



**TEESDALE ACTION PARTNERSHIP (TAP)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY 17th JULY 2024, 6:00pm (HAMSTERLEY VILLAGE HALL)**

Present:

Elected Members:

Cllr Robert Potts
Cllr George Richardson
Cllr James Cosslett – Chair
Cllr Wendy Greenfield (Town & Parish Council's Representative)

Public Representatives:

Rachel Tweddle – Vice Chair
Lynne Oxby
Elaine Laurie
Robin Brooks
Christine Watters

Partner Representatives:

Craig Jewkes
Insp Michael Summat
Linda Bird – Vice Chair
Robert Davisworth
Simon Allen

Co-opted

Grace Crawford (UTASS)

Officer Attendance:

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

Presenter:

Victoria Murray, Head of Transactional and Customer Services - Durham County Council

Observers: 12 x Forum Members

Apologies:

Roger Peat

Cllr Ted Henderson
Susan Bainbridge
Bob Danby
Peter Locke
Cllr Richard Bell
Cllr James Rowlandson

Teesdale Action Partnership Board Meeting

1. Welcome from Chair, Introductions and Apologies

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

AW informed the Board that due to the resignation of Tim Viggars, **Simon Allen (SA)** has been appointed as the new Business Representative on the TAP Board. On behalf of the Board **Cllr JC** welcomed **SA** to the meeting.

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

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.

Cllr Robert Potts declared an interest in the following Neighbourhood Budget projects to be discussed under item 7 of the agenda: Etherley Parish Council – Wifi and Village Defib, Durham County Council Highways Assets - A68 Birds Mouth Fencing and the Hamsterley Hopping's - Festival Equipment and Entertainment project.

Rachel Tweddle declared an interest in the TCR Hub – Family Activities and the Trades for Cares – Village Hall Improvements projects.

Grace Crawford declared an interest in the UTASS – Community Support and the Trades for Cares – Village Hall Improvements project.

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 15 May 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. Customer Access Points Consultation

Board Members received a presentation from **Victoria Murray (VM)** - Head of Transactional and Customer Services - Durham County Council on the Customer Access Points (CAPs) consultation. **VM** gave the background to the consultation and highlighted the demand for CAPs across the County. Over the last 6 months (data to 31 March 24) around 52% of available appointment slots go unused across the whole CAP estate. In Barnard Castle CAP the unused appointment slots are around 60%. **VM** reported that the aim is to develop a more responsive offer which delivers customer service support to the places it is most needed and reduces the time spent in the current locations to better reflect the demand. As a result, appointments in Barnard Castle CAP would be reduced from Wednesday and Friday to Wednesdays with the aim of benefitting residents with increased choice and reduced travel requirements.

The deadline for feedback is Sunday 28 July 2024, 5.00pm. **VM** stated analysis of the feedback will be carried out in August and September 2024. The decision-making report will be scheduled to be presented to Cabinet by December 2024.

Board and Forum members were encouraged to respond to the consultation. Further details in relation to the consultation are available via the website: www.durham.gov.uk/consultation

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

WG asked where the CAP is in Teesdale? **VM** stated that the CAP is at Barnard Castle library.

RT stated that due to the reduction in appointments would the current staff lose their jobs. **VM** reported that staff will be relocated to the DCC Corporate Centre in Crook.

A **Forum member** asked can those individuals attending an appointment be asked why they have not completed the forms online? **VM** confirmed that as part of the appointment this data is collected.

Cllr GR asked, at the appointments, can information be provided on the support available through Citizens Advice. **VM** reported that Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) contracted Citizens Advice to continue to provide online support and advice to the community.

A **forum member** asked is Citizens Advice available in Teesdale? **GC** confirmed that Citizens Advice Bureaus (CAB) are held once a week at Woodleigh, Barnard Castle and at UTASS. **AW** highlighted that at the next TAP Board meeting there will be a presentation on the 'Improving Advice Services in County Durham' consultation and an update from CAB.

A **Forum member** stated that when the District Council's transitioned to a Unitary Authority there was a promise to maintain a presence in Teesdale. **VM** confirmed DCC are not

proposing to close the CAP point at Barnard Castle. The review is looking at whether there are any other places more relevant for individuals to access services.

A **Forum member** asked how many residents have internet access and have the capability to explore the services available online. **VM** stated that Digital Durham is working with central government with a range of different network providers to improve access. **VM** reported that to date 96% of the County has internet coverage, however, work continues to take place with those areas that do not have access.

A **Forum member** requested that the rurality of Teesdale is considered when exploring future CAP delivery. **VM** stated that the consultation provides the opportunity to explore the delivery of surgeries in other localities that maybe better placed.

Cllr JC thanked **VM** for the presentation.

5. Local Network Boundary Consultation

Board Members received a presentation from **Adam White (AW)**, TAP Coordinator, Durham County Council on the Local Network Boundary consultation. **AW** gave the background to the consultation and gave an overview of the new Community Engagement model to transition from AAP's to Local Networks (LN). **AW** reported that throughout the Community Engagement Review there has been a commitment by Cabinet to realign proposed LN boundaries with the revised electoral divisions. **AW** highlighted the aim of the proposed LN boundaries and the contribution the proposal will make towards MTFP savings.

AW reported that the number of electoral divisions will reduce from 63 to 51 and the number of county councillors reduce from 126 to 98 in May 2025.

Board and Forum members were encouraged to respond to the consultation. The deadline for comments is 5pm on the 18 August 2024. Further details in relation to the consultation are available via the website: www.durham.gov.uk/consultation

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

A **Forum member** asked will the transition to LN's effect the budgets available. **AW** stated that at this stage the Area Budget will be comparable to previous years. **AW** gave an overview of the new model, new governance arrangements and an explanation of funding for 4-year plans. As it stands, AAP Coordinators are on various workstreams looking at governance, performance management, community engagement plans and streamlined funding process etc.

A **Forum member** raised concerns with Etherley Parish proposed to be split across two LN areas and asked how this will affect their funding opportunities going forward. **AW** stated that the boundaries have been drawn up by Cabinet taking into

consideration the need to make MTFP savings and the results of the boundary Commission consultation. **AW** reported that AAP Coordinators would be looking at how LNs could potentially work across boundaries as the AAPs have done previously e.g. Weardale and Teesdale. **AW** recommended feeding back any comments or concerns through the consultation process.

GC stated that communities work hard to build strong identities and to improve community cohesion which is reinforced by the partnership work across AAP's. **GC** raised concerns with splitting a community across two LN's.

A **Forum member** asked how this will affect the allocation of Section 106 Funding. **AW** stated that this is currently unknown.

A **Forum member** asked will staff cover more than one LN. **AW** stated that the staffing structure will be reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of the new LNs and contributes towards MTFP savings. This may result in a staffing restructure exercise. **AW** confirmed that the staffing structure is not yet known. **AW** highlighted that any staffing changes will follow HR policy and procedure and maximise the use of early retirement and voluntary redundancy opportunities.

A **Forum member** asked how the LN Board's will be constituted. **AW** reported that AAP Coordinators are currently reviewing the structure of the LN panels. The proposal is for the format to remain the same as it is for AAP's. LN panels will include 7 public reps, 7 elected members and 7 partner reps. However, due to TAP losing an elected member this section of the Panel, may slightly differ. It has been suggested that a more flexible approach to the partner rep section, of the panels, be taken.

A **Forum member** asked will there be a consultation on the operation of LN's. **AW** stated when this information is available the Board will be updated, accordingly.

Cllr JC thanked **AW** for the presentation.

6. Area Budget

AW confirmed that a full copy of the Area Budget and Big Arts funding applications have been circulated in advance with the meeting papers. **AW** highlighted that Board members were given the opportunity to provide any comments to the TAP team in advance of tonight's meeting. No comments were received.

The applications have been considered by the Community Recovery Task and Finish Group and the relevant service providers and are recommended for Board approval.

AWard gave a brief outline of each application.

6.1 Northern Heartlands CIO - The I:D Project

Amount of Big Arts funding requested: £10,000

Total Cost of Project: £13,162

AWard reminded the Board that each AAP has received £10k from Public Health to deliver culture and arts-based projects that enhance mental health, wellbeing, and resilience in our local communities.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

6.2 Teesdale Day Clubs – Opening Doors

Amount of funding requested: £12,000

Total Cost of Project: £33,941

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

6.3 UTASS – Community Support

Amount of funding requested: £10,000

Total Cost of Project: £37,446

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

6.4 Trades for Cares – Village Hall Improvements

Amount of funding requested: £15,759

Total Cost of Project: £27,012

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

AW reminded the Board that it was agreed that the maximum grant will be capped at £12,000, however, consideration would be given to exceed this level if the project is an 'exceptional Teesdale wide initiative'. **AW** reported that the task group **AGREED** that it is an 'exceptional' project and warrants Board consideration.

6.5 TCR Hub – Family Activities

Amount of funding requested: £1,992

Total Cost of Project: £79,653

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

AWard to forward the AB and Big Arts funding applications to the DCC Funding Team for technical appraisal. (**ACTION 1: AWard**)

SA asked when the Area Budget funding is to be allocated by. **AW** stated it is anticipated that the Area Budget funding is allocated by December 2024. **AW** reminded the Board that each project proposal is considered by the task group, if successful the proposal is then recommended to the Board. Furthermore, **AW** stated that all AAPs are working towards a

reduced timeframe to allocate AB funding, this financial year. The reduced timescale is a result of the timescales and work associated with transitioning into Local Networks.

LB explained the role of the task group, its membership, and the funding process. The next task group meeting will take place on 28 August 2024, 10am at Ingleton Village Hall.

7. Neighbourhood Budget

AWard confirmed that a summary sheet for the NB proposals has been circulated in advance with the meeting papers.

AWard gave a brief outline of each proposal.

7.1 Etherley Parish Council – Wifi and Village Defib

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£3,880** (£3,880 from Cllr Potts)

Cllr Robert Potts declared an interest in this project.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

7.2 Durham County Council Highways Assests – A68 birds mouth fencing

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£3,000** (£3,000 from Cllr Potts)

Cllr Robert Potts declared an interest in this project.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

7.3 Montalbo Primary School - Out of School Club – Creative Communities

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£2,000** (£500 each from Cllr's Henderson, Rowlandson, Richardson, and Bell)

Cllr Ted Henderson has a declaration of interest in this project.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

7.4 Hamsterley Hopping's - Festival Equipment and Entertainment

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£1,771** (£1,050 Cllr Potts and £721 from Cllr Cosslett)

Cllr Robert Potts declared an interest in this project.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

7.5 Middleton in Teesdale Cricket Club – Club House furniture

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£1,000** (£500 each from Cllrs Bell and Henderson)

No comments were raised.

7.6 Bowes Hutchinson C or E Primary - Spirituality Garden

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£4,250** (£2,125 each from Cllrs Bell and Henderson)

Cllr Richard Bell has a declaration of interest in this project.

No comments were raised, and the Board **APPROVED** the application.

7.7 Copley Village Hall – Kitchen Refurb

AWard confirmed that the request for NB is **£3,000** (£1,500 each from Cllrs Potts and Cllr Cosslett)

No comments were raised.

AWard to forward the NB applications to the DCC Funding Team for technical appraisal.
(ACTION 2: AWard)

8. Locality Neighbourhood Issues

8.1 Locality Policing Issues

Insp Michael Summat gave an update on the key issues for the TAP area:

- The policing boundaries will remain the same.
- There are no particular crime trends or patterns to note. The demand in the police remains the same, however, this will increase in the winter months.
- Targeted crimes have been committed at Bowes Museum and Harmire Enterprise Park.
- Cross boundary meetings continue to take place.
- In previously months there has been a spike in shop lifting. This was relating to a specific person at a specific address. To resolve this issue a closure order notice has been issued on this address.

- Safety measures were encouraged to ensure doors, houses and cars are locked; Valuables are stored safely etc. Board and Forum members were encouraged to be vigilant.
- The WhatsApp groups continue to provide pivotal information to the police.
- A **Forum member** raised concerns of speeding cars and the illegal passing of horses at Woodland. **Insp MS** stated that the Mobile Camera Van is deployed based on a set criteria and area specific data and stated that further evidence would be required to warrant its deployment. **Insp MS** stated he would investigate the issue in more detail with the forum member. **AW** suggested an article in the Teesdale Mercury to promote awareness of how to pass a horse safely along with the possible deployment of the Speed Watch vehicle that TAP funded. **Cllr RP** requested information on the number of times and the areas that the Speed Watch van has been deployed. **Insp MS** to provide an update on the Speed Watch van at the next Board meeting (**ACTION 3: Insp MS**).

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

9. Coordinators Update

9.1 Area Budget Spend Profile

AW gave an overview of the Area Budget Spend Profile for 2024/25. A copy of the spend profile was circulated, in advance of the meeting, with the meeting papers.

A **Forum member** welcomed comments from the Board members on the Area Budget proposals put forward through the task group.

9.2 Quarterly Monitoring Updates

AW stated that the quarterly updates (April - June 2024) will be circulated to Board members shortly. **AW** stressed; if any Board members would like to submit individual comments for circulation that they are more than welcome to do so.

AW stated that the following projects have failed to provide project monitoring in Q1:

- Cockfield Guides and Brownies - Cockfield Guides and Brownies Explore and Enjoy
- Durham County Council - Three Villages Traffic Calming
- DCC - Veterans Legacy Programme
- The Bowes Museum – New Heating System

This information will be presented to the task group when considered any future funding applications.

9.3 TAP Press Articles

The Board were provided with an update on the press coverage TAP has received in Teesdale Mercury over the May – June 2024 period.

9.4 TAP Wider Work

The Board were provided with an update on the wider teamwork of TAP since the September 2023 Board meeting.

9.5 AONB

CW informed the Board she has been accepted as a Governor at Cockfield Primary School.

10. Date/Time/Venue for Next Meeting

Cllr JC thanked Board members for attending the meeting.

The TAP Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 September 2024, 6pm, at St Mary's Parish Hall, Barnard Castle.