



4 Together Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting Wednesday 3 November 2021, (Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams)

PRESENT:

Mark Booth – Health Representative, Nigel Jones – VCS Representative, Justin Parry – Fire Service Representative, Mary Readman – DCC, Insp Mike Sammut – Police, Angela Smurthwaite – Livin Housing, David Stothard – Business Representative (Vice Chair), Carole Atkinson, Tony Cutmore, Liam Fellows, Susan Kirby, Dennis Ramsey (Vice Chair), Cllr Peter Atkinson – DCC, Cllr Julie Cairns – DCC, Cllr Pauline Crathorne – Cornforth Parish Council, Cllr Joe Makepeace – Ferryhill Town Council, Cllr Joe Quinn – DCC, Lee Copeland – Principal AAP Coordinator, Gordon Elliott – DCC Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement, Callum Aitchison – Principal Community Development Project Officer, Paula Nixon – Community Development Project Officer, Paula Stockport – AAP Support Officer, Graham Wood – DCC Economic Development Manager, Angela Blanchard – DCC Towns & Villages Link Officer

APOLOGIES:

Paul Darby, Cllr Elaine Peeke, Chris Cairns

Standard Board Meeting

A1. Introductions & Apologies

LC/DS welcomed everyone to the meeting of the 4 Together Partnership Board. DS asked Board members to note the recent sad passing of Cllr Brian Avery, our current Chair. Brian had been a longstanding public servant and a much-valued member of the AAP from inception in 2009, having never missed a meeting. He will be greatly missed. Board members observed a minute's silence.

DS welcomed two new Public Representatives to the Board; Liam Fellows and Susan Kirby.

Apologies for absence were noted, as above.

A2. Agreement of Minutes from Previous Meeting (1.9.21) - Matters Arising

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

- A previous action had been recorded for Cllr JC to forward a copy of the notes from the meeting with representatives of Ferryhill/Chilton GP's surgery she had previously attended with Cllr PA. Cllr JC will follow up (**Action 1: Cllr JC**).

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

A3. Countywide Partner Issues

A3.1 DCC Towns & Villages/Regeneration Update (Graham Wood/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 matters relating to the 4 Together Partnership area, including selective licensing, tackling empty properties, home energy improvements, spruce ups, targeted business improvements and work around neighbourhood retail parades.

AB updated on the Towns & Villages (T&Vs) 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. AB is the link officer for 4 Together and will support the Towns & Villages process.

Questions were invited from Board members and the following points were noted:

- Cllr PC commented that she feels disillusioned with the lack of apparent support from DCC for high streets in smaller villages, i.e. West Cornforth, where the retail offer has deteriorated greatly over a number of years. Cllr PC added that she feels there should be better dialogue between DCC and the Parish Council in relation to potential sources of support. GW acknowledged the issues, adding that there are possible options that could be discussed further and will follow up with Cllr PC outside of the Board meeting.
- TC asked whether there is scope for the AAP T&Vs funding to support the setting up of a community shop. GW responded that a project of this nature could be looked at, to explore sustainability, identified need etc. TC also asked whether bodies such as Parish Councils are eligible to apply for the AAP T&Vs funding; AB confirmed they can.
- Cllr PA highlighted ongoing issues in relation to poor public transport provision in various areas, which can leave residents cut off, particularly in the evening. Cllr PA asked whether any potential financial support would be available to help address these issues. GW commented that issues around public transport provision have been highlighted across the County, and DCC are waiting to hear about some possible additional funding which may be available in future. LC further added that all AAPs have recently been asked to nominate a representative to join a newly formed Local Bus Board, where members will meet with local transport providers to discuss relevant issues. Cllr Elaine Peeke has volunteered to represent 4 Together Partnership, and Board members will be kept updated on progress once meetings have started.

LC asked if Board members would welcome a subgroup being set up, to look at potential ideas and project development specifically in relation to the Towns & Villages funding, working alongside Angela Blanchard. Board members **AGREED** and LC will liaise with AB to arrange (**Action 2: LC/AB**).

[GW left the meeting]

A3.2 Primary Care Network Update

Mark Booth updated Board members in relation to the Sedgefield North Primary Care Network (PCN). PCNs were established in June 2019 and have been developing their role over the last two years; there are thirteen PCNs within Co Durham. The population of 4 Together AAP is covered by the Sedgefield North PCN, one of the largest in the County, and which consists of 5 Practices grouped to work collaboratively:

- Ferryhill & Chilton Medical Practice
- St Andrew's Medical Practice, Spennymoor
- Bishops Close Medical Practice, Spennymoor
- West Cornforth Surgery
- Skerne Medical Group, Sedgefield

The PCN has a Board which meets monthly and consists of a GP and practice manager from each of the 5 practices, plus an associate membership drawn from local partners including community nurses and local pharmaceutical representatives. Managerial, administrative and financial support is commissioned from South Durham Health Federation, and strategic development guidance provided by NHS County Durham CCG.

The aims of the PCN are:

- to improve the health outcomes for patients in the local area
- to add extra capacity into Primary Care to help meet the increasing demands of the patient list
- to encourage practices to work together to deliver services in a more joined up way

MB advised that a briefing note for Board members has been supplied by the PCN, which will be circulated for information. MB added that the lead clinician for the Sedgefield North PCN, Dr Matt Shield, has offered to attend a future Board meeting to give an update presentation if this is something Board members would welcome. Board members **AGREED** that a presentation would be beneficial, and LC will arrange (**Action 3: LC**).

A4. Neighbourhood Issues

A4.1 Arriva Bus Services

DR highlighted issues in relation to a number of recent reductions to some local Arriva bus services, leaving residents in outlying villages extremely isolated, particularly in the evenings and at weekends. LC suggested that Cllr EP can feed back on these issues when she attends the Local Bus Board which is being set up and bring any relevant updates/information back to the Board.

A4.2 Neighbourhood Policing Update

Insp MS updated Board members in relation to ongoing issues with antisocial behaviour across Ferryhill and the wider AAP area. There were a number of

incidents over the last weekend, specifically with shops being targeted. Intelligence has been gathered and work is ongoing to follow up with those involved. Insp MS highlighted there are no significant crime patterns currently. Insp MS reiterated the importance of reporting incidents regularly, to help ensure that data is captured accurately, particularly when Police are looking at available resources.

Cllr PA highlighted the frustrations people experience when trying to report incidents using the 101 system. Insp MS acknowledged these difficulties, and added that an alternative method is now available for people to get in touch with known/named contacts rather than going through the main 101 system, with the aim of freeing up the system for general reporting etc.

DR highlighted an issue with parked cars blocking the road outside the library/school in West Cornforth twice a day, expressing concern that emergency vehicle access could be restricted. DR asked who had would have responsibility for making an assessment about the possibility of imposing parking restrictions/double yellow lines in the area. Insp MS added that the Police would be able to enforce action if the road is fully obstructed, but DCC would ultimately be responsible for any road markings etc. Insp MS added that Police reps would be able to attend local schools to educate parents around these issues if schools feel this would of benefit.

Cllr JM reiterated the earlier point in relation to the importance of reporting incidents to the Police; people often vent their frustrations via social media but then don't follow this up through the official channels. Cllr JM added that he feels the Police deserve more support on this and commended the work they do.

A5. Area & Neighbourhood Budget Update

A5.1 2021-22 Area Budget Funding Update

LC confirmed that Board members had received copies of three project proposals by email for consideration ahead of the meeting. As previously agreed by the Board, these proposals specifically relate to the poverty alleviation/social isolation element of this year's funding (£125k).

A5.1a Healthy Communities (The Cornforth Partnership)

- AAP funding request = £25,000
- (Total project cost = £36,074.56)
- Copy of application summary previously circulated to Board members by email (27.10.21)

A5.1b Community Links (The Cornforth Partnership)

- AAP funding request = £55,044.49
- Total project cost = £74,332.85
- Copy of application summary previously circulated to Board members by email (27.10.21)

A5.1c Benefiting Futures (Ferryhill LADDER Centre)

- AAP funding request = £55,000
- Total project cost = £81,000

- Copy of application summary previously circulated to Board members by email (27.10.21)

LC advised that over half of the Board have already responded by email to confirm their approval of the 3 x projects and asked the Board for confirmation/ratification of approval to take the projects forward now for technical appraisal. Cllr PA commented that he is fully supportive of the 3 x projects, feeling that they are very focused on the issues currently facing our communities and capture what our communities need; Cllr PA also thanked PN for her hard work supporting the applicants to pull all the relevant information together. These comments were echoed by Cllr PC and CAI. Board members **AGREED** that all 3 x projects now be submitted to the Funding Team for technical appraisal.

A5.2 2021-22 Direction of Remaining AAP Funds

LC highlighted to Board members that a subgroup will be set up specifically to look at the £210k T&Vs funding (as agreed at Item A3.1 above). This leaves an Area Budget funding allocation of £100k, and Board members were asked to consider how they would like to progress with this. Cllr PA suggested that a project callout would be his preferred option, local groups need help and time is ticking in terms of AAP spend in the current financial year. DR agreed with this suggestion. LF also supported the option to progress with a project callout under the Community Recovery priority, adding that the community knows best what is currently needed.

Board members **AGREED** to progress to an open callout as soon as possible. LC will meet with PN to discuss and make the necessary arrangements (**Action 4: LC/PN**).

[AS left the meeting]

A5.3 2021-22 Neighbourhood Budget Funding Update

CAI updated Board members in relation to current NB spend to date for Elected Members, and their balances, for information.

DR asked about the process for any unallocated NB funding from Cllr Avery's allowance. LC clarified that Cllr Avery had given verbal pledges in relation to his balance of funding, and also his Towns & Villages funding allocation, and these projects will be honoured wherever possible.

A5.4 Public Representative Recruitment Update

LC advised Board members that we still have two Public Rep vacancies on the Board, one of which is TC's position. TC's four-year term has passed but he agreed to remain in post and has submitted his application for the next round of interviews. LC advised that we received 3 x further applications from the recent recruitment advert, and interviews will be arranged in due course. LC will first need to coordinate a new Vice Chair for the Elected Member third of the Board, which will be required for the interview panel, and will then arrange the interviews (**Action 5: LC**).

A5.5 Holiday Activities with Healthy Food/Fun & Food Funding Update

CAI advised Board members that the call for 'Fun & Food' projects is currently open for the Christmas holiday period; the closing date for applications is 15 November.

CAi briefly updated Board members in relation to some of the monitoring feedback from the Summer holiday schemes, which saw 4 Together Partnership support 5 x local projects. A copy of this summary will be circulated with the minutes for information (**Action 6: CAi**).

**A6. Date & Time of Next Meeting:
Wed 5 January 2022, 6.00pm (Microsoft Teams unless otherwise stated)**

Cllr JM asked when the AAP will be returning to face-to-face meetings. LC explained that the AAPs are currently trialling the use of new equipment to support a hybrid format for meetings, as well as risk assessing local venues to ensure we adhere to current DCC COVID guidance. LC clarified that AAP Board meetings will continue to take place via Teams until further notice.

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