

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting

Tuesday 21 February 2023

Durham Town Hall, Market Place, Durham, DH1 3NJ

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr Bill Kellett, Georgia Donohue, Paul Howard, Cllr Lesley Mavin, Chris Tindale, Cllr Liz Brown, Victoria Ashfield, Cllr Eric Mavin, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Gary Tidbury, Rebecca Ashby

AAP Officer

Attendance: Craig Morgan – AAP Co-ordinator
Wendy Lavelle – Community Development Project Officer
Lyndsey Hunter – Community Development Project Officer
PJ Harding – Community Development Project Officer (Towns and Villages Team)
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Apologies Board: Sam Humble, Hannah Shepherd, Tony Hockey, Dave Clarke, Joanne Thorns, Mick Henderson, Cllr Richard Ormerod, Cllr Maureen Boettcher

Forum Members: 7 forum members attended the meeting

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Cllr Liz Brown (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Durham AAP Board Meeting. A round of introductions followed.

A warm welcome was offered to Georgia Donohue, the newly appointed public representative on the Durham AAP Board.

Apologies for absence, [as above].

Note: No business could be formally agreed as the meeting was not quorum. The AAP Co-ordinator will seek consensus for any decisions taken in principle from absent Board members via email.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 26 January 2023. Agreement and Matters Arising

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3 Presentation: Project Monitoring Report

Craig delivered a presentation on the quarter three project progress report for the period 1 October 2022 – 31 December 2022. Durham AAP is required to monitor all area budget projects it had funded on a quarterly basis and at their completion by the AAP funding team. Neighbourhood budget projects over £10,000 are also monitored.

A comprehensive report on all projects currently being monitored had previously been circulated to Board members for information.

The report was available for forum members upon request.

4 County Durham Partnership Forum Meeting Feedback

On behalf of Cllr Liz Brown, Cllr Bill Kellett attended the County Durham Partnership Forum meeting. There were only two county councillors in attendance. He provided feedback on the Community Engagement Review and advised that it had not been well received.

5 AAP Funding Update

An update on the current funding position had been included in the papers.

£181,282 of Area Budget had been approved; and there is £16,303* left to allocate.

*This figure may change depending on whether the applications are approved by the Board at this meeting.

£99,912 of the Towns and Villages Fund had been allocated; and there is £110,088* left to allocate.

*This figure may change depending on whether the applications are approved by the Board at this meeting.

6 Task and Finish Group Feedback and Project Approvals **Covid Recovery & Improving Our Villages and City**

Update – Durham Night Hub additional information

At the last meeting the Durham Night Hub application was approved however Board members requested further information on the accommodation costs which had been provided; £1400 per month which works out at £116 per session or £16 per hour. Board members present were happy that the accommodation costs were at a reasonable level.

Deferred Project Proposal – DERIC Children's/Youth Work, Bearpark

Wendy and Craig reported back on the meeting that they had attended with the DERIC project, partners from the Anglican Church and the County Councillor. This meeting had been requested by the Board so questions they had could be answered. The responses to the questions raised by the Board were discussed (as set out in the additional note circulated before the meeting), and as the communication issues with the church had been resolved, additional funding through the Balinger Trust was on offer and that they had thought about volunteers. The amount asked for had also reduced due to other external funding.

The Board was happy to support this project and it was agreed in principle, subject to full Board approval.

Project Proposal – Laurel Avenue Community Association Youth Council

An application had been received for £7,229.08 towards a total project cost of £7,666.53.

Laurel Avenue Community Association work with two local youth groups and each group wish to develop a Youth Council (YC). They will facilitate and develop each group to hold elections of the YC and will support them to develop essential skills throughout the year.

Each YC will consist of 12 children and young people from each organisation. They will hold a YC training session at the end of every month for 12 months; giving the opportunity for each YC to come together and share visions, learning, skills, and experiences. Training sessions will include networking (with each other and other groups of children), developing language and communication skills, problem solving exercises, social action projects and teamwork. Each group will work together to achieve common goals.

As part of the YC training they will escort 12 young people (six from each organisation) to spend 3 days/2 nights at a youth hostel in Langdale, Lake District to carry out activities that will increase young people's confidence and invaluable skills will be learned that will enable them to carry out their roles as youth councillors. Over the course of the three days, young people will learn leadership skills that will equip them to be effective communicators and will significantly impact them later in life. Off-site activities include orienteering, cooking, hiking, canoeing, gill trekking, caving which aim to boost self-esteem. Encouraging young people to work as a team they will learn perseverance, negotiation skills, decision making abilities, practice confident communication, learn project planning skills, and goal setting. To complete challenges young people need patience, endurance, perseverance, and mental strength. The young people will be encouraged to put emphasis on problem solving and team dynamics. Participating in outdoor activities without access to mobile phones and social media is a challenge for young people.

The Board was happy to support this project and it was agreed in principle, subject to full Board approval.

Project Proposal – Belmont Playing Fields

An application had been received for £10,000 from the Towns and Villages Fund towards a total project cost of £25,198.

The Belmont recreation ground is a vibrant physical and wellbeing hub in the Belmont ward of Durham City. There are 2 full size, 1 junior football pitches and 1 full size cricket pitch, complemented by a hugely interactive community centre, as well as play area, skate park, pump track and muga.

Following adoption of the County Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) in November 2021, Culture, Sport and Tourism are developing a three-year programme to deliver strategic recommendations relating to the County Council's stock of grass pitches.

Austerity measures have contributed to a steady decline in the condition of County Council pitches, and the applicant would like to deliver a series of playing pitch refurbishment schemes to improve their quality in sites like Belmont, which suffer postponements and flooding.

The pitches will be professionally inspected and a report on each will determine the scope of improvements required. This may be a combination of weed killing/fertilising, verti-draining (spiking), sanding and rolling. The estimate for these works is £10,000 per pitch, although this may be reduced where pitches do not require the full scope.

This site with improved pitches will breathe new life into a community via the 3 sports clubs on site who will enjoy more training and game time. More young people will be attracted to the junior football club, the cricket club can start a junior section and the Cheesy Waffles Project can engage more users via the improved pitches.

In addition, BUJFC will be able to bring several more teams onto the site rather than asking parents to drive to Houghton, Soccer Arena, Washington or Boldon for 4G facilities. This easily accessible village centred sports hub, maintained and enhanced with a greater footfall sure to stimulate more local prosperity.

The meeting was opened for discussion and those that knew the area or were involved in grass roots sports clarified that the pitches were often unplayable for teams or unusable to local people and groups. It was suggested that a site visit be arranged.

The Board was happy to support this project and it was agreed in principle, subject to full Board approval.

Project Proposal – St Nicholas Churchyard

An application had been received for £28,250 from the Towns and Villages Fund and £5,000 Neighbourhood Budget (a separate request is being made to the local County Councillors who had indicated their interest in contributing to the rewilding/restoration of the area). The total project cost is £41,250.

The plan is for a partnership project to improve the neglected graveyard of St Nicholas Church in the Sands and to turn it into an area for outdoor recreation, community gatherings and quiet reflection.

The partnership includes St Nicholas Parish Church, The Diocese of Durham, the Parish Council, Believe Housing, Durham County Council, and the Residents' Association: St Nicholas Community Partnership. They will also approach The Commonwealth War Graves Foundation as there are several second world war graves in the graveyard. They are also liaising with the Durham Wildlife Trust for professional advice, training, and supervision of volunteers.

The PCC of St Nicholas Church had received several complaints from residents regarding the state of the churchyard, about its overgrown nature, safety issues, and the state of the graves, including several to local councillors and one that came through the MP, and are keen to address the issues raised.

Among other things the project plan is to provide a community orchard area adjacent to the flats to encourage residents of the flats and others in the community to meet and work together. This will require an archaeological survey to ensure that no graves are disturbed in the planting of the orchard.

The meeting was opened for discussion and the Board received additional information from a member of St Nic's who was present. There were no concerns raised and the project was agreed in principle, subject to full Board approval.

7 Neighbourhood Budgets

The following neighbourhood budget projects were shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: Rear of Newton Drive, Pity Me. Verge Hardening
Councillor(s): Mark Wilkes / Mamie Simmons / Amanda Hopgood
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £5,590.00

Name of Scheme: All Saints New Dishwasher
Councillor(s): Mark Wilkes / Mamie Simmons / Amanda Hopgood
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £4,925.00

Name of Scheme: Shincliffe Juniors FC Container
Councillor(s): David Stoker

Interest Declared: No
Amount: £4,200.00

Name of Scheme: Mistletoe Street, Durham City
Councillor(s): Elizabeth Scott / Liz Brown
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £4,400.00

Name of Scheme: West Rainton Community Centre
Councillor(s): David Hall
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £1,150.00

Name of Scheme: West Rainton Traffic Calming
Councillor(s): Bill Kellett
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £1,093.61

Name of Scheme: Shincliffe Park Improvements and Inspections
Councillor(s): David Stoker
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £4,000.00

Name of Scheme: Lowes Barn Community Project/Merryoaks Community Centre
Councillor(s): Elizabeth Scott / Liz Brown
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £14,995.00

Name of Scheme: Shadforth Village Hall
Councillor(s): David Hall
Interest Declared: No
Amount: £1,000.00

Name of Scheme: Belmont Parish Council
Councillor(s): Christine Fletcher
Interest Declared: Yes, Parish Councillor
Amount: £2,517.00

The Board was happy for the projects to go ahead and the interest as declared.

8 [Report: Durham AAP 2023/24 Priorities and Meetings](#)

Board members had received a report providing them with an opportunity to review and consider the priorities that Durham AAP would like to address in 2023-24. The purpose of this report was to outline the options for Board meeting formats, dates, and times.

There were several ideas, however the general feeling was, more time was needed to discuss this before a decision could be made. A meeting will be arranged to solely focus on priorities for 2023-24.

In terms of Board and task group meetings for 2023/24 the Board made the following recommendations –

- Board meetings would continue to alternate between face to face and online, however all Board meetings would now take place at 6:00pm.
- Task Group meetings would continue to be held at 2:00pm but would now alternate between face to face and online.

9 Fun and Food Update

We received nine Fun and Food applications for Easter 2023. The Pelaw View Community Group – Spring Club is not going ahead this week (Wednesday – Friday at St Giles Church Hall).

A panel meeting had been arranged for Monday 27 February 2023 to go through the applications.

10 Chair and Coordinators Update

Chair's Update

The public representative interviews had taken place and the vacancy is now filled. Two applicants were interviewed.

Coordinator's Update

The AAP team had been busy working alongside the local county councillors re their neighbourhood budget.

11 Partner Updates

Fire Service Update

206 Safe and Wellbeing visits completed in the Durham area .92% of those visits carried out in high-risk wards.

10 Primary Fires (Primary class as those with monetary value), this included 3 accidental dwelling fires.

20 secondary fires (rubbish/waste fires). High numbers of secondary fires noted in the Brandon & Byshottles area. In response to this we increased the numbers of Environmental Audits (local authority requested to remove dumped waste) and Safe and well being visits in this area.

Durham City Safety Group

Working with Kevin Lough to deliver water safety training to licensees and business owners in City Centre. Training will be delivered at the station and will include:

River / Water Hydrology relating especially to Durham City.

Cold water shock

Procedures when carry out a water rescue. (Talk, reach, throw, go.) etc.

Durham Fire station procedures when responding to a water rescue.

Hypothermia

This will be followed up with a practical demonstration in station yard, utilising throw lines related equipment.

Paul Howard – Durham BID

Footfall in the city had seen an increase in daytime and night-time activity.

Fire and Ice takes place this week and there are new sculptures.

Tolent the contractor for the Riverside development had collapsed into administration.

The Durham Loyalty Card is to be replaced.

12 [Any other Business](#)

None.

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

29th March 2023, 6:00pm, Online

Subsequent Meetings

To be confirmed

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.