

Chester-le-Street & District Area Action Partnership (AAP) Board Meeting Minutes of Meeting held Monday 25th May 2023.

Present:

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

Partner Organisations: Suzanne Jobson (Karbon Homes), Inspector Lee Morris and Marion Ingleby (DCC).

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

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

Apologies: Joanne Malki (Business Association Representative), Khaled Malki (Public Representative), Graeme Carr (Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue) Councillor Bill Moist, Colin Stephenson (Health Service) and Aaron McCormack

Public Attendance: Seven 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.

Suzanne stood down as Chair and handed the Chair to Michael

Michael thanked Suzanne on behalf of the Board for her time as Chair.

Introductions. Michael advised that Clare Todd had been elected as Public Representative. He advised there was still a vacant Public Representative seat, nominations close this Friday.

Michael introduced Marion Ingleby, Head of Digital Services, Durham County Council (DCC), as the new Partner Representative. The Board welcomed Marion to her first meeting.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Michael advised that Cllr Alison Batey had been put forward as a nomination for Chair for the 2023/24 financial year. Michael asked if the Board were in agreement with this.

The Board Agreed

Michael advised that Suzanne Jobson, Karbon Homes, had been put forward as a nomination for Vice Chair for the partner element of the Board. Michael asked if the Board were in agreement with this.

The Board Agreed



Better for everyone

Michael advised the Vice Chair for the public element of the Board would be allocated at the next meeting in July.

[Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 7th March 2023 & Matters Arising](#)

The Chair went through the minutes page by page.

The Board agreed the minutes of Monday 7th March 2023.

Matters Arising

NE First Credit Union - Michael informed the Board that the NE First Credit Union (Debt Management) information had been circulated.

CCTV - Michael updated the Board on a meeting with Owen Cleugh on 29th March. Michael advised he would bring more updates when available.

New DCC Representative – Marion Ingleby – Head of Digital Services

Town Centre - Incidents with children on the roof of buildings in the town centre. Inspector Morris informed the Board that a security firm had been employed and would monitor the situation.

[Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance Presentation](#)

Julie Cane and Jo Mott introduced the presentation.

It was highlighted that this was a new approach to place-based, integrated care that dissolves existing barriers and addresses inequalities in access to mental health provision and support.

It was noted that the first deliver/pilot stage has been delivered in the Chester-le-Street area.

Subsequent questions followed the presentation.

A question was raised regarding subcontractors, asking if they are different in each of the areas? Julie advised that co-ordinators were busy collating the services in each area. Suzanne Jobson noted she would be in contact with regards the services Karbon Homes currently deliver.

A question was raised regarding a premises and if Integrated Care Board (ICB) funding be likely? It was noted that the ICB would not be funding this. It was noted that, at present, community centres/other locations with appropriate space were being looked at.

It was suggested that Citizens Advice may be able to help as this was currently only open three days a week.

Julie advised that they had 3,000 referrals to date. Although the advertising had yet to go out.

Board Members asked when the advertising would be ready. Julie advised that they were ready to go live now, but it would be staggered surgery by surgery so that the service is not inundated.

The Board thanked Julie and Jo for their informative presentation. Julie asked for the presentation to be circulated to Board Members.



Better for everyone

Action: Michael

[AAP Budget Report](#)

Michael informed the Board of the detailed breakdown of the report which included the total spend for the 2022/23 financial year and the budget outlined for the 2023/24 financial year.

Michael noted that the following budget was available for the 2023/24 financial year:

Financial Resources Available to the AAP in 2023/24

The AAP will have the following resources available to allocate in the current financial year:

- £150,815 Town and Villages Funding (to be fully allocated by the end of 2023/24)
- £100,000 Area Budget Funding
- £64,791 Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Fun and Food to cover Easter, Summer and Christmas 2023 school holiday periods
- £32,963 Half-Term Funding to cover the February 2023-February 2024 (inclusive) half-term holiday periods
- £9,902 Youth Funding
- £10,000 Welfare Reform Funding

The Board noted the content of the report.

[Towns & Villages Programme Report](#)

Bill Lightburn presented the report to the Board.

The report presented the Durham County Council (DCC), South Pelaw Road Safety/Environmental Enhancement project.

This project is part of a programme to improve Pelaw Square, as the primary entrance to the South Pelaw Estate. It responds to issues raised with the Ward Councillor by residents.

The narrow grass verge, which separates the footpaths from the highway, along the full length of Pelaw Square, has become increasingly worn and rutted due to cars and larger vehicles parking on it. This is unsightly, and is also a hazard to pedestrians, with a particular worry for children walking to and from the Chester-le-Street C of E Primary School.

The proposed scheme will seek to remove the over-run, predominantly grass verges, on both sides of the Highway, and install strengthened bitumen to offer added protection. It will be implemented by DCC Highways Team.

Prior improvement work has included erection of a long stretch of birds-mouth fencing, which has prohibited vehicular access onto a large area of public open space, and the intended works will further improve the visual appearance of the general Pelaw Square area.



Better for everyone

Door-to-door consultation has taken place with households potentially impacted by the proposals, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive - no negative comments were received.

The total cost of the project is £30,473, with £25,093 requested from the Towns and Villages Programme. The balance of £5,380 is being provided by County Councillor Neighbourhood Budget.

Insp Lee Morris asked was the design of the scheme to include parking. Bill noted that the scheme would not include this as the issues were predominately in relation to pedestrians' safety.

The Board agreed the project.

AAP Project Report

Fiona Kelly presented the report. Fiona highlighted that Woodshed Workshop CIC were awarded £16,169 Covid Restoration funding in 2021 to deliver the First Steps project.

First Steps was described as an intergenerational project which would use woodwork, construction, DIY and master crafts to support participants to develop practical skills, while also providing holistic person-centred pastoral support. Targeting those who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) and older members of the community, the project aimed to be mutually beneficial to both communities of need.

It was noted that Woodshed Workshop CIC has undergone some organisational changes since 2021 and they are yet to commence delivery of the First Steps project. With the organisational changes has come a slight shift in focus for the organisation which now has an emphasis around delivering alternative learning provision.

With this in mind, the organisation made an approach regarding the funding ringfenced to the First Steps project to request some changes as follows.

It is proposed that the First Steps project will now focus on supporting young people during periods of transition and change between accessing alternative provision and starting college.

There is evidence from research conducted by education partners that having accessed alternative provision is a key contributory factor to young people becoming NEET. This project aims to help mitigate this by providing transition support and college preparation for participants.

The provision would be advertised to existing partners and other alternative education providers in the area commencing in May/June 2023. A holiday programme would take place between June and August where two cohorts would receive support to undergo college transition preparation activities and work experience.

Support would continue throughout the Autumn term where it is understood there is a high risk of disengagement. This would be in the form of off-site sessions at the Woodshed Workshop to reduce stressors and work through transition issues with the aim of re-engaging with college or retaining contact with services.

Throughout December, January, and February the project would provide support to young people who disengage from full time education. Woodshed Workshop would remain a safe space for individuals who need more time, preparatory support and input and could be used as a location for meeting advisors for re-integration support ready for enrolment with other providers and returning to learning.

Costs would be £16,169 to fund the salary costs associated with delivering the project for two days per week over 39 weeks together with £3,600 identified for enrichment activities. In recognition of the fact that the participants are likely to require intensive support, the estimated number of beneficiaries is 15. The

organisation is no longer able to contribute the £2,747 match funding from their own resources as previously identified.

Fiona asked the Board for their comments on the proposal.

Insp Lee Morris asked where the beneficiaries would come from and were they from the AAP area?

Clare Todd asked how we can guarantee that the beneficiaries would be from this area?

Questions were raised asking why this proposal had just come to the attention of the Board now and why has there been such a delay?

Howell Davies asked what would happen to the money, could the AAP reclaim it and use it for something else? Fiona and Michael noted that the money could be re-allocated to a project or scheme with similar aims to the aims of the original project approved by the Board.

The Chair asked the Board to vote. The Board voted not to progress with the project as it was too much of a deviation from the original specification.

Not supported

Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Report

Allyson Rose presented the report. Allyson noted the following:

An AAP Board Funding Assessment Panel met on Tuesday 18th April 2023 to discuss the applications submitted. A total of ten applications were received, totalling £14,798. Unfortunately, two of the ten applications received could not be taken forward, this meant that eight applications were approved for funding by the AAP Board Funding Assessment Panel. Then projects were as follows:

| Organisation | Project | HAHWF Funding Allocated | Match Funding | Beneficiaries |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Pelton Fell Community Partnership To continue to provide breakfast and lunch with activities for young people across the area | Youth Café | £1,231 | £484 | 110 |
| Park View Community Centre Holiday camp sessions with a carousel of multi-sport activities including food | May Half Term Holiday Camp | £1,545 | £100 | 90 |
| Sacriston Youth & Community Project One full day session including, cookery, crafts and chill in the canteen. Outdoor sports and scavenger hunt/trail, den building. Indoor games. | Half Term Holiday Club | £582 | £150 | 30 |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--------|------|----|
| Environmental projects/litter picking/bulb planting and visit to pond. Health and wellbeing focussed activities including mindfulness and meditation. | | | | |
| Inspiring Futures to provide a two-day holiday programme for children and young people (5-16 years) at the Community Allotment project. Including healthy eating, arts and crafts and forestry etc. | May Holiday Fun & Food Programme | £762 | £200 | 30 |
| Chester-le-Street Community Association The 'Be a Better You' sessions will provide up to 25 school aged children with a week-long immersive experience with enriching activities to contribute to the development of resilience, teamwork, self-confidence, creativity, inclusion, character, social skills and well-being to support with their wider self-development and education attainment through drama. | Be a Better You | £1,575 | £955 | 25 |
| Grange Villa Community Enterprise To provide three holiday sessions for children of primary school age from the Grange Villa and surrounding area. Including a cookery workshop and activities. Movement and games sessions and creative kitchen sessions. | Children's Holiday Activities @ Grange Villa | £885 | £0 | 50 |
| Selby Cottage Childcare Centre Delivering fire pit activities where children can learn some basic fire safety skills, including using a flint and steel. Preparation of food to cook on the fire after whittling their own sticks to cook. Incorporating games from the 1950's, working with staff from Beamish Museum. | Fire it Up – Campfire Cookery & Traditional Games | £920 | £0 | 42 |
| Cornerstones Centre for the Community During the May half-term holiday, Make Lunch will provide both an 'in-person' session and will deliver activities with a meal to families. Also to include arts and crafts, gardening and grow your own. | Make Lunch Chester-le-Street | £538 | £58 | 25 |



Better for everyone

| | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Total | | £8,039 | £1,947 | 402 |
|--------------|--|---------------|---------------|------------|

The Chair thanked Allyson for the report and asked if a geographical split could be shown in future reports.

Howell Davies asked if the Board could campaign to promote the Syrian families who no longer receive funding from DCC as they have been settled in the Ch-le-Street area for over five years now.

Neighbourhood Budget Report

Fiona Kelly presented the report. Fiona noted the following:

Neighbourhood Budget Small Grant Allocations

Councillor Tracie Smith – DCC Clean & Green - 3 Tier Planter

The aim of this project is to install four, three tier planters within the Chester-le-Street North Ward. This project forms part of a larger NB proposal as noted below.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £150

Supported

Councillors Alison Batey, Paul Pringle and Danny Wood - Pelton Parish Council - Pelton Parish Coronation Community Event

The aim of the project is to hold a Coronation Community Event on 8th May 2023 on the

Roseberry Playing Fields. The event will be in the theme of a traditional village fair for local organisation and residents to come together to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. The following activities will be available: face painting; balloon modelling; Magician; beat the goalie; sotcks; hook a duck; Woody and Buzz mascot.

Declaration of Interest: Councillor Danny Wood – Chair of Pelton Parish Council/Councillor Paul Pringle – Parish Councillor

***NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £300 (Each Councillor committing £100)**

Approved

Councillor Alison Batey - Ouston Community Association – Ouston Community Centre – General Use

The aim of this project is to fund the provision of a dishwasher to the centre to ensure a ready supply of crockery at all times to centre users.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £999

Supported

Councillor Simon Henig – Pelton Fell Community Partnership Party in the Park

The aim of this project is host a street style party for the Kings Cornoation with bouncy castle in the multi-use game area located at The Brockwell Centre, this will be family event and will be ticketed to ensure numbers are kept to manageable level. Funding will cover the cost of refreshments, decorations, and a contribution towards a bouncy castle.

Declaration of Interest: Director

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

Approved

Councillor Emma Waldox – The Fulforth Centre – Sacriston Coronation Big Lunch

The aim of this project is for a Big Lunch celebrating the Kings Coronation, gathering the community together to celebrate and providing opportunities for building inter-generational relationships and reducing loneliness and social isolation.

This would involve a picnic-style lunch, small scale sideshow games/inflatables, displays/performances and have-a-go activities on the MUGA hosted by our regular groups, and simple craft/creative activities.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £300

Supported

Councillors Alison Batey, Paul Pringle and Danny Wood – Ouston CA – Coronation Retro Party and Royal Tea

The aim of this project is to provide a Coronation themed party with traditional party games for children. For adults, afternoon tea with bingo, with the planting of a Coronation rose to mark the occasion.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £300 (Each Councillor committing £100)

Supported

Bullion CRC – Coronation Celebration

The aim of this project is to provide a coronation tea, for six regular activities at Bullion Hall to mark the Coronation celebration from 9th May – 15th May.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £300

Supported

Councillors Alan Bell and Phil Heaviside – Durham Area Youth - Resources

The aim of the project is to start building resources for young people to use while in youth sessions at Lumley and Bournmoor youth sessions. This will help staff engage and keep young people active and when delivering training courses with in both sessions.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £999 (Each councillor committing £499.50)

Supported

Councillor Karen Fantarrow-Darby – Bullion Hall – Fibromyalgia Group Room Hire and Refreshments

The aim of this project is to support room hire and refreshment costs for a group using Bullion Hall. This will assist with the overall sustainability of the hall.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Allocation: £950

Supported

Councillors Karen Fantarrow-Darby, Bill Moist and Paul Sexton – Chester-le-Street Cricket Club – 3D Event

The aim of this project is to stage a 3D event to celebrate the Kings Coronation. Providing live coverage of the day on the big screen, with entertainment and a community cricket tournament.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £900 (Each Councillor committing £300)

Supported

Councillor Tracie Smith – South Pelaw RA – Toddler Group / Kings Coronation

The aim of this project is to celebrate the Kings Coronation with a Coronation Toy Party with the toddlers.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £144,19

Supported

Councillor Alan Bell – Woodlea Primary School – Coronation Coins

The aim of the project is to provide a commemorative Coronation coin for every child in school.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £150

Supported

Councillor Emma Waldock – Sacriston Youth Project – Youth Council Resources

The aim of the project is to provide resources for the Youth Council to utilise, the choice of resources has not yet been made as this will be researched and decided by the Youth Council themselves.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £322

Supported

Councillor Emma Waldock – Sacriston Youth Project – Nettlesworth Coronation Celebration Family Fun Day

The aim of the project a family fun day has been organised for Sunday 4th June at Nettlesworth Community Centre. The funds will contribute towards the cost of the free activities on the day, such as face painting or balloon modelling.

Declaration of Interest: None

NBSG Coronation Fund Allocation: £100

Supported

Neighbourhood Budget Allocations

Councillors Alan Bell and Phil Heaviside – Bournmoor Cricket Club – Container Tuck Shop

The aim of this project is to create a tuck shop in an area that is safe for children to use, away from hard ball activity and the car park. This provides many children playing cricket with the opportunity to buy refreshments. The funding will support to convert a small shipping container and create a seated family area for families to watch the kids play and practice.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £2,000 (Each Councillor committing £1,000)

Supported

Councillor Tracie Smith – DCC Highways – Sustrans Link Footpath, South Pelaw

The aim of this project is to create a link footpath in South Pelaw to access Sustrans Coast to Coast (C2C). The construction works will include, excavating the existing grass verge area and replacing with flexible bitmac construction and installing timber edging kerbs. The access to the C2C is near 86 Pelaw Crescent in South Pelaw.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £5,430

Supported

Councillor Emma Waldock – Mona Lisa Arts and Media - CAKE – Contemporary Arts in Kimblesworth and Exhibition

Giving local people the opportunity to come together, engage with their own creativity and meet others in a social space. CAKE is to be delivered by a professional artist with many years' experience in participatory arts and has experience of working with older people and Dementia. The contemporary art sessions are to be held in Kimblesworth and Plawsworth Community Centre. Bringing together a group of older local people on a weekly basis for 15 weeks.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £1,500

Supported

Councillor Tracie Smith – DCC Clean & Green - 3 Tier Planters with Maintenance

The aim of this project is to install 4 x 3 tier planters, filled with flowers, to enhance the local environment around the South Pelaw area. Costs also include 2 years maintenance for this project.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £5,079 (£150 of Coronation Fund will also be allocated to this project as noted above)



Better for everyone
Supported

Councillor Tracie Smith, DCC Highways - South Pelaw Road Safety/Environmental Enhancement

This project is part of a programme to improve Pelaw Square, as the primary entrance to the South Pelaw Estate. It responds to issues raised with the Ward Councillor by residents.

The proposed scheme will seek to remove the over-run, predominantly grass verges, on both sides of the Highway, and install strengthened bitumen to offer added protection. It will be implemented by DCC Highways Team.

Declaration of Interest: None

NB Allocation: £5,380 (Match funding of £25,093 via Towns and Villages Programme Funding)

Supported

[Partner Updates](#)

Police – Insp Lee Morris gave a general update on events that had taken place in Chester-le-Street.

Karbon Homes – Suzanne advised that Karbon Homes have 5,000 plus properties in Chester le Street and yet they have had less than fifty people from the area engaged with services over the last year. Karbon Homes are targeting the area in earnest over the coming months and would really welcome the support of the AAP Board Members to help do this.

Karbon Homes offer 1-2-1 bespoke and tailored advice and guidance around employability from job searching, CV writing, interviewing to creating placements and opportunities suitable for customers. 1-2-1 digital support is on offer from the Chester-le-Street Hub every Wednesday.

Karbon Homes also have a dedicated support fund that can help break down customers financial barriers to moving into work such as workwear, DBS checks, travel costs etc. The Money Works course includes a shopping voucher, and a food hamper upon completion. This is delivered by the Money Matters Caseworker so additional 1-2-1 benefits and money advice and guidance is available

Karbon Homes also offer 'The Write Turn' which aims to improve people's literacy and digital skills through the driving theory test. Provisional licenses will be funded as part of the course, and upon successful engagement with the course, Karbon Homes will also cover the cost of the theory test.

It was noted that Karbon Homes are happy to run courses in local community venues.

The 'Our Fair Foundations' report is Karbon Homes' response to levelling up, and a new approach to considering their impact on communities. Karbon Homes are taking a 'place based approach' in which they focus on specific areas, where they can engage in meaningful consultation with community members and stakeholders and work out where they can have most impact. Karbon Homes current areas are Stanley and Byker. The Board will be kept updated when this spotlight moves to Chester le Street.

The Chair asked that Karbon Homes offer/s be circulated to the Board

Business Sector – In Bloom was noted and the impending work around this

Health Rep – Michael Wilkes advised he would actively aim to rectify this situation as soon as possible.



Better for everyone

Action: Michael

AAP Co-ordinators Update

AAP Public Representatives – Michael noted that this had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

VCS Vacancy – Michael noted that an expression of interest has been received and that this would be taken forward in due course.

Head of Service – Michael noted earlier that Marion Ingleby, Head of Digital Services, was the new DCC Partner Representative.

Durham County Council – Community Engagement Review – Michael highlighted that the report was now due to go to Cabinet 27th July.

Annual Report – Michael advised the team were working on this and Board Members will receive a draft copy in due course.

Board Champions – Michael advised that all new projects are starting to deliver, and these projects would be aligned with Board Members. Michael advised a refresh would be sent out in due course.

Date and Time of the next meeting

Monday 24th July, venue to be confirmed.