



## All Together for Spennymoor

**Date** Friday 6 December 2024  
**Time** 1.00 pm  
**Venue** Livin', Farrell House, A2 Arlington Way, Spennymoor,  
DL16 6NL

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### Business

- 1 Chair's Welcome / Introductions
- 2 Apologies for Absence
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2024 (Pages 3 - 8)
- 5 MHCLG Programme Guidance Update
- 6 Programme Update (Pages 9 - 16)
- 7 Spennymoor Youth Working Group
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Date of the next and future meetings

**Helen Bradley**

Director of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham  
28 November 2024

To: **The Members of All Together for Spennymoor:**

J Allen, A Boddy (Chair), I Geldard, B Graham, A Harhoff,  
L Maddison, D Ranyard, E Scott, D Stone, A Strickland and M Tarling

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**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **All Together for Spennymoor** held in Livin', Farrell House, A2 Arlington Way, Spennymoor, DL16 6NL - Meeting Room on **Thursday 3 October 2024 at 3.00 pm**

**Present:**

**A Boddy (Chair)**

**Board Members:**

Councillor E Scott and L Maddison	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships, DCC
E Scott and L Maddison	Local Member, DCC
G Hall (substitute for J Allen)	County Durham and Darlington Police and Crime Commissioner
Councillor D Ranyard	Spennymoor Town Council
I Geldard	Spennymoor Town FC
B Graham	Community Representative
D Stone	Whitworth Park Academy
Revd Cannon M Tarling	St Paul's Church, Spennymoor
L Fellows (substitute for A Strickland)	Head of office, Office for Alan Strickland MP for Newton Aycliffe

**Officers:**

G Wood	Economic Development Manager, DCC
J Anson	Community Economic Development Manager, DCC
K Monaghan	Project Manager, DCC
C Harwood	Participation and Engagement Officer, DCC

**1 Chair's Welcome / Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the fifth Board meeting and introductions were made.

**2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Allen, A Harhoff, A Kerr and A Strickland.

**3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 August 2024 were agreed as a correct record subject to apologies being added for Councillor E Scott (apologies were sent but not recorded), the title to Mr A Boddy be corrected and a reference on page 7 to be amended to read 'A Strickland'.

### **Matters Arising**

- Discussions had taken place with Mr Strickland regarding the Zen City research that was promised from Government. He apologised and agreed to raise the issue again with his colleagues.
- No further information had been released regarding the new submission date or next steps from Government. It was assumed this information would follow the Autumn statement that would be announced by the Government on 30 October 2024.

## **5 First Year Investment**

The Community Economic Development Manager provided an update on what projects were proposed within the first year's investment. Figures had been costed within the spreadsheet through estimates from previous similar projects and some from salaries and work costs. The overall projects came in at just under £12 million but these were still being developed and had the flexibility to evolve with continuous engagement with the community. There was a presumption that year one of the programme would commence in 2025 as it was anticipated that a submission date would be confirmed by the government at the end of October 2024, and there would likely to be a four weeks deadline for submission. She surmised that if the submission date was set for the end November 2024, factoring in the Christmas and New Year period, it was considered that any assessment would not take place until January 2025 which would be in time for the new financial year for 2025/26. No submission template had been forthcoming from the government, therefore, a template had been created from previous funding submissions to assist with the collation of information. This could then be transferred to any revised documentation issued by the Government.

The Economic Development Manager noted that discussions had taken place with the Cities and Local Growth Unit and subject to any announcement relating to a revised submission, which could coincide with the Autumn statement, he anticipated a short window to a revised submission date and the process thereafter to follow previous advice with determination of the investment plan in approximately six weeks. With these timings the current estimate was that any Heads of Terms funding agreement would be issued in February 2025 and the programme to commence 1 April 2025.

The Community Economic Development Manager allayed Councillor L Maddison's fears that the repair work to the Leisure Centre car park had been factored into the financial figures as these had been identified as part of the accessibility walkabout to enhance and improve access to the entrance to maximise attendance.

The Community Economic Development Manager reassured Mr D Stones that investment in the town centre was a top priority to encourage and attract investment from both large and independent businesses to the town. Work was ongoing to look at industrial estates to attract companies to set up in Spennymoor. This work not only focused on large businesses but also smaller ones. She also confirmed that other funding opportunities would be investigated throughout the project. The aim was to achieve the best improvements possible with the £20 million allocated to help grow the town and future proof the investment.

The Economic Development Manager added that the council had received money from the government for the Kerbo scheme which would see the installation of electric charging points in streets of terraced houses and car parks.

The Community Economic Development Manager clarified for Mr G Hall that as part of the engagement works people had commented that they did not feel safe in certain areas of Spennymoor. Proposals had been made to reach out to children and young people to start conversations around diversionary activities. This had commenced through the establishment of a children and young person's working group to include their voices within the programme. The Community Economic Development Manager stated that the government work to create youth hubs mentioned by Mr G Hall should link in with the children and young people's working group to maximise funding.

The Community Economic Development Manager explained that the engagement work would build on talking to businesses, community development, engagement with the community and stakeholders and the establishment of community hubs. This would help to sustain growth of the programme and make people aware of what was available to them. It would also build on activities already available, such as boxing, basketball and gyms, so children and young people could contribute further suggestions of what they would like to do.

The Community Economic Development Manager also referenced that there had been positive feedback on the activities and markets events held and it was hoped that further enhancements could be made for the future. The programme would include the history and heritage of Spennymoor and how this could be taken forward.

Some concerns had been voiced around the use of off road bikes and a feeling of intimidation. Proposals to counter this included the installation of CCTV and the management and subsequent deployment of resources on the streets. It was seen as vital to change people's behaviours to improve cycling and walking in the town with a focus on establishing more links.

In response to Mr Boddy's positive comments around the significant plans for the first year, the Community Economic Development Manager confirmed that once a submission date had been confirmed, the subsequent branding would be formalised and awareness raising and messaging would be circulated to the community.

## **6 Update from "You Said ,We Heard" Feedback Sessions**

The Project Manager provided an update on the consultation exercises held throughout April and May 2024. These gave an indication as to what people wanted the money to be spent on. There had been positive feedback to the work by Urban Foresight which showed people that their views had been listened to. The Project Manager had attended all three working groups which continued to meet and build upon current projects and develop new projects, some of which had already been costed. He provided an example of a collaborative project which provided assistance to people who had experienced mobility issues due to accidents or strokes at the leisure centre.

Mr A Boddy commented that despite the delays caused by the general election and the change of government there had been a significant amount of work already carried out to deliver against contract.

The Economic Development Manager stated that work would be carried out with the comms and design teams to discuss the logo and branding for 'All together for Spennymoor' Town Board.

Councillor L Maddison relayed that the public could start to see fruition in the programme by the upgrade works at Festival Walk. Although it was not finished people could see the area had started to be cleaned up.

Mr D Stone explained that the first year was significantly important as a town board to communicate and engage with people, as generally people had no idea what £20 million looked like let alone what it could be used for. The quick wins and branding would help people get a feel for the sense and scale of the investment and how it could revitalise Spennymoor.

## **7 Programme Update**

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which provided a progress update of the draft initial project submission following the consultation period for the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme (for copy of report, see file of Minutes).

The Economic Development Manager gave an update to the Board that the position of the submission date had not changed from the information that was sent by government in July 2024. Some activities had paused due to the elections that had created a revised timeline. There was still no formal documentation from government for the submission but the team continued to collect data so it could be readily available when the date was released.

The Economic Development Manager stressed that it was a long-term programme for people who worked and lived in the town to shape its future. Work was ongoing to gain a business representative to be part of the Board which would be the final element for the right people to be at the table. With regards to the financial spreadsheet work would be taken to the next level with the three working groups which continued to work on the three themes. An additional fourth working group

had been established for children and young people which would be cross cutting and help build on the success of the youth festival to go from strength to strength. At the previous meeting discussions had taken place relating to the loss of youth worker provision which was a gap which supported young people. He confirmed that this would continue to be pushed as an opportunity to meet the needs of all residents.

**Resolved:**

- i) That the continued progress with consultation and consultation feedback events to underpin the LTPT programme submission be noted.
- ii) That a special Board meeting be arranged once the programme timescales were confirmed.

**8 Spennymoor Youth Working Group**

The Project Manager confirmed that the first meeting of the children and young people working group had taken place via teams and had been very positive. Work was underway to hold future meetings in the town centre.

The Community Economic Development Manager responded to Mr G Hall's reference to the trail blazer at the Gray's Academy in Darlington which was a positive programme focussing on youth activities to map activities in Spennymoor and confirmed that this exercise had already been carried out.

Mrs B Graham mentioned that there was a youth representative on their community management committee.

Discussions took place on the protocols for public relations and what messages should be communicated to the public and when. It was agreed that a coordinated approach would ensure that work already undertaken was not undermined and align to the vision. It was agreed that further work would be carried out on the comms protocol that was already in place relating to press releases and liaising with the local press offices.

Councillor L Maddison mentioned that she had contributed some funding towards a project entitled 'Choices' which was a story developed by a local PCSO which aimed to make young people to consider their attitudes and make better choices in life.

Mr G Hall stated that the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office was fully supportive of this type of work and referred to the Police education scheme in West Yorkshire. He suggested that a review should take place of how the police and education could work together to deliver these programmes effectively.

## **9 Any Other Business**

The Economic Development Manager provided the Board with images of the work achieved to date which included the;

- relocation of the library into Spennymoor Leisure Centre;
- ongoing demolition of units at Cheapside;
- new £13m Springmoor Grange School development;
- demolition of a supermarket and construction of a car park for Aldi;
- new police custody suite (a £20million public investment in the area);
- increased offer within the leisure centre for rehabilitation purposes for people recovering from strokes and accidents; and
- improvements carried out at Festival Walk

All of the projects had created jobs and would encourage people to use the town.

C Harwood mentioned that she had taken a group of 'hard to reach' children from Stanley to Spennymoor to see an art festival. They had been very impressed with the improvements made to the Front Street.

Mr A Boddy thanked the team for their continued hard work on the programme.

## **10 Date of the next and future meetings**

### **Resolved:**

- i) Future meetings to be held on a quarterly basis.
- ii) To hold a board meeting in December 2024 (potentially 5 or 6 December) following the Autumn Statement.



All together for Spennymoor

6<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Programme Update



## Report of

**Amy Harhoff Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth**

### Purpose of the Report

- 1 The Purpose of this report is to
  - (a) Provide Board members with a progress update of the development of schemes to be taken forward under the Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme

### 2 Background

- 3 The Long-Term Plan for Towns was announced as an endowment-style approach. This means that funding, of approximately £20million, will be released against a profile to the Accountable body and the Board has the flexibility to spend it over 10 years.
- 4 To access their allocation, each Town is being asked to submit a Long-Term Plan to Government, for approval. This will comprise of a 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan with a date of submission to be confirmed.
- 5 The Programme update report to June's Board meeting identified the section headings for the vision document. To date a pro-forma template for setting out the investment plan breakdown has not been received.
- 6 Following the government announcement 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 there was confirmation that the LTPT would continue and was confirmed by the current administration, working alongside local and devolved government, to supercharge the delivery of the five national missions.
- 7 Further community engagement will take place over the coming months, with the delivery of projects within the programme expected to begin in 2026/27.

- 8 To assist with conveying the town vision to the public an intention of each theme has been created with the intention of how each theme will deliver against the vision detailed below;

### **High Street, Heritage, and Regeneration**

This theme focuses on revitalising Spennymoor, and its town centre, by supporting local businesses, building on the town's heritage, and supporting new social and economic development. There will be a focus on enhancing the appeal and functionality of the town centre, encouraging more footfall and increasing retail and leisure opportunities. By blending the town's heritage and existing offer with new and enhanced infrastructure and amenities, this theme aims to create a vibrant, economically prosperous town that attracts both residents and visitors, thus contributing to the town's thriving economy and inclusive community spirit.

### **Safety and Security**

Ensuring the safety and security of all Spennymoor's residents is critical to fostering a strong community spirit and ensuring a high quality of life. This theme encompasses initiatives aimed at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. This will be done by enhancing public safety infrastructure and supporting new programmes and initiatives. By creating a secure environment where people feel safe to live, work, and visit, the town can build community pride and encourage greater social cohesion, thereby supporting the overall vision of a supportive and inclusive community.

### **Transport and Connectivity**

Improving transport and connectivity is essential for linking Spennymoor's residents to opportunities and services within and beyond the town. This theme addresses the need for more efficient public transportation, improved road networks, and enhanced walking and cycling. By facilitating easier access to employment, education, and recreational activities, these initiatives will help integrate the community, attract visitors, and support economic growth, thereby ensuring Spennymoor is a well-connected, thriving place to live and work.

- 9 To further assist with project delivery, a 4<sup>th</sup> Working group has been set up which will have a youth focus. This will ensure that the views of local young people are taken into consideration and with the long-term nature of the programme, that projects developed with their needs in mind.
- 10 This was following the consultation period when local youths were engaged with, and it was highlighted that there was a need for more

projects and opportunities for local youths in the area and as such a youth council representative has been appointed to the town board.

- 11 The Youth council representative has developed further consultation with members of the youth council and local schools with a view to getting detailed answers to issues raised in engagement with an online consultation designed to assist with collating this information.
- 12 The next youth council group meeting is 29<sup>th</sup> January with the online consultation being available from January until 22<sup>nd</sup> January. This will provide project development aligned with input from the youth council who will act as a voice for youth within Spennymoor.
- 13 A heritage group with Durham County council colleagues and local community heritage groups has also been created to further develop heritage projects based on the results of the Spennymoor LTPT consultation.

### **Governance - structures**

- 14 Technical officer and working group meetings have continued to take place in line with programme guidance to identify and align current and planned activity across the LTPT area.
- 15 Working groups have continued to provide highlighted issues within their specialist areas to make Spennymoor vibrant and inclusive as it can be in line with the vision statement and of the consultation summary and have been providing costings and areas of priority which help to facilitate project prioritisation.
- 16 Spennymoor youth and community will work with the youth council representative to strengthen young people's voices and involvement.
- 17 The final element of Board recruitment – Business representatives, was paused once we entered the pre-election period. Some initial expressions of interest were received and a range of potential representatives reflecting small and large employers as well as town centre-based businesses have been identified to progress through to informal discussions. The process for confirming these will now recommence when we receive revised government prospectus.

Alan Strickland MP has been appointed as MP for Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor and as such has joined Spennymoor Town Board in line with the published Guidance.

## **Submission**

- 18 Revised guidance confirming timelines and a new set of strategic objectives for the programme aligned with the Government's priorities will be published shortly. Further community engagement will take place over the coming months, with the delivery of projects within the programme expected to begin in 2026/27.
- 19 Government has provided a further capacity funding allocation for us to use across 2025/26 as we review our investment programme.
- 20 Work on project prioritisation to provide information for the template has not paused at any period during the pre-election period or since with working groups continuing to provide information and input to aid project development as we move forward.
- 21 From an analysis of all available town data, including that provided by Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and from the results of the community engagement work, a SWOT analysis has been undertaken to help the Town Board inform the long-term town plan for Spennymoor which has been relayed to people during the consultation feedback exercises.
- 22 Due to this the initial tranche of projects has focused on menu quick wins that will deliver against the communities' priorities. A business case is not required for on menu projects and will progress quickly during the first year of investment.
- 23 Investment will then be prioritised across the three themes and intervention categories which will be included in the investment Plan based on the feedback results of community engagement. To assist with this a project prioritisation tool has been implemented to assist with projects to be brought forward. The tool utilises priorities, investment themes, costs, geography, vision fit, strategy, "on menu" and timescales amongst other scoring criteria in order to see whether or not they come forward as an intervention and if so the year in which this is planned.

## **Face To Face Consultation Feedback Programme**

- 24 An important aspect of the Co-design process is the ongoing dialogue and feedback with communities. Commencing 6th July officers have been available across several community venues and events in the town to discuss the LTPT engagement programme results and advise how the identified priorities have been used to shape potential interventions.

- 25 Community and Stakeholder feedback sessions had concluded following events across the town but will now recommence in the new year to update the community as we revisit our proposed investments and project phasing.
- 26 Further resources will be implemented to allow community engagement to continue throughout the 10-year period of LTPT.
- 27 The programme of community venue face to face opportunities has been supplemented by attendance at other community venues in the town and will also incorporate planned events such as Spennymoor volunteer and community sector event due to take place 17 February 2024.
- 28 Additional information gathered or commissioned through the early stages of the programme is being used in support of the consultation responses. Further car park surveys have been commissioned to provide further robust information, to demonstrate any issues regarding car parking that were highlighted in the public consultation as an issue.
- 29 Town Centre survey – annual vacancy assessment has been provided.
- 30 Retail and Leisure Gaps and Capacity Study has been provided which compares against national statistics. This has provided potential areas for interventions, and identified issues regarding vacant buildings that were highlighted in the public consultation as an issue.
- 31 Asset Mapping of DCC Land and Buildings has been undertaken, including Industrial and Commercial Land.

### **Next Steps and Ongoing Activity**

- 32 Further background data is currently being collected to support the investment plan. This includes:
- 33 Asset & investment mapping of Partners Town Council, Livin– identifying public assets and known planned investments to support the vision submission.
- 34 Aligned/proposed investment – details of recent and proposed expenditure across the area which supports Programme priorities is being developed and will continue until submission date confirmed.
- 35 Continued face to face public engagement events at various community centres will recommence in 2025 and will continue throughout the 10-year period of LTPT.
- 36 Press releases, media coverage and social media communication have been used to inform the public of the current position of the submissions

and confirmation of Spennymoor LTPT. This also informs of the delay in submission but also be used to focus on the high level of work provided by working groups, other officers and town board members.

- 37 The next scheduled Spennymoor Town Board meeting is to be confirmed.

**Recommendation(s)**

- 38 Board is recommended to:

- a) Note the continued progress with LTPT programme development.
- b) Agree to hold a virtual board meeting when following the receipt of the amended prospectus from central government

Author(s)

Graham Wood, Economic Development Manager

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

None associated with this report.

### **Finance**

Government have confirmed the ability of local areas to carry forward unspent allocations in line with their Investment Plans.

An initial £50,000 Capacity funding allocation was received in 2023/4 with a further £200,000 released in April, linked to commencing Board meetings and confirming initial governance requirements are in place. It is understood Spennymoor was one of the first Town Boards to pass the governance checks and receive this further funding. A further £200,000 capacity funding allocation will be released in 2025/26.

### **Consultation**

The LTPT programme has co design and extensive consultation at its core. Co-design programme being delivered by sector specialists with feedback sessions commencing in July and continuing into August with schools and local community centres to be revisited in the new year.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

As a publicly funded programme activities in developing and delivering this programme are required to support the public Sector Equality Duties

### **Climate Change**

None associated with this report.

### **Human Rights**

None associated with this report.

### **Crime and Disorder**

None associated with this report. Safety and Security are a core theme for the programme and the subsequent investment plan.

### **Risk**

None associated with this report.

### **Procurement**

Specialist Co-design capacity has been procured following the Council's established procurement methodology.

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