

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 CDP's focus on transformation and innovation continues across many parts of the partnership and through working with partner organisations and networks and links closely to the Government's approach to delivering efficiencies. In total over £5 million has been successfully bid for which will support a wide range of initiatives across the county including the Transformation Challenge Award and Police Innovation Funding. This funding, alongside match funding and changes to the way services are delivered, will support thousands of County Durham residents to stay safe as well as become involved more closely in how services are shaped and delivered.
3. Some thematic partnerships have reviewed their plans and strategies, involving service users and local people in this process through consultation and engagement in a range of ways. Action plans showing how these plans will be delivered and objectives achieved are also under development and will be signed off by the respective partnerships over the next few months.
4. Durham has a history of positive Peer Challenges including on AAPs and broader partnership working. The most recent one was to support the implementation of statutory responsibilities in health, by way of a systematic challenge through sector peers to improve local practice.
5. AAPs continue to share best practice through sharing and developing project information as well as through working together on joint projects. There are more examples of projects being developed in one area and being adapted in other AAP areas with some featuring in the thematic sections of this report as well as within the general AAP update section.

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

6. As previously reported, the Council has secured £90,000 of Delivering Differently funding to work with **town and parish councils** on clean and green services. Since the last report all town and parish councils have been invited to submit proposals as to how they would like to be involved. The project has been split into four elements, an evaluation of existing models of working and three separate pilots, looking at different sized council areas and clustering opportunities. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday 17 June with decisions made by 1 July.
7. **Faith Networks** are another strand of the Partnership Framework. Following the publication of 'Faith in Sustainable Communities', which focusses on roundtable conversations with faith networks on the five Altogether Themes, a pilot event has been held in **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** looking at how churches and faith groups are already contributing to combating social isolation and how they can be engaged and supported further to play an even greater role in response to health and wellbeing priorities. This event has also helped facilitate better engagement between faith groups and the AAP.
8. The **Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group** has been considering the factors which help build resilient communities. Individual volunteering and the Community Champions model are both ways of developing the capacity and resilience of individuals to manage and shape change in their lives and communities. The Asset Transfer process is a good catalyst for building resilience and work is continuing to develop the model for the Centre for Volunteering and Social Enterprise. This work will focus on the Durham Ask and aims to hold together the best of what everyone is doing to support volunteering across the County in a more coordinated way.
9. AAPs continue to support the work of the voluntary sector in a number of innovative ways across the county, depending on the needs and aspirations of the area. One example is the **Stanley AAP** funded Volunteer Driver Scheme. The pilot project will see Volunteer drivers, using their own vehicles to provide a door-to-door service that will help the transport needs of vulnerable people of all ages. People will contribute to the cost of the transport (minimum £1, maximum £5) depending on the length of the journey. Social journeys (hairdressers, places of worship, wheels to meals, bingo etc.) are limited to a maximum of 10 miles and health related journeys to 42 miles. The service aims to prevent social isolation for the passengers and to help them achieve a better quality of life. The project is being delivered by the Social Resource Centre which has a history of working with the council.
10. In recognition of the significant contribution that the voluntary sector, emergency and uniformed services make to the county, the Chairman of the County Council hosted a thanksgiving service at Durham Cathedral on 17 May 2015 and presented a Chairman's Medal to The Salvation Army to mark 150 years of service.

Transformation and Innovation

11. Durham County Council and its partners continue to take proactive and innovative approaches to changing and delivering services. Over £5 million has so far been secured for the county for work in a number of areas including community safety as well as children's social care and the delivery of the Durham Ask. The following paragraphs give an update on some of the projects.

12. Since receiving £500,000 from the Transformational Challenge Award to initiate the 'Safer Homes Project', the Fire Service has begun to identify and transform the way in which the most vulnerable and elderly people within County Durham receive crime and fire safety advice and protection to ensure they feel safer within their homes. Working collaboratively from County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue (CDDFRS) Headquarters, the Fire Service, Durham Police and Durham County Council have been working tirelessly on various initiatives to ensure the funding is spent in the right areas. 26 volunteers were recruited to carry out home surveys on behalf of the project.
13. Initiatives such as partnership working between the fire service, police and local housing providers will see domestic sprinkler systems and crime preventative measures fitted in homes across County Durham. The work is set to make hundreds of people safer as funding is invested in the match funded initiative. £20,000 worth of sprinkler systems paid for through the project will be fitted in homes owned by the eight housing providers with the companies investing £20,000 of their own budgets into the scheme to install 'Secured by Design' crime safety measures.
14. Other aspects of the project include training in excess of 2,000 frontline professional such as community nurses, carers, social workers and contractors in fire and crime awareness as well as providing them with details of a centralised referral process set up at CDDFRS headquarters allowing them the opportunity to refer the vulnerable people they come into contact with. So far the Safer Homes Project has had 623 referrals, approximately seven per day, 40 of which had problems with hoarding, something that is a risk not only to the individual concerned but agencies entering the property.
15. Of those vulnerable residents receiving fire and crime safety advice and resources, 99% indicated they felt safer in their home, 95% felt more independent and 100% indicated they were satisfied with the service they received. Since the project began CDDFRS has seen a reduction of 31 (19.6%) dwelling fires equating to a saving of £772,055 whilst Durham Police saw a reduction of 46 (5.9%) dwelling burglaries equating to a saving of £180,550 and a reduction of 137 (8.5%) in other burglary equating to a saving of £631,296. On top of this in 2014/2015 CDDFRS experienced the lowest number of accidental dwelling fires in 20 years during which time the Safer Homes Project was in operation.
16. Another transformation project has come from a successful joint bid for £53,400 to the Police Innovation Fund from CDDFRS and Durham Constabulary who are aiming to recruit and train two new Community Safety Responders (CSRs) for the Dales area of County Durham. Currently within the Dales area, Fire and Rescue provision is provided from low call volume stations staffed by 'on call' Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters who have other full time jobs.
17. The CSRs will perform the joint roles of Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and RDS Firefighter and they will also be available to support the co-responder provision the Fire Service is currently operating from Stanhope, Middleton-in-Teesdale and Barnard Castle in support of the Ambulance Service. The CSR role will improve the delivery of blue-light services to the local communities in and around Stanhope. It will facilitate efficient and effective delivery of community prevention and protection models, together with flexible emergency response arrangements which encourage, enhance and embed co-working and interoperability whilst also safeguarding vulnerable people in this rural community.

18. Durham Constabulary has also been successful with a 'Police Innovation Fund' bid, with £154,000 awarded to support the implementation of 'Checkpoint'. The aim of 'Checkpoint' is to extend the integrated offender principles to a wider group of offenders by transforming the way services deal with offenders through police custody. Offenders will enter into a contract and receive support through a number of critical pathways of need to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour. 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. Clients will be supported by 'navigators' who will work with them to complete the contract, received access to support services, develop resilience and behaviour change.
19. Governance structures have been put in place including a multi-agency Checkpoint Project Board, covering Durham and Darlington. The Project Board, chaired by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, is the responsible group for the Checkpoint Project and will report directly to the Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Darlington Community Safety Board. The project is currently being piloted in the South of the County and Darlington before being rolled out countywide.
20. Durham County Council has also been successful in securing £3.5 million government funding to support the development of new approaches which will support children, young people and families in County Durham and lead to improved outcomes for them. Only 25% of proposals submitted to the Rethinking Children's Social Care received funding support.
21. The Children's Social Care Innovation Programme has funding of £30m to support the delivery of improvements to the quality of services so that children who need help from the social care system have better chances in life. It seeks to support the development, testing and sharing of effective ways of supporting children who need help from children's social care services.
22. The proposal sought funding of £3 million from the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme to enable the implementation of a new approach allowing us to "rethink children's social care". The funding will allow services to build on the progress we have already made to date and accelerate developments more quickly than we would otherwise have been able to do without this significant additional investment.
23. The key elements of the proposed innovation include:
 - a. Creation of 10 integrated teams across the County, focussed on early help and significantly increasing the range, access, quality and effectiveness of services for the whole family across the continuum of need;
 - b. Creation and development of third sector alliances in all areas of County Durham to build community capacity and sustainable change for families;
 - c. An intensive workforce development programme to support the new teams and the whole workforce;
 - d. Significantly enhanced service user engagement to change the relationship between professional and service user.
24. The investment will enable us to provide enhanced capacity within the teams and facilitate reduced caseloads for social workers. This will allow them time to work

intensively with families and coordinate the multi-agency support which will help families to bring about required changes leading to improved outcomes for themselves and their children.

25. Continuing to build on the excellent partnership working across County Durham is essential to our ability to deliver the required changes and improvements for families. In the coming months we will be seeking opportunities to engage with partners in the creation and development of a genuinely new approach to supporting some of our most vulnerable children and families.

Altogether wealthier

26. The **County Durham Economic Partnership** (CDEP) at its Board on 28 April focused on 'Ambition for the County', including a tour at the Hitachi site at Merchant Park II, Newton Aycliffe with a presentation from Merchant Place Developments who are developing the site and the adjacent Merchant Park II site. Realising the impacts of such developments, along with longer term ambitions and measuring our success were discussed in line with the County Durham Plan, European Structural and Investment Fund 2014-20 programme and North East Combined Authority.
27. In 2013, following work identified by the CDP Board, the County Durham Economic Partnership, in collaboration with the Children's Trust, produced a report focussing on business and education engagement across County Durham. The report identified that schools and businesses want to work together, but both would like to have better links and a route to engage more effectively. Although there are lots of activities already in place in the county, provision can be patchy and there is no mechanism to share experience of what works well, and to build upon this.
28. The report proposed an action plan, suggesting a list of actions that might help to address the gaps and improve business education engagement in the County. To give this high profile and direction, a Business Education Board has been established comprising senior representatives from businesses and schools, and an independent chair, with a remit to develop and enhance business engagement activity for schools and businesses.
29. Key aims of the Board are to raise the profile of education business engagement in County Durham and to encourage and promote the involvement of schools and businesses across County Durham.
30. The Board is keen to celebrate and add value to the education business engagement activities already happening in County Durham, and hence the idea of establishing a week of activities (possibly in July) under the brand 'Get the Buzz', with the following aims:
 - a. To raise the profile of business education engagement in County Durham;
 - b. To celebrate and promote successful initiatives through a PR campaign;
 - c. To co-ordinate a small number of events to take place during the week;
 - d. To launch 'Get the Buzz' as an umbrella brand;
 - e. To provide a platform to build upon for future years.
31. To celebrate the International Year of Light 2015, Business Durham is celebrating that *Durham is great at light* and promoting scientific discoveries, business and

culture that showcase light. The application of light in communications, healthcare, energy and entertainment is far reaching in our lives, across the whole light spectrum. Case Studies include:

- a. Thorn Lighting is a major employer in County Durham and makes modern, energy efficient lighting for work and leisure uses;
 - b. A new £18m National Centre for Healthcare Photonics is being created at NETPark in County Durham. Planned to open in 2017, it will be one of the world's most exciting places where businesses, academia, entrepreneurs and investors come together to develop new technologies using light to diagnose and treat medical conditions and illnesses;
 - c. Kromek uses its patented digital colour X-ray and gamma ray technology in a range of products that deal with liquid based threats in aviation security and border control, as well as the security and industrial inspection markets;
 - d. Durham University's Centre for Advanced Instrumentation builds instruments for major telescopes, enabling us to observe the universe in new ways;
 - e. Optical communication uses light to carry information. Located in Durham is Finisar, a global technology leader in optical communications components and subsystems for high-speed voice, video and data communications for networking, storage, wireless, and cable TV applications;
 - f. Lumiere, the biggest light festival in the UK with 175,000 visitors returns to Durham in November 2015;
 - g. Durham teachers are being inspired with ideas on how to engage children with light and smart materials in their lessons.
32. Whilst AAP priorities have changed recently for 2015/16, many still have a focus on the altogether wealthier priority theme. Many examples focus on the links between schools and skills needed to move into employment.
33. The **3 Towns AAP** is supporting a project to provide a set of bespoke careers education events in Parkside Academy to offer extra support to pupils on top of the schools statutory careers requirements. There will be several off timetable days planned over the next 12-18 months that will enable pupils to talk to both local and regional employers, obtain useful skills and knowledge by taking part in mock interviews and finding out key careers guidance information that will help them find the right employment pathway Post 16. These activities will be delivered in conjunction with Durham Education Business Partnership and the Employability Team at Crook who will offer a suite of work related learning opportunities and workshops that would add to the school's current statutory careers guidance provision.
34. In the many meetings and focus groups for young people a constant theme identified is the lack of opportunities for employment, training and courses, with employers reluctant to take on young people because of a lack of qualifications and/or experience. 3 Towns AAP's Training & Preparing for Employment Project will address this and aims to train and up-skill around 20 local young people interested in the sports industry to help address this need. The council will work across the 3 Towns locality with community sports clubs, youth and community groups, schools and college to identify appropriate candidates to offer training and

voluntary experience to give them a much greater opportunity of employment either full time, part time, apprenticeship or casual session work. Although this project is sport related the skills and experiences gained are transferable and would help future employability in alternative fields of work too.

35. Before courses are paid for, individuals have to demonstrate their commitment by volunteering for a short period of time at a suitable sports club, community programme or in a local youth club. Those suitable can then access appropriate coaching courses followed by a further payback period of 10 hours voluntary work within the sports club or community setting. It is hoped the young people would also be able to obtain additional references from their voluntary work to impress future employers. The courses on offer can be varied to include numerous sports and officials coaching badges to appeal to more young people while also benefiting more local sports clubs and organisations too.
36. **Derwent Valley AAP** has a project looking at training and employment which is delivered by Derwentside Trust and is similar to one supported previously by Stanley AAP. It aims to deliver two training courses – SIA (Security Industry Authority) Licence and CSCS (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme) Card - for anyone who is unemployed, aged 19+ and resides in the Derwent Valley area. To be able to apply for a SIA Licence, learners need to cover various aspects of Security.
37. Derwentside Trust supports local people and their communities to access training, funding advice, guidance and support and this project will aim to support 12 people to achieve their SIA Licences and 60 people to achieve their CSCS cards. Learners will be given support in accessing various job opportunities within the security sector and Derwentside Trust will work closely with other agencies to get referrals and also accept people who contact them direct. This project utilises a strong partnership approach between various organisations to support the learners in achieving their goals: SMARTT NE Ltd, Event Cover Education and Jobcentre Plus.
38. It is widely acknowledged that being in employment can have positive effects on people's health and wellbeing, both physically and emotionally. Many AAPs support initiatives that focus on the links between health and jobs. One example led by **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP)** is their Work 4 Health project which aims to provide access to a training programme that will help individuals with a health condition/disability (physical, mental, psychological etc.) to move towards employment. It focuses on the development of 'key' employability skills and provides access where appropriate to health interventions and support. The project supports clients to reintegrate with the concepts of employability and provide a combination of group and 1:1 support.
39. The ten week course includes a Level 1 Employability qualification (accredited by One Awards), interactive workshops to boost confidence, improve stress relief, and promote team work, communication and problem solving. Digital workshops to enable job search, use of Universal Jobmatch and uploading CVs and online applications will be provided by National Careers Service and employer led seminars will be organised in partnership with local employers. Support organisations are also invited to provide support to clients affected by the current welfare reforms.

Altogether better for children and young people

40. The **Children and Families Partnership** has developed the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2015-18 Delivery Plan to take forward the objectives and outcomes in the Children, Young People and Families plan 2015-18, which details the actions which will be undertaken to achieve the objectives and outcomes. Progress against the delivery plan will be monitored by the Partnership with regular performance updates presented to partners at the Children and Families Partnership meetings to ensure accountability and transparency. The delivery plan will be presented to the Children and Families Partnership for agreement in June 2015.
41. A key focus of the Children and Families Partnership is to support young people into employment, training and apprenticeships. As highlighted above, joint working activity with the County Durham Economic Partnership and the Business Education Board is taking place with schools and businesses to change perceptions, increase the opportunities available to young people and employers and raise young people's aspirations in County Durham. The Children and Families Partnership showed support for their 'Get the Buzz' week, which will take place in July 2015 and will focus on career aspirations with a series of events and coordinated promotion, branding and sponsorship.
42. Since their inception in 2009, all AAPs have supported children and young people's activities in some way, either directly through their priorities, or indirectly through other related projects. Many AAPs have continued projects over a number of years as they have developed and have also continued working in partnership with some of the same organisations due to the positive relationships that have been developed.
43. One such example is the work that **Derwent Valley AAP** carries out with the Sunderland Foundation of Light. Their latest partnership also includes the council's One Point Service and Groundwork North East and delivers bespoke courses and offer support opportunities to young people of secondary school age who have been identified as at risk or potentially at risk of exclusion for a number of reasons. The Foundation of Light is delivering Personal Development courses which run for 12 weeks one hour per week at Consett Academy. The programme focuses on a variety of issues which the young people face such as sexual health, mental health, substance misuse and confidence building.
44. As part of the overall project, the One Point Service based in Consett will be delivering a 'Team around the School' element, to reduce and prevent fixed term or permanent exclusion and to reduce the rate of persistent non - attendance, improve behaviour and prevent the risk of NEET indicators. Through group work young people will achieve the following outcomes: Young people are back into school and attending regularly, young people are re-engaged in learning, the behaviour of young people in school will improve so they can re-engage in learning and young people's social and emotional capabilities will develop which will help them to engage more effectively in school life.
45. To add value to the above opportunities, Groundwork will be delivering an Achievement Coach pilot programme to provide early intervention support to vulnerable young people at risk of under-achieving academically or becoming NEET. This model builds on experience of what works and responds to a clear evidence base to develop the confidence, skills and future employment prospects

of young people and to support progression post 16. The programme will work with a cohort of 10 – 15 young people to help them to access relevant activities, additional support and opportunities to achieve their personal and learning progressions.

46. One of the outcomes in the CYPFP is 'Children are supported to achieve and develop during their Early Years'. The **3 Towns AAP** Early Years Family Learning project will offer a range of interventions to support early years children, parents and professionals in five local schools. The AAP has identified, through schools in the area, issues some children face when starting nursery and school. Their expected development is below what it should be for their age and could have a detrimental effect on their long-term outcomes.
47. Parents obviously have an important role to play in their children's education and in terms of closing the gap in achievement. In four of the schools a rolling programme of family learning sessions will be offered. These sessions will be delivered by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and will be fun and informative sessions to give parents valuable skills for playing with their children at home. The project will start in September 2015 and last for one year. At one primary school, a motor skills programme will be delivered by a team of Occupational Therapists who have devised a programme for developing motor skills in early years children. The programme will comprise of a train the trainers course for school staff to be able to deliver to children in their setting. They will deliver a short programme of exercises to identified children on a regular basis.
48. Linked to this is the innovative 'Start to Play' project that the AAP is also leading on which proposes to deliver the programme in all nursery and reception classes. It is made up of innovative equipment designed to engage young children in physical activity and play. The delivery of the programme will support the key outcomes and goals in the framework for the EYFS standards. Through the delivery of the programme this will primarily work on the child's physical development however the programme has been developed to also aid the development of PSE, Communication, Language and Literacy, Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy, Creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The programme has been designed and written by the Youth Sport Trust to complement and support the EYFS.

Altogether healthier

49. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-18 was endorsed by the **Health and Wellbeing Board** in March 2015. The strategic objectives and outcomes in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy are underpinned by a number of strategic actions, which will be undertaken to meet these objectives and outcomes.
50. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan will ensure the strategy is effective and performance managed, ensuring transparency in demonstrating the progress that has been made, and what is still left to do. Performance monitoring reports will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on a six monthly basis to outline achievements and highlight where further action is required. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing board for agreement in July 2015.
51. As part of the council and partnership's approach to sharing and learning, the Health and Wellbeing Board has recently been subject to a four day Local Government Association 'Peer Challenge', to support the implementation of

statutory responsibilities in health, by way of a systematic challenge through sector peers to improve local practice. The peer challenge team consisted of seven team members, who met with six Councillors, 66 staff and 40 partners, through 36 interviews and focus groups.

52. The framework for the peer challenge consisted of five headline questions, with the feedback outlining strengths and areas for consideration under each:
 - a. Is there a clear and appropriate and achievable approach to improving the health and wellbeing of local residents?
 - b. Is the Health & Wellbeing Board at the heart of an effective governance system? Does leadership work well across the local system?
 - c. Are local resources, commitment and skills across the system maximised to achieve local health and wellbeing priorities?
 - d. Are there effective arrangements for evaluating impacts of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?
 - e. Are there effective arrangements for ensuring accountability to the public?
53. Feedback from the peer challenge stressed that County Durham's Health and Wellbeing Board is in a very strong place. Several partner organisations who attend multiple Health and Wellbeing Boards said it was, "the best Health and Wellbeing Board in the region", if not in the North. The peer challenge team identified the following areas of best practice that they would like to follow up and share with local government colleagues:
 - a. Community engagement;
 - b. Area Action Partnerships;
 - c. 'Voice of the child';
 - d. Relationship with Scrutiny.
54. The Local Government Association has recently commissioned national research on the state of play with Health and Wellbeing Boards. They consider County Durham to be in a strong position with good progress being made and having an impact nationally.
55. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Children, Young People and Families Plan have a shared objective 'Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life' with emotional wellbeing a key strand of this. The AAPs are actively engaged in this work and many are involved in the CREE initiative which was created to support mental health and emotional wellbeing for individuals with a specific role of preventing suicide.
56. The **3 Towns AAP's** CREE project is based at St Cuthbert's centre in Crook and consists of a regular weekly session every Tuesday with staff being available during office hours each day. Currently 20 Young People aged 13-19 attend the sessions with over 45 accessing since July 2014. The CREE is set up as a place for music making, film making, drama, circus skills and other creative activities that are appealing to the Young People as well as a space where individuals can come to chill out, make friends and access important information and guidance.

57. As the previous funding ended at the end of March, Public Health and the AAP will ensure the service can continue and that is staffed correctly with both an artist and youth worker running the project particularly in terms of dealing with issues of disclosure, mental health and suicide and being able to be responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable people in the 3 Towns Area.
58. Outcomes include:
- a. A widening of the range of activities available with a specific focus on arts and wellbeing provision for young people at risk of self-harm, mental health problems and suicide;
 - b. Improved mental health and emotional wellbeing for Young People who access the CREE project which also creates a sense of belonging and purpose within the community;
 - c. Opportunities for young people to be signposted to the many other activities facilitated by Jack Drum including Community learning programme, youth theatre, BFI Film Academies as well as IAG in respect of other local groups, organisations, careers and employment agencies and support groups;
 - d. A targeted number of participants receive training and mentoring from staff and are empowered to be CREE Champions with new confidence and transferrable skills to help lead the project.
59. AAPs support broader work delivering the altogether healthier priority theme. One area that has invested in this through a range of funding is the **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP (BASH)** with its Health Express initiative. The project was delighted to receive a visit recently from the Right Hon. the Lord Hunt of Kings Heath OBE, Shadow Deputy Leader of the House of Lords and Shadow Spokesperson (Health). This gave the Health Express a national platform to showcase the work done to date which includes the launch of community based work with the local college. 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.
60. Although Health and Wellbeing is a cross cutting issue that **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP (EDRC)** has had regard for through projects and joined up work since its inception; 2014/15 was the first time it was voted highly for by the community. This led to the AAP Board taking this forward as priority and a number of projects were funded which not only met this priority but the priority of Older People which was also a first. Information from the first quarter of project delivery is positive.
61. Their Health Buddy Scheme aims to deliver a local community based befriending service to meet the needs of the AAP population by supporting isolated older people in smaller communities by promoting independence, increasing confidence and encouraging community involvement. Experience has shown that isolated older people request regular support for between four to six months.
62. Some of the things a trained volunteer health buddy will do is to:
- a. Take the time to listen over a cup of tea;

- b. Enable attendance at social activities to develop wider social networks, and reduce isolation; (through attending with the client, providing transport, encouraging people to try new things);
 - c. Provide practical help with tasks like shopping;
 - d. Assist clients to attend medical appointments;
 - e. Provide healthy lifestyle information, and support positive behaviour change;
 - f. Signpost to other local services and facilities in the area.
63. This approach has a proven track record of successfully recruiting, inducing and developing volunteers. A dedicated Development Worker runs the service and provides opportunities for people who want to become volunteers, including management, support and training.
64. One of the projects shared at the Whole Partnership Event in November last year was the EDRC and If U Care Share Foundation's Emotional and Mental Health workshops that were delivered within Sedgefield Community College with year 10 students. This project has been extended to a pilot with a view to rolling it out across the county, potentially in partnership with other AAPs.
65. If U Care Share aims primarily to provide services which help prevent suicide and promote positive mental health, particularly in young people. This project is two-fold with the expansion of the EAMH service being one element. Those now actively involved in delivery of the programme have achieved accreditation for their work via the National Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) CPD programme by participating in the 'Effective Teaching and Learning in PHSE Education' course.
66. The project works with Sedgefield Community College, and includes:
- a. Work with a selected 'focus group' of young people from the school prior to session delivery to establish 'what emotional/ mental health means to them';
 - b. Meeting and consulting in detail with key personnel from the school with regards to how PHSE fits within their curriculum, what work the school has already done around these subject matters, and also the support networks currently in place;
 - c. Work with the school around good PHSE practice; have they established group/ pupil agreements and managing expectations from both parties;
 - d. Looking to form more bespoke 'partnership agreements' with the school to ensure our services can be aligned to their desired 'achievement, attendance, and attainment' outcomes;
 - e. Follow up assemblies, as well as development and delivery of more specific 'bespoke' follow up sessions. This however would be to smaller groups on possibly a 4-6 week follow up programme with participation on a voluntary rather than compulsory basis. Young people would then be supported to deliver to year 8 pupils with the objective of leaving a legacy within the school through peer mentoring;

- f. Continue to redesign/ enhance the resources provided to young people, i.e. leaflets/ brochures, helpline details, stickers for organisers, badges etc;
- g. Creating closer links with the Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)/ STOP training.

- 67. YMHFA is the second part of the project, with the delivery of a two day course 'in house' at Sedgefield Community College with relevant teaching/ support/ pastoral staff so that they are better equipped to deal with some of the areas covered with the pupils in the workshops mentioned above. This project allows them to work much closer with schools/ young people with a far more in-depth level of evaluation of their work, which in turn could provide invaluable data around emotional health needs. It is hoped that this will lead to the development of a 'model of empowerment' to be used across the County with young people.
- 68. In addition to the work above, the AAP have been instrumental in developing a Healthy Hub in the Trimdons, in partnership with Public Health, the Pioneering Care Partnership and Trimdon Grange Community Association who have recently taken over the ownership of Trimdon Grange Community Centre. This project was funded by Public Health and ties in with all of the ongoing health projects mentioned above.
- 69. The AAP involves livin in projects that are within the areas they cover, and livin are referring their tenants into the Health Buddy Scheme as well as Healthy Horizons. Both of these projects have been welcomed by livin as they raised at Task Groups that they are visiting tenants year on year that are in need of these types of project.
- 70. Neighbourhood Budget has funded some Food Education programmes in schools and at after school clubs held in community venues, and we will continue to work on this subject. There will also be another community gym within the AAP area, this time at Trimdon Community College Association, a shared usage facility with a school as a legacy of the WOW trailer. Various work is ongoing to support this Centre including the development of a role for a paid officer to work across the Trimdons to support community venues and help them to work together better.
- 71. The **Derwent Valley AAP** and **EDRC** are two of five AAPs (along with Mid Durham, Stanley and Chester le Street and District AAPs) supporting the Healthy Horizons programme which is a two year collaborative health improvement project, delivered through a partnership between Durham County Council Culture and Sport, Age UK County Durham and Leisureworks.
- 72. The project seeks to encourage older people, aged 65 and above, but particularly those who may be more restricted in terms of their ability to access traditional physical activity provision, to improve their lifestyle through the provision of accessible physical activity opportunities within their own communities. The programme, currently in its second year of delivery with support from the AAP, will develop and run on average 5 specific physical activity programmes within the AAP area and will incorporate the existing provision together with additional sessions.
- 73. Healthy Horizons already links to health services and schemes including the health champion/trainer schemes, the tobacco and alcohol reduction programmes, the cancer Champion schemes, healthy eating schemes and community led social wellbeing schemes such as luncheon clubs, tea dances and social groups for older people.

74. Another example of more than one AAP leading on the same project is the 'Us Girls' project in the **GAMP and Spennymoor AAP** areas. This project aims to engage girls aged 13+ in sport activities through a Street Games Doorstep Sport Club at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre and an US Girls After-School Club at Greenfield School and Woodham Academy. The programme is youth led in that the young people are consulted on what activities they would like to take part in, with the aim to provide those opportunities where possible. The programme targets 'non sporty' girls who do not currently access sporting activities. The club style is informal activity with the tagline –'Fun, Fitness, and Friends'.
75. Within these clubs the girls have helped plan the activities that are delivered and have engaged in a variety of sports including dodgeball, rounders, Zumba, basketball, badminton, street cheer and benchball. This has enabled the girls to become more active and has provided them with an insight into other sports they can participate in outside of the clubs. The girls have also helped with planning festivals and trips.

Altogether safer

76. The Government has recently introduced the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which formalises existing elements of the 'Prevent' strand of its Counter Terrorism Strategy; called 'Contest'. 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:
- a. Local Authorities;
 - b. Police;
 - c. Prisons;
 - d. Probation;
 - e. Education, Further Education & Higher Education;
 - f. NHS Trusts/Foundation Trusts;
 - g. Clinical Commissioning Groups.
77. The act is accompanied by statutory guidance which sets out its expectations for responding to the guidance in a proportionate and risk-based way. Each specified authority will be expected to:
- a. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of people being drawn into terrorism in their area, institution or body. No area will be deemed as risk free; and,
 - b. Ensure appropriate front-line staff have a good understanding of 'Prevent', are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of how to refer the individual for support.
78. In addition, additional responsibilities of the Local Authority include:
- a. Implementing a multi-agency group to receive referrals of those at risk of being drawn into terrorism (known as Channel);
 - b. Ensuring safeguarding policies include 'Prevent'; and,
 - c. Providing sectors, working with children in out-of-school activity, access to information on Prevent and safeguarding
79. Existing partnership arrangements for Counter Terrorism and Extremism include Gold, Silver and Bronze County Durham and Darlington 'Contest' groups. The

Silver group, which is the thematic group of the Safe Durham Partnership, is currently refreshing the multi-agency action plan to capture the implementation of the Act and an audit of partner's collective response will be carried out.

80. The SDP is also involved in The Blue Light project which is Alcohol Concern's national initiative to develop alternative approaches and care pathways for treatment resistant drinkers who place a burden on public services. It has challenged the traditional approach by showing that there are positive strategies that can be used with this client group. It is supported by Public Health England and 23 local authorities across the country.
81. A local pilot in County Durham, working with Alcohol Concern and AVA (Against Violence & Abuse) aims to build on this experience and help workers in different settings integrate these techniques and approaches into their daily work. A key setting for this is domestic abuse. The project aims to use lessons from the domestic homicide reviews as a focus for this development work. A series of local multi-agency workshops have been run which will consider individual domestic homicide reviews which contain treatment resistant drinkers and discuss how this aspect of the tragedy could have been better addressed. This will use the options and pathways developed for the Blue Light project as a framework to inform national guidance, due to be published at the end of the year.
82. Some AAPs have altogether safer related priorities or have it as an overarching focus linked to other work. **East Durham AAP** has been working with Durham Constabulary and residents of Deneside in Seaham to improve the area and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Deneside has been identified as an estate that historically has not engaged with the Police or other statutory agencies. This suspicion of anyone entering the estate has restricted the impact of any initiatives in the area to combat the serious issues facing the estate, in particular Crime and Anti-Social behaviour, which is higher in Deneside than any other area in Seaham.
83. As part of this work, the AAP held a Participatory Budgeting event in January at Seaham Youth Centre with Durham Constabulary. The priorities for the projects include providing activities for young people, supporting vulnerable people and reducing crime. Funding for the project came from a number of sources: Durham Constabulary (£10,000), Department of Community and Local Government - "Our Place" programme for local neighbourhoods (£17,500) and £6,000 from the Seaham Elected Members neighbourhood budgets .
84. The event attracted 29 expressions of interest with 15 projects progressing to full application. Over 460 people from Seaham voted on which community safety projects in the area would get an allocation of the £26,000 available. Seven projects were successful, with a further four projects being considered by County Durham Foundation for Trust funding . Durham and Darlington Constabulary supported the delivery of intensive community engagement training for the Seaham Neighbourhood Beat Team and committed officer time to working with the community to establish an effective engagement strategy.
85. Initial indications from Durham Constabulary are that the work is reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in Deneside, crime detection rates have risen and more importantly the relationship between the Police and the community is now positive and an Action Group has been formed to take forward identified Neighbourhood improvements.

86. **Chester-le-Street and District AAP** is also planning some work with Durham Constabulary to support an event aimed at raising the awareness amongst young people of sexual exploitation, internet safety related to grooming and appropriate relationships. This intervention comes on the back of a more general safety event 'Respect' that the AAP ran in December which involved over a hundred young people from local secondary schools. It was clear from that event that more focus and awareness was needed on particular topics. The event which will be run in June builds on a model developed in East Durham.
87. Following the spate of fires in the Stanley area, highlighted in previous update reports, Durham Constabulary and the Fire Service approached **Stanley AAP** to assist in reducing the likelihood of further fires to wheelie bins in local properties. One project that was highlighted to protect vulnerable residents was the purchase of wheelie bins locks. The AAP agreed to help fund the purchase of 340 locks that will be fitted to bins owned by local residents who reside in bungalows in the area. The properties have been chosen because access to the bins around the properties is easy; this is due to the council needing easy access for grass cutting, and on bin collection day, as residents are not always mobile and able to put them out.
88. The use of the lock is simple and easy to install and explain. It is the rubbish within the bin that causes the bin to ignite and burn so fiercely, therefore preventing access to rubbish will hopefully prevent the more serious bin fires. Stickers will also be placed on the bins and will act as a long lasting visible reminder/deterrent.
89. The **Environment Partnership** supported World Environment Day held on 5 June 2015 with a wide range of activities that attracted a whole host of cross sector and partnership working. The partnership organised litter picking events across the county at the following locations: East Durham – Seaham beach in partnership with Durham Heritage Coast; North Durham – Sustrans cycle way, Consett; South Durham – Oakley Green, West Auckland (ongoing work in this area by Safe Durham Partnership) and Durham City – the Sands. Partners who participated and supported World Environment Day included the Police, Groundwork, Durham University and the Environment Agency as well as Durham County Council.
90. World Environment Day also launched the 2015 County Durham Environment Awards. This annual ceremony celebrates the work of individuals and communities across County Durham and recognises their environmental achievements in contributing to making their surrounding areas more attractive. Details of the annual County Durham Environment Awards can be found at:
www.countydurhampartnership.co.uk
91. Awards throughout the year are issued by the Environment Partnership to recognise the environmental improvements which have been made across the county. Recent certificates have been awarded to: Collierley Primary School, Dipton for local litter picking activities; Shotton Colliery Residents Group Volunteers for carrying out environmental improvements including the removal of 2 tonnes of fly tipping and 580 bags of litter; Local volunteers – James Dods, Hamsterley Forest Volunteer and Allan Rayner from Cotherstone - Heart of Teesdale. Volunteers have been awarded certificates for their dedication to environmental improvements linked to woodland management, tree planting and organising forest trails.

92. Nominations for a 'Caring for Your Environment Award' can be emailed to the Environment Partnership - environmentpartnership@durham.gov.uk or by contacting the chair or a subgroup Chair (named below) directly.
- a. Environment Partnership Chair – Terry Collins, Durham County Council
 - b. Environment In Your Communities – Chair: Julie Form, Groundwork
 - c. Heritage, Coastal and Landscape – Chair: Oliver Sherratt, Durham County Council
 - d. Climate Change – Chair: Tara Duncan, Durham University
 - e. Local Nature Partnership – Contact; Jim Cokil
93. AAPs are increasingly supporting projects linked to the environment and in partnership with a range of organisations. **3 Towns AAP**, in partnership with Greater Willington Town Council, is funding the South Dene Wood Restoration Project which is looking at a Defra registered area of ancient woodland designation dating circa 1600. Residents would like to see this woodland improved and encourage people to join together to look after it.
94. The project aims to:
- a. Restore an important amenity in the town for walking, recreation, learning and environmental/wildlife conservation, so that it can be used as an outdoor environment to improve residents physical and mental wellbeing;
 - b. Repair the culvert to form a crossing in the northern end of the Dene and provide a circular walk to assist with walking for health;
 - c. Produce a walk leaflet to promote the Dene as an area in Willington to enjoy as part of a healthy lifestyle;
 - d. Repair the footpath to make damaged areas safer for users with a range of different abilities and needs so that they can benefit from woodland exercise and social interaction;
 - e. Deliver healthy activities to establish a Friends of South Dene group and combat social isolation.
95. The project will facilitate community involvement through working with residents neighbouring the site from the social housing estate at Sunnybrow and the newly built Persimmon Homes estate in Willington. This will also raise educational awareness around quality of life and environmental health issues as well as encourage community cohesion of two distinct residential areas and enable community ownership of the project, therefore bringing residents together. Local Schools will also be involved.
96. One of the more unusual and innovative AAP supported projects, led by **Chester le Street and District AAP**, is a community energy initiative. In 2014 Bullion Community Resource Centre, in partnership with Teesdale Environmental Consulting and supported by the AAPs Improved Environment Task Group, secured funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) of almost £20k to undertake a feasibility study to explore a Community Photo Voltaic (PV) project. The RCEF grant covers two specific project strands:

- a. Feasibility studies on a series of relatively small installations (3 kW -- 20kW) on community buildings. These systems could be owned by a community investment body, and placed on the roof, in exchange for use of free or discounted electricity by the community buildings;
 - b. A large scale solar farm, possibly as big as 2 Mega Watts which would potentially have a capital budget of £1.5 - £2m;
 - c. Detailed discussions have already been held with Officers from the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Team on this issue.
97. A third strand to be considered and debated by the AAP Board in May is a joint project with Cestria Community Housing Association, with a view to conducting a feasibility review on the viability of community owned PV systems on social housing properties. This could provide a comprehensive community PV feasibility project, looking at community buildings, local authority owned brown field sites and social housing. Not part of the original RCEF bid.
98. Cestria Housing own 4300 homes in the Chester le Street area, and while the technical aspects of a joint community/housing association multiple dwelling PV project are relatively straightforward, the legal and financial elements remain uncertain. The project is now at the stage of investigating the legal and financial structures to create a community investment company which could take advantage of the yield from the renewable energy schemes and re-invest this back into the community. This could further support future sustainability of community buildings and assets.
99. **GAMP** has recently supported the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) with funding to create a fully accessible community garden within the GAMP area, another example of projects with cross cutting benefits. This project is focused on the creation of a socially inclusive fully accessible community horticultural garden set in the grounds of the PCP. The aim of the project is to make use of the outdoor space by providing access to a community garden in the heart of the GAMP area that will enable residents, local schools and voluntary groups to develop their 'hands on' horticultural skills and to undertake new learning.
100. The project will be used to champion the wide range of health and wellbeing benefits that gardening and horticulture can have and outcomes will include: better physical health through exercise; improved mental health through a sense of purpose and achievement; the opportunity to connect with others, reducing feelings of isolation or exclusion; acquiring new skills to improve the chances of finding employment/volunteering; intergenerational learning; and feeling better for being outside and in touch with nature.
101. Following on from many successful Northumbria in Bloom entries throughout the county, this year Stanley Town Centre will be entered into the competition following financial support from **Stanley AAP**.
102. The Stanley in Bloom project will support and complement the ongoing delivery of environmental improvements and the aesthetic appearance of Stanley. The project will see the installation of six new planters on Front Street that will be sponsored by local businesses, along with 30 hanging baskets that will be bought and planted up by local secondary schoolchildren prior to being hung on the lampposts in the town.

The existing flowerbeds in the town will also have a facelift and be planted up by local primary schoolchildren.

103. All of these work areas will be accompanied by activities to engage local communities in caring for the environment around Stanley. In addition to the schools' planters work there will be a range of activities for the community to get involved in, including: litter picks, a large scale clean-up of the Sustrans track running alongside the Town Centre, and bench, fence and railing renewal. It is hoped that refreshing the paint and condition of much of the street furniture around the town centre will go toward improving the overall aesthetic of the area and in turn engage the local community. In addition to these activities there will be a lot of planting going on, hopefully involving as much of the green space around Stanley as possible including parks, cemeteries and other green spaces.
104. The project will engage with a range of stakeholders, young people, and existing volunteer and community groups in a programme of activities to improve public spaces and give a sense of pride for the area. In addition the project will develop community cohesion whilst improving not only the physical environment but also relationships between community members.

Area Action Partnerships Update

105. All 14 AAPs continue to deliver a range of projects against their particular priorities, some continuing from 2014/15 as well as beginning to implement new projects and initiatives against their 2015/16 priorities. The diversity of projects also continues across the county with many AAPs sharing best practice and adapting projects into their own areas.
106. **4 Together Partnership** has agreed some important changes for its focus this year. Having been one of the first to pilot the new AAP Terms of Reference for Task and Finish groups during 2014/15 the team has now made amendments to the process in order to take into account comments from board members, Task and Finish Group members and applicants.
107. The process is much more focused ready for the new financial year and the team is offering additional support to applicants in the form of presentations and application workshops with the aim of raising the quality of submitted applications. The Terms of Reference ensure that AAPs are as inclusive and open to as many community members and groups as possible starting from the consultation and forum processes to the work of the task groups and finally through to project development. Open project callout will again be used this year following on from its success the first time round. The partnership team received enquiries from across the north east asking if other local authorities offered a similar opportunity as people had seen the project callout, it also opened the applications process up to a number of new groups and ensured the partnership were trying to get their message out wider and engage a new raft of potential applicants and deliverers to the area. Other AAPs have shown an interest in following the revised processes and using the new materials and this will be shared.
108. **Durham AAP** allotted all of its Area Budget for 2014/15 and has already made significant inroads into 2015/16. Durham Christian Partnership is part of a new initiative that will give help to people in fuel poverty and is one of three pilot areas that will be trialing the new "Fuel Bank", which will provide eligible foodbank clients on prepayment gas and electricity meters with a voucher for fuel. The pilot is being

run by npower, with the national fuel poverty charity National Energy Action. People using the foodbank are in financial crisis and this impacts not only their ability to buy food but also to pay for energy to heat their homes, water or cook their food.

109. They are rolling out the voucher scheme to their distribution points across the County, and currently is available at the following distribution points: Brandon; Chester le Street; Chilton; Consett; Crook; Dawdon; Durham (North Road); Ferryhill; Laurel Avenue; Newton Aycliffe; Spennymoor; Stanley; West Auckland and Willington.
110. Shincliffe Park has enjoyed a new launch after two years of fundraising with Durham AAP being a significant contributor. The park at Pond Street, High Shincliffe, near Durham City, has had almost £90,000 spent on giving it a complete makeover. Rusty old play equipment dating from the 1960s has been replaced with the latest models and the park's football pitch is getting an artificial surface.
111. The first awards made under the Community Investment Fund (£300K) were awarded to West Rainton and Leamside by DCC. There are two bidding rounds and some £47k has been awarded to support play equipment, heritage memorials and the school dining hall to name but a few. Progress is now moving towards launch of the Capital Fund in September at the Village Annual Show.
112. During 2014/15 **Teesdale Action Partnership** (TAP) focused on three main priority areas: children and young people, job prospects and enterprise, and transport and environment. In addition to this there has also been some work done on health and welfare related issues. In all TAP has supported 17 projects through its Area Budget and 20 projects through the County Councillors Neighbourhood Budget allocation.
113. There has been a good focus on economic development which has included the creation of apprenticeship and trainee places. Trainers have been trained and are delivering youth worker training and support for businesses is being enhanced through joint work between the South Durham Enterprise Agency, Enterprise House (Barnard Castle) and UTASS (Middleton in Teesdale). TAP has been heavily involved in the North Pennines LEADER and contributed to the appeal process which helped to secure substantial financial support for the North Pennines area. Local Councillors have used Neighbourhood Budget Funding to support the ongoing development of the cultural programme at the Witham in Barnard Castle which is developing a range of activities that will bring people into the area.
114. Children and Families have benefitted from the very successful Children and Young People's Small Grants fund. To date 29 organisations have benefitted. Decisions on funding for this project are made by young people, supported by TAP and Teesdale YMCA. TAP was also able to give a comprehensive response to the recent review of Children's Centre's through the work of its Children and Young People Task and Finish Group.
115. Environmental work has been supported through various projects looking at issues such as invasive species along the River Tees and the protection of endangered birds in the area.
116. Thanks to additional investment TAP has also been able to support a number of projects linked to Health. The previously successful rural employability project was extended thanks to funding from the CCG and Public Health funding has supported projects working with families around safety and welfare, older people keeping in

touch and giving new healthy opportunities to children and young people. Local Councillors have supported a number of sporting organisations in the area with sports ranging from sailing to cricket.

117. **Chester-le-Street and District AAP** held its second Participatory Budgeting event in March with 23 projects available for the public to vote on and with £28,000 available in grant for capital related equipment. Cestria Housing also contributed £2,000 towards this grant pot. 1,068 people voted at the event and 11 of the projects were supported. Successful grants ranged from mental health organisations, Carers support projects, Sports Clubs, Community Buildings and youth activities.
118. Sambarama is a **Derwent Valley AAP** funded project was a joint partnership between Mad Alice Theatre Company, Jack Drum Arts and Leisureworks which has recently delivered Drama and Samba based activities for children aged 7-12 years from the Derwent Valley area - culminating in a performance by 40 local young people to their family and friends.
119. The children worked with a professional actress and a professional musician, assisted by volunteer apprentices. All primary schools were offered the opportunity to take part in this creative and fun project and samba and drama sessions were also delivered after school in a range of different community venues across the area. Leisureworks provided mask/prop making workshops as part of their on-going Colour Your Life programme to offer the children and their families an opportunity to work with a professional artist to make items for the final performance. The project also provided an opportunity for volunteers to achieve an Arts Award aimed at helping them to learn new skills, build confidence and self-esteem, improve interpersonal skills and raise aspirations.
120. **Mid Durham AAP** has continued to support two of its flagship programmes - Haggrid (an alternative educational programme based around horticulture, agriculture and community cohesion led by Durham Agency Against Crime) and the Mid Durham Intergenerational programme (led by Age UK County Durham).
121. Mid Durham AAP was the first AAP to support the development and delivery of the award winning Haggrid programme. The AAP provided a three year funding package which saw it work with approximately 30 students from Durham Community and Business College, all of whom have gone on to gain a variety of qualifications in horticulture and agriculture with some going onto associated apprenticeships. Along the way they have also picked up awards from Durham County Council as well as the Royal Horticultural Society and appeared on the BBC's Crimewatch. The AAP has provided a further three years matched funding to support the continuation of the programme. This will see it expand up to Burnhope and take on board the development of a large area of land in partnership with Burnhope Parish Council and the local community partnership. This particular piece of work will have community cohesion as a key element of delivery to support the continued galvanisation of that community.
122. The Mid Durham AAP was again the first AAP to develop a localised Intergenerational programme which was ran alongside the county wide work of Age UK. The initial programme which was set up for 18 months and worked across 15 villages engaging 400 children and young people and over 130 older people in a variety of different activities. Links between schools, youth groups and older people have now established regular coffee mornings, IT workshops, sporting and arts

based activity. 26 people have gone through accredited training including several of the local police cadets. Links have been formed with Haggrid so that older members of the community and the pupils engaged in Haggrid are learning a variety of skills from each other with their local communities as a whole benefitting - hanging baskets, community planting schemes, improving grot spots. The Intergenerational programme also won the One Awards Community Young Learners of the year award for 2014. At the AAP Board meeting in March the Board members were so impressed with the work of the programme and its many other attributes it decided to continue its support for another year with specific focus on developing the training as well as examining dementia awareness, promoting community safety and involving young people in decision making that affects the areas they live in.

123. These programmes will continue to make an impact on key County Durham Partnership cross thematic focus areas including volunteering, reducing inequalities and supporting job creation. It will also impact upon key elements of all of the Altogether Better thematic partnerships.
124. **Weardale AAP's** Wheels to Meals service continues develop with new people regularly signing up for the service. A mailshot of over 150 residents is despatched every month with details of the venue and activity. In general, this is an excellent way of keeping in touch with others and making new friends, especially for those living alone and can address the issues associated with social isolation which can be further compounded by the rural nature of Weardale. From January to April this year, over 40 trips to local venues have been undertaken that provide a variety of different environments to have a sit down meal, from Auckland Castle, Horsley Hall to Bradley Burn Café, over 340 beneficiaries. Some participants book every week, whilst others plan a trip out once a month. The assisted shopping trips ran as part of the Wheels to Meals programme are also very popular.
125. **Stanley AAP** has used their Welfare Reform funding allocation for 2014/15 to provide a face to face Welfare Rights Service in the Tommy Armstrong Centre in Stanley Town Centre every Wednesday. A Welfare Rights Officer is holding a Drop in Advice Surgery on a Wednesday morning from 9:30am – 12pm and a one to one Appointment system on a Wednesday afternoon from 1pm – 4pm in the Centre. Residents who own their own home or rent from a private landlord, have been taken off benefits or do not know what they are entitled to claim, are being encouraged to organise an appointment by calling into the Tommy Armstrong Centre or attend an Advice Surgery.
126. The role of the Welfare Rights Officer is to provide advice and support on financial issues and make referrals where appropriate, identify relevant households who are entitled to welfare benefits and provide support and assistance in accessing these, ensure that residents views are expressed understood and included throughout delivery and development of the welfare rights service, and ensure that the residents incomes are maximised.

Recommendations and reasons

127. It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

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Tel: 03000 263591

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