

**East Durham Area Action Partnership Board Meeting
6pm on Wednesday 12th July 2023 at The Lisa Dixon Centre, Haswell**

PRESENT:

Elected Members

Cllr A Surtees (AS) (Chair)
Cllr Jake Miller (Cllr JM)
Cllr Terry Duffy (TD)

Partner Organisations

Graham Easterlow (GE)
Ian Hankin (IH)
Insp J Eales (JE)
Ian Porter (IP)
Jim Murray (JMurray)
Susan Robinson (SR)

Public Representatives

Rona Hardy (RH),
Danny Dickinson (DD)
David Blackwell (DB)
Gill Rodgers (GR)
Alison Paterson (AP)
Annabelle Lumsden (AL)

Co-opted Members

Edna Connor (EC)

Officer Attendance:

John Murphy (JM) – AAP Coordinator
Laura Towers (LT) – AAP Support Officer
Kaye Stephenson (KS) – Community Development/ Project Officer

Presenters:

James Cook, Spatial Policy, Durham County Council

Public Attendance:

6 members of the public were in attendance

Apologies: Cllr Julie Griffiths, Cllr Ivan Cochrane, Insp Phil Carter, Amanda Moon, Joanne Angus

1. Introductions & Apologies

JM ran through housekeeping and health and safety.

AS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

A round of introductions were undertaken and apologies were noted, as above.

AS noted that anyone with a declaration of interest on any project should step out as appropriate.

2. Previous Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous Board Meeting on 14th June 2023 were accepted by the Board as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

No matters arising.

3. Police & Fire Reports

Inspector Joanne Eales – Seaham & Easington

A number of houses have been identified in the Murton area where people committing criminal activity were residing. The team has been in contact with Northumbria Police regarding people from out of the Durham area coming into the area. Work has been done with Believe Housing. The people have been charged with a number of offences by Northumbria Police.

A number of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) have been issued – five in the last few weeks. Durham is one of the Home Office trailblazer areas to tackle ASB and offenders will be punished swiftly. Immediate Justice is where the perpetrators need to repair the damage they inflict on victims within 48 hours of being handed an out of court disposal by the Police. This will continue until the money is spent.

In Seaham, a female bogus official targeting elderly residents who have a key box on the wall has been identified, arrested and is on strict bail conditions.

In relation to ASB in Church Street Seaham, where two assaults took place, two individuals have been arrested and are on strict bail conditions. This has had a positive impact as ASB has decreased.

There has been a rise in commercial burglaries, with a number of businesses being targeted. The offenders have been caught on CCTV on a number of occasions.

Jet and Ben have been into schools with PCSOs looking at ASB etc.

There was £10,000 of funding for youth engagement work in Easington Colliery. There has been a good uptake. Engagement workers are out in the community.

AS updated that there were 37 people on the first night. There are 25-27 youths attending consistently. Looking at extending to Easington Village.

The CAT Team has been in Deneside this week – work around off-road bikes and drug activity is emerging from this.

A cannabis farm was dismantled in Murton.

Discussion took place around shoplifting and that this is an area-wide issue.

SM asked regarding the outcome/results of a Mutual Gains project in Deneside AS will report back at the next meeting on this.

Inspector Joanne Eales – Peterlee

Throughout the week, Peterlee Neighbourhood Team has targeted ASB by upping patrols in the areas and carrying out extra engagement within the areas as well as engaging with partners. PCSOs have visited the hot spot areas for ASB and carried out the Stamp it Out stencils.

There has been a pop-up PACT at Asda, Peterlee. The officers were able to engage with the community whilst showing a presence in the community.

Good results this week, with five Community Protection Warning Notices issued, five people issued with Traffic Warning Notices for driving anti-socially, five Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts issued to youths in the area, two off-road bikes seized, to the value of £10,000, five people reported for driving offences, one prolific shoplifter arrested, one person arrested for driving whilst under the influence, over 15 visits carried out in partnership with local housing groups to target anti-social behaviour by tenants, one youth reported for public order and 14 Anti-Social Behaviour Warnings given out to youths.

There has been a huge crackdown on ASB. The team changed their shifts and are working into the night to protect the community also.

A male who was causing a considerable amount of crime within Wheatley Hill has been arrested and evicted and is currently in prison awaiting a Crown Court appearance.

Safer Streets 4 money – work has started with Peterlee Town Centre Staff (Castle Dene) to support them with upgrading CCTV system. Safer Streets 5 is also out currently for funding bids.

Community engagement with the Cheesy Waffles project in Horden along with Jet & Ben – great engagement with the team down there.

A male wanted for recall to prison has been detained today in a property in Peterlee and sent back to prison.

Investigations are ongoing into a house which was burnt out in Blackhall.

Fire

AS welcomed Ian Hankin, the new County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service ED AAP Board representative to the meeting. IH will provide the fire report at future meetings.

4. Housing Strategy Phase 1 Consultation – James Cook, Durham County Council

This the first round of consultation to replace the original housing which was adopted on 2019 to ensure the Council is well positioned. Delivery has included Targeted Delivery Plans to guide interventions, the delivery of older persons' housing and Selective Licensing.

There will be two stages to the consultation to scope and define key principles and priorities. There will be feedback following each stage, with the new strategy being adopted by 2024.

There are seven principles and five priorities to the strategy which will be for the whole of the County and not just the Council. New homes will be designed in line with current emerging energy standards. The consultation will run from 26th June 2023 until 18th August 2023 at 5pm with the final draft in spring 2024.

Cllr JM noted that there is currently a TDP in Wheatley Hill where the plan is to put alley-gates in a hot spot area. It is better to have everything in place beforehand. Cllr JM also added that it is important to ensure people are in the right places with the right level of consultation. Empty properties need to be incorporated into the strategy.

EC asked if there was anything in the strategy on demolition and new builds.

JC noted that other documents would be linked in with eg the Horden Masterplan. There will be more detail on demolition once we have the strategy.

GE asked where this links in with Homes England and also with Devolution.

JC confirmed that Homes England would be engaged with. JC advised that the strategy would be produced for County Durham and this would likely be aligned.

GE also asked if this would involve work in partnership with housing partners. Is there a financial plan? JC advised that it would involve work in partnership with housing partners. The strategy will look at potential funding opportunities.

IP suggested that the vision should state 'a good choice of quality homes' and also 'enabling people to live longer lives' as well as something about working with social housing providers and landlords.

DD noted that it would be good to see data in the strategy eg travel to work. There is a reference to flagship projects – will that be made public in the strategy?

GR highlighted the importance of having suitable accommodation for the ageing population. AS added that more bungalows are needed and more affordable homes. Rent to buy schemes should be adopted.

JC advised that there will be 10% older person's housing in response to an ageing population.

JMurphy asked whether green spaces would be built in the new developments.

JC advised that this is a planning issue and design plans will link to policies.

AS noted that in-fill and brownfield sites are not always used to capacity. The policy is looking at this. Houses of multiple occupation need guidelines to put a policy in place. Also relating to Principle 4 – it can't be underpinned by community engagement if dictated by planning laws.

JE noted that there are issues with empty properties and also repeat cannabis grows. It is important to look at this as part of the strategy.

JC added that it is important to have buy-in from other agencies in order to look at the wider issues to design them to avoid issues arising.

AS thanked JC for the presentation.

5. Neighbourhood Issues

A question was raised re the Green Seat at Easington.

AS advised that a site visit had taken place and a plan of action has been put in place.

6. Priority Group Updates

Maintaining the Social Fabric of our Communities (MSFOOC) – Cllr Angela Surtees (Chair)

The minutes of the MSFOOC meeting on 8th June were circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

AS updated that a further MSFOOC meeting had taken place on 5th July where a number of things were identified by the group to look at, including social isolation, income deprivation/cost of living, physical activity and emotional wellbeing. The priority group is now looking at how to sustain activities. NE First Credit Union (NEFCU) presented their application at the MSFOOC meeting.

AS declared an interest in the NEFCU application as a Trustee and left the meeting temporarily. GE took the Chair.

Total Project Cost: £85,540

East Durham AAP AB Request: £68,432

A further request for £17,108 will be going to East Durham Rural Corridor's Board.

GE summarised that a detailed discussion had taken place at the MSFOOC meeting on the cost of living crisis and resilience. It is important that people can and know how to access the products which are available. 55% of NEFCU loan applications are being turned down on average. People are coming forward in positions which are so difficult that they sometimes can't access products.

JMurphy added that NEFCU will liaise with large-scale companies and work with community centres and advice agencies. The Business Development Officer role will be based four days a week in East Durham at the Horden Hub and one day in East Durham Rural Corridor.

Cllr JM asked whether this included some funding from last year and what happens if East Durham Rural Corridor's Board do not agree to the funding.

JMurphy advised that £7,800 is from last year's budget. It would be possible to do it as a four-day position if not agreed by EDRC.

RH asked how it will be sustainable in the future and whether it is required because everything has fallen back because of Covid.

GE noted that some of the community collection points have closed since Covid. NEFCU has grown and amalgamated with several credit unions over a short period of time. It is important to get products to people. There are a number of 0% loans underpinned by central government, but they can be difficult to access.

GE asked the Board whether or not they were in support of the application.

The Board were in support of the application. To avoid being inquorate for shortage of elected members S11d(ii) was applied so AS returned and supported.

AS retook the Chair.

Children, Young People & Families (CYPF) – Fun & Food Update Rona Hardy (Chair)

RH provided an overview of the Fun and Food funding.

Holiday Provision with food took place before Fun and Food in East Durham. There was Area Budget funding between 2016 – 2020, initially with a £40,000 pot of funding for 2016-2017.

In June 2020, the government announced a fund for children receiving benefits related to free food. East Durham AAP had a fund of £49,000 of Area Budget, Covid and Holiday Activity with Food funding to allocate. In 2022, East Durham had £203,233 Fun and Food funding, this increased to £264,603 in 2023.

The funding for the remainder of 2023 – 2024 is:

Summer 2023 - £120,633

October Half Term 2023 - £22,713

Christmas 2023 - £17,396

February 2024 - £22,715

The average free school meals percentage for the Easter Holidays 2023 for East Durham was 39.38%.

AS asked whether there was funding for the next two years.

RH advised that it is not confirmed yet.

GE added that on the HAF government website 2024-25 will be the third year of funding, but we don't know if it will continue after that.

A DCC video was shown to the Board of the Fun and Food activities at Easter 2023.

AS noted that a lot of activities are taking place for children over the Summer Holidays.

JMurphy provided thanks to Rona Hardy and Wayne Gibson for all of their Fun and Food work.

Neighbourhoods & Place (N&P) – Graham Easterlow (Chair)

The Neighbourhoods and Place minutes from the meeting on 6th June 2023 were circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

GE updated that a further N&P meeting had taken place on 4th July where the Police and Community Safety attended.

The priorities of the group include community safety, regeneration, transport, Devolution and the green agenda. GE encouraged anyone who is interested to come along to the priority group meeting.

7. Neighbourhood Budget applications for notification or endorsement of declared interest

The NB spreadsheet was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting, as per the spreadsheet above.

JM highlighted the following NB projects with conflicts of interest. The Board approved these projects.

Project Name: Mind the Child on Barnes Road

Councillors: Adcock-Forster & Griffiths

Project Cost: £329

NB Amount: £329

Description: The school would like to purchase safety signs to position on Barnes Road to deter parents/carers from parking in unsafe areas. These signs will support the work of local PCSOs and traffic enforcement officers.

Conflict of interest declared by Cllr Griffiths. Cllr Griffiths is a school governor. The Board approved this project.

AS and RH declared an interest as trustees of the Hazelwell Centre.

Project Name: Haswell Summer

Councillors: Cochrane

Project Cost: £580

NB Amount: £580

Description: Support towards summer activities including off site visits during the school holidays 2023.

Cllr Cochrane declared an interest. Cllr Cochrane is a trustee of the centre. The Board approved this project.

The Board made no comment to the other NB projects which were presented.

JMurphy will provide an Area Budget update at the next Board Meeting.

8. Any Other Business

None raised.

Thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a nice summer.

9. Date & Time of Next Meeting:

**Wednesday 13th September 2023, 6pm
Horden Social Welfare Centre**