

**Cabinet**

**14 January 2015**

**County Durham Partnership Update**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

**Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**

**Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Durham County Council's Cabinet on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including key issues from the Board, the five thematic partnerships and all area action partnerships (AAPs). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county.

### **Summary**

2. A huge amount of partnership activity has been delivered in the last few months of 2014 that evidences the connected and yet diverse work led by all parts of the partnership.
3. The renewed Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), the overarching strategy for the county, was launched at the CDP event in November and confirms the partnership's vision and priority themes as well as looking ahead and key areas of focus of the partnership in the years to come. Some of the strategies that underpin the SCS have also been refreshed including 'No Health without Mental Health' and the Healthy Weight Strategic Framework, both recently ratified by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
4. In periods of austerity it is important to recognise the achievements of local communities and organisations and the partnership has done this through a number of award ceremonies and events. The Environment Partnership celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Environment Awards in November and recognised three projects with an Outstanding Award, the first time it has done so. Durham Community Action held its first Volunteering Awards in October culminating with the Volunteer of the Year being officially recognised for their hard work and dedication to helping others. All parts of the partnership came together at the CDP Event in November to celebrate the achievements over the last five years and to look at how we tackle some of the challenges going forward together. In addition to this, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the AAPs have all held consultation events using a variety of mechanisms to engage. The new VCS Better Together Forum has also held two meetings in recent months. This brings together over 20 of the larger or specialist VCS organisations working across county and aims to share good practice and prepare for the future collaboratively. Thousands of people have been engaged

with the partnership through this wide range of activity, all of whom play a valuable role in achieving the objectives set out in the SCS.

5. Expressions of interest continue to be submitted on the Durham Ask. This asset transfer programme is building on the successful community buildings programme which is now nearing completion with the majority of the buildings due for transfer imminently and over £500,000 of external funding brought in. The lessons learned from this will help shape the Ask going forward. £1.4 million recently received from the Government's Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) will help with the delivery of the Ask as well as supporting the voluntary and community sector to build sustainable support for volunteers. This follows on from the Fire Service successfully bidding for £500,000 under the TCA 2014/15 programme to deliver their Safer Homes project, building on their Total Home Safety work.
6. In addition to the above funding, the European Social Investment Fund Strategy and Operational Programmes have been submitted to Government with approval expected in the New Year. This will lead to over €156 million for County Durham, its share of the €537 million fund in total.
7. Welfare Reform and the poverty agenda continue to be key area of focus for the partnership with all partners working together to mitigate the impacts of changes on local people. As well as two conferences, all AAPs are addressing this issue with additional funding approved by Cabinet earlier this year. As the challenge increases the CDP has identified six key areas of focus and will regularly update the CDP Board and Cabinet on these going forward.
8. The council has carried out a light touch consultation on its budget following on from the comprehensive one carried out in November 2013. This was through the AAP forums as well as at other specific events and online with findings being reported to Cabinet at a future meeting.

### **Partnership Event**

9. The CDP held an event on Thursday 20 November that looked back over the first five years of the work of the partnership and with Cllr Henig highlighting some of the key achievements to date. The event was the first of its kind and offered an opportunity for all parts of the wider partnership to come together to share best practice and look at how we can continue to work positively together moving forward.
10. The renewed Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) was launched at the event by Cllr Henig. This builds on the SCS published in 2010 and sets out the partnership's ambitious vision for what the County will look like in 2030. It is the overarching plan for the county and summarises the work ongoing across the five priority themes of Altogether wealthier; better for children and young people, healthier; safer and greener and the 14 AAPs. It also sets out how partners work with the voluntary and community sector and the town and parish councils across the county and the benefits of working together.
11. Board Members, Thematic Chairs and Board Members and AAP representatives all played a key role in the event on the day and in preparation which made it a positive and engaging event. Helen Marriage, Director of Artichoke, was keynote speaker, and spoke of the incredibly positive experience of working with partners in

Durham. Chief Constable Mike Barton also spoke to delegates on problem solving and showed how using different approaches and thinking of issues in a different way can be useful in tackling problems going forward.

12. Feedback received, both from delegates on the day and from evaluation forms, has been very positive with people also commenting on actions that they will take following their attendance at the event.

### **Durham Ask**

13. The Council continues to focus on the 'Durham Ask' which is about working with community groups, town and parish councils and local organisations to transform the way local services are provided by transferring them to local management. To help achieve this ambition the Council has been successful in its bid for £1.4 million from the Government's Transformation Challenge Award fund. The funding is to support local authorities to transform the way they work, make changes to their business processes and work with the wider public sector to improve services for local people. This will increase the number of social and community enterprises and encourage volunteering and enhance the volunteering experience. It will also reduce council spending whilst protecting the services and facilities local people most value.

### **Joint working with the Voluntary Sector and Local Councils**

14. The **Local Councils Working Group** invited a representative from Northumberland's County Association to its October meeting to hear about how town and parish councils work together as well as how they work with Northumberland County Council. It was interesting to find out that five of the newer parish councils, created immediately prior to Local Government Reorganisation, have Partnership Agreements that cover a range of services delivered by Parish Councils. These involve a financial contribution from the parishes of £200,000 raised through precept increases. They involve joint teams covering neighbourhood service type activity currently with the hope of rolling them out to other services such as leisure and youth activities etc.
15. The December meeting heard from Andy Coulthard, AAP Co-ordinator for Mid Durham, about the positive working arrangements that exist with the County Durham Association of Local Councils local forum in their area. This has included parishes in the area contributing financially towards participatory budgeting and shared projects including Silver Talk, which has been rolled out nationally.
16. The **Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group** invited Karen Lynn from Cornforth Partnership to talk to the group on consortia working. This was a comprehensive presentation which included the requirements for successful consortia working and the challenges /barriers involved. Karen highlighted the key considerations which organisations need to take account of before entering into consortia and also gave examples of successful consortia across the region.
17. Julie Form gave feedback from the first gathering of the **Better Together Forum**. Membership is made up of the larger countywide or regional VCS organisations operating in the county, with DCA representing smaller voluntary and community groups. The purpose of the forum is to horizon scan, share best practice and look for new opportunities to collaborate. A quick straw poll had identified that fifteen organisations present had a combined annual turnover of £18M; employed 480

staff; and worked with 1500 volunteers. The second meeting on 3 December included a workshop led by Sue Parkinson on preparing for EU Funding. Julie also introduced a regular slot for organisations to share their recent successes, key opportunities they are pursuing and any learning points from any recent disappointments.

18. The County Durham Volunteering Awards, organised by Durham Community Action, showcased the work of individual volunteers from across the county. The awards ceremony, involving over 200 people, took place at Ramside Hall Hotel, Durham on 16 October 2014. The aim of the event was to recognise and celebrate the work done by volunteers who freely give up their time to improve the lives of others. The award categories mirrored the five altogether themes, together with a Young Volunteer of the Year and a County Durham Volunteer of the Year. The awards were supported by the Northern Echo and Smooth Radio and sponsored by the Council, Beamish Museum, Banks group; Northumbrian Water; the two Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
19. In addition to the DCA Awards, **East Durham AAP** also held their own Volunteering Recognition Awards which built on the Volunteer Awards ceremony held in 2012 and highlights the significant contribution made by volunteers in the area. The event which was also the East Durham Area Action Partnership Autumn Forum, was attended by 195 people, all of whom were offered the opportunity to vote on the AAP 2015/16 priorities.

### **Additional External Funding Secured**

20. Through the Community Buildings Asset Transfer Programme over £570,000 has been brought into the county to support management committees of community buildings. This programme of work is nearing completion and will see 96 remain in community use. The significant additional income for the programme has been achieved through the work of Community Buildings Team, alongside colleagues in the voluntary and community sector and the AAPs, who have empowered groups to bring in their own funds for projects and capital works and providing support to enable the groups to write the actual bids. They have also liaised with funders such as Big Lottery, Awards for All and Locality as well as some lesser known charities and sources of funding including the Scotto Trust, COMA and the Postcode Lottery. Town and Parish Councils have also contributed to the success of the programme. Links to expert advice and guidance from the council's central funding team and County Durham Community Foundation have also been very valuable.
21. The transfer of Quarrington Hill Community Centre to its management committee is a positive example of joint support given to a community building by the council and the VCS. Initially this was in establishing a new management committee and then guiding the new committee through the lengthy process of asset transfer, to become one of the first to complete the process in the county.
22. With the new management committee in place, they secured nearly £7,000 from the AAP's Its Up 2U Participatory Budget scheme to carry out refurbishments to the centre, enabling the group to offer a wider range of activities and functions from the centre, which in turn generates a larger income to sustain it. In 2014 the committee also successfully bid for 46,019 external funding from Lafarge Tarmac. This enabled more substantial refurbishment of the centre including changing rooms

being transformed to become new meeting rooms, offering more rentable space for the centre.

23. **Mid Durham AAP** and its partners work closely with a variety of community groups across the AAP area to support them with governance, policy, funding, information and advice. They have supported, alongside Durham Community Action and Durham County Council's Regeneration Service Grouping, a range of community venues to bring in external funding, develop business plans and policies. The team has worked with sports clubs to develop successful funding bids and local businesses and developers to support community cohesion projects. The creation of village action plans where local residents have had the ability to feed in their local issues and work with the AAP and partners to try and solve them has led to this work.
24. The Council and partners work closely with County Durham Community Foundation (CDCF) as the prime funding agency for small and medium sized local voluntary groups with AAPs building close links in localities. **Chester Le Street and District AAP** is one AAP that has had early successes through supporting two groups to obtain £7,000 between them from CDCF. Further applications are in the process of being developed.
25. Over £40,000 of funding was secured to construct a MUGA pitch within the Horndale area of Newton Aycliffe through **GAMP AAP**. The AAP has also been proactive in supporting a wide range of local community groups access external funding to develop their projects. Funding was secured from Livin, Section 106 monies and a wide range of local trusts and charities. This partnership approach also resulted in Great Aycliffe Town Council allocating land for the development and agreeing to undertake all future maintenance and insurance obligations.
26. **Weardale AAP** supports their partners at the Killhope North of England Lead Mining Museum in trying to attract more visitors and enhance their visitor offer. They have also helped the museum's team by working on a submission for HLF funding.
27. There is a potential of a £1.5m investment into the **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP** area through a number of community initiatives such as Shildon Community First, Gaunless Gateway Big Local and the Shildon Health Express. The AAP has also successfully brokered an arrangement with a Charitable Trust which has seen further investment not only in the BASH AAP area but across the County. This arrangement has involved showcasing and introducing potential projects to the trust via a series of project visits. In the last 12 months this has seen an investment of £228,000 into the County with projects in BASH, 3 Towns, East Durham and Teesdale AAP Areas benefitting.
28. A number of AAPs (**Stanley, 3 Towns and Teesdale**) have recently launched small grants funds through their forums with different amounts available depending on the area. Teesdale's is focused on its children and young people's priority group and is delivered in partnership with the YMCA whilst 3Towns' must be led by children and young people themselves. These types of grants are invaluable to local groups and charities and enable them to put on events as well as providing small amounts of support to their members.

29. **East Durham AAP** Team has attracted over £4.5m in match funding into East Durham and delivered an average of over 110 projects a year since 2010. Since May 2014 a total of £102,766 has been secured for ten community based projects. The community development role of the officers has resulted in the delivery of community based projects that have also attracted this additional funding for the area.

### **Altogether wealthier**

30. The **County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP)** at its Board meeting in November focused its discussion on Enabling Growth in County Durham. Some of the key issues, challenges and areas of discussion included plans for developing transport infrastructure within the county and the role of the North East Combined Authority (NECA), as the single body with the responsibility for strategic transport across the all seven local authority areas within the North East.
31. An EU workstream update report was presented to the board to illustrate the breadth of activity that is being considered via partners. Core activity has included the Social Inclusion conference held in September 2014 with over 160 partners in attendance and continued communication with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership at both individual and group level. The UK's Partnership Agreement has now been agreed with the European Commission. This is the high level strategy, which sets out how European Structural and Investment Funds will be spent across the UK. The more detailed Operational Programmes for ERDF and ESF for England are now being negotiated with the Commission. The outcome of these negotiations may have further implications for County Durham depending on the detail that is included in the Operational Programme.
32. The Durham City Board continues to provide strategic governance and leadership to a series of interrelated initiatives and partnership activities in the City. Setting out a strategy for the future development of the City requires a multi – faceted approach while balancing people, business and place. To support the wide nature of the agenda and incorporate a broad section of views, membership has recently been reviewed and the group has welcomed new members from the Durham City BID, Atom Bank, Durham City MP, Federation of Small Business and Carillion. The group further supports and builds on the aspirations to deliver schemes like Freeman's Reach, Aykley Heads, Northern Quarter, infrastructure and transport within the city, Millburngate House and North Road, as well as developing 'place promotion' through inward and business investment and building the Durham City brand. Working with Visit Durham, partners on the board have proactively support initiatives to improve the City
33. The promotion of the county's food and drink offer, the final stage in Visit County Durham's three year Regional Growth Fund (RGF) national marketing campaign, went live at the beginning of September 2014 through high profile media activity. Activities included posters on the London Underground, digital billboards at Edinburgh Waverley and Manchester Piccadilly train stations, online adverts on the Telegraph and Guardian websites and editorial in the Telegraph, Observer and Evening Standard. Durham also features in the launch of the new national Magna Carta Trails, the tourism activity developed to celebrate the Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015.

34. AAPs continue to support altogether wealthier as the county's top priority with a range of projects and initiatives aimed at supporting local businesses and individuals looking to re-enter the job market or retrain.
35. In the last two years **East Durham Rural AAP** has given £33,929 area budget, matched with £34,000 of Community Economic Development County Wide Targeted Business Improvement funding for its targeted business improvement scheme aimed at improving shop fronts and boosting the appearance of town and village centres. The scheme has helped to safeguard these businesses as the improvements made have meant increased footfall and therefore jobs have been secured.
36. As showcased at the recent County Durham Partnership Event, **GAMP AAP** and South Durham Enterprise Agency (SDEA) are working in partnership to provide a package of training and business development grants for new business within the GAMP area. This project lends assistance to individuals looking to start up small businesses in the area by providing a financial package to assist with their start-up costs. The project links closely with the support offered by the GAMP funded Employability Skills Fund and the suite of support available through staff and projects at SDEA. To complement the support service and financial package the project also provides a range of workshops to assist with key business. To date 22 local residents have been assisted in establishing their business, with all 22 continuing to successfully trade.
37. The **Spennymoor AAP** led Destination Employment project has already engaged a total of 36 clients from the area and has started to deliver a comprehensive programme of ICT support, training, mentoring and work placements. Clients are able to access ICT support and have been receiving help with Universal Job Match, Job Match and CV development. A qualified mentor is working closely with clients to provide Information, Advice and Guidance and employability skills training. They have also been asked to carry out benefit calculations for clients. An Information Day was held in August last year at St. Pauls Centre with local residents invited to attend. At the event attendees were able to find out about the scheme, access CV Workshops, ICT Support, training information and support with welfare reform issues. Local residents that did come along to the event provided really positive feedback. At the event people signed up for work experience and training, with one client asking for specialist support around domestic violence. The event also offered an ideal opportunity to network with other providers and the project made some excellent links.
38. As part of the project, County Durham Furniture Help Scheme (CDFHS) is currently supporting clients with a programme of practical work experience and in house training. Clients are gaining valuable experience in a variety of roles including front office/customer service, IT, graphic design, van crew/delivery and warehouse work. The project has also provided a work experience placement for a young person from Whitworth Park School. The individual in question came on a long term placement as she was at risk of exclusion from school. She worked up until the summer and gained valuable work experience.
39. The project is currently developing a referral pathway and is already receiving referrals from Job Centre Plus and the National Careers Service. It has also developed links with a number of local organisations including Profound, ILM

Associates, Nordic Focus Training Group, Cornforth Partnership, Northern Pinetree Trust and Moving.

40. The **3Towns AAP's** Citizens Advice Project in Willington in its first six months of operation has given support to 43 clients with 59 per cent of enquiries welfare benefit related, the remaining enquiries relate to housing, legal, employment, consumer, relationship or debt related. The project achieved over £44,000 in financial gains for its clients, 47% of which are either disabled or have long term health problems.
41. This project supports the continuation of a free confidential advice service in Crook (three mornings a week). In the first six months of 2014 2265 clients accessed the service in person and a further 926 received advice and information by telephone of which: 913 people received advice on benefits resulting in an additional £218,586 being claimed by those entitled; 177 families were helped with housing matters and 55 families with child tax credit forms; 7 cases of domestic violent were referred to specialist partners, 74 legal cases were passed to solicitors and 136 debt cases were referred to CAB; 150 people were helped with utility bill issues. And a further 148 people were helped with consumer matters and 265 clients were referred for food parcels/emergency utility payments. The figures indicate the demand and scope of the project.

### **Altogether better for children and young people**

42. The **Children and Families Partnership** has an overarching responsibility for delivering better outcomes for children, young people and their families and in order to make this happen they actively engage with children and young people to gather their views. Children and young people attend each of the Children and Families Partnership meetings to highlight and discuss issues which are important to them. This influences services and helps to shape how the partnership does things in the future to meet the needs of children and young people.
43. Young people have raised issues to the Partnership about access to mental health services. This feedback has been shared appropriately for consideration as part of the Child and Adolescence Mental Health (CAMHS) strategy. Information provided by young people in relation to alcohol has also been shared for consideration in the refresh of the Alcohol Harm Reduction strategy.
44. Following discussions with young carers, the Partnership agreed to sign up to the County Durham Young Carers Charter. This is an opportunity for the partnership to show a commitment to improving facilities, services and support available to young carers. Work is currently taking place with Family Action's 'The Bridge Young Carers project' to progress the sign up and to meet the commitments in the charter. Feedback from children and young people is used to inform the refresh of the Children, Young People and Families Plan. The refreshed document for 2015-18 will be agreed in March 2015, and presented to Cabinet at a future meeting.
45. From 1 October 2015, the responsibility for commissioning public health services for 0-5 year olds, delivered by health visitors and the family nurse partnership, will transfer from NHS England to local authorities. This transition marks the final part of the overall public health transfer to local authorities from the NHS, following implementation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and aims to encourage integrated working.



## Altogether healthier

46. The **Health and Wellbeing Board** has signed up to the NHS Statement of Support for Tobacco Control, supporting the bolder vision of 'Making Smoking History'. The Statement has been developed to support local government in their tobacco control work, it provides a public commitment to work towards further reducing smoking prevalence; to demonstrate a commitment to take action; and to publicise the NHS's dedication to protect local communities from the harm caused by smoking.
47. The Board has also formally ratified the 'No Health without Mental Health' Local Implementation Plan, which was developed by the Mental Health Partnership Board as the overarching strategy to improve mental health and wellbeing across all ages within County Durham. It is the local implementation plan of the national 'No Health without Mental Health' strategy and is supported by a number of strategies and work relating to mental health, including the national Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, which is a commitment from organisations to prevent mental health crises. The key aim of the concordat is to develop joined up service responses to people who are suffering from mental health crisis. The next step is to develop, agree and publish a joint action plan before 31 March 2015 to bring about the local improvements needed. There is agreement to develop this across County Durham and Darlington in conjunction with both Health and Wellbeing Boards, as a number of partners operate across the populations of both County Durham and Darlington.
48. A Healthy Weight Strategic Framework has been developed as a local response to 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A Call to Action on Obesity in England'. In County Durham over 75% of children are a healthy weight when they start school, but less than 25% of adults are a healthy weight. The strategy aims to achieve a sustained upward trend in healthy weight for children, young people and adults in County Durham by 2020. The Healthy Weight Alliance, which is a multi-agency partnership working to promote healthy weight in County Durham, will lead on this work.
49. The Health and Wellbeing Board's Engagement Event took place last October and was attended by over 240 people from various groups including voluntary organisations, patient reference groups, service users and carers. The focus of the event was informing people about what has been achieved, or about work which is already taking place or is planned to take place. The event consisted of a mix of local and national speakers and had a number of themed workshops relating to health, social care and the wider wellbeing approach and gave people the opportunity to provide their views on how services should be developed. Feedback from the event has been used to influence future services through the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Children, Young People and Families Plan, as well as in the development of plans such as the School Nursing review, and the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy.
50. Whilst health and wellbeing is not a recognised priority for all AAPs they do support a wide range of health based initiatives across the county. **Stanley AAP and Derwent Valley AAP** are both supporting Age UK County Durham to provide IT training courses for people aged 50+ living in their areas which will enable older people to get online. Both AAPs have purchased IT equipment including laptops and iPad as well as broadband installed in some venues.

51. Each year of the project Age UK County Durham will host training courses in different venues across the two areas. Age UK County Durham will also deliver a minimum of eight outreach sessions over the two years using the laptops, iPads and Tablets, tailored to need, in suitable venues in the AAP area, thus helping to increase sustainability of these community venues. These sessions will also include mobile phone training. Older people who have become confident will also be able to attend the Internet cafe at the Stanley Resource Centre and take advantage of the free Wi-Fi.
52. Participants will be provided with a support pack which will include information including guidance on how to stay safe online and a crib sheet that they can complete with the help of the tutor providing a guide specifically tailored to their needs/equipment. Age UK County Durham will also provide older people with a stylus as it has been identified that due to arthritic fingers most find it difficult to manage a touch screen.
53. The project is an IT course and a series of discussions with older people about the opportunities that modern technology presents, whether or not they wish to try some of it (or maybe just improve existing skills) and also address any worries they may have about getting online. The practical, hands-on aspect of the project will offer a range of activities that will be led by what the older people want and this may include: setting up an email address (and attaching photos), saving money by buying train or theatre tickets online, shopping online or using other web-based services e.g. benefits applications, car tax etc.
54. This project will provide a mixture of learning formats and also offer friendly, informal learning at a pace to suit the people who come along as learning IT can be daunting. For those older people who become good at IT, the project will encourage them to volunteer to support the project and advise their peers.

### **Altogether safer**

55. The **Safe Durham Partnership** supported County Durham Safer Homes initiative, led by the Fire and Rescue Service, has been successful in attracting £500,000 of 'Transformation Challenge Award' funding for 2014/15. Neighbourhood Watch volunteers will be trained to recognise a range of vulnerabilities which will be recorded on a single basic assessment of need carried out in the home.
56. Once a vulnerable individual is referred by a volunteer, carer or professional, they will be assessed for specialist security and safety equipment designed to prevent burglary and fire in the home. This will be provided in one of three ways: Low cost equipment permanently fixed to the home; Specialist mobile equipment fitted until the vulnerability ceases providing for sustainability and permanently fitted specialist equipment to properties owned by Housing Associations for allocation to those most at risk.
57. As previously reported, the Ministry of Justice 'Transforming Rehabilitation' programme has resulted in the split of probation services. A new public sector National Probation Service is dealing with all those who pose the highest risk of serious harm to the public. Twenty one regional private sector Community Rehabilitation Companies will manage all other offenders. The 'Preferred Bidder' status for the Community Rehabilitation Company for the Durham Tees Valley area has been won by ARCC (Achieving Real Change in Communities and a consortium

made of agencies from the public, private and third sectors) Community Interest Company. The preferred bidder status means that ARCC are now the only supplier with whom MoJ is in talks to arrange the Community Rehabilitation Company contract within Durham Tees Valley. Once the preferred bidder stage has concluded, the final offer will be presented and the contract awarded.

58. Work has been undertaken by the Safe Durham Partnership and Local Safeguarding Adults Board to develop a multi-agency approach to hoarding and hoarding behaviours within local communities. This follows a Coroner's report highlighting several issues relating to a hoarding related fire death and the Coroner writing to Registered Social Landlords and Durham County Council requesting action to eliminate or reduce the risk of death created by such circumstances. As a result, throughout 2014 the partnership has worked with local housing providers and other agencies to create a multi-agency Hoarding toolkit; identify key points of contact; and establish clear roles and responsibilities. A one day conference was delivered in August 2014 to raise awareness of hoarding and hoarding behaviours whilst sharing local case studies and practical solutions. This issue is now being taken forward by the Hoarding and Housing Group, following a governance review of the Safe Durham Partnership.
59. In September, approximately 150 delegates attended a counter terrorism seminar to raise awareness of 'Prevent'; the Government's strategy for stopping people becoming involved in or supporting terrorism. The seminar featured leading terrorism commentator and lecturer Dr David Sloggett as a key speaker. Dr Sloggett is an international authority on the subject and provided a fascinating insight into terrorist events. The purpose of the seminar was to continue the work to raise awareness and understanding about the threat everyone faces from those who promote terrorism and how organisations can recognise and support people at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
60. Outside the work of the Safe Durham Partnership itself, the **County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority** (CDDFRA) has provided an update on their estate renewal and improvement programme which began in 2010. Its aim is to modernise the estate ensuring it is fit for purpose and provides a basis for delivering efficient and effective services and partnership opportunities for the community in future years.
61. The key areas of this programme are: the relocation of the Headquarters from Framwellgate Moor to a new building in Belmont in 2013, followed by the Command and Control Centre moving into this building in October 2014. The building provides first class facilities and equipment to reflect the requirements of a modern day fire service whilst also being utilised in a partnership arena to host meetings and test operational preparedness. Workshops and stores have been relocated in from the Framwellgate moor site to a Technical Services Centre at Bowburn and the Service training centre will also relocate to a purpose built facility at Bowburn in early 2015.
62. The Fire Service and Durham Constabulary were successful in a bid for funding from the Police Innovation Fund and as a result they will deliver their incident command training from the new centre. Also, as part of the Fire Service's partnership commitment with Durham Constabulary, the fire station at Newton Aycliffe has been converted to a shared station with the Police, enabling them to

reinstate their presence in Newton Aycliffe town centre and demonstrate excellent partnership working between the two organisations.

63. A Community Fire Station at Crook was opened in May 2014 replacing the old and inadequate premises that did not provide any training facilities for the firefighters of Crook. In addition, Durham Fire Station, currently situated at Framwellgate Moor will relocate to new premises at Snipery in early 2015, again providing a more efficient environmentally sustainable building which can also be utilised by the communities. These new stations will greatly enhance the Services ability to recruit and retain on-call firefighters that provide such a vital response to their local areas.
64. The Service was recently successful in gaining funding from government to build a 'Quad Service' station at Barnard Castle. The station will enable the relocation of Police and Ambulance teams from existing sites in Barnard Castle into a new shared facility on the existing fire station site. Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue Team (TWSMRT) will also relocate from their current base at Barnard Castle Police Station into the shared site, believed to be the first 'Quad-Service' station in the country. Sharing accommodation is part of a broader strategic commitment between the blue-light services to collaborate wherever possible which will promote interoperability which will ensure that the emergency services are able to respond effectively to major incidents within the County and also nationally. It also allows financial efficiencies to be realised without reducing frontline services.
65. **Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP's** Crime and Fire Prevention project has enabled the Neighbourhood Policing team covering Newton Aycliffe and Middridge and the Fire Service to purchase items of crime and fire prevention equipment in order to enhance their existing service of providing free home fire safety checks and advice to residents within the GAMP area.
66. The funding also supports the Neighbourhood Policing Team to attend community forums such as coffee mornings, drop in sessions at local community centres, gatherings of elderly residents and to hold talks on bogus officials. The team will revisit people who have been victims of crime, and - for example, in cases where sheds/garages/outhouses have been broken into, officers will issue equipment providing reassurance to the victim, making them feel more protected and also reducing the likelihood of them becoming a repeat victim.
67. Each year Newton Aycliffe Fire Station personnel carry out 1400 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) in the Aycliffe and Middridge area in support of the service vision of "Safest People, Safest Places." In approximately 15% of all HFSCs carried out in the Aycliffe and Middridge area by the Fire Service the misuse of electrical equipment is observed and is more prevalent in the more elderly members of the community. The Fire Service will utilise the AAP funding to purchase additional equipment not currently available to the service. The Fire Service also responds to requests from the Police where members of the community are at increased risk of arson due to neighbourhood disputes, domestic violence etc.

### **Altogether greener**

68. The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Environment Awards was held on 13 November 2014 at the Radisson Hotel, Durham. A record-breaking 119 entries from across County

Durham were submitted for this year's awards in 12 categories. The annual awards recognise great design, environmental achievement and community spirit. Judges selected 53 projects or individuals to be honoured for their hard work, dedication and commitment to improving their surroundings. Three projects were judged as 'outstanding' i.e.: a country house restoration, a refurbished community arts building and Britain in Bloom were the big winners in a prestigious environmental awards scheme.

69. Lartington Hall in Teesdale, Barnard Castle's The Witham, and the Durham in Bloom campaign were all judged "outstanding". In the built environment category, Lartington Hall, a listed country house, at Lartington, near Barnard Castle, was commended after being restored in keeping with its 17th Century origins. It now hosts celebrations as well as fundraising events and opens to the public for special visits or community gatherings. The Witham, a key part of Barnard Castle's heritage, was recognised in the built environment section. After its future was secured for use by the local community, the building was designed to provide cultural and commercial facilities for a wide range of users. Completing the trio of outstanding entries was Durham in Bloom, a community based partnership of 15 organisations, praised in the places and spaces category. Volunteers have dedicated nearly 3,500 hours to transforming Durham's public and private open spaces and recently won gold in the prestigious Britain in Bloom.
70. The **Environment Partnership Board** in September 2014 launched the 'Caring for Your Environment Award' in order to give recognition to individuals, community groups and projects which carry out environmental improvement works in their local area. This award will be awarded throughout the year and gives recognition to those within our local communities who conduct positive environmental improvements. To date recipients of the 'Caring for Your Environment' award include;
71. 'Durham in Bloom' (where over 1,000 volunteers, local businesses, schools, community groups, individuals, AAP's and Town and Parish Councils dedicated nearly 4000 hours into making Durham City's horticultural initiative nationally recognised in the Britain in Bloom competition) and; Derek Briggs from Chester-le-Street Central Residents' Association who secured a £500 grant from the Chester-le-Street and District AAP to provide a community clean up and install a commemorative bench to improve the appearance of the entrance to the Osborne Road car park in the town centre. The bench was designed with the help of students from Park View School. The design features the town crest, depicting St. Cuthbert's Cross as well as the spring gentian – the flower of County Durham. Both projects are excellent examples of delivering environmental improvements which the Environment Partnership Board has given recognition to.
72. Nominations for a 'Caring for Your Environment Award' can be emailed to the Environment Partnership - [environmentpartnership@durham.gov.uk](mailto:environmentpartnership@durham.gov.uk) or by contacting a board member directly.
73. A new Chair of the Climate Change Group (Tara Duncan, Sustainability Manager, Durham University) has been appointed. This position will not only give representation from Durham University but also strengthen the Environment Partnership as there are opportunities to engage further with the University in terms of its Environmental programme and local activities. The remit of the Group is currently being addressed as the Climate Change Strategy in the main has been

delivered. Future topics which the group will cover include flooding, education and domestic energy.

74. Locally based initiatives to support the work of the Environment Partnership can be found across the county. Board Members from the **Spennymoor AAP** organised a community litter pick where members of the Board, along with members of the community and young people from our Youth Council, carried out the litter pick on Saturday October 21 and was featured in the Northern Echo. The litter pick was organised as a result of feedback from Forum Members in relation to litter issues. Board Members are keen to see this continue and are actively seeking members to sign up and be part of future volunteer litter picks.

### **Area Action Partnerships Forums**

75. The AAPs have recently held their autumn/winter forums where their priorities are voted on for the forthcoming year. The format of the forums varied across the county from some AAPs holding a number of smaller events within their areas to some linking with existing Christmas events.
76. **Mid Durham AAP** held their Forum at the end of November which took a workshop format using three of the AAP's task group themes – supporting older people, employment/job prospects and supporting the voluntary and community sector. The workshops highlighted the projects and programmes that the AAP and its partners had developed for each theme and looked at key issues and potential gaps. The event was used as a show case with targeted local groups and partners invited in to work more closely with the AAP and support the promotion and take up of the services promoted. Survey Monkey was also used to request feedback from Forum members and residents regarding the AAP priority themes for 2015/16.
77. In an attempt to maintain and increase the number of people within the **EDRC AAP** community engaged their Forum followed a different approach this year. Voting roadshows took place within primary and secondary schools that students who live or study in the EDRC AAP area attended, supported by the AAP team and Investing in Children. Over 500 pupils aged between eight and 16 viewed the project display boards, and voted on which projects they feel should receive funding via the It's Up 2 U Voices Project Participatory Budgeting Scheme, which was developed by the EDRC AAP Youth Forum.
78. The EDRC AAP Board agreed to allocate £40k for projects through this scheme which must be 'for young people, by young people'. The overall aim of the scheme is to support projects in the AAP area that have the potential to improve the lives of children and young people. The scheme aims to support community groups and organisations to deliver projects that will help address the activities for children and young people priority chosen by local people.
79. The **Derwent Valley AAP** chose this year to combine its Forum with its Christmas in Consett event and Christmas lights switch on, the aim being to engage a wider range of residents whilst adding a festive element to the priority voting exercise. The festive Forum took place in November in Consett with free live music, dance, theatre and comedy related entertainment taking place throughout the day and a range of market stalls selling Christmas crafts and gifts. A free Santa's grotto was also provided which benefited 300 families who also got to meet Christmas Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Peppa Pig and Frosty Magic characters.

80. At the event, which was attended by between 350-400 residents, anyone aged 11 years or over could vote for their local priorities using coloured baubles which they were asked to hang off Christmas trees to create a festive display as a back drop for the event. Over 480 votes were cast on the day and these votes will be combined with the voting results from the second Christmas event taking place on 3 December down in Blackhill and Consett Park along with the results from the new on-line voting survey.
81. Similarly the **4 Together Partnership** held its Winter Warmer Forum event with excellent partner involvement and information stands. Early planning for next year will look at ways of combining our events with other existing community events for November/December 2015 to further increase participation.
82. The AAP has had successful project callouts for two out of its three priorities. After widespread publicity for both the employment and the older people's task groups the partnership has had Area Budget requests of £113,440 for the £70,000 available. The 4 Together AAP is oversubscribed with good project submissions and if priorities continue for another year this means the partnership has a strong starting point for project development in the new financial year.
83. The **3 Towns Partnership** has taken a different approach to the November forum and priority voting this year, choosing not to hold a traditional forum event instead joining in with an elected members funded project to deliver forum activities as part of the Crook Town Christmas event. The 3 Towns forum maximised the opportunity for a larger number of people from the area to take part in having their say on the priorities for the partnership for 2015/16.
84. A separate online survey was utilised on the 3 Towns Facebook page with 70 people participating. Young people aged 11 plus were asked to complete an electronic survey at Parkside Academy and Wolsingham school with 391 3 Towns' young people taking part. As a result 37 new young people indicated they were interested in becoming Youth Forum members and 15 Facebook participants would like to join the forum. 718 residents have taken part in total, the highest number to date.
85. This year **Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP)**, through a number of routes, have engaged with over 340 people in the decision making process for next year's priorities. People voted in a number of ways including, by post, electronically or by attending one of four events. The main Forum event was held in Barnard Castle and was supplemented by three mini forums in Cockfield, Middleton in Teesdale and Winston. These events were organised in response to concerns raised after last year's event regarding people being able to access a one off event on a Saturday in Barnard Castle. Young people were engaged in the priority vote via a session with Teesdale School. All of this information will be considered by the TAP Board before a final decision on the 2015/16 priorities are decided.
86. The Forum also gave organisations support by TAP funding in the past to get together to show what they were working on. Over 20 local community groups and support organisations attended the forum which was an opportunity for those involved to share ideas and get advice on support and funding.

87. **Weardale AAP's** forum event included twelve five minute presentations from participants who had worked with the AAP to support the Weardale community. The presentations varied from young people talking about what the apprenticeships meant to them, to Wheels to Meals project that reduced the factors that lead to social isolation. In the words of one resident: "I found the Forum inspirational this year. It was really refreshing to hear from real people and groups which had benefited from the approach – the sense of community was palpable and very uplifting. As someone who lives and works in Weardale (and the wider North Pennines), it was really good to see."
88. Other AAPs followed a more traditional approach to their forums. The **BASH AAP** held its November Forum event on 20 November 2014. As always it was a well-attended and well received event by the community. The forum event was an opportunity for the partnership to take a step back and consider some of its achievements over the last three years from the projects it has supported. Priorities for the BASH AAP have been fairly constant since the launch of the AAPs in 2009 with Employment, Children and Community Safety featuring every year. This has allowed the partnership to maintain and develop some major flag ship projects which have made a real impact against the priorities local people have identified.
89. The **Durham AAP** November Forum was hailed as a success by the Durham Times with one visitor remarking in her feedback: 'The thought and effort which had gone into making the event go with a swing came from various quarters, of course, including the table-top displays of the various applicants and their physical presence, some of them engaging very pro-actively and informatively, but what was immediately noticeable, from the moment of coming through the doors was the presence of AAP staff and other DCC input, all of you welcoming, helpful, and enthusiastic...as were others, such as various Durham AAP Board members, looking bright-eyed and involved!'
90. 500 attended on the day with almost 200 questionnaires filled in providing feedback on the latest proposals relating to the council's budget position; 460 people voted on the AAP priorities for 2015/16 with the results to be announced at January's Board meeting when the Board will set the priorities for the coming year. To add to the event money that was raised from selling refreshments was put towards their recent Macmillan Coffee morning to make a total of £775 raised by the team.
91. One the day 19 projects competed for a share of the £20K pot with ten being successful. The winners varied from local community groups wanting to put on singing lessons, providing employment skills to those with mental health issues, to purchasing disabled friendly equipment for bowlers. For those that were unsuccessful the AAP is now working with County Durham Community Foundation to find alternative funding.

### **Area Action Partnerships Update**

92. In addition to individual projects the AAPs are collectively involved in a number of different pieces of work. This covers a wide variety of project work as well as the broader support focused on attracting funding highlighted earlier in the report. Some further examples of their work are detailed below.
93. The Chester-le Street & District War Memorial Association have had ambitions to install a new more fitting war memorial in a public place within **Chester-le-Street**



since the inception of the AAPs. Over the course of the last two years they have been gradually fundraising towards their target needed to both purchase and install a new memorial in the Market Place within the town. Chester le Street and District AAP has been successful in working alongside them to achieve this helping them access section 106 funding as well as other funding (£68k in total) and also in helping with the practical issues of dealing with planning and in public consultation regarding the siting of the memorial. The association have often come through the AAP team for advice and guidance at each of the crucial stages of the memorial construction.

94. Having built this relationship it came as no surprise that the AAP was asked to help co-ordinate the first ever outdoor remembrance parade in the town around the newly built War Memorial. Given the short-notice the AAP had to start from a low base in terms of information and detail of how this is to undertaken. Taking a methodical approach and working with church and service representatives the AAP managed to help achieve a very successful outdoor service to appropriately mark remembrance particularly given the Centenary of World War I. This was the largest public remembrance service delivered in Chester-le-Street with approximately two thousand public in attendance alongside the many civic and service representatives. This is likely to be a collaboration for the future, as the War Memorial Commemoration Event which we are assisting with is currently in the planning stages, to be held in May 2015. A review of the parade is scheduled before the new year to help build upon this success.
95. The Salvation Army- Hunger, Heat and Hope project in the **3Towns AAP** area supports the food bank to provided gas and electricity top ups and food to those In Need. This enables people to cook hot meals with the food provided by the food bank. One of the biggest issues during cold weather is choosing between heating, eating and finding money to cook food. Food bank usage has increased over the last couple of years; October 2013 – September 2014 – The Foodbank provided food for 967 Adults and 424 Children. The majority of the people are coming from benefit delays rather than sanctioning. Some of the stories are about debt piling up until no money remains apart from paying debt repayments. A proportion of people using the foodbank have no life skills so cannot budget or cook from fresh, these are encouraged to take part in the Victory Programme set up to directly help those in this situation.
96. The **Weardale AAP** team, alongside local YMCA staff, have developed a “meals outreach service”, the idea developed from a luncheon club losing its current supplier, working alongside the group we identified prospective supply methods, identifying what would be the “best fit” for the group. The local YMCA with fully fitted kitchens and staff where approached to see if they could met the needs of the luncheon club, this relationship has now forged a bond with the two voluntary groups who work to each other’s mutual benefit.

## Summary

97. The CDP has been involved in a range of diverse activity since the last update report to Cabinet in September 2014. The launch of the SCS refocuses the vision and priorities of the Partnership with a range of plans underpinning this also refreshed.

98. It has held a range of events engaging and consulting with local people and celebrating contributions made by a range of individuals and groups across the county as well as bring nearly 200 people together at the whole partnership event in November. Other ambitions achieved are the community buildings programme and the attraction of funding to support the delivery of the Durham Ask which continues to receive expressions of interest.

### **Recommendations and reasons**

99. It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

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**Contact: Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer**  
**Tel: 03000 263591**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** - Area and Neighbourhood budgets are utilised and delivered through the 14 AAPs and ensure the Council (and AAPs) receive improved information on the outputs achieved through use of locality budgets.

**Staffing** - None

**Risk** - None

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - The actions set out in this report aim to ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded within the working practice of AAPs.

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** - Altogether safer is the responsibility of the Safe Durham Partnership.

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners and the establishment of a Sound Board to progress the recommendations and will continue this consultative approach.

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Issues** - None

**Legal Implications** – None

## Appendix two

### Partnership Events 2015

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Title</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
14 January 2015	Voluntary Sector Stakeholder Forum	Office of the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner	<a href="mailto:enquiries@durham-pcc.gov.uk">enquiries@durham-pcc.gov.uk</a> 03000 264631 quoting VCS Forum
6 February 2015	Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy Consultation event	Public Health, Durham County Council	Dawnn Roe <a href="mailto:dawnn.roe@durham.gov.uk">dawnn.roe@durham.gov.uk</a>