

Cabinet

10 April 2013



County Durham Partnership Update Report

Report of Corporate Management Team

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Cllr. Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Durham County Council's Cabinet on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries 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 Partnership continues to make a positive contribution, through joint working with all partners, against a range of jointly developed and agreed priorities. Whilst work continues against the longer term priorities as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Partnership also focuses on emerging issues such as Welfare Reform and its implications for local communities. The County Council is leading on a significant programme of work in order to ensure, as reforms are made, we understand the impact and work with partners to try and have support in place for local people to access.
3. The County Durham Partnership continues to grow and develop its range of partnership working across all sectors. Following the CDP's commitment to the Armed Forces being ratified at the June 2012 Forum meeting with the signing of the Armed Forces Community Covenant, the first meeting of the County Durham Armed Forces Forum was held on 11 March. It was hosted by the 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers at the Gilesgate Armoury in Durham. The Forum seeks to ensure that service and ex-service personnel in County Durham suffer no disadvantage as a result of military service. It involves representatives of the armed forces and organisations for ex-service personnel, as well as partner organisations, elected members and officers of the County Council.
4. The AAPs are also continuously developing new and varied ways of linking to all parts of their communities. The Council's approach to Participatory Budgeting continues to evolve, as highlighted in the February Update Report presented to Cabinet. Three events have taken place during February and March that have resulted in over £650,000 being allocated to local communities across the Stanley, Three Towns and Derwent Valley AAP areas.

Key CDP links

Voluntary and Community Sector

5. As reported to Cabinet in February, the OVN Conference took place on Friday 22 March with the aim of stimulating debate and prompting ideas in order to respond to the changing political, social and economic landscape and to encourage communities to develop a more resilient approach to their sustainability. This links closely with discussions at the February

VCS Working Group about establishing a multi-disciplinary group to look at Welfare Reform in order for the VCS to be able to contribute to the wider work on this wide agenda.

Local Councils

6. Great Aycliffe Town Council hosted the March meeting of the Local Councils Working Group and took this opportunity to showcase their work and how they support their local communities. Other Councils will be invited to host meetings of the Working Group which will enable members to visit different parts of the County and build an understanding of the work of the Local Councils tier.
7. Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner, also attended the Working Group and updated members on his first six months in office. He informed the group on the development of the Police and Crime Plan and the priorities developed following extensive community consultation as well as his own personal priorities. He also gave a few examples of how he has linked with town and parish councils so far and said he would like to continue this and develop those relationships.

Armed Forces

8. The first meeting of the County Durham Armed Forces Forum was held on 11 March hosted by the 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers at the Gilesgate Armoury in Durham. The Forum is part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant which seeks to ensure that service and ex-service personnel in County Durham suffer no disadvantage as a result of military service. It involves representatives of the armed forces and organisations for ex-service personnel, as well as partner organisations, elected members and officers of the County Council.
9. The Assistant Chief Executive outlined our commitment to the Covenant and Major John Inglis-Jones, Battalion Second-in-Command, gave a view from the Army perspective. The Forum then agreed proposals for the local administration of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant by the County Durham Community Foundation. This grant from the Ministry of Defence is open to any Voluntary and Community Sector group, or public bodies such as schools, to develop projects which strengthen the ties or mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live.
10. The Assistant Chief Executive also updated attendees on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and considered the effects of Welfare Reform particularly as it relates to service and ex-service personnel and their families as well as hearing about plans for Armed Forces Day on 29 June 2013 and for the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War.

Strategic Direction of AAPs

11. AAPs contribute to the achievement of the objectives against the thematic priorities and following their November Forum meetings, have confirmed their priorities for 2013/14 which sees more than half of the Partnerships supporting the voluntary and community sector and 11 of the 14 have an employment or training related priority. Both of these points highlight the changing landscape in which all partners are working and how important the needs of local communities are. Also, more AAPs have chosen altogether safer as a priority for 2013/14 than in previous years.
12. The full list of AAP priorities for 2013-14 can be found at Appendix two with projects relating to these priorities already in development and will feature in future reports. The projects developed will see further funding allocated, and attracted from external sources, to support the CDP priorities which will add to the £7.2M of AAP funding allocated to date and the £11.8M match funding brought into the County by AAPs since 2009.

Welfare Reform

13. Welfare Reform is one of the biggest changes to welfare to be introduced in 60 years. As Members will be aware, the Council, working with its partners, has developed an extensive programme looking at all aspects of the Welfare Reform Act. As well as implementing the processes necessary to ensure the changes introduced by the Act can take place, a key part of the programme is to understand the impact in communities and on residents. The Council will build on its partnership approach with the voluntary sector and other third parties in an attempt to ensure necessary support mechanisms are in place to help communities manage the change brought about by implementation of the Government's changes to the Welfare System. The focus will be on practical ideas and initiatives such as a directory of advice and support as well as working through the AAPs with local groups to understand where the impacts are being felt and the specific needs of each locality and community. An event for the County Durham Partnership is planned for June 2013 to bring local partners together to capture and understand the range of services, advice and resources, which currently exist. This aims to help ensure as many groups as possible are aware of the different advice and support mechanisms available and to discuss how these can work together.
14. One practical example of this is already in development in the East Durham area where a number of key partners have jointly recognised that the high levels of economic and social deprivation in their area of operation is soon to become exacerbated with the continued effects of economic downturn and austerity measures being added to by the impending Welfare Reform. Individuals and families in East Durham are expected to experience greater impacts than other areas and the level of impact will need a wide range of support.
15. East Durham already experiences high levels of dependency on intervention strategies ranging from Home Furniture packs to an emergency Food Parcel Service. The recently established Credit Union in the area has seen high demand for its services; but levels of reliance on legal and illegal money lending are high. It is proposed that **East Durham AAP** supports East Durham Trust in establishing an extensive programme of "Community Welfare Champions". These would be locally based volunteers who would be trained and supported in their efforts to provide an accessible, frontline advice and signposting service within the setting of a specific locality.
16. It is envisaged that sixteen localities (or estates) will be chosen from which at least one volunteer will be recruited; these volunteers are likely to be formally linked to a Community Group, (probably a Community Centre or Residents Association). The volunteers will be trained and given specific information on a range of potential signpost destinations and issues, including:
 - a. Welfare Reform/Benefit Changes
 - b. Credit Union
 - c. Illegal Money Lending Unit
 - d. Welfare Rights
 - e. CAB
 - f. Priority/Non Priority Debt
 - g. Emergency Interventions (e.g. Emergency Food Parcels)
17. Following training, the services and location of the Community Welfare Champions will be promoted within their locality. The Champions will also monitor information such as the advice given, referrals made and nature of difficulties faced etc. The Champions would also be encouraged to be visible in a number of community locations in order to maximise knowledge of the service and access to it.

18. The project will see the recruitment and training of 16 volunteers and the engagement of the 1000 beneficiaries before evaluation and development of a legacy strategy. It will be managed by East Durham Trust with support from other parties including East Durham Homes. A Steering Group will be established with bi-monthly meetings to monitor the project and provide strategic direction as well as the Champions being brought together regularly to share good practice and encourage reflective learning.

Participatory Budgeting

19. **Stanley Area Action Partnership**, working in partnership with Stanley Town Council, gave residents of Stanley the chance to say how local budgets are spent for the third year running at a Public Vote Event held in February. Local organisations, schools, and community and voluntary groups were invited to apply for funding to deliver their local project, with the overall 'It's Up 2 U' 2013 funding pot for Stanley being £120,000, £60,000 of which was from Stanley Town Council.
20. 1,603 Stanley residents attended the Public Vote Event with 14 projects receiving between £2,000 and £12,000. The projects included support for youth clubs, sports clubs and associations as well as schools and allotment associations.
21. Also in February, people who live, work or volunteer in the **Three Towns Partnership** area were invited to cast their votes for projects they would like to see get a share of the £500,000 capital funding available with 1353 people turning out. The people of the Three Towns gave a clear mandate to allocate the money to one project to develop a new eco friendly leisure facility in Crook. The Community Partnership for the area together with Spectrum Community and Leisure now has 12 months to develop their proposal into a deliverable project.
22. The third of the series of 'It's Up 2 U' participatory budgeting events was hosted by the **Derwent Valley AAP** in March at Derwentside College, Consett. The event was well attended with 872 local residents coming along to view the 22 projects on display. 15 projects received their full funding request from the £40,000 available, with each of the remaining six projects receiving a small financial contribution. The event provided an opportunity to showcase the work of the AAP and the many active community groups in the area.
23. As in previous years, all three events attracted large numbers on the day, with many signing up to become Forum Members. Also, some attendees expressed their interest in becoming public representatives on AAP Boards as part of the current recruitment process. Through the successful planning and implementation of PB in Durham, the County is now recognised as a national leader and has attracted interest from as far afield as the United States and Denmark, with visits from these places planned for later in the year.

Altogether wealthier

24. The first major step in approving the EU budget for the 2014-2020 funding programme was achieved at the meeting of the European Council held in Brussels in February this year, subject to ratification by the European Parliament. The Structural Funds budget, which covers regional economic development, sets the amount that the European Union will spend on addressing regional economic disparities after 2013. This gives some degree of certainty to Durham and Tees Valley whom together form a 'NUTS 2' area and will qualify for proportionally higher levels of funding as a Transition Region.
25. The UK Government has provisionally indicated that is likely to make financial allocations to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England rather than to 'NUTS 2' regions directly. This increases the significance of LEP led local EU investment strategies and the scope for alignment between ERDF, ESF and rural funding streams. As such the **County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP)** and County Council have been contributing to the

development of the North East Independent Economic Review (NEIER) and LEP led investment planning processes and will continue to support both processes to ensure Durham's top investment priorities are given the best opportunity to access available funding sources.

26. The RGN Programme is one of five Defra funded national pilots designed to test new ways of stimulating economic growth in rural areas. A £3.2 million project is expected to create up to 300 new jobs and support hundreds of businesses in Northumberland, Durham and Gateshead. The North East Rural Growth Network partnership (NEFRAN) is managing the pilot. The programme has a number of elements including the development of small networked enterprise hubs. In Durham proposals for the provision of flexible work units at the Middleton in Teesdale Auction Mart are being developed. The final element of the scheme is a Small Business growth Fund with £1 million funding available to targeted businesses.
27. Works have started on a two year £2m investment programme to improve over 70 factory units built in the 1980s and 90s and now managed by Business Durham. Works will include replacement roofs, upgraded security doors and windows alongside other minor works. Works are currently underway at Sacriston Industrial Estate followed by Coulson Street, Stella Gill and Chilton Industrial estates. The works are being carried out by the County Council and will extend the life of the units by a further twenty five years. Construction works at Consett Business Park started on site on 7 January 2013 and will provide a further 2,000 sq m of space for over thirty small businesses in the Consett area. Due for completion in November 2013 the scheme is costing just over £3m and is funded by the Council and ERDF (European Regional Development Fund).
28. Other initiatives that CDEP are currently focussed on include:
 - a. Taste Durham, the county's food and drink quality mark, was celebrated on 28th January with celebrity chef Martin Blunos. 50 businesses in Durham have been assessed against the national criteria and have been awarded the Taste Durham quality mark.
 - b. The destination website for visitors in the County has reached over half a million consumers in nine months. The target of 500,000 unique visitors was achieved in December. The site has also been re-designed and re-launched with new functionality and facilities.
 - c. Welcome to Durham is a three day programme that combines qualifications in customer service with familiarisation visits to help consumer facing staff in tourism and hospitality become more knowledgeable about the county's product. The programme started in February.
29. The Business, Enterprise and Skills Strategy was adopted by the County Durham Economic Partnership Board in July 2012. The strategy focuses on generating new jobs in six key sectors by: increasing aspirations, promoting opportunities and utilising market intelligence.
30. AAPs continue to contribute towards the strategic priorities of the CDEP and many have again identified priorities related to this theme for the next 12 months, enabling them to continue and enhance existing initiatives.
31. Through the Employment and Jobs priority, Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP (BASH) has so far committed £60,000 of its Area Budget towards Business Advisors and Employability projects. This Advisors project is a partnership project funded between Bishop Auckland and Shildon Area Action Partnership and the South Durham Enterprise Agency. It works closely with 2D, the local CVS, and Durham County Council through its Employability Project. Two Business Advisors were recruited to work with a number of local community

organisations, local employers and local agencies. Their aim is to provide flexible and targeted business advice to businesses and business start-ups in the Bishop Auckland and Shildon area. Both Advisors have a wealth of experience in business support including start up, business planning, financial forecasting, marketing and various business specialisms.

32. To date the project has surpassed all expectations and has achieved:
 - a. 215 individuals engaged
 - b. 38 businesses engaged
 - c. 49 business start ups
 - d. 39 job opportunities identified from local organisations

33. The Employability Project has also proved to be very successful. Again, this is a partnership project between BASH and Durham County Council, working with 2D and a number of local community organisations, local employers and local agencies to support residents into work, training, volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities. The Employability Mentors provide clients with information advice and guidance and employability support tailored to client needs identifying and removing barriers to work. The Mentoring Officers support clients providing a personalised and innovative service and engage with a number of support services to meet the needs of each client's action plan. An employability event will improve awareness of support available and job/career opportunities.

34. In the first few months 2D, through the provision of information and guidance, have engaged over 100 people and have made 97 referrals to the Employability Mentor, who has increased contact with targeted clients, supporting 29 people into employment and 21 businesses have expressed an interest in the Apprenticeship programme, with 10 people supported into apprenticeships.

35. The Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP (GAMP) Board in 2011 agreed to fund the biggest project to date for an Employability Skills Fund project for local people to access with a total cost of £147,910 from a range of partnership sources. The aim of the project is to have two funds designated to supporting any unemployed person over the age of 16 in the Great Aycliffe and Middridge area. The two funds are; an 'Employability Skills Fund' aimed at responding to specific training needs and a 'Discretionary Fund' aimed at removing barriers that prevent clients from accessing training.

36. A total of 88 applications have been submitted since the project officially commenced and detailed below is a breakdown of the number of applications received:
 - a. 68 Employability Skills Applications (*training*)
 - b. 20 Discretionary Applications (*removal of barriers e.g. travel*)
 - c. 7 Clients have been successful in securing employment, which is a significant figure, and one has entered volunteering.

37. GAMP is also working with the Council's Employability Team to offer local firms the chance to offer apprenticeship opportunities in the Aycliffe area. The project will support businesses to create 20 engineering and manufacturing specific posts for young people living in the Great Aycliffe and Middridge area with the aim of tackling the high levels of youth unemployment in the area by encouraging and supporting businesses to create employment opportunities that would not otherwise have existed.

38. Firms including Tallents Engineering, Finley Structures, Aycliffe Fabrications and Stiller Transport are joining forces to launch an Apprenticeship Awareness Challenge, working with Aycliffe's two secondary schools. The project will involve six companies giving a brief demonstration to Year 9 students at both Woodham Academy and Greenfield Community College during a series of workshop carousels, dubbed "speed networking", to give young people a flavour of the work they do. The young people will then be split into groups during

site visits to six different companies, when they'll get to learn more about their chosen industry, from manufacturing to IT and HR.

39. The programme, funded through GAMP's Area Budget, and in partnership with the town's two secondary schools, is designed to get school-leavers interested in apprenticeships. The project is being led by Woodham Academy with input from EDT (Engineering Development trust), the largest provider of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics enrichment activities for young people in the UK, and supported by both Woodham and Greenfield schools.
40. Young Enterprise is the United Kingdom's largest business and enterprise education charity. Every year they help 250,000 young people learn about business and the world of work in a classroom environment under the guidance of volunteers from 3,500 companies. Their mission statement is "to inspire and equip young people to learn and succeed through enterprise." Its guiding principle is to do this through 'learning by doing.' Their programmes cover a whole range of topics exploring the world of work, saving, earning, decision making, teamwork, presentations, skills needed for certain jobs, interview techniques, entrepreneurship and raising aspirations.
41. By including Livin in the discussions at the Task Group, **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP (EDRC)** has allocated £7,700 of Area Budget (2012/13) and £9,500 from Livin funds, along with £21,000 worth of volunteer time, £3,200 from School funds and £3,000 worth of Young Enterprise Local Funding; nine primary schools and one secondary school within the AAP area will be able to take part in this project. All schools within the AAP area were approached and all of those willing and able to take part have been included.
42. By providing quality materials and volunteers from the local community to deliver the programmes, the students will engage in fun interactive sessions that will help them achieve employability and key life skills that they will need in later life. The AAP Co-ordinator and Community Development Project Officer have volunteered to be trained and teach some of the sessions, as has a public representative Board Member. All Board Members will have the opportunity to go along and spectate at sessions. The sessions started early February and further updates will be provided as the project progresses.
43. The Sports Apprenticeship Scheme and Apprenticeship Bursaries are two schemes were funded in 2011/ 2012 to help young people take a step closer to the world of work. They also have the added benefits of providing new activities for children and young people free of charge in schools and community centres, through Saturday morning and after school clubs, and supporting businesses in the area.
44. The sport apprenticeship scheme is equipping young people with the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to seek jobs in the sport and leisure industry. The 16-week course, which was been extended to a year by attracting other funding, includes football coaching and leadership awards, employment awareness and key skills; trainees can extend it with customer care qualifications.
45. Of the 45 spaces available, four are available at the moment, and work is ongoing to secure places with the training provider leading on the project, with a view to taking the young people on permanently at the end of the placement; their role will be as mentors for long term unemployed seeking work. One day a week is spent on a course work file and four days on placement with youth clubs, sport venues and schools including Coxhoe Junior and Deaf Hill Primary Schools. To gain practical experience, participants are also running youth activities in villages across the AAP area. Three sport apprentices are also working at the former Durham County Council run Coxhoe Leisure Centre which has reopened as community venture Active Life @ Coxhoe.
46. The apprenticeship bursary scheme is supporting fourteen young people placed within eleven small and medium sized firms within the AAP's area. This scheme aims to match

businesses looking for a trainee with 18 to 24-year-olds wanting to work in a particular field and vice versa. This has resulted in a trainee accountant, mechanic, green keeper at a golf club, child care assistant at a nursery, animal care, florists, engineers, horticulture and agriculture and business administration.

47. The AAP gave £31,005 to the sport apprenticeship scheme, which brought in a further £84,615 of external funding, and £21,000 to the bursary scheme for which Durham County Council also secured an additional £18,900. The money is subsidising wages and covers tutoring, fees and materials. There has been a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment and training within the AAP area since the projects were implemented. As well as linking with Altogether Wealthier this links with Altogether better for children and young people, as the Sports Apprenticeship scheme supported the other AAP priorities of activities for children and young people, and supporting the community and voluntary sector (by providing apprentices for Active Life@ Coxhoe, and holding sessions in local Community Centres)

Altogether better for children and young people

48. The **Children and Families Trust (C&FT)** continues to show positive achievements against key priorities set out in the Children, Young People and Families Plan. Academic achievement, verified from initial releases before Christmas, shows that the percentage of pupils who achieved 5 or more A*-C GCSEs increased for the tenth consecutive year and the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE (including English and Maths) also increased and continues to be above the national average. It is also positive that the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at Key Stage 4 narrowed for the fourth consecutive year.
49. The latest rolling year teenage conception data, which have approximately an 18 month time lag, indicate a conception rate of 38.8 per 1,000 15-17 year old women, which is better than Statistical Neighbours (40.2) and the North East region (40.4).
50. A shared focus with the Safe Durham Partnership is the issue of young people reoffending. Figures for April to September show that 0.56 offences were committed per young offender which is a 35.2% reduction against the 0.87 offences per young offender during the corresponding period of the previous year. Provisional data to the end of December indicates that there were 191 First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System, which is well within the locally agreed target of no more than 340 FTEs per year. This further evidences the positive effects this work is having with the young people of the county.
51. There continue to be areas identified for improvement by the C&FT which include obesity rates which continue to increase in both reception year and year six. This has led to 'Improving support to families with children who are obese or overweight' being identified as a strategic action within the County Durham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2017.
52. A national issue that is locally relevant is the percentage of 16-18 year olds who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). In County Durham this has increased to 10.0% (up from 7.6% from the corresponding period of the previous year) as a result of the reduction in 'Not Knowns'. Ongoing work continues across the One Point Service to support these young people into learning or employment.
53. AAPs continue to support statutory services and schools in working with children and young people across the County. Enter CIC, with the **4Together AAP**, will be running a programme which uses performing arts techniques to build enthusiasm for reading, raise literacy levels and help to bring books to life. The programme will run after school and at weekends and will be comprised of taught sessions (linking into the LAMDA verse speaking programme) and performance based literacy weekend activities for the whole

family (featuring actors and actresses bringing stories to life). The books and themes selected will be relevant to each age range.

54. During the partnership work with Head Teachers from local schools (Ferryhill Station Primary School, Dean Bank Primary School and school governors) to ascertain the reading levels of the young people, it was discovered that many of the young people's reading ages were significantly below the national average. Schools explained that the pupils concerned had little support at home and many of their parents had poor literacy levels. As a result very little reading happened outside of the school environment with little opportunity for advancement beyond the school environment. These findings were discussed with local parents who informed workers that they would be eager to get involved with the programme.
55. It is important that these issues are addressed because, without functional reading skills, people are significantly disadvantaged in later life. It also directly impacts self esteem, academic ability which in turn has a direct impact on social inclusion, social status, and confidence. Many of the students engaged with are victims of bullying, with problems compounded by their low level of academic ability and achievement. Raising literacy levels is a necessity and will have a positive impact on other initiatives.
56. The overall aim of a recently agreed consultation project with children and young people is to support **GAMP** in its engagement process, including the needs of those too young to speak for themselves by linking with their parents. The primary focus of this work will be to obtain the views from a wide and diverse range of children and young people across the whole GAMP area. The project will be led by Extended Schools in conjunction with a number of GAMP's partners. Pre-school aged children will have their needs identified through partnership work with the One Point Principle Family Workers and Surestart family workers linking to parent groups. A minimum of six young people will be identified to lead on the project alongside the Extended Schools Co-ordinator. These young leaders will be working with staff from extended schools to visit and engage with an estimated 100% of schools in the GAMP area over the course of the year.

Altogether healthier

57. The Health and Wellbeing Board will consider a number of key issues over the coming months including considering the implications of the Winterbourne review and agreeing an action plan for learning disabilities in County Durham as well as looking at the planned changes to urgent care and the role of pharmacies in improving health. It will also consider the Public Mental Health Strategy which includes suicide prevention. Further updates on these will feature in future reports.
58. Some AAPs are focussed on interventions for local people that intend to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local communities. **Chester-le-Street & District AAP** has recently worked with County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust's Health Improvement Service and DCC colleagues to deliver a 'Change for Life Road show' in Chester-le-Street. The road show which took place on Saturday 23 February was one of only 12 nationally and the only one held in the North East Region. The aim of the Roadshow was to promote the Change 4 Life national campaign and offer people information around the core aims of the programme to "eat well, move more and live longer". The event also included involvement from Leisure services and also enabled people to engage in a Check 4 Life assessment to look at particular health issues and lifestyle choices such as smoking advice and alcohol awareness.
59. In total 350 people signed up on the day to join the Change 4 Life campaign and these numbers were on a par with cities like Leeds and Nottingham who had had similar Change 4 Life road shows during the previous week. It is hoped that this type of health focussed road show would be viewed as a 'springboard' for other health focussed events and initiatives to be planned in the future. The idea to get involved in this campaign was

championed through the AAP Health and Wellbeing Task Group and local community members supported to delivery of the event.

60. **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP's (EDRC)** Healthy Hubs project aims to build strong, resilient, sustainable communities through increasing confidence, motivation, knowledge and skills. Using asset based community development approaches (focusing on a communities strengths/ assets not deficits) engagement will take place with local people (including young people) to explore community needs and establish additional provision in communities and whilst increasing the skills of local residents. Preliminary work has already commenced in Bowburn Community Centre, including linkages with Wellness on Wheels (WOW) which is currently based at the Centre, and further updates will be provided as the project progresses.
61. A further example contributing to the altogether healthier theme is the innovative approach being taken by EDRC AAP to improve the emotional wellbeing of local people. Stray dogs that had faced the bleak prospect of being put down are helping people live happier, healthier lives under a pioneering initiative designed to boost well-being. They have been given a brighter future and new purpose by being used in the Social Prescribing Initiative with the NHS. Anyone at risk of developing mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, is being encouraged to visit the centre based in Coxhoe to take a dog for a walk in the countryside therefore boosting their mental and physical health. The scheme is open to anyone referred by their GP who wants to increase activity levels in an enjoyable way. This is a prime example of how working in partnership, with support from the AAP, can lead to excellent opportunities for the well-being of local people.

Altogether safer

62. The **Safe Durham Partnership (SDP)** considered the draft Restorative Approach Strategy in March and work is now underway to pilot 'Integrated Restorative Practice', building on existing practices in Durham City. The aim of the Restorative Approach is to improve victim confidence and satisfaction in the criminal justice system. Two neighbourhood restorative projects are currently being piloted in Bishop Auckland and Horden.
63. Work targeted on Prolific Female Offenders continues locally within County Durham. There is an opportunity to reshape a commissioned service to provide safe, secure accommodation for some of our most vulnerable female offenders. In response to the IOM Regional Summit, hosted by Durham in October of last year, and working within the force boundary, a Task and Finish Group representing the Darlington and Durham Reducing Re-offending Groups has met to provide initial proposals on a pilot aimed at diverting women offenders from the CJS.
64. The Safe Durham Partnership Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Strategy: Safe and Active Communities is currently undergoing a refresh with the 'Bigger and Stronger' objective resulting in County Durham having 30% of all its homes in a NHW scheme, the highest percentage of any area in England and Wales. Some of the work linked to this includes 900 primary school children completing the ten week Junior NHW Course which trains them in keeping safe and reporting an incident to the police. Also, a New Safer Homes Scheme sees NHW volunteers provide crime and fire safety advice to vulnerable residents, provide basic security equipment and refer for more detailed work.
65. Representatives from the Safe Durham Partnership attended the Tilley Awards in London where they were nominated for a Certificate of Merit for the problem-solving of stray and illegally tethered horses in the Bishop Auckland area. The Tilley Awards are a Home Office initiative which recognises innovative crime-fighting projects. The project was in the top 12 entries submitted this year out of a total of 110. The awards paid tribute to the exceptionally high quality of the entries. Durham County Council and Durham Constabulary Durham submitted the Durham entry with the assistance of RSPCA, BHS, trading standards, the National Farmers Union and the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

66. Local evidence of interventions which support the work of the SDP can be found across the County. **Chester-le-Street & District AAP**, working in partnership with the Council's Civic Pride Team and Cestria Community Housing, delivered Sacriston's 'Week of Action' which included:
- a. Education sessions in local schools led by Civic Pride and Cestria Housing.
 - b. Estate tours and a pizza night for young people – led by Cestria Housing. The tours identified 21 concerns which are currently being addressed. The Pizza Night was attended by some 20 young people and ten parents / carers.
 - c. A community skip day.
 - d. Community speed watch. Approximately 150 vehicles were recorded. two warning letters were sent.
 - e. Free dog-micro-chipping ten dogs were micro-chipped by Strayaid; one stray dog was collected from Sacriston.
 - f. Community planting and a community litter pick on sites identified by the community; this included the use of the Probation Service Unpaid Work Team
 - g. Installation of new dog waste bins
 - h. A Staysafe Operation during which a large amount of alcohol was confiscated and three young people taken to a place of safety for collection by their parents / carers.
67. Safer Neighbourhoods staff continue to work on the Deneside (Seaham) time limited project. This involves co-ordinating work with Police, Neighbourhood Wardens, **East Durham AAP** and Positive Futures to tackle issues that were highlighted within LMAPS such as Criminal Damage, Environmental Issues, Anti Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Vehicle Nuisance. To date, the project has seen new CCTV equipment being purchased and fencing erected to stop the issue of parking problems and nuisance. A new boxing club and other sports have also been established, with excellent participation by young people in the area. Educational sessions have been carried out by Police and Wardens in local schools to highlight the environmental problems.

Altogether greener

68. The **Environment Partnership** is beginning to consider the events and activities that will mark World Environment Day on 5 June 2013. This is an annual event that will raise the profile of the work of the Partnership as well as encouraging county wide participation in Environmental projects. The theme for 2013 is '**Think** before you **eat** and help **save** our environment!' It is centred on an anti-food waste and food loss campaign that encourages people to reduce their 'foodprint'. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), every year 1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted. This is equivalent to the same amount produced in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, one in every seven people in the world go to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of five die daily from hunger. This year's campaign encourages people to take action from their homes and then witness the power of collective decisions made to:
- a. reduce food waste,
 - b. save money,
 - c. minimise the environmental impact of food production and
 - d. force food production processes to become more efficient.
69. The partnership is working on a week of activities, a day for each of the five themes (Climate Change, Waste, Pride, Natural and Built Environments). The Environment Awards will also be launched around this time to maximise publicity and ensure engagement with media partners.
70. Other activity that the Partnership is leading on is a Responsible Dog Ownership campaign which has targeted the 15 areas across County Durham with the highest number of complaints in relation to dog fouling. Large signs were placed on street columns in these

areas to raise awareness and push home the enforcement message in relation to issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling. A free dog chipping service is also being provided alongside the campaign.

71. Registration for the 'Big Spring Clean 2013' was opened on March 6, with the activities running from 18 March to 12 May 2013. Feedback from this campaign will feature in the June report to Cabinet.
72. Working closely to the objectives of the altogether greener theme of promoting pride in our communities and enhancing, conserving and maximising the value of Durham's natural environment the **Mid Durham AAP** and the Countryside team have produced a rail path master plan which focuses on increasing community ownership of the paths which flow through Mid Durham. Residents in Lanchester, Langley Park, Esh Winning and Waterhouses have outlined plans for their particular parts of the paths which include wild flower meadows, orchards, signage, educational links to local schools, seating and general path maintenance. Work with Ushaw Moor, Broompark, Brancepeth, Brandon and Meadowfield residents and started in early March.

Area Action Partnerships Update

73. The AAPs continue to deliver against their 2012/13 priorities whilst also preparing to begin work on their recently agreed 2013/14 priorities. All of the work carried out through the work and support of AAPs at a local level links directly back to the strategic priorities and objectives of the County Durham Partnership.
74. **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP (EDRC)** has funded a Youth Workers in Training project that will train six local people to achieve a Level three qualification in Youth Work status which will enable them to deliver youth work across the whole area. As well as being employed as Workers in Training throughout the duration of the course, therefore adding value to existing provision, the workers are also equipped with the necessary skills, qualifications and experience needed to continue with a career in this field.
75. The second phase of the Cycle/ Walkway Project has commenced in the East of the County following on from the successful implementation of phase one which covers the NETPark to Fishburn route. Phase two will link Fishburn to Trimdon Village and is funded by the EDRC AAP as well as other partners. Part of this work involves looking at opportunities to link with the 'Bike It' initiative and the 'Living Street Officers' for a limited period to encourage behaviour change and promote new facilities in schools, such as the bicycle storage racks at Sedgfield Community College.
76. The main aim of **Spennymoor AAP's** Youth Council project is to provide a mechanism that allows children and young people to express their views and opinions to help make decisions and shape the services that directly affect them. It has two main components, the first being a Youth Forum. This takes place four times a year in school time and brings together four young people from each school in the AAP area. The young people bring topics for discussion, take part in interactive activities and take on a representative role. The representative role involves feeding back and gathering information to the rest of their school e.g. through school council meetings. In addition to this the youth forum will begin a virtual and postal network that all young people could sign up to get involved and have their say on local and community issues. The youth forum is open to all young people five years and over.
77. The second stage is the Youth Council itself which formalises the work of the youth forum. The council involves approximately 17 young people aged 11-19 from the Spennymoor AAP area. The project aims to mirror the setup of the Town Council and electing a Youth Mayor. The Youth Council has responsibility for allocating £15,000 to local initiatives and community youth groups and schools will be invited to apply for funding awards. The

Youth Council is very keen to progress and have set themselves a number of targets which are due to be completed by the end of the financial year.

78. The Out There project is one that the AAP are currently developing and will commence in the spring. It is based on outdoor activities to encourage and engage young people in new skills and will help those who take part to learn the fullest benefits of physical exercise and enjoy testing their stamina. The project will begin with a five week rock climbing course then Go Carting activity and conclude in a weekend residential excursion to an outdoor activity centre, where a further 11 outdoor activities will be explored. These could include bridge building, archery etc, with over 30 activities to choose from. The activities will all be tailored to each individual's abilities.
79. The project will give an opportunity to young people who may not ordinarily or otherwise be able to do so due to financial constraints. The rock climbing activity will come with a Level 1 NICAS certificate which is personal to the individual. A booklet will be kept to record achievements that can be continued after the project concludes.
80. As the majority of AAPs have altogether wealthier related priorities, activity continues across the County in a variety of ways. The **Mid Durham AAP** Employment and Job Prospects task group are focusing on four key areas for development during 2013. Two recently AAP supported projects will start to focus on two of these concerns; smaller businesses needing support and advice when expanding and those out of work receiving relevant workforce skills and work experience. The task group are currently working on the other two areas which are apprenticeships and local employment and training advice and support. The task group is focusing on the outcomes from the 2012 Overview and Scrutiny report produced on youth employment and is working towards supporting the altogether wealthier objectives of vibrant and successful towns, competitive and successful people, sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities and a top location for business.
81. The **Derwent Valley AAP** will soon be working in partnership with Derwentside Homes and their Social Housing Enterprise Durham (SHED) project to offer a new and innovative scheme designed to maximise apprenticeship opportunities in the area. Funding from the AAP will contribute towards the creation of 12 apprenticeship opportunities offering pre-employment training, wage subsidies and incentives to businesses to create additional placements, particularly relating to the field of engineering.
82. The AAP is also encouraging communities to 'slam dunk their junk' as part of a programme of environmental activity days throughout 2013. The programme will offer educational assembly sessions to local schools to promote recycling and highlight the issues of dog fouling and litter. Community litter picks and grot spot clean ups will also be undertaken in each of the eight surrounding villages using community volunteers and members of the Community Payback scheme. Free dog micro chipping will also be provided to complement the promotion of the successful Green Dog Walkers Scheme.
83. The **Weardale AAP** has been working with the village hall and community building to support their future sustainability. Engaging with the isolated communities is one of complexities of working in Weardale but fortunately most settlements have access to a small community meeting area, a hall, community centre or multi-use building. The AAP has identified a need to support the groups with be-spoke tailored training with courses run, at a time convenient to the needs of the group. This has also offered the added value of strengthening the groups.
84. The physical buildings also need some attention from a lick of paint, replacement windows, and doors. The AAP Board agreed to a grants projects and received ten applications for funding, from which seven were funded in their entirety, these project ranged from internal/external decorating, acoustic panels to replacement windows.

85. In terms of the beneficiaries of the project for every one pound spent an additional one pound sixty of actual funding was raised. This is without the volunteer times spent obtaining quotes, discussing how the building could be utilized and become more sustainable with a grant. This has engendered a sense of achievement with this grant, with one group stating "we have enjoyed the process of applying for this grant it has helped us to focus and prioritises our needs".
86. Working with **Teesdale AAP (TAP)**, the Tourism sub-groups have come together to fully articulate the Durham Dales brand, collaborative working has achieved economies of scale, and met mutual aims. The Durham Pocket guide for 2013, detailing the places to visit, eat and shop in Durham will be distributed across the County, and at key gateways in the North East. With over 300,000 copies produced – this pocket guide is an essential publication to promote the County and its various visitor attributes.
87. Also working with Weardale AAP, TAP has been recently supported the local Farmwatch and Mountain Rescue Services with a grant for handheld radios and transmitter improvements. This will greatly improve communication and help with the better coordination of activities.
88. In continuing to identify tourism as a key priority, TAP will build on work done over the past two years which has seen Tourist Information provision supported as well as supporting activities celebrating Charles Dickens and his links to Teesdale. The Current Tourism Small Grants Scheme has helped a number of communities boost tourism in their area. Area Budget funding has recently been approved that has secured a major exhibition at the Bowes Museum that will celebrate the life of former Teesdale Resident, Jeremiah Dixon (of Mason/Dixon Line Fame)
89. TAP are once again supporting the Rural Employability Scheme. Last year the scheme worked with over a large number of clients and helped over 20 of them back into work whilst many others took up volunteering positions or training courses. This year the project will work more closely with tourism providers and look to support people into tourism related jobs.
90. Funding from TAP is also being utilised to help reinstate a substantial section of the Teesdale Railway Path that runs between Lartington and Middleton in Teesdale. The bad weather over the last few years has had a major effect on this very popular route. Local volunteers will work alongside the Council in doing this work.
91. The **Stanley AAP** funded a Meet the Funders Event on Tuesday 26th February 2013 at the Lamplight Arts Centre, Stanley to give local community organisations the opportunity to discuss their project ideas with potential funders.
92. Durham Rural Community Council organised the event, on behalf of Stanley AAP, ensuring local and countywide organisations and groups were aware of the event and registered attendees for the two sessions. The Funders included; Big Lottery, Cooperative Bank, County Durham Community Foundation, Durham County Council, Funding Information North East, Lloyds TSB, Sir James Knott Trust, Sported and The Rothley Trust.
93. The event was attended by 120 representatives from local voluntary and community associations and was a great success with a number of organisations applying for funding in the hope of making their project a reality.
94. **Durham AAP** was recently awarded Investors in Children (IiC) status for facilitating discussions between young people and service providers in the Sherburn Road area. One nine year old quoted by IiC thanked the AAP for listening and supporting their wishes for activities at the community centre for the next year. The AAP Chair was pleased pointing out some of the other recipients included organisations such as the famous Alder Hey Hospital.

95. The AAP's Small Grants Fund has now supported over 100 local groups providing a range of items from Durham City Ladies FC with kit to the provision of a notice board to the Framwellgate Moor Youth & Community Centre. This scheme has proven to be very popular with local community groups looking for the smaller grants and is likely to be continued into the next financial year.
96. A number of play areas are now progressing with applications from across the city and the Wharton Park HLF bid has seen the appointment of prestigious architects to steer the bid over the coming months. The associated Haggrid Project was officially launched in February and will take ten young people aged 14/15 from Framwellgate School and involve them in a youth development programme based around horticulture in the park. The project will take place over around eight months and will teach the young people about citizenship give them an NVQ level 1 qualification and give them hands on horticultural experience through the creation of a community garden in Wharton Park.

Area Action Partnerships: Revised Terms of Reference and Recruitment Process for Member of the Public Positions

97. The establishment of AAPs in 2009 followed a period of extensive consultation that led to Cabinet agreeing their Terms of Reference and the recruitment process for the seven AAP board positions for Members of the Public at its meeting on 19 March 2009.
98. During the consultation period, the Council received clear guidance that the public felt it crucial that AAPs were seen to deliver on action, they should be non-political and there should be an opportunity for new members of the public to get involved. The need to avoid the prospect of the 'usual suspects' taking up the positions on Boards was made on a number of occasions.
99. These principles have underpinned the Terms of Reference for AAPs as well as the recruitment process for the Member of Public positions on AAP Boards. However, now that AAPs have been in operation for four years, it is appropriate both are reconsidered by Cabinet. This is timely not only because the Scrutiny review of AAPs proposed some enhancements to the Terms of Reference but also because Members of the Public positions on boards have a four year 'term of office'.
100. As has been reported previously to Cabinet, AAPs have been subject to a number of reviews and examinations. The conclusions of these exercises, while suggesting some enhancements, have found the partnerships are delivering on their **Terms of Reference** as they have engaged large numbers of the public while completing a significant amount of local projects.
101. The largest review of AAPs was carried out by Scrutiny in 2011, and has been reported to Cabinet. Many of the recommendations set out in the review have already been implemented. The key outstanding area for action relates to a number of suggested changes to the AAP Terms of Reference.
102. Work has been on-going to revise the AAP terms of reference following the Scrutiny Review and as part of this work, AAP Coordinators were provided with an opportunity to comment on the terms of reference so any specific issues could be captured and discussed.
103. Although not a recommendation from the Scrutiny Review, it was felt that an opportunity should be provided for representatives from across the AAPs to come together to review the revised AAP terms of reference as a 'critical friend'. A dedicated Terms of Reference Sounding Board was therefore created to facilitate this opportunity.

104. Further to the review of the AAP terms of reference and the consideration and subsequent inclusion (where appropriate) of Overview and Scrutiny, officer and Sounding Board feedback, a final draft has now been developed (see Appendix 3).
105. A brief overview of the main changes to the original terms of reference is detailed below:
- Clarification that the AAPs are non political in nature
 - Additional category of Forum membership included linked to volunteering
 - Clarification provided regarding minimum age for Board membership (16 years)
 - Clarification provided regarding minimum age for Forum membership (11 years)
 - Increased length of co-optee contribution to 12 months
 - Additional role and responsibility of Board Members linked to attendance at Task and Finish Group meetings included
 - Clarification provided regarding the role of Forum Members at Board meetings
 - Additional information included linked to declarations of interest and subsequent dispensation based on advice from DCC Legal Services Team
 - Re-wording of 'communities of interest' information based on feedback from DCC Equalities and Diversity Team
 - Clarification provided regarding future alterations to the terms of reference which should be in compliance with the DCC Code of Corporate Governance
 - Minor re-wording of terms of reference overall to ensure clarity and grammatical consistency
106. If all of the proposed changes are agreed, all nine recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Review of AAPs relating to the AAP terms of reference will have been addressed.
107. As set out in the attached Terms of Reference, the role of **AAP Member of the Public positions** are to be reviewed after four years. As a consequence, many of the positions are now up for renewal and publicity is now underway to encourage new members to come forward. Whilst current Board members have undeniably made a significant contribution to the success of AAPs and they are not excluded from applying for a position, they have been informed preference will be given to recruiting new Board members. However, current Board members will be encouraged to continue as members of the AAP Forum and to take part in AAP Task and Finish Groups.
108. The fact that for many the end of the four year term of office for Member of the Public positions on AAPs coincides with the local elections provides an opportunity to align the selection process for two thirds of the Board's membership. Reflecting the desire to wherever possible highlight non-political nature of AAPs, and given all 126 County Councillors will have an opportunity to take up a Board position during their four year term of office, it is proposed candidates in the County Council election will not be considered in this Member of Public recruitment process. However, given there have been many requests for more parish and town council places on AAP Boards, which we have been unable to accommodate, and given Member of the Public positions are the main means for many hundreds of town and parish councillors to get involved in AAPs, this restriction will not apply to candidates in town and parish council elections.
109. In line with the principles to actively encourage new members of the public to play a role in AAPs, and to also try to ensure there is balance of communities represented, it is proposed the recruitment process should follow the successful model used since 2009 of an application and interview. A request from one AAP to select the position by election has been received by the Council. However this is not considered appropriate for a number of reasons, primarily because an election is likely to discourage a large number of people to come forward for consideration. Furthermore, there is a well resourced and

comprehensive alternative for elected positions that will generate the members for AAPs, namely the imminent local council elections.

110. In terms of the interview process, these were originally planned to take place during the weeks of 15th and 22nd April 2013 to ensure the positions are recruited prior to AAP Annual General Meetings. The majority of the AGMs will take place in May/June 2013. Recruitment at this stage will allow time for the new members of the public to receive briefings and training on AAPs prior to the AGMs. With regard to the interview panel, it is proposed that the same broad format is used that proved successful in 2009, with the exception that Elected Members will not be involved because the interviews will take place during the period of the election. This will also help demonstrate that the process meets a key recommendation of the scrutiny review that AAPs need to demonstrate that they are non-political. As a consequence, the proposed panel would be made up of the local AAP co-ordinators, an AAP partner representative and a VCS representative outwith the area. While one AAP has suggested the latter position should be filled by a current member of public on the board, this is not being recommended as the preferred option will provide greater confidence to applicants that the process is independent.

Recommendations and reasons

111. Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report and to agree the recruitment process for the Members of Public positions on AAP Boards as set in this report and the revisions to the AAP Terms of Reference as attached in Appendix 3.

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Appendix 1: Implications

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

Staffing - None

Risk - None

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

Accommodation - None

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

Human Rights - None

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

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications - None

Appendix two - AAP PRIORITIES 2013 - 14

| | AAP Area | Priorities |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| NORTH | Chester le Street | Development of Town and Village Centres Welfare Reform and Employability Improved Local Environment Supporting Community Groups and Community Buildings Opportunities for Children and Young People Health and Wellbeing (focusing on tackling Diabetes and Social Isolation) |
| | Derwent Valley | Employment and Regeneration Health and Wellbeing Local Environment Activities for Children and Young People Communication |
| | Mid Durham | Road Safety and Highways Activities for children and Young People Support for the VCS Support for Older People Employment and Job Prospects |
| | Stanley | Regeneration of Stanley and its Villages Opportunities and Activities for Young People Support for the Elderly, Carers and Disability Groups |
| SOUTH | 3 Towns | Job Prospects and Employment Children and Young People Healthy Lifestyle and Wellbeing |
| | 4 Together | Employment, Job Prospects, Education and Training Activities for Children and Young People Crime and Community Safety |
| | Bishop Auckland and Shildon | Employment and Jobs Children and Young People Crime and Community Safety |
| | Great Aycliffe and Middridge | Activities for Young People Employment, Enterprise, Education and Training Support to Community & Voluntary |
| | Teesdale | Tourism Supporting Voluntary, Community and Cultural Organisations Children and Young People |
| | Weardale | Tourism Employment and Job Creation Support for the Community and Voluntary Sector |

| | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|---|
| | | Broadband |
| EAST | Durham City | Supporting the Voluntary and Community Sectors City Centre issues Vulnerable People Activities for Young People |
| | East Durham | Maintaining the Social Fabric of Our Communities (Overarching priority) Children and Young People Education, Training and Job Creation Regeneration |
| | East Durham Rural Corridor | Activities for Children and Young People Community Aspirations Employment and Job Prospects |
| | Spennymoor | Main priorities Employment and Job Prospects Children and Teenage Provision Overarching Crime and Community Safety Communication, I.T and Technology |

Terms of Reference for Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)

Introduction

Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) have been established for 14 geographic areas within County Durham defined by the boundaries of town and parish councils and informed by extensive public consultation. They were a key facet of the original bid for unitary status and are the bridge between the unitary council and the diverse needs of the County's communities.

1. Purpose

The AAP is the mechanism through which the Council works with local communities and partner organisations to make sure those local services meet local needs and that the voice of the community is heard within the service development process. The AAP is non political and enables councillors, residents and partners to come together to influence priorities and take decisions in the light of local needs and circumstances. It focuses on local actions to help the Council and its partners to tackle inequalities and narrow the gap between different areas and it also delivers locally agreed improvements that are important to communities within its area.

2. Principles

Members of the AAP agree to work together to achieve the aims of the AAP on the basis of the following principles:

- Mutual trust and respect
- Openness and transparency
- Effective communication and accountability
- Removal of barriers to equality of access and opportunity
- Effective performance management
- The AAP is non political

3. Boundaries

An AAP cannot alter its own boundary but must request permission from Durham County Council to vary any boundary.

4. Function

i. Engagement

AAPs will provide a means:

- For the Council and partner organisations to engage in a meaningful, dialogue with people in their local communities.
- To build and shape local identity in order that communities can speak with a clear and strong voice.
- To promote community cohesion and support debate, ensuring that all voices are heard.
- To encourage local people to engage with the local democratic process and to be involved in shaping their communities.
- To recognise, celebrate and support the role and contribution of individuals in improving their communities.
- To streamline and focus cross-public sector consultation with local people.

ii. Empowerment

AAPs will provide a means:

- To clearly communicate local issues and priorities to public sector partners, based on an analysis of local data and opinions, and to develop a shared vision for the AAP area.
- To involve local people in the way local services are planned and delivered and to assist partners to meet their duty to involve people in decisions, policies and services that may affect them or be of interest to them.
- To assist partners to effectively combine their efforts in a local area to improve local outcomes, narrow gaps between different areas of the County and improve quality of life.

iii. Local Action

AAPs will provide a means:

- To resolve local issues through either:
 - Direct action through use of its own development funding or by means of engendering voluntary community action.
 - By dialogue with the County Council service departments and County Councillors with regard to influencing use of their delegated budgets.
 - Negotiation with the AAP's and Council's partners.
- To develop a focussed Annual Report for an area, targeting the key issues that the AAP has focussed on in that particular financial year.
- To develop an AAP Action Plan to progress the priorities of the AAP and its work locally.

iv. Performance

AAPs will provide a means:

- To facilitate access to quality performance data to enable local people and service users to understand performance as it applies to their area.
- To support the impact of the County Durham Partnership and its thematic groups in achieving its priority outcomes.
- To comment on public sector performance in the AAP area.

5. Equalities and Inclusion

- a. The AAP will actively value the benefits of diversity and ensure that it operates in ways that ensure and promote fair treatment and equality of opportunity.
- b. At least one Board member of the AAP will take on the role of championing Equality & Diversity issues.

6. Accountability

The AAP will manage its affairs in ways that are clear and transparent and demonstrate proper accountability to the County Council, partner organisations, stakeholders and the wider community through clear reporting and effective communications of its performance, actions and decisions.

7. Performance Management and Review

- a. The AAP will develop arrangements to manage its own performance in achieving its agreed priorities and actions, focussing on up to five key priorities in a financial year. These arrangements will be mindful of the priorities of the County Durham Partnership and the annual voting of Forum members especially as they relate to the AAP, whilst recognising the need to balance them with local issues as evidenced by robust local engagement mechanisms and local performance data.
- b. Performance and project management information should be reported by project sponsors and deliverers on a quarterly basis to enable AAP Boards to assess progress against targets for agreed projects.
- c. To reflect the partnership nature of AAPs, a joint review arrangement will be put in place between partner organisations represented on the AAP Boards and the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor their effectiveness.

8. Membership and terms of office

a. Forum

The membership of the Forum will be open to all who live in, work in, volunteer in or represent any area within the AAP boundary.

Forum membership is open to anyone aged 11 years and over.

b. Board

The membership of an AAP Board will be open to three categories

- i. Members of the public
- ii. Partner Organisations
- iii. Elected Members

The three categories will each represent one third of the Board's total voting membership of twenty-one (21). Board members must be a minimum of 16 years of age.

c. Elected Members

- i. Of the seven places available for Elected Members, six will be made available to Unitary councillors and one to a representative from the Town/Parish Councils within the AAP area (where they exist, where they do not, Unitary Councillors will take up the seventh place).
- ii. If there are fewer than six Unitary Councillors willing to take up positions on a Board, the remaining places will be made available to Town/Parish Councils.
- iii. Where a Unitary Councillor's electoral division straddles more than one AAP boundary they can only sit on one AAP Board at any one time. They can be an alternate for another Unitary member to a Board in another AAP covered by their ward boundary and if called upon to attend as the alternate will have full voting rights.
- iv. If there are more than six Unitary Councillors within the AAP area, selection of the positions will be made to reflect the electoral balance of the AAP area. This does not apply to the Town and Parish Councils.

- v. v. Where there are more Unitary Councillors than places available on a Board, Unitary Councillor Board Members will agree an alternate deputy from those Councillors in an AAP area without a position on the Board.
- vi. vi. Town/Parish Council Board members will be selected by local town or parish council. They will also select an alternate Town/Parish Councillor.
- vii. vii. Where there are more Elected Members than positions on the AAP Board, they will serve no more than 24 months (two years) before requiring reappointment.

d. Partner Organisations

- i. These shall be represented by one senior officer from the following organisations: Durham County Council Head of Service; Durham Constabulary; the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group (or one of its constituent GP practices); Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue; the Registered Social Landlord or managing agent covering the most rented properties within the AAP.
- ii. One further representative will be provided for by the lead Voluntary and Community Sector infrastructure organisation covering the AAP area.
- iii. A final person will represent the interests of the local business sector or recognised business network.
- iv. Partner organisations are expected to send an alternate if their main representative is unable to attend.
- v. Partner organisations are expected to promote the work of the AAP within their organisations where appropriate.
- vi. Partner organisations have a standing place at the AAP Board.

e. Members of the Public

- i. Members of the public must live in, work in, study in or volunteer in the AAP area. Work will include unpaid work. However, they cannot belong to more than one AAP Board even if where they live and work may qualify them for membership of two different forums. (See notes re: removal of this sentence)
- ii. Members of the public wishing to stand for the AAP Board must be a member of the AAP Forum.
- iii. Members of the public will be selected to serve for up to four years on the AAP Board from the date of their appointment.
- iv. A process agreed by Durham County Council will select this category of AAP member.
- v. Unitary councillors cannot take up the position of a public representative on the Board.

f. Cessation of Membership of AAP Board

- i. If anybody fails to attend for three consecutive Board meetings, even with apologies, then the Board may proceed upon the basis that the person has resigned and seek a replacement, unless that individual has received dispensation from the Board to be absent (e.g. for reasons of ill health or maternity).
- ii. Any request for dispensation should be submitted to the co-ordinator. This request would be discussed at the next available board meeting unless the request for dispensation is confidential in which case the final decision will rest with the AAP Chair and Co-ordinator.
- iii. Any resignation must be in writing to the Chair of the AAP and copied to the AAP Coordinator.

g. Board Vacancies

- i. Partner organisations Council, Police etc... must be informed as soon as possible to enable them to arrange alternative representation.
- ii. When a public representative resigns or is unable to continue duties the AAP Board will select from a list of reserves to provide a replacement. If a list of reserves is not available then the AAP Co-ordinator will carry out a public recruitment process.
- iii. This list of reserves will be drawn up from the most recent appointment process.

h. Non-voting co-optees

- i. Some AAPs may feel the need to engage some expertise outside of the Board membership so they will be allowed to co-opt up to three people to support the Board.
- ii. Co-optees can be co-opted for a period of up to 12 months.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

a. Chair and Vice Chairs

- i. By the first meeting of the AAP Board after April 1st each of the Elected Member, Partner Organisation and Members of the Public sectors will have agreed a Vice Chair for each of their categories.
- ii. It is expected that the Vice Chair from each Category will hold the Chair for one year out of every three. In exceptional circumstances the Board may deem it appropriate to continue with their current Chair for a maximum of a two year period.
- iii. The Vice Chairs will stand down at the first Board meeting after April. Each category will then select a Vice Chair. Previous Vice Chairs will be eligible to stand. Any Vice Chair that needs replacing during the year must be replaced by the relevant category within the next two Board meetings following the vacancy occurring. If they fail to appoint the Chair will appoint and they will remain in place until the first meeting after April.
- iv. The Board can remove the Chair by exercising a vote of 'no confidence' that must be proposed and seconded before it is put to a vote. On a vote of 'no confidence' a Chair must resign and return to being a member of the Board. The Category of membership holding the Chair for that year will propose another Chair from their category.

b. The duties of the Chair will include;

- i. Chairing meetings of the AAP Board and Forum ensuring that the meeting is able to conduct its business in an orderly and timely fashion, but on the other hand the Chair must ensure that all those entitled to do so may express their views and that the decisions taken by the meeting adequately reflect the views of the meeting as a whole.
- ii. Chair's attendance at the Chairing Meetings training session will be required if no relevant training has been undertaken in the last three years.
- iii. Act as the focus for the AAP and represent the AAP at key events in accordance with the Code of Conduct;
- iv. Work closely with the AAP Coordinator to agree agendas and minutes for issue to the Board and Forum;
- v. Discuss reports and the direction of the AAP with the Co-ordinator and other relevant partners.

- vi. Consider any criticisms or concerns raised about the role or functioning of the AAP, bringing them forward for discussion at a meeting of the AAP if it is not possible to resolve them in any other way.
 - vii. If a vote is called for, then following the vote (in which the Chair can vote), the Chair will exercise a 'casting vote' in the event of a tie. If an emergency decision is called for that does not allow time for a meeting to be called, the Chair will take the decision after consultation with the two Vice Chairs. This decision will be communicated to the rest of the Board as soon as it is taken.
 - viii. Attend the County Durham Partnership Forum as set out in the County Durham Partnership's governance arrangements or arrange for an alternate to attend.
- c. Roles and Responsibilities for Board Members:
- i. Board members will be encouraged to participate in Task & Finish Group meetings and will be expected to abide by the Code of Conduct.

10. Meetings (see also Appendix 1)

- a. The **Forum** will meet up to twice per year and will be open to the public. One of these meetings must focus on a priority voting exercise the results of which will be used as a steer for the Board when agreeing the priorities, as well as providing an opportunity for the Council to consult on the development of their budgets. Fifteen working days (Mon –Fri) notice will be given to invitees.
- b. The **Board** will meet at least six times per annum and five working days notice should be given of the details and business of the meeting. The Board meeting will be open to the public.
 - i. The Annual General Meeting of the AAP Board will be the first meeting after every April 1st.
 - ii. The public may be excluded, in whole or in part, if it is likely that in their presence information may be disclosed that has been requested to remain confidential or should remain so if they fall within the list under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
 - iii. Forum members will be invited to attend as observers. The Forum members are not eligible to take part in any decision making associated with the Board, but can at the discretion of the Chair contribute to discussions where deemed appropriate.
 - iv. Quorum - No business can be formally agreed at a Board meeting of the AAP unless a quorum of at least three members from each membership category are present i.e. a minimum of nine Board members. If a quorum is not achieved at the meeting then AAP co-ordinators will seek consensus for any decisions taken in principle at the meeting from absent board members either by email or by calling a special meeting in order that the work of the board can progress.
 - v. If the Chair is not present then the meeting will appoint one of the Vice Chairs. If neither Chair nor the Vice Chairs are present at a meeting then those in attendance should agree a chair by nominating and seconding an individual who must agree (if more than one nominee then there should be a quick show of hands to appoint a chair for the meeting). If the meeting cannot agree to appoint a Chair then the meeting will be reconvened in seven days.
 - vi. The format for Board meetings should be as follows -Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising followed by the relevant agenda to include Local

Neighbourhood Issues, Priority Updates and Partners will have an opportunity to raise issues relevant to their service area.

- c. Special meetings of an AAP Board can be called by a motion to the Chair signed by at least a minimum of 9 Board members (which must be made up by three from each category).

11. Decision making

- a. It is expected that the decisions of the AAP will be reached by consensus.
- b. If there is not a clear consensus, then a vote may be called for by the Chair on a show of hands or a secret ballot. In this case a simple majority will prevail
- c. Minutes of the AAP Board will be made publicly available once they have been agreed as a true record
- d. AAP board members who believe they may have a prejudicial interest must declare it and its nature as soon as it becomes an issue. (Definition - if a member of the public (with knowledge of the relevant facts) might perceive that an AAP Board member's judgement on a matter for decision could be prejudiced i.e. the topic under consideration directly affects a board member (to their benefit or detriment)). The Coordinator will be the final arbiter in determining if such an interest exists and be guided by the maxim 'even if in doubt then they declare an act accordingly'. Once an interest is declared the board member must leave the room whilst the item is discussed and a decision reached before they return, except in (i).
 - (i). Whilst it is usual practice for a board member to leave the room after declaring such an interest, they may be allowed to answer questions from board members on the subject for which they have declared an interest if the Chair deems it necessary for them to clarify certain points to enable the Board to make an informed decision. Once any points are clarified the individual(s) will then be required to leave whilst the decision is taken.
 - (ii) In the event that a Board meeting is not quorate further to a Board member declaring an interest and leaving the room, the Chair may give a dispensation to the Board member to entitle them to participate (take part in discussions and any subsequent vote). Any dispensation granted at the meeting should be formally recorded in the meeting minutes.

12. Finance

[All finance will require a comprehensive set of criteria to be developed in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer]

1. Each AAP will have an Area Budget to further the purpose of the Partnership and address the priorities set by the AAP Board. The amount allocated in the Area Budget will be set annually by the County Council and recommendations for spend will be made by the AAP Board to the Assistant Chief Executive.
2. In addition to the Area Budgets, the AAP Board may make recommendations to Unitary Councillors for use of Neighbourhood Budgets. Proposals for use of Neighbourhood Budgets will be made to AAP Boards at the next available Board meeting, or via email if the NB is for information only,

with the aim of ensuring impact is maximised against the priorities set by the AAP Board or by emerging community issues. Final recommendations for spend will be made by the Unitary Councillors to the Assistant Chief Executive unless the Councillor(s) has declared a personal or prejudicial interest in the application, in which case the AAP board will make the final recommendation.

- 3 The financial year of the Partnership shall commence on 1st April in each year and shall end on 31st March of the next calendar year.

13. Representation to External bodies

- a. The AAP will determine who should represent them on external bodies
- b. Any appointee by the AAP to an external body who fails to attend two consecutive meetings of a particular body may be replaced by the AAP

14. Sub groups of the AAP

- a. The AAP will have the power to set up task and finish groups to support its own work and to agree who should populate and Chair the task group.
- b. It may be required to set up other arrangements to link in with countywide strategic arrangements as required by the County Durham Partnership.
- c. Each task and finish group will have a Terms of Reference to ensure that their activity is conducted appropriately.

15. Engaging with neighbourhoods and communities of interest.

- e. Effective engagement with neighbourhoods and communities of interest is a key role of AAPs. Each AAP will determine its own mechanism to engage with its neighbourhoods that best reflects local circumstances.
- f. In engaging with neighbourhoods the AAP will recognise the important role of town and parish councils and local community and voluntary groups.
- g. The AAP will ensure that it engages with and considers the needs and priorities of communities of interest such as, although not limited to, disabled people, black and minority ethnic communities including Gypsy and Traveller communities, young and older people, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, transgender people, faith groups and those representing other beliefs such as Humanists.

16. Complaints

- a. If any individual AAP Board member or member of the AAP Forum wishes to submit a complaint they should do so in writing to the AAP Co-ordinator who will investigate the matter.
- b. If a complaint is made an acknowledgement will be made within five working days from receipt of complaint either:
 - i. Outlining the procedure to be followed
 - ii. Or an explanation as to why the complaint will not be dealt with by the AAP Board.
- c. If a complaint either
 - i. Concerns the Chair or the AAP Coordinator; or

ii. You believe your complaint was not dealt with properly by the AAP;
then the matter should be referred to:

Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement
Assistant Chief Executive's Office
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UL

The complaints procedure of Durham County Council will then prevail and you will be notified accordingly of its procedure.

17. Staff

- a. The AAP will be supported by staff employed by Durham County Council and all staff management issues will be dealt with by Durham County Council. This does not preclude other organisations locating staff within the AAP team but they will act under the direction of the AAP Coordinator.
- b. The AAP Coordinator will also represent the AAP at other meetings and is bound to ensure that where practicable they discuss such issues with the Board or the Chair but must give feedback at a Board meeting as to activities they have been involved with in the name of the AAP.

18. Review and alteration to the Partnership Agreement

If an AAP identifies a need to alter the Terms of Reference they must submit such a request to the County Council's relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder. If the request is deemed to be one that is minor and only affects an individual AAP then that request may be decided upon by the relevant Portfolio Holder. If the request is deemed to be major or could potentially affect other AAPs then it must be submitted to Cabinet for a decision by the relevant Portfolio Holder.

19. Dissolution

The AAP can only be dissolved by Durham County Council.

Appendix 1

Standing Orders for meetings of the AAP Board

Duration

- Meetings of the AAP Board should aim to last no longer than two hours. An intervening break can be scheduled into this 2 hours at the request of board members.

Agenda

- The AAP Co-ordinator in collaboration with the Chair, finalise the agenda beyond the set items but all have the opportunity to request items to be put on the agenda before it is sent out.
- Wherever possible tabling of agendas on the day of the meeting should be avoided unless there are exceptional circumstances. Good practice will be to give members at least 5 days notice of business of the meeting.

Protocol for All Meetings

- Code of conduct will appear on the reverse on each board agenda to remind attendees of processes to be followed.
- All attending are expected to abide by reasonable standards of behaviour. No shouting, swearing, threatening, accusing or other abusive behaviour will be tolerated.
- Everyone's viewpoint is to be respected.
- If an attendee oversteps the mark the Chair is entitled to ask for an apology and if an apology is not forthcoming has the right to insist that the person shall leave the meeting.
- All board members have the right to speak during all sections of the board agendas by indicating to the Chair his or her intent (usually by raising a hand). In most cases discussion should flow naturally but the Chair must ensure that all are given the opportunity to contribute and not the vociferous minority.
- The Chair does have the right to refuse any further discussion when a topic is either exhausted or reached a stalemate or the Chair has decided to move progress.
- All forum member observers at board meetings, at a minimum, should be invited to comment under the neighbourhood issues section of the agenda. It is at the discretion of the chair if they are to be invited to participate in discussion in any other sections of the agenda.
- It is the Chair's prerogative to call for a vote on any particular issue and he/she may seek a mandate from the meeting as to whether it will be a show of hands or a secret ballot.
- Agreement is usually reached by consensus unless there appears to be no consensus then a vote will be taken. All are expected to abide by a decision outside of the meeting and must not use another forum to undermine a decision taken at the AAP.
- Conflicts of interest need recording and the process should be followed as outline in section 11d.