

Chester-le-Street & District Area Action Partnership (AAP) Board Meeting Minutes of Meeting held Monday 20th March 2023.

Present:

Councillors: Craig Martin, Elsie Forrester (Parish Council Representative), Phil Heaviside, Emma Waldock and Tracie Smith.

Partner Organisations: Joanne Malki (Business Association Representative), Suzanne Jobson (Karbon Homes), Graeme Carr (Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue) and Mary Readman (DCC).

Public Representatives: Clare Todd, Khaled Malki, Chris Hoy and Howell Davies,

Officer Attendance: Michael Wilkes (Principal AAP Co-ordinator), Pete Garrod (Principal Community Development Project Officer) Allyson Rose (Community Development Project Officer), Laura Sloan (Community Development Project Officer), and Bill Lightburn (Towns & Villages)

Apologies: Councillor Alison Batey, Councillor Bill Moist, Inspector Lee Morris, Colin Stephenson (NHS North East & North Cumbria ICB) and Aaron McCormack (Public Representative).

Public Attendance: Four members of the AAP Public Forum were present at the meeting.

Introductions, Apologies and Virtual Housekeeping Code of Conduct/Protocols

Suzanne Jobson (Chair) opened the meeting. Housekeeping arrangements were noted. Apologies were also noted as above.

Michael noted that a card and flowers were sent after the passing of Cllr Beaty Bainbridge, on behalf of the Partnership.

Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 16th January 2023 & Matters Arising

The Chair went through the minutes page by page.

The Board agreed the minutes of Monday 16th January 2023.

Matters Arising – Michael noted that all issues raised regarding the outdoor sporting facilities consultation had been forwarded to Ben Kelsey. The queries from Cllr Moist were also forwarded after the meeting.

NE First Credit Union - Michael informed the Board that the NE First Credit Union (Debt Management) approach was currently at the AAP Funding Team, undergoing a technical appraisal. It was noted that sessions will be clarified and circulated in due course

ACTION – AAP to forward information when available.

CCTV - Michael updated the Board around comments regarding the town centre, empty properties and CCTV and noted that a meeting was planned with Owen Cleugh on 29th March

ACTION – Michael to feedback information from the meeting.



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The Chair noted that the One Stop Shop was operating as usual, with no change. It was also noted that wider consultation was taking place regarding front line service points but it was service as usual at the moment.

New DCC Representative - Mary Readman – Head of Transactional Customer Services at DCC introduced herself but noted that she would be leaving DCC in the near future. Michael noted that he would confirm the new head of service representative as soon as possible.

Town Centre - Clare Todd noted that there had been a number of incidents with children on the roof of buildings in the town centre and these concerns had been reflected on Facebook. Michael noted that he would raise with Inspector Lee Morris and feedback.

ACTION – Michael to contact Inspector Lee Morris regarding the issues raised

Neighbourhood Issues

Michael asked if there were any neighbourhood issues to be raised, none were forthcoming.

Michael explained the process for raising a neighbourhood issues from an AAP Board Member/Forum Member, being to let the AAP team know ten days in advance of the meeting, so that a response could be provided at the subsequent Board Meeting.

IRMP Fire Presentation

Graeme introduced his presentation and noted that this consultation gave the public opportunities for engagement. Graham provided his presentation, and copies of the engagement questionnaire were circulated to Board Members to complete.

Graeme noted that a HMI inspection response had been received and this was very positive. A further commendation showed that the fire service were recognised as one of the best in the country, leading the way in some of their work. It was also noted that fire safety audits were well above the national average.

It was noted that this consultation covers how the fire sector is changing and how the public can have their say on all strategic areas. A lot of things they do are about how vulnerable residents are identified and supported within the community. Graeme stated that, although some may see this as a money saving approach, backroom staff have been cut but frontline staff have not and service provision remains the same (even though there has been an overall 15% loss of staff). Graeme noted that budget pressures, as with many other organisations, were present and the fire service were doing the best they could to deal with this.

Graeme note that, moving from a manned machine of five down to four staff works operationally as that is the number of staff they train with. Graeme noted that this is undertaken on a risk-based approach, but most fire services will be working this way now.

Questions followed regarding staff and resources being available should they be required. Graham noted that staff would be available from other stations should they be needed, this is done as a holistic approach with other responsible authorities such as the Police. Graeme states that the Operational Assurance Team communicate best practice, further learning from previous incidents and have various de-briefs regarding their incidents. Benchmarking was noted by members of the AAP Board, around national learning, and Graeme noted this was an ongoing process.



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Questions were raised regarding the possibility of moving to three staff. Graeme noted that this depended operationally on the appliance that was to be used. Graeme did note that other fire services were introducing smaller vehicles where less staff were required, but this could only attend certain incidents i.e. not large scale fires. Graeme noted that for Business Fire Safety, further legislation would be coming out and that there would be a need to go out and inspect further.

Cllr Tracie Smith noted issues with lithium batteries being thrown away in bins. Graeme noted that in this area this was not as much of an issue locally. Khaled Malki noted electric car batteries, which are difficult to extinguish, are an issue as well. Graeme noted that lots of research was going on regarding this but again, at the moment, this was not a major issue locally.

Finally, it was noted that the consultation is open until 11th May 2023. Questionnaires were left for Board Members to complete.

Howell Davies noted his thanks for everything that the fire service provided.

Budget Update

Michael informed the Board that a detailed breakdown of Area Budget would be provided at the May meeting. Michael further stated that Area Budget was fully allocated for this financial year. Michael noted that, unfortunately, no further Older Peoples Social Isolation Fund (OPSIF) or Healthy Relationships Fund would be available for 2023/24 financial year.

It was also noted that an update on Towns & Villages spend would be brought to the May meeting.

Monitoring Update

Peter Garrod noted that the monitoring report was quite lengthy but this was needed to show the Board the length and breadth of what was being funded and the processes that need to be followed to track all applications. Peter noted that 24 live projects were currently being monitored on a quarterly basis. Peter noted that the AAP Board Champion process was in place and members of the AAP Board would be contacted in due course regarding potential visits.

Community Engagement Review

Michael verbally updated the Board with progress to date. Michael noted that the consultation was now live and he highlighted the online sessions that Board Members across the County had been invited to. Also, the AAP Forum had been informed of the review, including the report and links regarding feedback. Clare Todd noted that some previous members of the AAP Board had not received an invitation to take part in the consultation. Michael noted that they had now been forwarded the consultation document.

Neighbourhood Budget Report

Neighbourhood Budget Town & Villages Allocations

None.

Neighbourhood Budget Small Grant Allocations (including Coronation Fund)



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Peter talked through the report and noted the declarations of interest within, which were all approved as noted.

***Summary Description – Councillor Craig Martin – North Lodge Parish Council – Coronation Badges**

The aim of this project is to provide badges to children who attend Park View lower school to commemorate the Coronation.

Declaration of Interest: Parish Councillor – Elsie Forrester as Parish Councillor

***NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £300**

APPROVED

Summary Description – Councillor Craig Martin – DCC Clean & Green – Kingsmere, Replacement Trees

The aim of this project is to replace three trees damaged by storms around Kingsmere, North Lodge.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £569

***Summary Description – Councillors Alison Batey, Paul Pringle & Danny Wood – Pelton CA – 50th Anniversary Celebrations**

The aim of this project is to support the development of 50th Anniversary Celebrations to be held at and around Pelton Community Association.

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Danny Wood – Parish Councillor – Clare Todd – Parish Councillor – Elsie Forrester Parish Councillor

***NBSG Allocation: £999** (Each Cllr committing £333)

APPROVED

Summary Description – Councillors Alison Batey, Paul Pringle & Danny Wood – Ouston CA – 50th Anniversary Celebrations

The aim of this project is to support the development of 50th Anniversary Celebrations to be held at and around Ouston Community Association.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £999 (Each Cllr committing £333)

Summary Description – Councillors Karen Fantarrow-Darby, Paul Sexton & Bill Moist - Parkrun Riverside Parkrun, Safety Equipment

The aim of this project is to provide equipment to enable the event organisers and marshall's to run the event safely. The project will replace equipment used during briefings and throughout the event, making sure it is safe.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation £480 (Each Cllr committing £160)

Neighbourhood Budget Allocations

***Summary Description – Cllr Tracie Smith – 1507 Squadron Air Cadets – STEM Project**

The aim of this project is to purchase kits around Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to support the training and skills development of cadets. The skills learned can be transferrable into education and industry.

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Tracie Smith - Squadron President

***NB Allocation: £3,000**

APPROVED

Summary Description – Councillors Karen Fantarrow-Darby & Simon Henig – Bullion CRC – Environmental Consultancy & Purchase of Fridge

The aim of this project is to support the engagement of an environmental consultancy to undertake an energy assessment and prepare specifications for a new energy source. The purchase of a new fridge will support the partnership with the Fare Share programme and wider provision for the community.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £1,000 (Each Cllr committing £500)

Summary Description – Councillors Paul Sexton & Bill Moist – Waldrige Parking & Traffic Circulation

This project was approved by the Board at its meeting on 10th October 2022.

Further investigation by the County Council's Highways Services Team has established a need to protect utilities during implementation works (additional cost of £1,150), and Waldrige Parish Council is now unable to commit funds to the project. Consequently, Councillors have agreed to fund the shortfall in Town & Villages budget.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £ 6,150 (Each Cllr committing £3,075)

Peter also noted that a further application which had been circulated via e-mail, which included a declaration of interest for Cllr Simon Henig for Pelton Fell Community Partnership – Brockwell Centre Neighbourhood Budget project (£1,040).

APPROVED

Holiday Activities with Healthy Food – HAWHF/Fun & Food Reports

The AAP Board - Funding Sub-Group meet regularly to consider funding approaches. The latest was to consider the February and Easter 2023 Holiday with Healthy Food Fun approaches. Their decisions were noted in each report as follows:

February Allocations



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Organisation	Project	HAHWF Funding Allocated	Match Funding	Beneficiaries
Pelton Fell Community Partnership	Youth Café	£1,440	£692	90
Community Fitness CLS	Food for Fitness	£1,748	£0	160
Live Well North East	February Holiday Provision	£1,889	£818	65
Park View Community Centre	February Half Term Holiday Camp	£1,920	£100	120
Sacriston Youth & Community Project	Half Term Minis & Juniors Holiday Club	£500	£580	50
Durham Area Youth	Half Term – Great Lumley	£918	£117	30
Ouston Community Association	Half Term Holiday Activities – February 2023	£765	£0	60
Total		£9,180	£2,307	575

Easter

Organisation	Project Title	HAHWF Funding Allocated	Match Funding	Beneficiaries
Sacriston Youth & Community Project	Easter Eggstravaganza	£1,500	£1,234	45
Pelton Fell Community Partnership	Youth Cafe	£3,261	£735	110
Pelton CA – Pelton Youth Project	Easter Programme 2023	£4,735	£2,000	130
Durham Area Youth	Easter Holiday – Lumley/Bournmoor	£2,931	£544	30
Grange Villa RA	Grange Villa Easter Project	£2,800	£0	60
Cornerstones	Make Lunch Chester-le-Street	£514	£50	29
Total		£15,741	£4,563	404

The Chair queried the number of beneficiaries being lower for Easter but with a higher spend. Clare Todd noted that this all depended on the provision but all those organisations that have been supported were worthy recipients of funding.

Michael noted that a link to the Fun & Food Facebook page/website, would be noted within the report in future.

The Chair noted that it would be great if more Board Members could get involved in the Funding Assessment Panels. Clare Todd noted how informative these were to understand the process and the projects in more detail. It was also noted that a team member from the Fun & Food Team attends each session to provide



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support and invaluable information. Allyson Rose was requested to circulate dates of the Fun & Food launch /closing dates as a reminder to AAP Board Members.

Action: Allyson to forward information as requested.

Partner Updates

Police – Unfortunately, Inspector Lee Morris was unable to attend the meeting. A brief update was provided by Michael as Inspector Morris had submitted a written update. It was noted that a further cannabis farm had been located and dealt with at the old HSBC building.

Health – No report as no representative was in attendance

Fire & Rescue Service – Graeme Carr had nothing further to add as he had already undertaken his presentation above.

Karbon Homes – The Chair noted that the Chester-le-Street Hub was operational and currently promoting new services around housing, digital coaches, employability, cost of living information etc. Cllr Tracie Smith enquired about the potential for members of staff coming out to community groups. The Chair noted that this could be arranged. The Chair noted lots of other activities taking place in community buildings across the area. Howell Davies noted a lack of Debt Advisors for the Citizens Advice Bureau. Mary Redman agreed to share further information with Howell and the AAP Board on debt management. The Chair agreed also to share all information on the activities mentioned.

Action: The Chair to forward over information discussed.

Business Sector – It was noted that the Easter Egg Hunt in Chester-le-Street Town Centre would take place on Good Friday, from 10am – 2pm.

Voluntary Sector – No report as no representative was in attendance.

AAP Co-ordinators Update

Public Representative Board Member Vacancies – Michael noted that Mick Rodgers had tendered his resignation and that Clare Todd's term of office would end in April 2023. Michael noted that a call out for new representative would be sent out in due course.

VCS Vacancy – Michael noted that this was still vacant. This would be advertised in due course.

Head of Service – Michael noted that information would follow in due course.

2023/24 Board Meeting Schedule – This had been circulated to all members. Michael noted that Board Meetings dates may need to change due to the availability of venues however, Board Members would be provided with advance warning of any changes .

Staffing Update– Michael noted that Peter Garrod would be moving to work with AAPs in the south of the County. The AAP Board thanked him for his work. Michael stated that Fiona Kelly would be returning to the AAP Team in April, from her period of maternity cover at the Derwent Valley AAP.

Open Water Safety Group – It was noted that meetings were due to be arranged again and that information would be provided to the wider Board, as and when required.



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In Bloom – Clare Todd noted that a visit from the judges would take place on 18th April 2023. Clare noted that she would be working with DCC Civic Pride regarding the spring judging. Clare also noted that she had been working with Cllrs around litter picking across Chester-le-Street.

Flood Warden – Clare Todd noted that she had been undertaking more promotion around this and trying to get new members. It was noted that the new plan would be re-issued once available.

Date and Time of the next meeting

Monday 22nd May, Bournmoor Parish Hall, Bournmoor.