to her draft Police & Crime Plan for 2021-24. Consultation is currently ongoing in relation to the draft Plan, with the findings due to be presented to the Police & Crime Panel later in September 2021. JA outlined her vision, "to make the communities of County Durham and Darlington safer, stronger and more resilient to crime and antisocial behaviour". The draft Plan sets out six key themes:

- Safer Communities – ASB, neighbourhood crime and serious organised crime
- Safer Business – Strengthen engagement with local businesses to prevent crime and protect themselves and retail workers
- Safer Online – Work in partnership to tackle threats and support vulnerable people
- Safer People – Victims, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, Hate Crime, Young People, Mental Health, Drug Alcohol and Gambling Harm
- Safer Roads – Support Durham Constabulary and key partners to tackle the fatal 4 -speeding, mobile phones, drink and drug driving and seat belts
- Safer Countryside – Increase confidence and support rural initiatives

JA broadly outlined the planned approach to addressing the priorities. Board members were encouraged to take part in the consultation if they haven't already done so.

JA invited questions from Board members and the following points were noted:

- Cllr BA commented that the current '101' telephone system can be very frustrating, with users often unable to get through, hence why people can be put off reporting incidents. JA acknowledged these frustrations and the difficulties with the current system, adding that improvements will be looked at where possible.
- Cllr PA commented that the Ferryhill area in particular has suffered badly with an increase in ASB over the last few months, with a perception among some that 'nothing is being done'. JA advised that work is planned to help improve signposting particularly around ASB, i.e. in bringing clarity around who has

responsibility for the problems, who is the best reporting contact out of hours etc. This is a collective issue and therefore work alongside partners such as DCC, Youth Services, Police etc will need to take place.

- Cllr JM raised an issue in relation to several failed attempts to arrange an official handover of the ebikes that were previously funded from Cllr JM's Neighbourhood Budget. CAi has been trying to contact the project lead in the Ferryhill policing team to arrange some publicity for the handover without success, and Cllr JM asked whether JA or the Chief Constable would be able to accept the bikes on behalf of Durham Constabulary should contact still fail to be made locally. JA would be happy to discuss if needed.
- CAi reiterated the earlier point in relation to escalating incidents of ASB in Ferryhill, particularly in relation to local shops. When incidents occur 'out of hours' these can't be reported to DCC. People are expressing concerns to their local Cllrs that these incidents aren't being classified as crimes, but rather as 'incidents', and what type of incident would be deemed a crime. There is a perception that this then results in lower crime figures than the reality. Insp MS commented that the police and DCC work very closely on the issue of ASB, with regular communication, and members of the public don't always 'see' the work that's taking place behind the scenes. Insp MS shares the frustration of local residents and business owners, adding that there are a range of socio-economic issues which are impacting on the levels of ASB, which the Police can't resolve. Insp MS acknowledged the difficulties people are facing, but added that the issues are often complex. He also added that communication is key, so that people have a better understanding of the work that's taking place, and the Neighbourhood Policing team will continue to work hard on improving this.
- Cllr PC asked about plans to reintroduce face-to-face PACT meetings; TC confirmed that a meeting is due to take place at Cornforth House later this week.
- Cllr BA commented that he feels withdrawal of youth services funding/provision, e.g. youth clubs etc, has impacted on rising ASB levels generally. JA responded that there has been a 75% reduction nationally in funding for youth provision. In other areas of the County where diversionary activities with youth workers have been funded, they have seen benefits, so this does often prove to be a good solution.

Cllr BA thanked JA for her update and JA/VB left the meeting.

A5. Neighbourhood Issues

A5.1 Neighbourhood Policing Update

Insp MS updated Board members. There are no significant patterns crime wise currently. Insp MS reiterated the importance of reporting incidents regularly, to help ensure that data is captured accurately when looking at resources.

Rachel Tyndall (RT) from DCC's ASB Interventions Team updated Board members in relation to the process around how DCC link with the police to deal with incidents. RT's team is currently working with 18 young people in the Ferryhill area, from various age groups; a number of warning letters and home visits have been issued and carried out. RT highlighted there has been a spike over the last

three weeks or so, adding that the Ferryhill policing team do a fantastic job in working closely with DCC and reporting incidents. Wider services are often involved when looking at cases to address a range of issues within the home unit such as domestic violence, financial issues etc, and this process can be lengthy.

Cllr JC commented that issues with ASB aren't just relevant to Ferryhill; Chilton has a lot of ongoing issues also, and Cllr JC would welcome a meeting with Insp MS and/or RT outside the Board meeting to discuss further.

NJ noted that a number of adults in the 4 Together Partnership area are also causing problems with ASB, and the issues aren't solely limited to youths.

LC thanked RT for her update.

A6. Area & Neighbourhood Budget Update

A6.1 AAP Funding Decisions & Way Forward

LC gave Board members a presentation in relation to this year's funding streams/budgets and the respective timescales and criteria for allocation. LC recapped this year's funding allocations:

- £100,000 - specific focus on local welfare and anti-poverty initiatives to complement actions within the Poverty Action Plan*
- £25,000 - Older Peoples Social Isolation Fund*
- £10,000 - Welfare Reform Fund
- £100,000 - Core Area Budget Funding linked to Community Recovery and Emerging Issues (at least £24k of core Area Budget must be spent on Capital projects, with a minimum grant of £5k)
- £210,000 - Towns & Villages funding
- £22,560 - Holiday Activities with Healthy Food (HAHF)
- £9,902 - Youth Fund
- **£477,462 - Total 4 Together allocation**
- Combination of Core and devolved budgets so need to be managed differently
- *At least £125k MUST be spent before the end of financial year

LC asked Board members to consider looking at this year's budgets in order of priority for allocation, with high, medium-high, and low-medium timescales for allocation.

High Priority: £125,000 is devolved from other service groupings and must be defrayed by March 2022 (£100,000 specific focus on local welfare and anti-poverty initiatives to complement actions within the Poverty Action Plan, and £25,000 Older Persons Social Isolation Fund). LC suggested it would also make sense to add the additional £10k Welfare Reform element of funding into this. LC asked Board members to agree that the AAP team use their specialist knowledge and links with local organisations to progress potential ideas that could address gaps in local service provision. All project applications would still come to the Board for discussion and decision.

Medium-High Priority: £100,000 Core Area Budget for Community Recovery and Emerging Local Issues; LC highlighted there is potential for carryover of this funding if it's not fully allocated before the end of the current financial year. LC suggested Board members could consider either having an open callout or Board

development sessions to look for projects that meet the overarching theme of “Community Recovery with Emerging Issues” including a local focus on:

- Activities/Resources
- Support for Community Groups/Service Providers
- Making our Areas more Attractive
- Employment & Training

The above issues take into consideration the 4 main areas recently identified as needing support via local consultation carried out by Paula Nixon.

Medium-High Priority: £9,902 Youth Fund (open call, already being managed)

Medium-High Priority: £22,560 Holiday Activities with Healthy Food (open call, already being managed)

Low-Medium Priority: £210,000 Towns & Villages funding (carryover confirmed for this funding, therefore we have more time to plan). LC highlighted some key points for this funding; the criteria is already established (previously circulated), this funding will be supported via the Towns and Villages team, and all projects are encouraged to include 30% match from applicants. LC suggested that a T&Vs officer be invited to attend the November Board meeting to begin more detailed discussions on this funding and agree how the Board want to move forward (**Action 3: LC**).

A lengthy discussion took place, with the following points noted:

- Cllr BA commented that our local service providers always do a fantastic job, and particularly during the pandemic, in helping members of our local communities, and should be supported. Cllr BA moved that the Board agree the AAP staff team will use their expertise and work with local service providers to work up potential projects given the short time to allocate the £125k welfare/anti-poverty element of funding.
- Cllr JM asked for clarity around the process, he wouldn't feel comfortable with officers 'making decisions' around which projects receive funding, which could be construed as pre-ratifying. There are a lot of other local organisations who could be in a position to deliver worthwhile projects and they shouldn't be disbarred from the process. LC clarified that officers wouldn't be making decisions on funding, rather working with any local service providers to work up eligible projects which meet a specific identified need, which would then be brought to the Board for decisions.
- Cllr PC agreed with Cllr BA's view; the AAP officers don't make decisions on funding, rather they use their local knowledge to work with groups to support them with project development. Our local groups often rely on AAP funding support, they have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic supporting vulnerable and isolated members of our community, and Cllr PC wouldn't want to see these groups potentially be lost.
- PN highlighted that the £125k element is targeted funding, and reiterated that the proposal for officers to work with service providers to develop potential projects is just for this element of funding. The wider core £100k AB could be taken to open callout relatively soon should the Board wish.

- Cllr JC commented that this amount of funding is fantastic for our local area and should be seen as an opportunity to perhaps work differently. Cllr JC suggested that a subgroup of Board members could be set up, as well as bringing all key organisations together to discuss the potential for this funding, to level up the whole 4 Together Partnership area, so that any projects funded can support the whole Partnership area wherever possible.
- TC suggested the Board should focus on the £125k initially, given the timescales previously outlined, and then move to the core £100k, also noting the impact on workload for the AAP staff team to administer such a high amount of funding.
- NJ suggested that Board development sessions to look at the core £100k would be beneficial after the high priority £125k has been addressed.

The Board **AGREED** that due to the tight timescale for the £125k, the AAP team would work with local service providers to progress potential project proposals that would address identified needs and gaps in provision, with a view to bringing these to the Board for further consideration. These should be specifically focused on welfare reform/anti-poverty/social isolation of older people. PN added that there is sufficient funding available to support other groups through the wider core £100k AB which will be discussed at a later date.

LC acknowledged that several newer Board members would not have had sight of previous information circulated in relation to Towns & Villages funding criteria and will circulate (**Action 4: LC**).

A7. OPSIF Presentation – Prosper Project (Tony Cutmore)

LC reminded Board members that TC had been invited to present on the current OPSIF-funded project being delivered by Cornforth Partnership (Healthy Communities), with a view to potential extension as agreed by the previous Board. LC added there are specific criteria that projects should address, and progress over the years has been monitored and approved by Adults Services who devolve the grant.

Declaration of Interest noted: Tony Cutmore & Cllr Pauline Crathorne

TC updated Board members in relation to the previously funded 'Healthy Communities' project.

TC gave an outline of the 'Prosper' project proposal, "creating healthier communities is a redevelopment of our existing offer of support to older people in the 4 Together Area Action Partnership following on from the Covid-19 Pandemic; we aim to continue to improve the social, emotional capabilities and mental wellbeing of older people. It has been designed with local residents and service users, and is based on their needs and the issues they are facing in their local community".

The project will enable the continuation of Cornforth Partnership's existing service, and build upon the successful and positive relationships created with service users, providers and statutory services. The proposal will offer a plethora of project delivery across the 4 Together Area Action Partnership area for older residents

living within our communities. It will provide a consistent service to our older people and will work on a range of outcomes including:

- Reducing isolation in older residents
- Creating access to Food
- Improving the Health and Wellbeing of older people

The project will see three key delivery areas:

- Continuation - of the dedicated older person worker for the area; their role will be to provide services, meet with clients on a one-to-one basis and support community groups to become established and self-sustainable.
- Access to Food - continue the current Feeding the Community project, offering an affordable hot meal delivery service twice weekly.
- Getting Connected - incorporate a pathway of support for older people to learn the skills required to operate online services such as skype, internet shopping and social media

PN asked Board members for approval for TC to progress his project proposal to a funding application form, which would be brought back to the Board for consideration and approval. Board members **AGREED** (**Action 5: TC**).

LC clarified that all further agenda items will be deferred due to the meeting overrunning:

- 2021-22 Neighbourhood Budget update
- Interim Project Monitoring updates (already circulated previously)
- Holiday Activities with Healthy Food funding update

A8. Date & Time of Next Meeting:

Wed 3 November 2021, 6.00pm (venue tbc)

LC thanked everyone for their attendance, and the meeting was closed.