



**GREAT AYCLIFFE & MIDDRIDGE PARTNERSHIP (GAMP)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2022, 6:00PM (Oakleaf Sports Complex)**

PRESENT:

Cllr Eddy Adam – DCC, Cllr James Atkinson – DCC (Chair), Cllr Neville Jones – DCC, Cllr Ken Robson – DCC, Cllr Tony Stubbs – DCC, Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd – DCC, Cllr Tony Towers – Midldridge Parish, Sue Cooke, Julie Dudley, Simon Hocking, Chris Hutchinson, Peter Shovlin, Natalie Whitworth (Vice Chair), Rosie Woodward, Daniel Blagdon – Health Representative, Andy Coulthard – Livin Housing Representative (Vice Chair), Insp Sarah Honeyman – Police Representative, Oliver Sherratt – DCC Head of Service Representative, Malcolm Woodward – Fire Service Representative, Brian Riley – GAMP Coordinator, Victoria Grieves – GAMP Community Development Project Officer, Paula Stockport – GAMP Support Officer, Angela Blanchard – GAMP Towns & Villages Community Development Project Officer, Chris Barlow – ERS Limited

APOLOGIES:

Carol Gaskarth, Peter Gallone

OBSERVERS:

Mr B Adamson

Standard Board Meeting

1. Introductions & Apologies

Cllr JA opened the meeting, reminding Board members of the standard Declaration of Interest item on the agenda. Cllr JA informed observers they would be welcome to comment under Items 3 and 4 on the agenda.

Cllr JA welcomed Rosie Woodward to her first Board meeting as Public Representative, replacing Kate Hopper, and a brief round of introductions was given.

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

2. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19.7.22 – Matters Arising

The draft minutes from the Board meeting held on 19.7.22 had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. There were no outstanding actions.

AC highlighted that in relation to Livin’s work in the western area (referenced at Item 3.2), Groundwork are currently carrying out some ‘community conversation’ consultation work and AC will keep Board members updated on future progress in due course.

There were no other matters arising, and the minutes of the last meeting were **AGREED** by the Board as a true and accurate record.

3. Countywide Partner Issues

3.1 ERS Presentation – Community Engagement Review (Chris Barlow)

Board members received a brief update presentation in relation to the Council's current review of community engagement and funding processes, which includes the AAPs. CB outlined the background and scope of the review. CB also highlighted that ERS will be hosting several visioning events where attendees will have an opportunity to give their input as part of the review process. Additionally, an online survey is also available for people to provide input.

A Q&A session was opened, and the following points were noted:

- Cllr TS asked whether the scope of the review was potentially too wide, and would be keen to ensure that good practice in AAPs where things work well, i.e. GAMP, is not overlooked.
- Cllr EA commented that GAMP AAP works really well, with funding allocated to some really worthwhile projects, local consultation works well, and we have great partnership working and proactive subgroups, as well as a supportive staff team. Cllr EA acknowledged that there are operating differences across the various AAP areas, and sees this as a positive which reflects their respective communities, e.g. what works in one area may not work as well in another area.
- Cllr EA asked what engagement will be taking place with the wider public, as the visioning events and current online survey are aimed towards existing AAP members. CB clarified that a separate survey will be made available for the public to give their views.
- Insp SH commented that GAMP works really well, and spoke of the benefits of her involvement with the Board not only in terms of accessing funding but also in developing partnerships and having access to local networks and members of the community. Having also sat on another AAP Board in a different area, Insp SH feels that a 'one size fits all' approach across the County wouldn't be practical given the differences across the localities.
- OS stressed the importance of feedback from the online survey and visioning events sitting alongside all qualitative data. OS also asked whether there would be an opportunity as part of the review process for stakeholders to give feedback on initial findings before any final recommendations are made. CB clarified that regular feedback is presented to the steering group, and that ERS wouldn't simply present their findings and then 'walk away' but it will ultimately be for the client (DCC) to determine how feedback is shared with AAPs and any considerations around further engagement.
- Cllr DSL commented that, whilst it is always good to learn from others and share best practice, there should be caution not to lose what works well in GAMP. Cllr DSL also acknowledged that the work of the AAPs had to change dramatically over the last 2-3 years as a result of the pandemic.
- SH commented that each AAP is unique in their demographic and the review should have respect for each areas' colloquialisms. CB advised that ERS will rely on feedback from stakeholders to share information around why they believe a certain area works well, or not.
- SC acknowledged the lack of consistency across some of the AAPs but would be concerned if too many changes were imposed upon GAMP when it works so well. SC added that she believes the online survey isn't relevant to Public Representatives and feels that the value of their input has been overlooked.

- AC commented that the original ethos of the AAPs was to involve communities and believes that the views of the public should be the most important. AC also asked about the timescales for the review; CB clarified that the aim is to complete the review by December 2022, although this is not a hard deadline.

BR confirmed that a copy of the presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes.

3.2 Groundwork NE & Cumbria Update (Natalie Whitworth)

NW updated Board members in relation to the GAMP-funded projects which Groundwork have been running recently, the successes they have achieved and their impacts to date.

A Q&A session was opened, and the following points were noted:

- Cllr EA commended Groundwork on the projects, and asked whether clients are signposted to other relevant organisations for support. NW confirmed that Groundwork have links with Social Services and a range of other local support organisations and clients would be signposted where appropriate.
- OS asked whether NW, as a deliverer, had a view on why projects work so well in the GAMP area, and whether there would be scope to replicate some of the great projects that are taking place in other areas of the County. NW advised that Groundwork are linking with other AAPs across the County now, to develop similar schemes in other areas. BR noted that some deliverers may have capacity issues in terms of expanding to other areas. BR also highlighted as an example that the GAMP-funded Employability Skills & Discretionary fund managed by Bishop Auckland College has been seen as a 'best practice' project and rolled out across a number of other AAPs.
- PS asked how Groundwork identify and engage with truly isolated people, a lot of whom don't have access to social media. NW commented that Groundwork will happily take recommendations from friends, neighbours etc if they're aware of someone who may need help and support.
- Cllr TT commented that he would be keen to link with NW to have a discussion around potential links and support for people in Middridge, possibly with a rep from Groundwork attending a future Parish Council meeting; NW will catch up with Cllr TT outside of the Board meeting to discuss this.
- Cllr DSL commented that committed volunteers frequently drive local community projects and small venues forward, but can often be difficult to secure. Local community venues will have capacity to do more joined up work but this can be difficult without the volunteers; perhaps a small 'support fund' for centres to access smaller amounts of funding could help to support core workers to keep centres running.
- Cllr KR asked if Groundwork re engaging with other local groups in Newton Aycliffe, for example a newly formed Welcome Café was recently set up at St Clare's and has increased attendance from 20 to around 90 people each week, it could be useful for Groundwork to establish links.
- RW advised that she is a Dementia Friends Ambassador and would be happy to offer support; NW will catch up with RW outside of the Board meeting to discuss further.

BR confirmed that a copy of NW's presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes.

BR also confirmed, for the minutes, confirmation of information circulated by email since the last meeting:

- Information on the Council's Poverty Action Plan consultation (emailed 19.7.22);
- Quarter 1 project monitoring update reports (emailed 5.8.22);
- Information on the next phase of the Council's Big E-conversation consultation (emailed 6.9.22);
- GAMP ebulletin, circulated 20.9.22.

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

Insp SH updated Board members in relation to antisocial behaviour figures, local PACT priorities, and current/emerging issues. Insp SH commented that the GAMP-funded CCTV cameras are proving to be really successful, with several other AAP areas expressing an interest in replicating the project.

Insp SH highlighted that the team will be hosting a community spirit Christmas event planned for the weekend of 3 & 4 December at the Big Club, with a grotto, face painting, raffles etc. This will be a free event for families, as well as being a positive engagement opportunity, details to follow.

Insp SH also asked Board members to encourage local residents to be vigilant with the darker nights drawing in, adding that the team has light timers available if needed.

CH commented that he has been really impressed with the 'Keep In the Know' service since signing up, and receives regular updates which are really informative.

AC commented that Livin will have a housing officer attending the police station each week, further developing sound working relationships and data sharing, and a fantastic example of partnership working.

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

BR highlighted an additional neighbourhood issue received via a GAMP Forum member, which he had been asked to bring to the Board:

"One of the items I would like you to consider is how, if possible, you could help the St Mary's and St Joseph's Credit Union which is having problems and is going to close next year."

BR asked if Board members had any information in this area; CH advised that he is aware of the situation and will discuss with BR outside of the Board meeting (**Action 1: CH/BR**). Cllr EA added that Junction 7 may have additional information which could be relevant.

5. **GAMP Coordinator's Update**

5.1 2022-23 Area Budget (AB) Update

BR gave Board members a brief update in relation to this year's Area Budget project callout. The 14 successful projects that were agreed following the ranking panel meeting are all in the process of being prepared for the technical appraisal stage.

BR highlighted that whenever the GAMP team send Board members an email with a request for a response to confirm funding approvals, it is imperative that you take the time to reply. Despite a second reminder the team are still short of sufficient Statutory Partner responses to give us a quorate decision for the Area Budget projects, so cannot send these for technical appraisal; BR urged all partners who recently received an email reminder on this to respond asap. Board decisions are not deemed to be quorate without a minimum of 3 x responses from each sector of the Board. A simple one-line response to confirm approval will suffice, and BR stressed the importance of all Board members responding to these requests. The same applies to Neighbourhood Budget proposals that are circulated by email.

BR also highlighted, for the minutes, a small pot of additional funding that each AAP has been allocated this year, £10k for Healthy Relationships projects. Given the relatively small amount of funding available, and the specific criteria attached to this funding, BR had previously proposed to the Chair & Vice Chairs that the GAMP team target local deliverers with the necessary skills and expertise in this field, to seek expressions of interest for projects which could potentially meet the criteria. An email was circulated to relevant groups last week and BR will keep Board members updated on progress with this funding.

5.2 Towns & Villages (T&Vs) Funding Update

BR advised that he had hoped to be holding another subgroup meeting for this funding at the end of September, but unfortunately some additional information is still outstanding in relation to one of the potential project proposals for discussion from GATC. This has been slightly delayed and so the T&V subgroup meeting has been postponed for now, until probably early November.

BR gave a brief recap of this funding; we have a current balance of approximately £51k, which we should hopefully be able to fully allocate at the next subgroup meeting with the proposals currently on the table.

BR will keep Board members updated on progress of spend with this funding going forward.

5.3 Public Representative Recruitment

BR confirmed that interviews had recently been held for the public rep vacancy on the Board arising from Kate Hopper's recent resignation. We've already welcomed Rosie to the Board tonight, and BR confirmed that the panel were also able to appoint a reserve rep should any future vacancies arise within the next 12 months.

BR thanked AC and Cllr JA for being on the panel.

6. **Date/Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 29 November 2022, 5:00pm, Microsoft Teams**

BR asked Board members to note the change of time for the next meeting to 5.00pm.

BR confirmed that Board members will be receiving an update in relation to Durham County Council's medium term financial plan at the next meeting.

Cllr JA/BR thanked all attendees, and the meeting was closed.