



Teesdale Action Partnership – Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Held: 13 March 2024

Cotherstone Village Hall

Elected Members:

Cllr Richard Bell – Vice Chair
Cllr George Richardson
Cllr Wendy Greenfield (Town & Parish Council's Representative)
Cllr James Cosslett

Public Representatives:

Susan Bainbridge
Elaine Laurie
Robin Brooks
Christine Watters
Roger Peat

Partner Representatives:

Craig Jewkes
Insp Ed Turner
Linda Bird – Chair

Presenter:

Liam Granville (LG) - GoFibre Project Delivery Manager, GoFibre
Ashely Barnes (AB) - Digital Durham Project Development Officer, Durham County Council
Craig Jewkes (CJ) – County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

Officer Attendance:

Adam White, TAP Coordinator
Annalisa Ward, TAP Community Development Project Officer
Peter Henderson, TV Community Development Project Officer
Emma Walton, TAP Support Officer

Observers: 5 x Forum Members

Apologies:

Alison Clark
Bob Danby
Peter Locke

Cllr Robert Potts
Rachel Tweddle
Lynne Oxby
Tim Viggars
Cllr James Rowlandson
Cllr Ted Henderson

Teesdale Action Partnership Board Meeting

1. Welcome from Chair, Introductions and Apologies

In the absence of RT, LB chaired the meeting.

LB welcomed everyone to the Board meeting of Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP).

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

Insp ET stated that this meeting will be his last Board meeting. **AW** thanked Insp ET for his time and dedication to the TAP Board. This was echoed by the Board. **Insp ET** introduced his replacement **Insp Mike Sammut**.

2. Declaration of Interest and Meeting Protocol

AW made the Board aware of the declaration of interest procedure and informed all Board members that this is a standard item on the agenda. **AW** informed the Board and Forum members of 'house rules/etiquette' for the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

AW reminded meeting observers they would be welcome to comment under Items 4,5 8 & 9 of today's agenda.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

The draft minutes from the meeting held on 31 January 2024 have been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. **AW** reviewed the minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy.

AW confirmed there were no outstanding actions. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed by the Board as a true and accurate record.

4. Go Fibre / Digital Durham

Board Members received a presentation from **Liam Granville (LG)**, GoFibre Project Delivery Manager, GoFibre and **Ashely Barnes (AB)**, Digital Durham Project Development Officer, Durham County Council on the GoFibre delivery in the Teesdale area.

LG gave an update on Project Gigabit, its delivery, the existing full fibre coverage, and commercial coverage. A government contract to cover Teesdale is in place with GoFibre. More than 4,000 rural Teesdale premises will gain access to ultrafast gigabit-capable broadband offering speeds of 1,000 Mbps. There are 1,040 homes connected to date. An overview of the packages available for the Teesdale area were highlighted. Marketing continues to take place with businesses and stakeholders.

AB reported that ongoing work is taking place to help and support digitally excluded residents with the PTSN 'Big Switch Off'.

A Q&A session took place, and the following points were noted:

Cllr RB asked what communication would take place with residents. **LG** stated that once services are available the GoFibre team will market the area, hold local events and a 'commercial feed' will take place.

Cllr RB asked if individuals would need to set up a new email address if they changed to GoFibre as he had been told by a resident that GoFibre don't provide an email service. **LG** stated GoFibre will only provide the internet and phone connection, however, the residents existing provider can still host and maintain the residents email address, and this should be at no extra cost.

A forum member asked to what extent broadband access, in the delivery area, can be guaranteed. **LG** stated that as part of the contract, GoFibre are required to feed over 4,000 properties in the Teesdale area. **AB** reported that once fibre is installed both computer and physical surveys will be carried out over a 6-month period. **AB** stated that it is unknown if fibre can be installed in properties until the trenches are dug. Where works can not be carried out by GoFibre to install broadband, extensive investments would be required.

A forum member asked which properties fall outside of the subsidised programme. **AB** stated that BDUK are currently undertaking a review of the area to confirm the properties that fall outside of the commercial plans. However due to this scheme not been funded by the government this information cannot be shared.

WG asked if the network lines will be placed underground. **LG** stated that where possible the existing BT infrastructures are used, however, if a network cannot be established underground works will take place. **AB** assured the forum member that technology has advanced over the years and the cables are much more resilient.

A forum member asked what safety measures will be put in place to support vulnerable residents. **AB** stated that during a power outage, generators will be provided offering power for 2-3 hours. Further work is also taking place to explore suitable options for the future. **AB** reported that communication providers have been made responsible by Ofcom to ensure the safety of vulnerable customers and suggested affected residents speak with their own energy and network provider to see what safety measures are in place. **AB** highlighted that BT are hosting a series of Digital Voice events in towns across the county in June. Their team will be on hand to offer support to their customers on the change to digital landline services.

RT thanked **LG** and **AB** for the presentation.

5. County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2024 - 2027

Board Members received a presentation from **Craig Jewkes (CJ)** - County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) on the Community Risk Management Plan 2024-27 (CRMP) consultation. **CJ** provided the background on the achievements and performance over the last year. The consultation, cover a three-year period, seeking views on how resources are used to prevent and respond to emergencies in the future.

The Board were asked to feedback their comments through the consultation routes on the following questions:

1. Do you agree with the Service's approach to keeping you safe?
2. Do you agree with our commitments outlined in the plan?
3. Do you have any comments on our plans for 2024-2027?

Board and Forum members were encouraged to respond to the consultation. Further details in relation to the consultation are available via the website: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/community-risk-consultation>. The closing date for comments is 10 May 2024.

A Q&A session took place, and the following points were noted:

Cllr RB asked what involvement the fire and rescue service has in new development proposals. **CJ** stated that developers are required to incorporate adequate access facilities and to ensure their development is safe by providing facilities to minimise delays to the fire and rescue service when responding to emergencies. The fire and rescue service are not involved in the planning of the infrastructure, however, they do explore the fire safety measures for new development including the internal building structures, fire exits,

emergency lighting, alarms systems etc. The fire and rescue service has building plans, across the county, for those buildings that are over 3 stories high or above.

WG asked if the parish council fire plans need to be sent to the fire and rescue service. **CJ** stated that all fire plans, once submitted to DCC, are kept centrally by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The LRF work to produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on the local community.

WG asked is information kept on empty housing. **CJ** stated some information is obtained by Durham County Council on empty housing and single occupied housing.

A forum member asked has the plan been rural proofed. **CJ** stated that the consultation is now live for comments and encouraged people to respond.

A forum member stated that a different approach is required in rural areas as properties are spread over a large geographical area. **Cllr RB** confirmed that many of the rural councillors sit on the County Fire Authority Board. The fire and rescue service are committed to their response time across the Teesdale area. This was reinforced by **CJ**. **CJ** reported that where a response time is slower than expected, the manager will be held accountable.

A forum member asked; 'what does the fire and rescue service do to protect those most vulnerable in emergency situations, such as the power outage during Storm Arwen'. **CJ** stated that in partnership with DCC a high level of information for those that are most vulnerable in rural locations is retained. This information is vital in emergency situations.

A copy of the presentation and a link to the consultation will be circulated to Board members and those forum members in attendance. **(ACTION 1: EW)**

RT thanked **CJ** for the presentation.

6. Area Budget

AW gave an overview of the Area Budget Spend Profile for 2023/24. The report includes the status of each project. A copy of the spend profile was circulated, in advance of the meeting, with the meeting papers.

AW stated that a more detailed update on the projects supported through TAP funding will be provided at the TAP AGM.

7. Neighbourhood Budget

There were no Neighbourhood Budget applications to present at tonight meeting.

AW stated that several applications have been circulated via correspondence and thanked Board members for their comments.

AW stated that county councillor's neighbourhood budget allocations are required to be allocated by December 2024.

8. Locality Neighbourhood Issues

8.1 Locality Policing Issues

Insp Ed Turner gave an update on the key issues for the TAP area:

- There are no particular crime trends or patterns of note since the last meeting.
- The migration to Appleby Fair takes place at the end of May. Several partner agency meetings have been held. Target hardening will take place at Shawbank.
- Vehicle crimes have increased especially in cars with keyless- entry systems. **Insp ET** encouraged the use of a signal blocking pouch.
- An update was given on a new initiative 'Rural Eye'.
- Information and intelligence gathering from the community was encouraged as this provides vital information for the Police.
- **Insp ET** welcomed his predecessor Insp Mike Summatt to the Board.

Insp ET thanked the Board for their continued support and commented positively on the partnership work that has taken place over the years.

8.2 AAP Neighbourhood Issues

AW confirmed that no neighbourhood issues have been raised in advance of the meeting.

Cllr RB reported that a consultation is live regarding a 20mph speed limit outside of Cotherstone School.

9. Coordinators Update

9.1 TAP Forward Plan 2024/25

At the AGM, the Board will be presented with the TAP Forward Plan 2024/25. **AW** highlighted some of the primary areas of interest that will be outlined in the plan:

- Budgets
- TAP Priorities
- Approach to funding

9.2 AGM – Chair / Vice Chair

The TAP AGM will be held on Wednesday 15 May 2024, 6pm at UTASS. The AGM will provide an opportunity to showcase a number of projects that have been supported by TAP and a celebration of the Chairman's Medal.

AW reminded the Board, at the AGM, the Chair and Vice Chairs for TAP will be elected for 2024/25. It is the turn of the elected member sector to take the Chair during 2024/25. **AW** explained the process and encouraged Board members to consider the roles of Chair and Vice Chair.

AW to email the TAP Board for nominations for the role of Chair and Vice Chair from each sector of the Board. **(ACTION 2: AW/ TAP Board members)**.

9.3 Community Engagement Review

AW stated that as a result of the Community Engagement Review AAPs will transition into Community Networks from May 2025. As it stands, AAP Co-ordinators are on various workstreams looking at TofR, performance management, launch events, community engagement plans, streamlined funding process etc. **AW** informed the Board that some AAPs will be displaced from their locality offices. As it stands, the TAP team will remain in situ. **AW** highlighted that the Board will be updated accordingly, once further information is available.

9.4 The Big Arts Funding

AW informed the Board that all AAPs have received £10k from Public Health to deliver culture and arts-based projects that enhance mental health, wellbeing, and resilience in our local communities. All projects will have to, at least, have commenced delivery by the end of September 2024.

AW stated that work is taking place with AAPs and Public Health on how best to deliver this fund. In the TAP area **AW** reported that a tentative discussion has taken place with a project lead. The Board will be updated accordingly.

Cllr RB stated that UTASS has appointed a parish nurse, funded through the churches, to support those with mental health issues.

WG welcomed a discussion with the parish councils regarding future events / improvements to the area.

9.5 Quarterly Monitoring

AW stated that the quarterly updates (Oct - Dec 2023) have been circulated to Board members. **AW** stressed; if any Board members would like to submit individual comments for circulation that they are more than welcome to do so. **AW**

raised concerns with the level of detail, organisations not meeting deadlines etc and suggested the concerns be addressed at task group meetings.

9.6 County Durham Partnership Update

AW informed the Board that the County Durham Partnership meeting took place on 29 February 2024 at Brandon Community Association. The event was attended by the TAP Chair and the TAP Co-ordinator. **AW** highlighted that he delivered part of a presentation around the impact of the Towns and Villages funding. This provided the opportunity to showcase several of the projects supported by TAP and highlight some of the unique issues faced in rural areas. A presentation was also delivered on Humanitarian Support. It is anticipated that the Humanitarian Support presentation will be delivered to AAP Boards.

9.7 TAP Press Articles

The Board were provided with an update on the press coverage TAP has received in Teesdale Mercury over the January 2024 – February 2024 period. **AW** thanked Teesdale Mercury for TAP articles presented in the Mercury.

10. AOB

AW informed the Board that Tim Viggars will be resigning from the Board. **AW** welcomed any suggestion for a Business Rep.

AWard informed the Board that she attended the Durham County Council Environment Awards 2023, with several awards for projects/ people in the Teesdale area. **AWard** informed the Board that Roger Peat was highly commended as an adult volunteer for his work in the garden project and for his involvement that in the work that taken place around the town.

A forum member asked can an update be provided on the bus service. **Cllr RB** stated there is currently no changes.

11. Date/Time/Venue for Next Meeting

LB thanked Board members for attending the meeting.

The TAP AGM / Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 May 2024, 6pm, at UTASS.

A list of future board meeting dates for 2024/25 will be circulated to Board members.
(ACTION 3: EW)