

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting

Thursday 29 September 2022

(Virtual Meeting - held via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr Liz Brown, Cllr Eric Mavin, Rebecca Ashby, Chris Tindale, Gary Tidbury, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Mark Mallatratt (for Dave Clarke), Cllr Lesley Mavin, Paul Howard, Rev Joanne Thorns, Hannah Shepherd, Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Martin Hollingsworth (for Ian Moore), Cllr Richard Ormerod

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

Presenters: Cllr Mark Wilkes, Paul Watson - Durham County Council (DCC)

Apologies Board: Sarah Burns, Cllr Bill Kellett, Victoria Ashfield, Ian Moore, Dave Clarke

Forum Members: 12 forum members attended the meeting

1 [Welcome, Introductions and Apologies](#)

Cllr Liz Brown (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Durham AAP Board Meeting.

Apologies for absence, [as above].

A minute's silence was observed in memory of Queen Elizabeth II.

2 [Update: River Wear, Weirs in Durham City](#)

Cllr Mark Wilkes explained what had been taking place in relation to the cleaning regime along the river and how important it was to maintain it. Last year people had been brought in to remove as much material as possible off the main weir and 42 tonnes of trees were taken away.. Debris will be removed once the otter resting place had been installed and DCC now had Natural England's permission to do this.

Cllr Wilkes handed over to Paul Watson who shared some technical details and diagrams as part of his presentation. The weirs were built in the 1890s using timber and stone but repairs were now needed. DCC had engaged with specialist consultants to undertake investigative works on the weirs. Short term and longer-term works had been identified to protect the weirs costing £260k

for short term repairs; £150k further detailed in-river structural design assessments and £1m for refurbishment works.

The meeting was opened for questions –

- Do you work hand in hand with the volunteer groups in the city?
Yes, we are always working closely with these groups, and we hope to work with them more in the future particularly in how we deal with things much further upstream.
- Where is the £1.5m coming from?
We currently have some parallel bids coming through from various sources and we are hoping to have some resolution within the next few months. Work is ongoing to identify potential funding in the short term for in-river repairs.
- When was the 42 tonnes removed?
Prior to Lumiere last year, September/October time.
- What processes are in place to prevent people from entering the river to remove debris?
We discourage anyone entering the river to remove debris, it's dangerous. We use a specialist company who have specialist training.
- Are we looking at this next summer or 2024?
2023 for the shorter-term repairs. Once the debris is cleared, we will be able to do a much better investigation as to the whole extent of the damage.
- Do we know what is happening with the Prebends weir?
Is this possibly the responsibility of Durham University? I'm not sure. This would have to be followed up with them. However the consensus is that it is not as in bad a condition as the main weir.

3 [Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 24 August 2022. Agreement and Matters Arising](#)

The Chair reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy.

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

A forum member queried that she had not received a copy of the presentation: Review of Durham County Council Community Engagement. Craig assured her that he would circulate this.

Everyone was encouraged to attend the Visioning Events and/or complete the survey regarding views on DCC Community Engagement / Area Action Partnerships.

Rothbury Road – there had been some issues around the delivery of the multi-use path. What had been delivered was not what the AAP had agreed upon. It had been recommended that the other funding sources be used to cover the

costs and the money that had been allocated through the Towns and Villages Fund comes back into the pot and reinvested.

4 Neighbourhood Update

City of Durham Trust 80th Anniversary

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the City of Durham Trust. To mark the occasion the Trust will hold the following events:

On 1 October the Trust will hold its AGM at the Assembly Rooms in the North Bailey. The event will include the presentation of the Trust's Architectural Award to the cathedral for the new Glazed Lobbies. After the business meeting Professor John Pendlebury of Newcastle University will give a talk about Thomas Sharp, the town planner who produced the decisive planning document for the Development of Durham City in the second half of the 20th century.

On 5 November the Trust will host a conference: Perspectives on the World Heritage Site. This will take place in the Pemberton Rooms on Palace Green and will feature a range of speakers from local residents to the President of World Heritage UK. To book a place at the conference simply email chair@durhamcity.org. It will also be available via Zoom. To request the link simply email zoom@durhamcity.org a few days in advance.

5 AAP Funding Update

- Towns and Villages Fund - £55,263.00 had been allocated generating over £750,000 match funding. £155,000.00 remains to be allocated. There are potentially 15 organisations in terms of what we could potentially spend this funding on.
- Area Budget - £82,000.00 had been allocated leaving £116,000.00 to allocate.

[These figures may change depending on the outcome of the Board's decision on the applications being considered at this meeting]

Discussion on how we help those impacted by the cost-of-living crisis

Discussion ensued on warm hubs and the cost of living crisis. Cllr Liz Brown highlighted that there was going to be Council money available and asked the Board how they felt about moving some of the AAP's budget to help people who were struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Any ideas were welcomed. How do we help those who help others?

Craig set some context in relation to this and advised that the funding needed to be spent in accordance with Area Budget guidance and projects must be over £5,000.00. He provided some examples as to how this could be

implemented and these had been discussed with the Chair and Vice Chairs. Questions and comments from the Board and forum included,

- How does this fit in with local emergency plans?
There is going to be funding available for organisations who had already done a plan to buy the equipment they may need, Northern Power Grid Foundation has also set up a £7.5m fund which is being piloted now.
- What are the schools doing to help?
Schools are running at full capacity, and I caution how much we can put onto schools [*comment from a school governor*]
- What are other organisations doing? Age Concern are looking at the strategy.
- When is all this happening as the local community are asking. The Council's approach will be launched in the near future.
- Joined up thinking in the local community is essential to try to make sure that we're all working together.
- It's important that the people and volunteers are safe.
- A Board member raised the importance of a quick turnover to get these projects up and running.

Comment in the chat

The Northern Gas network has been funding Warm Hubs in Northumberland for about 5 years and we can learn a lot from them.

The Board was happy for the AAP team to promote the Area Budget as a fund that can be used to support community organisations and buildings to potentially help with bills and measures to help them reduce their outgoings through generating electricity, insulation etc. providing an audit had been done.

6 Task and Finish Group Feedback and Project Approvals

The September task group meetings did not go ahead due to the passing of the Queen. The decision to bring the applications to this meeting was agreed via email.

Area Budget

Newton Hall Dog Exercise Area

Durham County Council are applying for funding to install a fenced in dog exercising area on land at Newton Hall. The area would have disability access and allow people to let their dogs off the lead in an enclosed area.

Amount applied for: £6,385.00 with £6,385.00 match funding

The meeting was opened for discussion –

- What maintenance/cleaning programme is in place?

- Will there be any noise impact to residents?
- It was highlighted by those living in the area that no consultation had taken place in Newton Hall.

The Board agreed that this application be reconsidered once adequate consultation is carried out and questions around maintenance and cleaning were answered.

Durham City Youth Project Satellite Clubs 2022

The AAP funded the establishment of these new youth clubs last year. They are now running and are becoming well established at Framwellgate Moor and at Sherburn Road, but additional funding is needed to ensure they can continue this year whilst longer term funding is found.

Amount applied for: £8,848.00 with £26,257.00 match funding

Although there was one query regarding the sustainability of the project, the application was approved.

Durham Palatinates Netball Club

The club wants to do more to attract young people and give them opportunities to play netball for fun and competitively. They are applying for funding for equipment, match fees and for training and courses for new and existing coaches.

Amount applied for: £20,720.00 with £17,760.00 match funding

The meeting was opened for discussion –

- Do they charge a membership fee?
- What happens if the match funding is not secured?
- Is it linked with Durham University, given the name of the club?
- How accessible is it?
- What is their membership made up of?
- The costs are high, how many people will the project support?

The Board agreed that this application be brought back to the October Board meeting pending satisfactory responses to the questions raised.

[Cllr Richard Ormerod declared an interest in the following item of business]

Towns and Villages Funding

Wear Rivers Trust Invasive Species Project

Wear Rivers Trust would like to train local volunteers to tackle invasive species such as Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balaam in the riverbank areas around the peninsular.

Amount applied for: £15,000.00 with £16,100.00 match funding

The application was approved.

7 Neighbourhood Budgets

The following neighbourhood budget projects were shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: DCYP Satellite Youth Clubs 2022

Councillor(s): Amanda Hopgood / Mamie Simmons / Mark Wilkes / Eric Mavin / Lesley Mavin

Interest Declared: Yes – Cllr Mamie Simmons is a trustee of the organisation

Amount: £5,750.00

Name of Scheme: Sustainability and Future Planning Support

Councillor(s): Eric Mavin / Lesley Mavin / Christine Fletcher

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £2,238.00

Name of Scheme: LACA Fusion of Friends

Councillor(s): Christine Fletcher

Interest Declared: Yes, Cllr Christine Fletcher is a member of Laurel Avenue Community Association Management Committee

Amount: £1,300.00

Name of Scheme: Belmont Community Safety Project

Councillor(s): Eric Mavin / Lesley Mavin / Christine Fletcher

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £2,997.00

Name of Scheme: Newton Hall Dog Run Area

Councillor(s): Amanda Hopgood / Mamie Simmons / Mark Wilkes

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £6,385.00

The Board was happy to approve the projects and the interest as declared.

Fun and Food Funding Approvals (Autumn Half Term) and top up proposal (Area Budget Application)

We received 8 Fun and Food applications for October Half Term 2022 totalling £13,796.00 leaving a shortfall of £9,296.00.

Following the panel meeting some applicants were asked if their applications could be amended to reduce costs. This reduced the overall ask down to £11,844.00 leaving a shortfall of £7,343.00. A paper had been prepared and included with the papers with details of the applications received and options for the Board to consider.

The Board agreed to fund the following four applications via the Fun and Food Scheme –

- Harbour Support Services (Refuge)
- Cheesy Waffles Project (Children with Additional Needs)
- Pelaw View Community Group
- Laurel Avenue Community Association (Partial Funding)

The Board felt all applications were worthy of support and agreed to cover the shortfall through the AAP's Area Budget through the creation of a one-off AAP small grants scheme. The Board also agreed to fund the following Fun and Food applications –

- Go the Distance / Durham Community Boxing Club
- Witton Gilbert Village Hall
- DCC SEND Team
- Durham Area Youth

8 Chair and Coordinators Update

Cllr Liz Brown apologised for missing the last Board meeting.

She had attended services following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

Ian Moore will be attending DASH's 50th Anniversary Party on 29 September.

She encouraged everyone to complete the Community Engagement Review survey.

Craig Morgan, Durham AAP Co-ordinator had been working with the Community Resilience Group and partners including Northern Powergrid to ensure efficient plans are in place to support the local community following Storm Arwen.

The social value idea continues in Belmont and the contractors are keen to look at options to support the community regarding the school rebuild.

He reminded the meeting that there is £10,000.00 in the Healthy Relationships Fund. He had met with some youth organisations, and they had discussed the idea of a consortium bid that they would all buy into that would tailor their needs. He said it was encouraging to see them all wanting to work together.

He continues to work with Neville's Cross and also North Road Methodist Church to make it more accessible to the wider public.

9 Partner Updates

Rev Joanne Thorns – VCS representative on the Board

Working with Durham County Council on poverty issues and the cost-of-living crisis as people are becoming dependent on voluntary organisations.

Matin Hollingworth – Fire Update

The bonfire strategy had been circulated with the Board papers. They are working closely with the Police this year in the lead up to bonfire night and the safety around fireworks.

Mark Mallatratt – Police Update

Two arrests were made during Freshers Week. There had been a spate of burglaries in Sherburn Hill, Sherburn Village, Gilesgate area and several arrests had been made. A dedicated team were working to resolve the issue. There had been incidents of vehicle thefts whereby criminals were using kits to pick up signals from the vehicle's key. He gave some options to keep us safe during the dark nights.

13 October – Framwellgate PACT meeting 6.00 pm

1 October – fire station open day Bowburn Industrial Estate 9.00 am - 2.00 pm

28 October – Sherburn Team Halloween at Ludworth Community Centre.

Paul Howard – Durham BID Update

The ballot process had taken place and Paul was pleased to announce that businesses in Durham City had voted in favour to renew the Business Improvement District (BID) securing at least another £1.6 million over 5 years to be invested in improving the area. New businesses will be arriving in the next few months and there will be further openings in Durham Market. Street entertainment will take place on Saturday and on 15 October; a Halloween event will take place on 29 October and the Christmas Light Switch on will take place on 27 November this year. There will be another Independence Campaign and gift cards are planned for Christmas.

Hannah Shepherd – Durham University Update

Freshers Week going on until the end of the week; apologies for any disturbance. Safety measures had been put out re river routes and safety. Term starts on Monday and hopefully things will settle down. Durham University Residents Forum will be distributing their Livers Out leaflet. Events happening over October Half Term, please visit the website for further information.

10 [Any other Business](#)

None.

11 [Date and time of next meeting](#)

26th October, 6:00pm, Newton Hall Community Centre

Subsequent Meetings

- 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.