

Cabinet

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County Durham Partnership Update



Report of Corporate Management Team

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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. The County Durham Partnership continues to focus on supporting people most in need. Changes to the welfare system have affected thousands of people within the county with further impacts still expected. The AAPs in particular have focused on the area of welfare reform with successful projects shared across localities. The AAPs share best practice and learning across boundaries and also how they work with partners in the voluntary and private sector to support local people.
3. Focus on the economy has also continued as a key area of work across all parts of the partnership with a reminder of some of the key successful projects focused on increasing individuals' employability and skills forming a significant part of this report. The variety of projects show that the local nature of the AAPs can be matched with the strategic aims of the partnership to deliver positive outcomes for people, which also links to the welfare reform agenda. The County Durham Apprenticeship Scheme, for example, is featured and shows how a broad strategic initiative can be delivered successfully at a local level.
4. In working with, and empowering, local people through those programmes mentioned above, and others, they will be in a stronger position to become involved in their local communities in the future and particularly to engage with the Durham Ask. Partnership working supports this and sets in place networks and mechanisms to support social and community enterprises in a variety of ways. The Ask continues to be a focus for the council with expressions of interest being received and business cases developed.
5. Listening to the views of local people is central to the work of the CDP. In recent weeks there have been a series of regional consultation events focused on the

North East Combined Authority and its devolution proposals. These have been co-ordinated by Durham and have attracted significant interest with Durham's event attracting over 100 people made up of business and voluntary sector representatives, town and parish councillors and clerks and local residents. The outcome of these events will be reported when available.

6. The CDP brings together all of these issues at its forum meetings, the most recent of which was hosted in February by the Fire and Rescue Service. All 14 AAPs have now taken the opportunity to share best practice and inform others of the work carried out in their areas including some specific projects as well as broader updates on priorities therefore the forum format is now slightly different. The February meeting was centred on the fire service and on how it has adapted its ways of working to ensure it can continue to meet demand. Five AAPs also presented on how their work complements and enhances that of the Fire Service through a variety of ways including funding projects for equipment and home safety checks to more reactive work following major incidents such as the flooding in Chester le Street and shop fires in Stanley. The workshop discussions at the meeting generated some positive ideas on how to take forward further partnership working.

Welfare Reform and Support for Local People

7. The County Durham Partnership continues to work collectively to address the issue of Welfare Reform, both strategically and in local communities with AAPs central to this. Working with local social housing provider **livin**, **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP)** has recently supported the development of a free, confidential, impartial, independent, quality marked and accredited debt advice service for residents. SYD (Sort Your Debt) has commissioned FISCUS to deliver the service to residents who need independent advice and support with: money MOTs and budgeting advice; benefits, tax credit and pension credit advice; starting your own business, tax credits and grants; better-off into work or self-employment calculations and debt repayment plans, IVAs, debt relief orders and bankruptcy.
8. Since the launch of the project in January 2015 over 20 GAMP residents have received support on a range of issues with financial savings of almost £4,000 made and a total debt advised on of over £40,000.
9. **GAMP** and **East Durham Rural Corridor AAPs**, working in partnership with the Pioneering Care Partnership, have developed a free service to assist residents into employment. The project is aimed at individuals of working age who require support to navigate the present Welfare Reforms, in particular those residents who have poor access to formal learning opportunities and who are digitally excluded.
10. It will provide employability pit stops (in community venue surgeries) across the Great Aycliffe and Middridge and East Durham Rural localities to deliver support to clients around a range of themes including: personal development and employability skills (support and development of a targeted CV to promote independent job search and raise personal aspirations); completion of job application forms - an awareness of personal skills and abilities to enable realistic targeting of attainable employment pathways; support to access additional funding opportunities and promoting increased financial capability.
11. Also in the East of the county, and as highlighted in previous reports, **East Durham AAP's** Welfare Champions and Debt First Aid projects have proven to be successful in supporting individuals and families and undertaken over 2000

interventions to date. Linked to this is the Access to Food Capital Grants project which came out of the AAP's research into access to food which identified children and the elderly as those most at risk. This is supported anecdotally through the need to include a food budget within holiday activity grants which is as a result of a number of children (usually on free school meals) not receiving meals at home. This grant will encourage the development of holiday based provision targeting children and families and replace worn equipment.

12. The **Derwent Valley Partnership (DVP)** and **Mid Durham AAPs** are also working with their Registered Social Landlord partner, Derwentside Homes, and other local agencies through their social enterprise SHED (Social Housing Enterprise Durham) to supply and collect goods for re-use which can then be distributed to the local community, at a low cost charge which will help sustain the project. An additional service that will be offered will be the clearing of Derwentside Homes' void properties; removing goods which can be re-used and diverted from landfill. The project will also offer warehousing training from the base in Number 1 Industrial Estate which will give individuals valuable vocational experience in manufacturing.
13. Unemployed people would be recruited to the project which will offer work experience, qualifications and confidence to succeed and find sustainable employment. The project is about supporting people back into employment and giving these individuals a sense of direction by offering future career opportunities. In addition to this the project will also be carrying out maintenance jobs in the local community through SHED.
14. As well as working with housing partners on welfare reform, AAPs work closely with the voluntary and community sector on this issue. **Spennymoor AAP** is supporting the Citizens Advice County Durham Community Access Kiosks project. Its aim is to give information and access to Citizens Advice Services, through the provision of information kiosks and training of local reach out volunteers in each community who are able to provide information and signposting to the local bureau. The information kiosks will be placed in local village halls and community centres, and will be supported by a Citizens Advice Services volunteer development officer who will empower members of the local community to support their fellow residents as they deal with issues they may have with the Universal Credit and Welfare Reform programmes. The programme has only recently started and due to one of the Community Centres withdrawing from the programme and delays in broadband installation, they are still in the development stage of the project.
15. **Durham AAP** is also working with Citizens Advice via a joint working initiative between MIND and Durham Churches as a pilot approach to dealing with the reasons why people attend Foodbanks and also piloting some outreach work in the Sherburn ward dealing with the issues raised by welfare reform for local people.
16. The **3Towns AAP** led advice project in Willington targets residents with Welfare Benefit Issues and those who are experiencing poverty. Weekly advice sessions are held in Willington Community Action Centre, so far achieving over £76,015 in financial gains for its clients. The Signpost Advice and Information project supports the continuation of a free confidential advice service in Crook (three mornings a week).
17. Between January and December 2014, 3399 clients accessed the service in person and a further 1520 received advice and information by telephone. Of which:
 - a. 2139 were disabled and 597 were of pensionable age;

- b. 1272 people received advice on benefits and help completing a range of forms resulting in an additional £900,175 being claimed by those entitled;
- c. 236 families were helped with housing matters;
- d. Five cases of domestic violent were referred to specialist partners, 87 legal cases were passed to solicitors 198 people were helped with utility bill issues. And a further 208 people were helped with consumer matters;
- e. 407 clients were referred for food parcels / emergency utility payments in times of dire financial need when awaiting benefits to be put into place and 48 have benefitted from the local furniture scheme.

18. These examples show the variety of initiatives across the county that are supporting local people and the continuing need for support. This will continue as long as it is identified by local people.

Joint working with the Voluntary Sector, Local Councils and Armed Forces

- 19. The CDP networks are key to ensuring that support is widespread and initiatives are delivered where they are needed. Through joint working with the VCS, town and parish councils and AAPs, projects are enhanced and more sustainable. There are two strategic working groups that continue to meet bi monthly to jointly address key issues.
- 20. The **Local Councils Working Group** is focusing on delivering the Delivering Differently project which attracted £90,000 from Communities and Local Government following a successful joint bid late last year. Durham County Council and the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) are working together to identify three pilot town and parish council areas to look at more joint working in the future, particularly focused on clean and green neighbourhood services. Another part of this work will be identifying, through work carried out by the Institute for Local Governance, the most appropriate and cost effective ways of working with town and parish councils and how to expand these in the future.
- 21. The **Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group** is focused on developing the offer for volunteering and social enterprise across the county and a presentation at a recent meeting looked at what was needed for social enterprises to thrive. This agenda will drive forward the Durham Ask and support groups coming forward to take on services and facilities to be able to take these on and develop sustainable enterprises.
- 22. The AAPs work closely with the voluntary and community sector in supporting local communities with recent attention focused on community buildings and asset transfer. **Durham AAP** has supported the newly formed Sherburn Community Association with issues such as the opening of bank accounts, business planning as well as supporting their application for Lottery funding. Also in their area, Pitlington Community Centre has now agreed their asset transfer and is looking to make refurbishments to their heating system which the AAP will look to help them with through accessing further funding.
- 23. The **Derwent Valley AAP (DVP)**, in partnership with the County Durham Food Partnership and Durham Community Action, is taking forward one of the priorities from the Sustainable Local Food Strategy which is to facilitate and support more community growing opportunities throughout the county.

24. With a contribution from the Tudor Trust of £60,000, the DVP funding (£6,120) will enable communities in Derwent Valley to take part in the Community Growing Project aimed at increasing community access to good food and improving health, self-esteem, community resilience (both economic and environmental) and education/unemployment. The project aims to support local communities to develop a scheme that utilises the skills, assets, experiences and interests of each community. This supports the Health and Wellbeing strategy, particularly the positive impacts on obesity, healthy eating, exercise levels and mental health, the project will also contribute towards children and young people making healthy choices, decreasing health inequalities and early deaths and improving mental health and wellbeing of the population.
25. **BASH AAP** has made links at a national level and will facilitate a further visit from the Scotto Charitable Trust by recommending projects for funding. This is an excellent, unique opportunity for the AAP to provide additional support and revenue to groups in the area. As a result of this unique and ongoing relationship and the support of the BASH AAP an additional £270,000 has been invested into the area by the Scotto Charitable Trust.
26. The Partnership continues to support the **armed forces** in a range of ways including in accessing national funding. Four successful grant applications from local Cadet Forces to the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme were reported to the **Armed Forces Forum** held on 12 March. The total funding awarded in County Durham from this Grant Scheme for 2014/15 is £106,000. The Forum also heard about the findings from a research project on information sharing for ex-service personnel (veterans) and considered the future possibilities for creating hubs to improve co-ordination and awareness of services to support veterans and their families. The Forum itself provides an excellent opportunity for partners to exchange ideas to improve outcomes for veterans in the County.

AAP Priorities 2015/16

27. AAPs have chosen their priorities for the forthcoming year through their forum meetings. The majority of AAPs have decided to keep the priorities from last year although there have been some slight amendments. A number of them have incorporated health and wellbeing into their work, either through existing priorities or having it as a specific focus. This reflects work between the thematic partnerships and the AAPs and the proactive way that all parts of the partnership address key issues.
28. Teesdale Action Partnership and Weardale AAP have changed their priorities the most whilst, for the first time in recent years, not all of the AAPs have prioritised employment, jobs and training directly. Durham AAP, Teesdale Action Partnership and East Durham Rural Corridor AAP have not specifically identified the economy as a priority although it is acknowledged that much of the work carried out across the partnership and by AAPs specifically has some economic impact. This shows the diversity and the local nature of the priority setting process.

AAPs and Employability

29. The County Durham Partnership identifies Altogether Wealthier as its top priority and this is also reflected in the work of the Area Action Partnerships. Over the last few years the AAPs have attracted significant funding into the county to support a wide range of initiatives in local communities.

30. The support given by AAPs can be categorised into specific areas: apprenticeships and support to young people as well as awareness of future job opportunities; support and training to upskill people to enable them to re-enter and access the job market, some with links to welfare reform and support to businesses to grow and develop and employ additional people with the correct skills. Many of the AAPs have been involved in all of the areas whilst others have focussed on one element.
31. The countywide Apprenticeship Programme, as reported to the **County Durham Economic Partnership**, has achieved 835 apprenticeship starts across a variety of sectors to date, with the most popular being Business Administration 159 (19.1%), Engineering 119 (14.3%), Electrical 47 (5.6%), Joinery 39 (4.7%) and Hospitality & Catering 35 (4.2%).
32. The current programme starters intake stands at 470 (56.3%) for 16 to 18 year-olds and 588 (70.4%) 16 to 19 year-olds so good progress is being made in focussing on the younger age range, which was identified as a priority in the Apprenticeship Action Plan by the Council and partners. With regards to businesses creating the apprenticeship opportunities, 555 (66.8%) have fewer than 20 employees and 717 (86.3%) have fewer than 50 employees, which emphasises the importance of focussing on the smallest growing businesses. In the run up to Apprenticeship Week (9 to 13 March 2015) a number of press releases were issued, including case studies highlighting the success of the programme from a diverse range of employers.
33. The employability project in the **3 Towns AAP** area covers all aspects of the work mentioned above and is currently in its fourth year and continues to be successful. Two of the main outcomes from the project are to:
 - a. Increase engagement with unemployed residents in the 3 Towns area and increase the flow of residents not in employment through the stages of the Regional Employability Framework. This is achieved through promotion and awareness raising and through the engagement element of the project at a grass root level liaising with a wide range of local organisations. There have been 292 people engaged with to date, referrals are also made via local organisations such as Dale and Valley Homes and the South Durham Enterprise Agency. Following engagement the clients received support to progress towards employment through the stages of the REF. In the first nine months of this year 125 new referrals have been made into the project. 124 residents have received 1:1 mentoring support including CV preparation, training, confidence building, communication skills and interview techniques.
 - b. To increase the number of unemployed residents in 3 Towns into sustainable employment and conversely a reduction in the number of residents not in employment. 39 residents have moved into employment (31%), 3 apprentices, 11 into self-employment and 25 into employment. Exceeding the total target for the whole year.
34. 3 Towns AAP has recently agreed their funding allocation for the forthcoming year with five new employability projects selected for funding and that meet the following themes developed through the task and finish group process:
 - a. Projects which support people into employment / projects which offer employability support

- b. Projects which develop people's employability skills by gaining qualifications and experience through volunteering at local groups and clubs.
 - c. Projects which encourage employers to take on apprentices and support the businesses during the process.
 - d. Projects which support those affected by Welfare Reform
 - e. Projects which offer an early introduction to the world of work for Young People at school and make or strengthen links between employers and schools, in addition to statutory provision.
35. The **BASH AAP's** Employability Skills and Discretionary Fund provides two funds to older people looking to re-enter the jobs market. An employability skills fund to respond to specific training needs and a discretionary fund to remove barriers which prevent clients from accessing training. The Employability Project tailored one to one employability support and mentoring with a particular focus on the over 50s in order to gain sustainable employment. This also works with local employers. This is an extension of an existing project and will provide a part time mentoring officer. The Raising Employment and Career Aspirations in Schools project will also provide impartial careers advice and guidance, in particular to raise aspirations of young people aged 8 – 13 as well as unemployed adults.
36. The County Durham Apprenticeship Programme has seen significant success across the county with many AAPs involved. **Stanley AAP** is working with the Employability Team at the County Council on a Stanley Apprenticeship Programme. £10,000 of Area Budget funding has been allocated to the project with a further £15,000 coming from the National Apprenticeship Service.
37. The aim of the project is to tackle the high levels of youth unemployment currently being experienced by incentivising businesses to create additional apprentice opportunities that otherwise would not have existed. The programme will aim to create ten apprenticeship opportunities for unemployed 16-24 year olds who are residents of the Stanley AAP area to support them to identify and access these apprenticeship opportunities. The project will work with private sector SMEs who have never recruited an apprentice before or have not recruited an apprentice in the last year thereby increasing the business base of those companies who recruit apprentices (only 24% in 2011/12) and provide more opportunities for young people. This will be achieved by working with SMEs with less than 250 staff to create ten new apprenticeship opportunities in the Stanley AAP area.
38. The Stanley Apprenticeship Programme will create apprenticeship opportunities that last a minimum of 12 months with the incentive being paid at the end of month three to improve sustainability of the apprenticeship opportunity. The scheme has already supported 45 employers to create 49 apprenticeship opportunities with 42 young people (85.7%) still on programme. Retention data show that 31 young people (63.3%) have been on the programme for six months against total programme average of 66.7%.
39. Many AAPs, including **Teesdale (TAP)**, have focused on enabling people to re-enter the jobs market by looking at gaps in provision in terms of training and experience for certain types of jobs. One area identified within that particular area was the need for local people to be trained as youth workers with recently advertised posts remaining unfilled for some time. Working with Teesdale Community Resources and Teesdale YMCA a project has been developed that will

see eight local people trained as youth workers (level 2 qualification) as well as two existing youth workers being trained to deliver the youth work training in the future.

40. TAP has also been successful in the past year in working with and supporting businesses through business units at Middleton in Teesdale Mart. Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Service (UTASS) and Durham Dales Enterprise CIC have worked to ensure that the units were built and filled with local businesses. TAP is supporting the next steps ensuring that development work can continue which will create a sustainable model of working for future years.
41. The **Derwent Valley Partnership (DVP)** has also looked at matching the needs of businesses with the skills of local people with their Employment and Education Task Group. It identified a need for a comprehensive study of the area's existing skills levels and the outcomes of the study will be used to create an informed skills and employability action plan for the area. So far, baseline data has been generated and employer interviews have begun aimed at consulting with businesses regarding issues such as recruitment, training and links with local schools and training establishments.
42. Alongside this work, a questionnaire will be circulated to 100 businesses locally over the coming week to gauge their views and requirements. It is envisaged that the collated results of the data collection and questionnaire will be available by the end of April enabling the development of the action plan to commence.
43. Also addressing specific areas of employment and training, **Stanley AAP** has supported Derwentside Trust to fund 12 people to secure a Security Industry Authority (SIA) license and 60 people to gain their Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSCS) card. Anybody who is unemployed, aged 19+ and resides in the Stanley AAP area can access the training, either for the SIA or the CSCS. The Trust is working closely with other agencies to receive referrals for the courses and also accept people directly contacting Derwentside Trust to access the courses. Referrals can come from any organisation that supports people within the Stanley AAP area.
44. The AAP has funded the delivery of a Retail Improvement Project in Stanley Town Centre. The first phase of the project benefitted seven shops who received Shop Front Improvement Grants. The shops undertook a major facelift and received; joinery repairs, painting to doors, woodwork, and masonry, with five of the shops also receiving new signage. They also received retail advice about their shop and window display layout to help maximise their retail offer and improve their footfall. The second phase has seen five shops in the Town benefit from the Shop Front Improvement Scheme; two of the shops have received decoration works to their frontage and the remaining three shops are currently waiting for their new signs to be fitted.
45. During the final currently live phase of the project the project deliverers have been working with a further four shops. They have all received decoration works to their shop front and all but one of the shops have received the necessary Advertisement consent for their new shop signs to be fitted and this will happen soon. Following the completion of the final phase of the project Shopkeepers and local shoppers will be consulted on the reaction to the shop fronts and any increase in sales or profits as a result.
46. **4Together AAP** also awarded £15,000 to support local business through their Targeted Building Improvement Grant Scheme, part of a total of £80,000 project

which offered grants to business owners or tenants in Ferryhill Town Centre for external works, to help improve the commercial vitality of the town centre and create and sustain a sense of pride amongst the local population. The project offered grants to owners or tenants in Ferryhill Town Centre businesses to a maximum of 50% of costs, up to £5,000, for external works. The project covered Ferryhill Town Centre, in the first instance and was widened out slightly as the scheme progressed.

47. Employment and Job Prospects became a priority for **Mid Durham AAP** in 2013 focusing upon the altogether wealthier objectives of 'Sustainable Neighbourhoods', 'competitive and successful people' and 'Business, creation, development and growth'.
48. The large majority of businesses in Mid Durham are predominantly small and it was highlighted that support to sustain and develop business was key to the area. A task group worked on a positive piece of joint work with CDC Enterprise and initially **Chester le Street AAP** and now **Derwent Valley AAP** to set up a cross AAP boundary Business Support Advisor. To date this has seen over 150 businesses advised; 22 new jobs created and 23 safeguarded. The most recently support programme (2014) is being delivered by the Durham County Council Employability Team who is working closely with partners to identify residents who need support in getting back into employment. To date the scheme has worked with 11 residents and managed to secure employment for two of them.
49. On the capital side, the AAP has been referred a major employment and training initiative through the County Durham Economic Partnership. The North East Civic Trust has been to the AAP Board and put forward a £6.2m proposal to refurbish the Home Farm in the grounds of Ushaw College and develop a heritage skills centre in partnership with Durham University. The AAP will be hoping to support them with regard to the heritage lottery phase one bid and with community and partner engagement.
50. More recently, **East Durham AAP** area budget and the East Durham Elected Members' neighbourhood budget have supported the creation or continuation of a number of employment opportunities. Examples include: two Community Officers; six apprenticeships, specifically aimed at not for profit organisations; Community Centre Manager's post created; continuation of two Community Centre Managers' post; Community Health and Fitness Officer; creation of two Horticultural Apprentices; support for the development of a social enterprise centre with a community building (providing business start-ups for three social enterprises involving 30 members of the community) and three posts created attached to area budget projects; Welfare Champion Co-ordinator, Community Job Club Co-ordinator and Centre of Excellence Dementia Co-ordinator.
51. In total over the last three years of focus on employment, job prospects and training the **4 Together Partnership** has invested £129,989 worth of Area Budget into employment related projects which has seen projects worth £316, 400 being delivered aimed at raising opportunities for local residents in the world of work.
52. One particular project supported by **4Together AAP** and **Spennymoor AAP** is the County Durham Furniture Help Scheme Employability Training project which was delivered on an eight week training and work experience scheme supporting 40-60 target clients, providing a placement in a business environment which fully prepares them for the world of work. It aimed to break down barriers to employment by

promoting individual aspirations and advancement as well as supporting learning activity. 20 clients progressed into employment, and eight into further learning or training at an Area Budget contribution of £18,905 towards a £28,905 project

53. There were three elements to the scheme: employability programme; work experience and training. Individuals receive a completed CV and record of achievement including information such as details of projects worked on, certificates from external trainers, in-house training and a matrix of skills and training gained are kept with ongoing support provided to clients who gained employment.
54. Following successful engagement with Apprenticeship Programme for the **Chester-le-Street** area, the AAP has started a specific piece of work looking at enhancing transport links and access to jobs and training opportunities. Local evidence suggests that often people can obtain an apprenticeships or job role but due to travel difficulties they may not be able to access this if they don't have means of independent travel. The AAP have therefore supported an initiative to promote the availability of 'LiftShare' locally to try to grow the pool of people who are signed up to this national initiative. Liftshare acts as a car sharing service and is aiming to get 500 new registered users of this scheme across the Chester-le-Street area to support car sharing to major employment sites. Local adverts have been placed in the AAP produced Chester-le-Live brochure which goes to 24,000 households and targeted work has been done with local employers to encourage them to get their staff to sign up to Liftshare.
55. In addition to this the AAP is currently developing a 'Wheels to Work' Project that involves the short term loan of scooters to people who have secured a job offer, but where transport is a barrier to accepting them. It is currently looking at learning from best practice of a scheme operating with Armed Forces Service personnel in Northallerton and also a scheme in Newcastle.

Altogether wealthier

56. The **County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP)** at its Board meeting in February focused on Access to Finance and more specifically: ATOM (Bank), making investment happen in County Durham and Access to Finance North East including JEREMIE 2. Some of the key issues, challenges and areas of discussion included:
 - a. Atom will be the UK's first mobile bank. It is a new and different type of bank. It has been "designed for digital" and in particular for smartphone and tablet, an area in which there has been explosive growth. Atom Bank moved into Northumbrian House in Nov 2014. There are currently approximately 120 people (including contractors) employed by Atom. Although many of the permanent posts have been recruited from existing companies, Atom are expecting total employee numbers to rise in the next 7-10 years to 510. It is hoped many of these will come through local recruitment.
 - b. Edward Twiddy, Operations Director discussed the locational and skilled labour advantages of locating within Durham. The main next steps are in preparation for the launch of the bank which will include complying with national banking regulations and market testing of products and services. The bank is planned to launch in Autumn 2015.

57. Simon Goon, Business Durham Managing Director, provided an overview of JEREMIE 2. This is an investment fund that will provide much needed investment and a loan fund for north east businesses. The fund is currently in design and being modelled, with an anticipated project launch on the 1 January 2016. The board discussed the make-up of the fund, how it can benefit local businesses, appointment and/or procurement process for the new programme with EU and DCLG, preferred methods of management/delivery and joint working with the NELEP and Tees Valley LEP.
58. The next CDEP Board will look at the development of the County Durham Plan and Merchant Park II development at Aycliffe Business Park.
59. The detailed Operational Programmes for ERDF and ESF for England are still under negotiation with the Commission, working through the detail of each priority, agreeing the activities to cover as well as the results, outputs and financial targets. The outcome of these negotiations may have further implications for County Durham depending on the detail that is included in the Operational Programme. A decision is expected in spring with project calls and delivery not expected until the summer.
60. Partners are continuing to meet to discuss other key strategies:
 - a. The review, refresh and development of a new Business and Enterprise Strategy is underway. A partner led project group is meeting to develop key priority areas for the strategy. There will be clear linkages to the newly adopted County Durham Skills Strategy. The draft strategy is scheduled for completion by autumn 2015.
 - b. Work is ongoing to refresh the Housing Strategy to consider key changes and issues that have arisen since the development of the last strategy. The refreshed Strategy includes 'Building Altogether Better Housing Markets', 'Building Altogether Better Housing Standards' and 'Altogether Better at Housing People' themes. A phased approach to the refresh has been undertaken, with key issues being researched and evidenced to inform partner discussion. A draft refreshed Housing Strategy will be completed in April 2015, however discussions are underway in relation to the development of the County Durham Plan.

Altogether better for children and young people

61. The **Children and Families Partnership** has led a robust consultation process with key stakeholders, including children and young people to refresh the Children, Young People and Families Plan for 2015-18 to ensure it remains fit for purpose, continues to meet the needs of children and young people and is aligned to the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan.
62. From the consultation, some gaps were identified and additional strategic actions have been added under the relevant strategic objectives. These include working with partners to implement the County Durham Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 and reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system; supporting the reduction of teenage pregnancies by delivering interventions such as more accessible sexual health and contraception services, use of an outreach youth bus to engage with young people in teenage pregnancy 'hot spots' and commissioning a new service which supports improvements in sex and relationship education in secondary schools; and continuing to improve the mental health and

emotional wellbeing of children and young people, ensuring interventions and services are effective and available to those who need it, including a review of the school nursing service.

63. The Stronger Families Programme is part of the 'Think Family' approach which sees Durham County Council and key partner agencies working together to ensure parents and children get the right support at the earliest opportunity. The Stronger Families programme (known nationally as Troubled Families) is required to 'turn around' 1,320 families by 31 May 2015. As at the end of February 2014, the programme had identified / worked with 1,695 families and was successful in 'turning around' the lives of 1,185 families, equating to 89.8% of the target for May 2015. Due to the successful implementation and delivery of Phase 1 of the Stronger Families programme, the Department of Communities and Local Government invited County Durham to be one of the 50 Early Starters for Phase 2 of the national Troubled Families Programme, and to take part in the design and development of Phase 2, ready for national implementation in April 2015.
64. Phase 2 will have a greater focus on localised results, and will be delivered over a five year time period. The target number of families for phase 2 of the programme is approximately 4,330 which means the criteria has been broadened to include 'children with needs'. The expanded criteria provide opportunities to target a greater number of families than in Phase 1.
65. The Children and Families Partnership is working in collaboration with The Bridge Project, part of the Family Action service in County Durham. As part of this collaboration, The Children and Families Partnership have agreed to sign up to the County Durham Young Carers Charter and an action plan is being developed to detail the work being undertaken to achieve this which includes recognising young carers in the work we do, identifying a member of staff to lead the support for young carers and developing a dedicated young carers policy for the Children and Families Partnership.
66. Supporting children and young people has been a main focus across AAPs since 2009. **Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership (GAMP)** and the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) have recently launched a Small Grants Fund for Children and Young People to provide grants to groups organising projects/activities within the GAMP area that improve the lifestyle, wellbeing and social inclusion of young people.
67. The Small Grants Fund for Children & Young People aims to support local voluntary and community groups/organisations working with children and young people in the Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP) area, and in doing so improve the lives of local young people. Priority is given to those applications that are able to demonstrate one or more of the following benefits: Sustained increase in physical activity for 6 months; Improved knowledge and skills around managing own health; Self-reported increase in overall health and wellbeing; Increase in confidence and self-esteem; Increase in social interaction and Increase in levels of trained volunteers in local communities.
68. Applicants can apply for grants between £500 and £1,000. To date, 15 groups within the GAMP area have received a grant, projects range from; junior team development programmes at Sedgfield Water Polo Club and Aycliffe Spartans Baseball Team, holiday trips for disadvantaged young people and family cooking

courses at Walworth School. The total value of applications approved stands at £38,707.61, including match funding.

69. Working with young people has also been the focus of the work of the **Derwent Valley AAP (DVP)**. They are working with Consett Academy and contributing £5,178 towards the delivery an activity programme for able, gifted and talented students aged between 11-18 years. A range of activities, computer programmes and visits designed to stretch and challenge the most able students and give them experiences above and beyond that which can be achieved in lessons, will be offered as part of the programme.
70. There will be four elements to the programme which are:
 - a. 'Happy Puzzle Day' - an activity day using large 3D puzzles to help engage students in solving mathematical problems which will support student transition from Key Stage 2 and extend and challenge the Key Stage 3 students.
 - b. 'Jaguar Challenge' - a computer programme challenge that uses software to simulate setting up a race car. Students then encounter a range of mathematical problems that they need to solve in an effort to win races.
 - c. 'Technology Challenge Day' – students will undertake practical activities that increase their awareness of the application of science with points being awarded for planning, team work and the finished product. This challenge will include robotics, E-FIT software and a vehicle challenge.
 - d. 'Spectroscopy Visit' – a visit to Newcastle university Chemistry department to experience the latest technology and gain a deeper understanding of its application in everyday life.
71. Two additional opportunities will also be offered as part of this project including professional dance training involving 25-30 students from years 7 to 10 (linking to gym and P.E sessions) and an Arts Award to inspire young people to grow their arts and leadership talents. The programme will give students a range of experiences and challenges that would not ordinarily be available to them and will lead to improved motivation, results and uptake of higher education.
72. The AAP is also funding a one day event for students from across the North Durham area to increase their awareness of the local opportunities that may await them if they choose to continue their learning in the areas of science, technology, engineering and/or maths (STEM). The format of the event will involve at least one keynote speaker, an exhibition of local employers and education providers including Derwentside College and the Universities, and some interactive workshop style activities. Young people will be given the opportunity to meet inspiring role models, understand real world applications of STEM subjects and experience hands-on STEM activities that motivate, inspire and bring learning and local career opportunities to life.
73. The aims of the project are to inform and inspire young people already thinking about careers in or following courses leading to careers in STEM subjects. A particular focus will be on the local opportunities available in STEM careers which they may have no idea exist. Several local employers with STEM related businesses are struggling to recruit locally for individuals with the required qualifications; this event will also serve to provide a forum for local employers and

education providers to interact and hopefully form some lasting relationships so that these issues can be addressed in the future. The anticipated outcomes include increased awareness among students of STEM careers and particularly local opportunities in STEM. Participating students will be surveyed on this before and after the event to measure its success in achieving this outcome.

Altogether healthier

74. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred the responsibility for developing and updating the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment from Primary Care Trusts to **Health and Wellbeing Boards**. Following a statutory consultation phase, the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment was agreed and published in March 2015. The key conclusion is that there are sufficient numbers of pharmacies across County Durham, but there is scope to further develop advanced, enhanced and locally commissioned services from the existing service providers in order to further support the work in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
75. Following consultation with over 400 local people including service users, carers, young people, scrutiny committees, partners and Area Action Partnerships, the Health and Wellbeing Board agreed the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2018 in March 2015. The review of the Strategy has also been informed by national and local policy development, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2014 and the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health County Durham.
76. A number of gaps were identified during the consultation process, which led to additional Strategic Actions being added under the relevant Strategic Objectives. These include implementing local awareness-raising campaigns to support the Smokefree Families Initiative, by targeting specific age groups on the health issues related to second hand smoke and by encouraging smokefree play areas across the county; working in partnership to identify those who are, or who are at potential risk of becoming socially isolated to support people at a local level and to build resilience and support in their communities; and establishing a wide and large scale intervention approach across agencies to support an increase in physical activity.
77. Young people also provided information about health and wellbeing issues which are important to them, including: a need for more young carers information; delivery of sex education by relevant dedicated people (not necessarily teachers) who can engage young people and a need to talk about prevention around self-harm and giving young people the choice of who and how they talk to about this.
78. A report on the JHWS will be presented to Cabinet at this meeting.
79. A Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Prevention Strategic Framework has been developed for County Durham, which brings together the key themes set out in other strategies and action plans, including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The strategic framework addresses the key risk factors for CVD, which is a major health problem and is the second largest cause of death in the UK. The prevention of CVD is a public health priority within the overall approach to reducing early deaths and health inequalities. The strategic framework is supported by an action plan that will be monitored through the relevant working groups which oversee specific plans, including: Tobacco alliance; Healthy Weight Alliance; Physical Activity Strategic Group and the Sustainable Food Partnership. The strategic framework was endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

80. The key message of the strategic framework is that the strategic objective in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the reduction of early deaths from CVD, while reducing health inequalities can only be achieved through an integrated approach combining population wide changes in lifestyle and targeted interventions aimed at those who are at a higher risk of CVD. Examples of action to be taken to reduce the risk of CVD by improving people's diet (reducing fat and salt intake), increasing physical activity and reducing smoking include: Improving safety and develop the environment conducive to physical activity; improving the quality of food in schools and care homes and developing community food growing schemes.
81. The Wellbeing for Life service has gone live with the tender awarded to a consortium comprising the following five providers: County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Health Improvement Service; Durham Community Action; Pioneering Care Partnership; Durham County Council, Culture and Leisure; Leisureworks. The Wellbeing for Life approach provides support to people to live well by helping to address the factors influencing health, and to increase their ability to become independent and resilient to maintain their own good health and that of those around them, taking a whole person and community approach to improving health.
82. A one year interim CAMHS strategy has been developed whilst more detailed work is undertaken to develop a three-year Children and Young People's Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Plan, commencing in 2016. Development of the interim strategy has been informed by national policy, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and draws on previous reviews and feedback from children and young people. It aligns to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, specifically in regard to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of the population.
83. Priority actions identified in the strategy include:
 - a. Consulting and engaging with children and young people, their families/carers and other key stakeholders (including education) to develop a 3-year children and young people's mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience plan, to ensure the needs of the local population are being met
 - b. Ensuring information and education is available for children, young people and their parents/carers on substance misuse and supporting children and young people to take part in positive activities which are appropriate for their age and reducing risk-taking behaviours
 - c. Ensuring support/signposting is available in schools for people suffering from mental health issues
 - d. Reviewing psychological support for children and young people with a disability or long-term condition e.g. diabetes, obesity and chronic fatigue
 - e. Developing open access and drop in clinics for CAMHS
 - f. Exploring better use of technology within CAMHS, e.g. use of Skype software to connect to children and young people and texting appointment reminders etc.
 - g. Piloting a CAMHS crisis liaison /deliberate self-harm service; providing greater support out of hours to children in crisis and in danger of self-harm

h. Supporting National campaigns to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination

84. 'Parklife' operates across the **3 Towns Partnership** and **Bishop and Shildon AAP** area and is one of many health related AAP projects. It aims to get more people doing sport, by improving access to local sporting opportunities to enable wider and more positive engagement and lead to improved health and wellbeing. The projects aim to get more people doing sport more often, with an emphasis on engaging those who currently do no sport or physical activity based around 3 parks- Glenholme Park in Crook, Hackworth park in Shildon and Town Recreation Ground in Bishop Auckland, 3660 individual new participants have taken part since the project started in June 2014 across all three areas.
85. Since the launch of the Winter Timetable, 79 people have taken up the opportunity in the 3 Towns area and 164 in the Bishop and Shildon areas. Indoor activities have included Football, Tennis, family games, and netball. 16 families have been attending family game sessions on a weekly basis from three Primary schools in Crook.
86. **Shildon Health Express** was delighted to receive a visit from the Right Honourable Lord Phillip Hunt of Kings Heath, Shadow Minister of State for Health. This gave the Health Express a national platform to showcase the fantastic work done to date. In addition a Shildon Health Express Forum Event was held which helped agencies come together to share information, network and feed into an asset mapping exercise for the area.
87. **Durham AAP** recently formed a Durham City Health Network which is increasing in numbers with the recent joining of the British Heart Foundation and the British Stroke Association. The group is currently engaged in looking at the best methods for monitoring various types of mental health projects.
88. The **Weardale Area Partnership** board agreed to fund the employment and training of two apprentices and a sports activator. The model used by the Sports Activators is that of "doorstep multi-sport clubs" which will leave a legacy of sporting opportunities in Weardale. The sporting activities are taking place in both schools and community settings. The two apprentices from Weardale deliver a variety of activities identified with the young people they work with, the process of developing "clubs" are based on the apprentices (under supervision) working within a geographic setting.
89. This model provides the apprentices with an opportunity to deliver a range of different sports and they become qualified instructors, with the experience of being able to actually deliver a programme of sport. The two people have successfully attained life guard qualifications, and a Level 2 in coaching and multi-skills, also table tennis, street tennis, badminton, boxing along with Basketball level 1, and they have identified a need for level 2 fitness instructors course and Level 1 in youth work.
90. An extensive Easter programme of activities was developed to maximise schools grounds and equipment and community centres especially in the more rurally isolated areas for example Rookhope, St Johns Chapel and Wearhead. Throughout the summer months they will be supporting the youth centres, clubs and groups throughout the Dale and particularly the Weardale Open Air Swimming pool.

Altogether safer

91. An emerging issue identified in the **Safe Durham Partnership** Strategic Assessment is the threat from cyber-crime. Analysis has shown that the highest reported category in Durham Constabulary force area was fraud accounting for 35% of total cyber-crimes and these include dating scams, goods and services not received. This was followed by violence against the person offences, typically harassment committed by ex-partners who had breached orders, accounting for 20%. Cyber-crimes of a sexual nature accounted for 15% and these included self-generated images and inciting child to engage in sexual conversation. The Safe Durham Partnership is currently reviewing the implications of cyber-crime for the Partnership, and a baseline audit / health check will be undertaken by the Police with partner organisations.
92. Events surrounding the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (the region incorporating Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus and part of southern Turkey) have led to the UK Government raising the UK Threat Level to Severe. The terrorist organisation is also referred to as IS (Islamic State) and ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). In response to the growing threat the Government presented the Counter Terrorism and Security Bill to Parliament in its first reading on 26 November 2014. The Bill received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015.
93. The Act places a general duty on each specified authority who must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Specified Authorities are: Local Authorities; Police; Prisons; Probation; Education, Further Education and Higher Education; NHS Trusts/Foundation Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups. Each specified authority will be expected to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation in their area, institution or body. No area will be deemed as risk free.
94. Further information can be found within the Bill itself.
95. The aim of the 'Checkpoint' service is to extend the existing integrated offender management principles to a wider, lower level adult cohort by transforming the way offenders are dealt with through police custody suites and divert them from prosecution. Currently, cautions, arrests, attendance at court etc. do not provide the adult offender with access to support functions to address their offending behaviour. Most are leaving police custody with little or no consideration of the causes of their offending or its management. Many adult offenders when arrested could be at crisis point, feeling unable to find a way out, as they are often without coping mechanisms or support networks. It is our intention that the client would be supported by 'navigators' who will work with them to complete the contract, received access to support services, develop resilience and behaviour change.
96. Checkpoint can provide a credible alternative by identifying and supporting the critical pathways of need with the result that low and medium level adult offenders are diverted away from the Criminal Justice System, (or exit the Criminal Justice System at an earlier stage), while also addressing the underlying cause of their offending behaviour. A bid to the Police Innovation Fund bid was submitted to the Home Office in January 2015 to support the Checkpoint initiative. We are still awaiting the outcome of this bid. At present Durham Constabulary is developing / reshaping their ITC systems in conjunction with Cambridge University to introduce a system to identify appropriate crime types, offenders and a control sample to pilot

the project. The Checkpoint project will continue to be developed throughout 2015 and it is hoped that a trial of the project will start during April 2015.

97. Members of the Safe Durham Partnership Board have been consulting with the 14 Area Action Partnerships and members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the refresh of the Partnership Plan 2015-18. Feedback from the AAPs has been positive and in particular, some key issues have been highlighted as important by the AAPs in relation to their local concerns about community safety issues: Perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour not reflecting the actual levels of recorded crimes and incidents or the significant reductions across the County; Road safety issues; Alcohol misuse and substance misuse, including concern about the use of 'legal highs'; Early intervention with young people and families; Domestic abuse and sexual violence; Hate crime; Cyber-crime and Shoplifting and whether there are links to welfare reform and austerity measures in relation to the increase in recorded offences.
98. The Partnership Plan will be implemented from April 2015, with a supporting delivery plan of high level actions, to be monitored by the Safe Durham Partnership.

Altogether greener

99. The **Environment Partnership** has been actively discussing and tackling a whole host of environment issues which affect individual residents and communities across County Durham. The Partnership works on a multi-agency approach to combat and plan strategies for issues such as flooding, energy, waste and recycling and the built & natural environment.
100. Recently the Environment Partnership has held a series of discussions which feed into the development of the Joint Health and Well-being Strategy as it is a proven fact that a positive environment and local surroundings play into individuals' overall health. The Partnership representatives via the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and sub-groups are investigating how the natural environment can create more daily movement in people. The Government suggests that LNPs:
 - a. Contribute to shaping the priorities in 'joint health and wellbeing strategies' (JHWS).
 - b. Incorporate the value of the natural environment to people's health and wellbeing in 'joint strategic needs assessments' (JNSA).
 - c. Contribute to local delivery of Public Health Outcomes Frameworks.
101. The Environment Board discussed Durham County Council's Scrutiny report on flooding and how by using the local knowledge we have across the Partnership we can assist in helping our communities deal with the effects of extreme weather. It is acknowledged that extreme weather is causing more issues and devastation locally and therefore the Environment Partnership is keen in supporting this area of work across the County in order to protect and look after the environment.
102. The Partnership continues to carry out, support and promote environmental projects across County Durham including:
 - a. Big Spring Clean – The Environment Partnership has helped launch this annual initiative held during March and April. In County Durham residents, community groups and schools are being encouraged to get involved in the Big Spring Clean campaign as it returns to the county for the fifth time. Last

year 1,700 volunteers spend 3,000 hours collecting 1,200 bags of rubbish!
To get involved or carry out a community clean up email
litterfreedurham@durham.gov.uk or call 03000 261 000.

- b. 'Operation Stop It' – A partnership approach to target waste criminals and stop waste being dumped illegally in County Durham. For the first time in its 26 year history, Crimestoppers is partnering the campaign, which is also backed by Durham Constabulary and the Environment Agency. Fly-tipping incidents can be reported online at www.durham.gov.uk/flytipping or by calling 03000 261 000. Householders are reminded to check their waste carrier is licensed with the Environment Agency before handing over their waste. To find or check a registered waste carrier email: www.gov.uk/find-registered-waste-carrier or call 03708 506 506.
- c. The Partnership is also supporting plans to promote further work link to Heritage Open Days across the County. This is a national event held in annually in September which attracts over 9,000 visitors to County Durham. In 2014, 69 venues were open free to the public in order to celebrate the County's architectural and cultural sites. Venues included Escomb Saxon Church, East Durham Heritage & Lifeboat Centre, DLI Memorial, Old Durham Gardens, Auckland Castle & Park, Binchester Roman Fort, Soho Engine Shed-Locomotion and Raby Park & Gardens.

103. The Environment Partnership is actively making plans to support this year's World Environment Day – 5th June 2015. Each subgroup will support this event and host a series of community clean ups and litter picking events cross County Durham. Further details will be advertised via the Partnership's newsletter and website in advance of this date.

104. The Board continues to allocate 'Caring for Your Environment Awards' in order to give recognition to individuals, community groups and projects which carry out environmental improvement works in their local area. This award is issued throughout the year and gives recognition to those within our local communities who carry out positive environmental improvements. Nominations for a 'Caring for Your Environment Award' can be emailed to the Environment Partnership - environmentpartnership@durham.gov.uk

Summary

105. The CDP continues to support local people through a proactive approach to key issues affecting them. Thematic Partnerships and Area Action Partnerships are working together to address these and to implement specific programmes to support local communities. This underpins the Durham Ask and will enable communities to become more involved in the future and ensure the sustainability of services and facilities.

Recommendations and reasons

106. It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

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Appendix 1: Implications

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