

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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Cabinet

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County Durham Partnership Update

Report of Corporate Management Team

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

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

Purpose of the Report

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

Summary

2. There has been a significant amount of work carried out within the County Durham Partnership in recent months which includes the approval of the renewed Sustainable Community Strategy by Cabinet, Full Council and the County Durham Partnership Board. This SCS shows that the county remains ambitious and optimistic and maintains a strong belief in partnership working.
3. The AAPs have decided on their priorities for 2014/15 following their extensive consultation last year. This report highlights some of the changes that have taken place over the last five years in the areas that AAPs have focussed on and why these changes may have occurred. AAPs have also received feedback on the budget consultation that they delivered through their forum events, with specific information tailored to each AAP, and the possible implications of this. They, along with other groups, have had early discussions as to whether there is any interest from the voluntary and community sector, local councils or other interested groups in running council services or buildings. This 'ask' builds on work with both the voluntary sector and local councils to date on how working together in a more effective way could potentially maximise resources for the benefit of County Durham's residents.

Welfare Reform

4. The partnership hosted a second welfare reform conference on Thursday 13 February which brought together many agencies involved in this agenda with many

delegates returning from the previous event to discuss progress of local and countywide initiatives. The aims of the conference were to:

- a. Continue to build a common understanding of the impact of the changes across the County;
 - b. Share information on the practical solutions being put into place to address the problems people face and consider what more we can do;
 - c. Identify any gaps and to work together to look at how these gaps might be filled;
 - d. Building on the partnership working already in place to provide the support and reassurance people need and
 - e. Promote further action to mitigate the impact of the changes.
5. The main themes emerging from the event were: the need to build healthy, resilient and self-sufficient communities by way of improved access to IT systems, affordable food and essentials promoting local initiatives and encouraging the use of credit unions. The feedback suggested communities would benefit from more preventative work/proactive projects and an increase in the presence and engagement of Area Action Partnerships. Represented groups felt that there should be more regular events, such as the Welfare Reform Conference, to effect positive multi-agency working and the council should continue to work closely with agencies with limited resources. It was suggested that sharing good practice and improving partnership working with better trained front line staff would be a positive step and simpler correspondence and improved information sharing/signposting will result in positive outcomes.
6. Some delegates mentioned positive impacts of changes which they described as a general increase in partnership working that was taking place and a streamlining of communication methods between agencies and users which was enhancing working relationships.
7. Many of the AAPs are continuing to develop initiatives around welfare reform in order to support their local communities and help to ensure they are as resilient as possible before any negative implications are felt. The **Great Aycliffe and Middridge (GAMP) AAP** Board has chosen to implement the Welfare Champions concept through the recruitment and training of six volunteers to work in community venues within the GAMP area. The project which is funded from GAMP's Area Budget with match funding from Livin was officially launched on Friday 28 March. To date, six local volunteers have been trained as Welfare Champions and has been operating in local venues since early April 2014.
8. This is an example of sharing learning between AAPs and replicates the successful programme that has been running in East Durham for 12 months and involved the identification and recruitment of key community activists who were subsequently trained to be responsive to the needs of individuals in their own neighbourhoods. The model works on the principle that significant numbers of people who are likely to be affected by changes in the benefits system would not contact the statutory advice services and may seek support from known members of their community.
9. **East Durham AAP** continues to have 'Maintaining the Social Fabric of Our Community' priority as its overarching priority with three key themes featuring in their 2014/15 AAP Action Plan: support for vulnerable people in the community; support for volunteers and support for community buildings. All of these are

impacted on by the changes to the welfare system and East Durham AAP has been very proactive in their approach to supporting some of the most affected communities in the county.

10. In developing their focus for the forthcoming year the task and finish group has reflected on the impact of the 2013/14 action plan which had three key themes:
 - a. Access to Finance: the funding for a Development Officer establishing a Credit Union in East Durham has proven to be highly successful with over 1,000 East Durham residents joining. The second phase of the project is now focusing on six targeted communities to elevate the impact of both legal and illegal lenders on those that can least afford the high interest rates. In addition, the project is working with local employers to introduce payroll deduction schemes to tackle the rise in pay day loans.
 - b. Access to Advice: the development of the Welfare Champions project arose from the need identified through the priority group for a service that could be easily accessed by those members of the community requiring information, signposting and support with online applications. It was identified that often residents would not seek out support until the issue was critical and required more intensive and continuing support. The trained volunteers are known in their communities and are often those that the community would naturally turn to for information.
 - c. Access to Food: the rise in the number and need for food banks and access to food has dominated discussions at every level. AAP has supported the extension of the mobile meals service, run by volunteers, this project originated from the 'Winter Squad' project and the recognition that there were isolated and vulnerable people requiring support all year round. The volunteers, in addition to delivering meals, provide both emotional and practical support.
 - d. The group also wished to develop practical approaches to this issue and supported the 'FEED' project in the period after Christmas. However the group want to address this issue through a more sustainable and informed approach. Research is being developed both locally and at county level to inform what support is required for the ability of a community to access food. Questions include:
 - i. What support is required to build capacity and maintain the infrastructure of those organisations providing food through lunch clubs?
 - ii. What age range is most affected by this issue?
 - iii. Is there a need to have community gardens or food co-ops? What impact do school holidays have on those young people reliant on free school meals?
 - iv. The research is due to be completed in the spring and will link into the countywide approach to this issue and inform localised action.

Armed Forces

11. The Armed Forces Forum, established by the County Durham Partnership as a commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant, met for the third time on 18 March. It 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.

12. The Armed Forces Forum heard about the work of the Royal British Legion's welfare support for ex-service personnel of all ages through their network of local case workers. Their 'Knowledge Base', an on-line self-help resource centre which can be accessed via the link: <http://support.britishlegion.org.uk/>
13. The Community Covenant Grant Scheme remains open to any voluntary and community sector group or public body, 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.
14. Local Business can sign up to the Corporate Covenant which can be adopted by a business or charitable organisation of any size, and from any industry, whether they are an employer of a member of the armed forces community or simply wish to acknowledge publicly your support for the armed forces. Businesses and charitable organisations who wish to participate will be asked to pledge their support for the two key principles of the armed forces covenant, but also to select from a range of other commitments they may feel able to make. Business Durham have circulated a news item about the Corporate Covenant and circulated to their business networks which includes business clubs and engineering forums.

Chairman's Medal

15. In 2011 the Chairman of the Council asked the Area Action Partnerships if they could help to 'formalise' the process for deserving people and agencies to receive the Chairman's Medal Award. The Chairman felt that the AAPs would be best placed to seek nominations locally but equally have coverage of the whole county.
16. Working with the Chairman's office, officers from AAPs developed a nomination process where the community have an opportunity to nominate deserving people and organisations for 'individual voluntary effort' or 'outstanding charitable organisation'. AAPs continue to be central to promoting the awards and obtaining and shortlisting nominations locally. The Chairman then chooses an award winner from the shortlists provided by each AAP culminating in 14 award winners representing all 14 AAP areas.
17. This year's award ceremony was held in April with around 150 nominations of individuals or groups in recognition of services to County Durham. The 14 winners all demonstrate considerable contributions to their local communities and include a 102 year old lady from the Spennymoor AAP area who has sold poppies on behalf of the Royal British Legion for over 50 years and believes she has sold over one million poppies. Also recognised were the Lifeline Community Action Group from the GAMP area which encourages those seeking help to help and support themselves and their families by teaching practical life-skills such as problem solving and budgeting. The group also organises local events, including a Christmas Day meal for disadvantaged people in Newton Aycliffe. A further winner was from the 3 Towns AAP area which had transformed allotments in the area on a voluntary basis and has captured community spirit and included a number of local people in the work.

Voluntary Sector and Local Councils Working Groups

18. The working groups held with colleagues from the voluntary and community sector and representatives from local councils continue to meet and share information on key issues affecting all parts of the partnership.

19. The VCS group is developing a countywide approach to volunteering, and building on the strong foundation of our current procurement practice to further increase VCS involvement in tendering exercises.
20. The Local Councils group has held discussions on the council's budget proposals with particular reference to national changes on local councils funding such as potential capping increases in council tax, similar to the rules applied to principal authorities at present.
21. A joint meeting was scheduled to complement the CDP forum meeting in February, to discuss interest from the voluntary and community sector, local councils or other interested groups in running council services or buildings. This 'ask' was launched at the CDP forum meeting and builds on work with both groups to date on how working together in a more effective way could potentially maximise resources for the benefit of County Durham's residents.

Sharing good practice

22. The AAPs and thematic partnerships of the CDP continue to share examples of best practice with each other which, in some cases, have seen initiatives or ways of working transferred to other parts of the wider partnership. They also continue to be innovative in their approaches and to learn from partners on new ways of working within communities.
23. During 2013/14 a lot of work has been done between the thematic partnerships and AAPs to embed the strategic priorities at a local level and also to feed in local issues into strategic planning. A good example of this was discussed at a recent **Children and Families Partnership** meeting where young people from Investing in Children gave a presentation on the improvements they had been involved in on the Sherburn Road Estate in Durham, supported by **Durham AAP**. In summary this meant three "agenda days" took place to gather the views of young people in the local area on their priorities, with three main themes emerging:
 - a. Things to do and places to go
 - b. Environment and safety
 - c. Police and relationships with young people
24. The young people looked at these themes with support from Investing in Children and Durham AAP, to identify potential improvements. Some of the achievements and outcomes from this work were:
 - a. Play park improvements - which included the installation of additional equipment and ensuring the range of equipment was suitable for all ages, and graffiti removal
 - b. A successful Community Group AAP Bid - the people responsible for delivering community youth activities worked together to ensure that their timetables were complementing rather than competing with each other
 - c. Relationships between police and young people improved, with both engaging in team building activities e.g. football and snooker matches and Mini PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings were established for the first time in County Durham.

25. The young people posed questions to the Partnership including: 'can more of this be done, and by whom?' Acknowledgement was given to the level of success the young people, Durham AAP and liC have achieved. The partnership felt that this success should be highlighted as an area of best practice and information shared with other AAPs and that the AAPs are well placed to take this type of improvement work forward. On a more general point the Children and Families Partnership is fully supportive of the work undertaken by the AAPs, linked to their priorities.
26. **Bishop Auckland and Shildon (BASH) AAP** has successfully been working with other funders to secure additional funding for projects. They have worked closely with the Durham Dales Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group who have invested over £90,000 in AAP projects including the continuation of their successful employability projects. Although these are not specific health projects the CCG have chosen to do this because they are impressed with the work carried out by the AAP and acknowledge that they have an impact on the wider social determinants of health.
27. They have also built relationships with some local charitable trusts which have resulted in a further investment into the local community of nearly £200,000. Project supported include community groups, village halls, charities and schools.
28. An example of AAPs working together with partners is **GAMP AAP's** 'Work 4 Health' project which aims to develop and deliver a training package that addresses the relationship between employment and health, often referred to as the social determinants of health. These are intrinsically linked, with good health associated with being in work and poor health linked to long term unemployment. The training will be aimed at those with a health condition or disability, aged 19 plus who reside in the GAMP area and are preparing to enter employment for the first time or are unemployed or unwaged and seeking to improve their employability skills for return to work.
29. The Learning for Health Coordinator at the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) will deliver a range of training sessions aimed at:
 - a. Meeting the needs of employers;
 - b. Building confidence/self-esteem so that individuals are empowered to apply for and secure/sustain meaningful employment;
 - c. Providing the opportunity to develop an understanding of relationships in the workplace and employer expectations;
 - d. Encouraging the development of values, personal attributes and interpersonal skills that contribute to success in the workplace.
30. A series of interactive workshop sessions will be built into the training to enable the individuals to learn invaluable skills outside the accredited programme including:
 - a. Team building activities focusing on: healthy lifestyles, communication etc.
 - b. Activity to increase self-management competence and ensuring goal setting is meaningful.
 - c. Working with employers and the National Careers Service to explore how they can improve their chances of landing a job.
 - d. Exploring the worth of their skills/competencies in relation to rapidly changing labour market needs.

31. The project will be delivered during 2014 and in addition to each ten week course, and where appropriate, individuals will be provided with one to one personalised support and 50% of the participants will have access to health therapies and treatments agreed with the Learning for Health Coordinator. There are a number of proposed outcomes attached to the delivery of the programme.
32. Similar to this is **Stanley AAP's** support of the delivery of the 'Health Improvement through Sport' (HITS) project that has been running successfully in Derwentside since April 2010, working with over 1,650 people to date. Targeting Derwentside residents (and their families) at risk of type II diabetes or cardiovascular disease, HITS aims to increase participation in regular physical activity through sports development structures and pathways.
33. HITS takes a unique community development approach in creating and sustaining physical activity opportunities, including recruiting and training volunteers to support and lead multi-sports sessions, working in partnership with local sports clubs. As well as delivering sessions directly, project staff undertake development work to help improve local capacity, helping to set up new groups and clubs such as Archery at Shotley Bridge Cricket Club, Pilates at Craghead Village Hall and Back to Netball Stanley. The project has been recognised nationally as a model of best practice in improving health through physical activity and has been included as a case study/positive example in 'Improving Health Through Activity and Sport' 2012, a report commissioned by Sport England.

Refreshed AAP priorities

34. The AAPs have recently chosen their priorities for the forthcoming year through their November forum events. The participatory budgeting element of the events this time meant that many more people than usual voted on the priorities for their AAP area. A usual forum meeting attracts between 80 and 150 people whereas a participatory budgeting event can attract on average 800 people, with a wider age range and people who may not usually engage with the AAP. This can offer a variety on the priorities that are usually chosen as well as offer a different perspective as to why they are chosen. The events can also facilitate discussions amongst groups of people that may not usually meet and this can have an impact on the decisions that they make.
35. Since their inception in 2009 the AAPs have worked on a diverse range of initiatives in order to meet their priorities. At their launch events in the spring of 2009, 13 of the 14 identified activities for children and young people as a priority, with Teesdale being the only exception, possibly due to the demographic of the local residents. At that time less than half of the AAPs identified employment related issues as a priority although many identified town centre regeneration and vitality which covered physical and environmental issues. Support for the voluntary sector also came out as an issue which may have been related to a change in arrangements within the county following local government reorganisation and a fear that central funding would be reduced.
36. The table below shows how AAP area budget and Member's Neighbourhood budget, including any match funding was allocated in the first year of AAPs, with economic activity and support for children and young people receiving the most support.

Altogether	NB 2009/10	Match	AB 2009/10	Match	Total
Wealthier	270,113	457,227	800,787	1,852,485	3,380,612
Children and Young People	946,779	1,699,222	659,106	664,670	3,969,777
Healthier	92,500	155,739	242,049	610,065	1,100,353
Safer	219,767	42,797	142,904	0.00	405,468
Greener	203,746	264,438	236,112	345,561	1,049,857
Totals	1,732,905	2,619,423	2,080,958	3,472,781	9,906,067

37. The priorities for most of the AAPs remained quite static until 2012/13 and 2013/14 when nearly all AAPs identified priorities linked to employment support, job creation and education and training. Whilst wider Altogether wealthier projects have always featured heavily these were initially more about the physical regeneration and town centre vitality whereas they are now much more people focussed. This is believed to be due to the changing economic climate and the recognition locally that people needed additional help and support to find a job after a period of unemployment or to access training that would help them change jobs. Also, many AAPs have used their area budgets to identify specific support for people wanting to start their own business as this was a recognised gap in provision within the county that has seen significant success in many AAP areas.

38. The table below shows how funding from AAPs and Members budgets in 2012/13 and 2013/14 have been invested in the thematic priorities, with the majority supporting altogether wealthier, the county's top priority.

Altogether	NB 2012/14	Match	AB 2012/14	Match	Total
Wealthier	2,657,642	8,082,819	2,007,598	5,876,713	18,624,802
Children and Young People	1,806,164	2,092,708	732,685	801,046	5,432,603
Healthier	610,455	1,114,021	270,653	426,547	2,421,676
Safer	868,647	400,351	163,495	111,212	1,543,705
Greener	419,358	309,121	89,650	205,417	1,023,546
Totals	6,362,266	11,999,020	3,264,081	7,420,935	29,046,332

39. Many AAPs in the last year have specifically linked their work to changes in the welfare system and trying to minimise the impact this has on local communities. This is a theme that has continued for the current year with AAPs learning from each other and adopting some project ideas. As Durham has pockets of quite severe deprivation this work is vital in helping people to not only understand the changes but also to be able to put measures in place to mitigate against them. The AAPs are proactively identifying innovative ways of working with partners and local groups to keep

40. An example of how priorities can change can be found in **Mid Durham AAP's** area. Their forum meeting saw Crime and Community Safety rise up to the top priority from previously being sixth and environmental issues rise from seventh to third. The AAP staff team carried out further investigation into the feedback provided on these two priority areas and discovered the following:

- a. Crime and Community – came up high because it was a lot of people’s second or third choice. The comments made were not specific to issues and places, but generally, perception based comments; ‘*Crime is always a priority*’ and ‘*More police on the streets*’. The team also discovered that the majority of these comments had been made by older people. They then took this information to the LMAPs group and agreed that the use of the Durham Constabulary ‘Opportunity Knocks’ scheme might help them to be able to provide better background information as to what local people do feel about community safety within their village. This was discussed at the AAP Board meeting in March, with the Board agreeing not to set up a task group around this priority, but to wait on what further information could be provided through the ‘Opportunity Knocks’ scheme. However, the board agreed to pursue the older people angle further through our existing ‘Support for Older People’ task group.
 - b. Environment – The environmental issues were very village specific and it was agreed at the AAP Board meeting in February that the best way to deal with these was to conduct the work through the village action plans rather than setting up a specific task and finish group. The key issues were litter, dog fouling and general street cleanliness and to date it appears that the village specific work in partnership with the Parish Councils, County Councillors, relevant service partners and residents has managed to address a lot of these issues.
41. Crime and Community Safety was also voted highly as a priority this year in the **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** area and similarly there is little statistical evidence from community safety partners and council information to corroborate this. The representative from Durham Community Action however, highlighted that research shows that younger people and older people are the groups most affected by fear of crime. Therefore the board decided to have Crime and Community Safety running alongside the priorities of Activities for Children and Young People and Older People.
42. The **Spennymoor AAP** has also seen a shift in priorities and has re-adopted the priority of Town Centre Regeneration for the 2014-15 financial year, a priority theme which it has not had since the 2011-12 financial year. Taking into consideration the previous work the partnership did around Town Centre Regeneration and the continuing desire from members of the public and wider forum for employment and jobs to be considered as priority, the AAP has decided to merge the two themes to try and instigate a more joined up approach in tackling the two target areas. It is intended that this will result in some innovative work that will provide schemes that produce, amongst other things, economies of scale and value for money.

Altogether wealthier

43. The **County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP)** meeting in February invited a presentation on the opportunities and the delivery strategy of Durham University. This was presented by Professor Ray Hudson who covered enhancing impacts of the cultural events on the economy of County Durham, with Roger Kelly, the Chair of the Cultural Partnership, providing support on influencing opportunities for investment presented through the NELEP. Edward Twiddy, NELEP Director, also

provided an update on the developments for the SEP and moving EU Investment planning towards delivery.

44. The CDEP recognised that Durham University is continuing to strive for excellence in research and education. Part of its strategy includes the promotion of Enterprise Zones and additional research and development; widening participation in higher education, specifically working with young people and the provision of scholarships; developing its local supply chain and opportunities to develop and expand local career progression for students through business engagement and start-ups. The Cultural Partnership is in the process of setting out a ten year strategy for the county. It supported the Cultural Partnership's plans to identify events, undertake a cultural audit of the county and to work with, and make links with, people to make the most of the assets we have. The CDEP continue to support the development of opportunities presented through the next round of European Funding and endorsed the establishment of a new Durham Investment Group to drive forward this activity within the CDEP and to continue to work closely with the NELEP.
45. In order to provide useful information to improve understanding of the impacts of welfare reform on housing provision and to consider housing demand across the sub region the Housing Forum has commissioned some research to analyse the current and future housing demand needs within County Durham and Tees Valley. Also, the current partnership Housing Strategy is due to be reviewed and refreshed by partners, with a new strategy planned for April 2015.
46. The **4 Together AAP** has supported a number of initiatives to support local people into employment, including supporting job club facilities at the Ladder Centre, a local community building, due to the increased demand for the service. This has increased the opportunity for local people to access support from one day a week to four days, available four hours a day. This service is provided by fully qualified employability mentors who have the ability and skills to support local people with both the ICT requirements but also employment support and advice. In order to address the needs of the local community and ensure that job search requirements are met, the project offers general support and one to one mentoring for clients who require extra help and support.
47. The job club provision provides open access to ICT from ten laptops, allows clients to complete online applications and provides help and support to set up email accounts, government gateway accounts and also CVs.
48. Only five months into the 12 month project outcomes are exceeding targets:
 - a. 150 advice and guidance sessions provided
 - b. 21 people have been supported into employment
 - c. 81 local people have gained skills to improve employability
 - d. 65 people have taken part in training with 21 receiving qualifications
 - e. 75 local people have reported being more confident and able to cope with benefit requirements.

Altogether better for children and young people

49. A robust consultation process with key stakeholders, including children and young people, has taken place to review the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2014-2017. The reviewed plan has a focus on early years' provision, support for children and young people in education and those who are not in education,

employment or training (NEET). Children and young people will be supported to make healthy choices and have the best start in life which will include the development of an emotional health and wellbeing strategy. Partners will also work to embed a Think Family approach to consider the whole family when carrying out work with individual children or adults.

50. Following consultation, a final version of the “Believe, Achieve and Succeed: Increasing the Participation of Young People in Learning 2013-2015 Plan” has been approved by the **Children and Families Partnership**. The aim of the plan is to identify and co-ordinate a range of activities to increase the participation of young people in learning and to reduce the NEETs. European funding is available to support young people aged 14-19 who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.
51. Significant changes in relation to children with special educational needs and disabilities will be implemented from September 2014, following Royal Assent of the Children and Families Act on 13 March 2014. A Special Educational Needs and Behaviour Review has been undertaken in Durham which identified that the county has more children and young people with special educational needs than the national average. A multi-agency steering group has been established to plan for the implementation of these reforms in the county. This includes piloting Education Health and Care Plans with a number of families; bringing together a holistic approach to meeting children and young people’s needs. Local Authorities must also publish a clear and easy to understand “local offer” of services available in the local area.
52. The Children and Families Partnership has been awarded Investors in Children status to recognise the work undertaken to support children and young people. At each meeting, children and young people provide feedback to the Partnership on the issues that affect them. This includes issues in relation to homophobic bullying, mental health and self-harm support and access to local services.
53. **East Durham Rural Corridor** is the latest AAP that is focussing on specifically engaging with children and young people. Their ‘Making a Difference – Children and Young Peoples Voice’ project has the overall aim to create opportunities for children and young people to be involved in having a say about their community and the issues that affect them.
54. Throughout the year funding will be used to deliver a series of activities which will offer opportunities for dialogue that will hopefully result in change. All of the activities will be developed and steered by children and young people, Investing in Children, local Councillors and the AAP Board. As part of the project the following will take place:
 - a. **Youth Forum** – a Youth Forum will be established for children and young people living in the East Durham Rural Corridor area. Meetings of the forum will take place on a bi-monthly basis running parallel to the AAP Board meetings and feeding in the views of children and young people and vice versa. Young people sitting on the forum will represent their local area and act as the voice of other young people living there; they will have a place on the AAP Board agendas at every meeting. The forum will also link in with other agencies involved in the AAP, e.g. Police, health and the fire service etc, and have a say on service provision for youth activities.

- b. **Events** – Forum members will be responsible for seeking the views of other children and young people by organising and facilitating events such as agenda days (adult free events run by young people for young people), research groups and councillors surgeries etc. All events will take place in community buildings children and young people are comfortable in.
- c. **Councillor Surgeries** – Forum members will work directly with local Councillors to organise local Councillor surgery events throughout the year that will offer young people the opportunity to speak directly to their local Councillors, raise any concerns they may have and make changes to their area.
- d. **Training** – Forum members will be offered training in order to develop their skills in delivering such events, interview training to enable them to be able to interview future youth workers for the area if need be, equal opportunities training and e-safety training.
- e. **Peer Mentoring** – Young people on the forum will be trained to act as peer mentors for other young people and youth projects in the area.

55. Another of the many ways that AAPs have of involving children and young people is through celebratory events. The **3 Towns AAP** Children and Young People's Awards 2013/14 was held on Friday 4 April 2014 with almost 150 people gathered to celebrate the achievements of the Children and Young People of the three towns. This is the third time that the Youth Forum has organised an awards night in order to promote the positive activities of young people and reduce the negative attitude towards this age range. This year, 23 nominations were received for the eight categories which are: Help in the Community Award; Young Carer's Award; Hero Award; Young Role Model Award; Youth Project of the Year; Silver Lining Award; Young Person's Choice Award and Wildcard Award. All nominations were extremely strong and the panel had a very difficult decision shortlisting for each award. For the first time, the panel recommended to the Youth Forum that Special Recognition Awards should also be given to those who had not been shortlisted but whose nomination deserved recognition.
56. **Teesdale AAP (TAP)** has led on the development of a new Youth Arts Festival for County Durham. The feasibility work was done in 2013/14 and this is being built on so a festival can be delivered on the 20 and 21 July this year. This 'pilot' festival will involve 200 young people from the Durham Dales area and will bring them together for a weekend of drama, art and music in Barnard Castle. The project brings together a number of local partners and has been successful in attracting significant amounts of match funding including £11,000 from the Arts Council. The pilot will hopefully lead to a much bigger festival in 2015 attracting young people from right across County Durham and the North East region to a part of the county many people may not have previously visited.
57. Working with the council's leisure services team, TAP has also funded the delivery of multi-sport activities for young people in 11 villages in the Teesdale area. Getting activities out into some of the more remote parts of County Durham is essential for the inclusion of children and young people and will also benefit their

health and well-being. The project will support local volunteers and encourage them to continue to deliver activities for children and young people in future.

58. As featured in a number of these reports previously, during the **Spennymoor AAP** supported community trips of 2011 and 2012 parents were asked if they would like to 'find out more' and help on future trips. Having completed training with CAVOS and working closely with Spennymoor Extended Services, Spennymoor Area Family Events (SAFE) came into existence. SAFE, via this project, aimed to offer families within the Spennymoor AAP area, the opportunity to engage in positive activities and hope to bridge the gap in the community by offering affordable trips that are accessible for all.
59. This project has now been completed and over the past year SAFE has planned and carried out five very successful trips and events which have been accessed by approximately 769 people from all parts of the community. The project has built relationships with local businesses that have enabled trips and events to be offered at the best possible prices to all members of the community.
60. SAFE has been out and about in the community working hard to fund raise and publicise the group and its activities. These activities have ranged from bag packing in ASDA, walking in the Spenny Gala, organising raffles and tombola and helping out at local events run by Success North East. The feedback from all SAFE events has been fantastic, with many families expressing their appreciation of the group's efforts to provide this service, enabling families to spend "quality fun family time together". Those involved are currently hard at work looking for further funding opportunities to run this year's trips and events, with plans in place for an Easter trip for the community to look forward to.
61. **Stanley AAP** is also supporting events for young people through the re-start of alcohol-free young bands nights in Stanley. The project will build on the positive features and outcomes of the previous programme and will help to contribute towards the reduction of alcohol misuse and the promotion of healthier and safer lifestyle choices amongst young people. The project will enable a series of live music events to take place in a central location in Stanley. Young bands from the Stanley area, as well as from other parts of County Durham and the region will perform on a professional stage with full technical support (lighting, sound, crew) to help raise self-esteem and aspirations, and to encourage young bands to take their music seriously and develop performance skills.
62. Young people will be involved in all aspects of the live music events, including: the planning, promotion and delivery of the events such as leaflet/poster design, promotion through social media, helping out back-stage and front of house, taking photographs of bands, running stalls and the completion of audience surveys during and after the event. A partnership approach to the planning and delivery of the events will be undertaken to encourage collaboration between a range of public, statutory and voluntary agencies in the area. Further added value will be brought to the young bands nights through links with other opportunities and projects specifically the 'Sound Connections' project being managed by regional music agency Generator and Durham County Council Arts Team.
63. The re-starting of this popular project will give young people a place to meet with friends, listen to live music played by their peers, participate in other leisure activities, access information about a range of issues relating to healthy lifestyles,

and find out about other local opportunities from key partners. The project will result in a regular series of eight alcohol-free live music events over a 12 - 15 month timescale featuring young bands in a range of styles and genres popular with the local audience, with programming decisions guided by young people themselves. Another aim of the project is to build on other local and regional music-making activity involving young people, and find ways in which the young bands nights can complement and add value to the commitment, enthusiasm and resources of other providers based or operating in the Stanley AAP area.

Altogether healthier

64. The **Health and Wellbeing Board** has agreed the first annual review of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017 following consultation with over 400 local people including service users, carers, young people, scrutiny committees, partners and Area Action Partnerships. The review of the strategy has also been informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2013, Annual Report of the Director of Public Health County Durham and the Better Care Fund plan. Additional actions have been incorporated in the Strategy to address the important issues that have been identified, including support for children with mental health needs, offender health and social isolation.
65. The Better Care Fund plan for County Durham was ratified by the Health and Wellbeing Board at its meeting in March. This is a pooled budget which will be deployed locally on health and social care initiatives from 2015/16. The Better Care Fund plan will support the aim of providing people with the right care, in the right place, at the right time, including a significant emphasis upon care in community settings, with the express aim of reducing admissions and readmissions to secondary care and alleviating pressures on the acute sector.
66. The Better Care Fund plan has been aligned to the strategic objectives in the reviewed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and to Clinical Commissioning Groups strategic and operational plans to ensure that the work on health and social care integration and transformation is fully reflected. One of the important initiatives in the plan relates to the integrated short term intervention service (ISIS). The service will provide one route into all intermediate care services following discharge from hospital, which will prevent unnecessary readmission to hospitals or premature admission to care homes, and promote independence and faster recovery from illness.
67. Six of the **Northern area AAPs (Chester le Street, Derwent Valley, Durham, East Durham Rural Corridor, Mid Durham and Stanley)** are working closely with the Council's Culture and Sport, Leisureworks and Age UK County Durham to extend and further develop the 'Healthy Horizons' physical activity programme for older people. All six AAPs have either older /vulnerable people or health as a key priority and recognise that the Healthy Horizons programme is working with hundreds of older people across our areas to keep them both physically and mentally active. The programme has been externally evaluated on several occasions and feedback has indicated how important this programme is in keeping older people independent, for longer. The project addresses several key issues identified both locally and countywide (Health & Wellbeing Strategy) including heart, stroke and lung disease, dementia, mental health and an increasing older population.

68. Healthy Horizons was established in 2005 and has a proven track record in improving the health of the older population by getting people active within their own communities and during its nine years it has worked with over 3,000 older people with popular sessions including Line Dancing, Aqua Salsa, Yoga and FitSteps.
69. Over the next two years Healthy Horizons will seek to encourage older people, aged 65 and above, but particularly the more elderly and those living in disadvantaged communities, who may be more restricted in terms of their ability to access traditional physical activity provision, to improve their lifestyle through the provision of accessible physical activity opportunities within their own community.
70. Further to the success of **Derwent Valley AAP's** Chitter Chatter project, which set out to tackle inequalities in language, literacy and personal and social development skills, the AAP is now supporting a family learning project called Healthy starts which is currently being delivered and which will focus on the limiting the impact of welfare reform, healthy eating and exercise. Families will also continue to get language enriched activities during the healthy starts project.

Altogether safer

71. The **Safe Durham Partnership** continues to see one of the lowest levels of crime per 1,000 population despite County Durham experiencing a recent increase in crime following year on year reductions. Durham has the lowest crime rate of 15 'Most Similar' community safety areas (year to December-end 2013). Crime levels are lower than the equivalent period in 2011/12 but are 6% higher than the number of crimes in the same period of 2012/13. Based on current figures, Durham Constabulary forecast a 10.7% increase in total crime by the end of 2013/14. This increase, however, is within the context of an increasing crime rate in more than half of police forces nationally.
72. On 14 January 2014 the **Safe Durham Partnership** held a Restorative Approaches conference which was a milestone for accelerating this work. Their aim is to become a restorative county by creating a culture of restorative approaches both in local communities and within partner agencies and services. The partnership aims to integrate restorative approaches into a number of groups and areas of work. The current and planned provision of restorative approaches has been mapped, along with training needs for staff from those organisations involved.
73. The Safer Home Scheme continues to provide safety and security equipment to the homes of those who need it most. More than 4,500 homes have benefited since 2011 and while the scheme is not able to deliver these numbers today, it is delivering home safety at a fraction of the cost of the original funded scheme. The scheme is now run by 19 volunteers from Neighbourhood Watch in the east and the south of the county. Volunteers have given 452 hours of their time by visiting 213 homes where they have carried out crime prevention surveys and handed out basic security equipment. Volunteers have raised £2,500 in funding to add to the funding provided by the Council.
74. A task and finish group has been established to provide strategic level co-ordination of Safe Durham Partnership issues leading up to and during the transition of probation services across County Durham. The group includes representatives from the Council, Police, Probation, Ministry of Justice, Prisons, Public Health and

the Police and Crime Commissioners office. The group is managing the local transitional arrangements and the replacement of the existing Probation Trusts with a new National Probation Service and the creation of 21 public sector Community Rehabilitation Companies which took place on April 1 2014.

75. A new national Serious and Organised Crime Strategy has been published by the Home Office. The strategy uses the Counter Terrorism (Contest) Framework as a model to connect activity at an international, national and local level. It utilises the four P's to describe its objectives:
 - a. Pursue and disrupt serious and organised criminals;
 - b. Prevent people from getting involved in organised crime;
 - c. Protect against serious and organised criminality; and,
 - d. Prepare when serious organised crime occurs and ensure communities, victims and witnesses are provided support.
76. County Durham is at an advanced stage of development and has started to, provide advice to other areas of the country in terms of 'lessons learnt'. Therefore work has been undertaken to review and update our position against the requirements of the strategy.
77. In recognising the importance of the CDP's work in addressing drug and alcohol misuse, the **4 Together Partnership**, is funding a project to deliver a support group for those experiencing drug and alcohol problems. The new project is set to help users and families suffering from the effects of drug and alcohol addiction via the community group called Clean and Sober Living, situated in the Cornforth Partnership building.
78. The project, for people living in Ferryhill and the surrounding areas, will target 25 to 30 people with an addiction and may be resorting to crime. Those taking part will be put in touch with former addicts who are in long term recovery and will benefit from 50 peer led drug and alcohol support group sessions led by an experienced mentor. Additionally the project will engage with families and wider stakeholders by offering an educational/training programme surrounding addiction and alcoholism and abstinence based recovery.

Police and Crime Plan

79. Ron Hogg, Durham's Police and Crime Commissioner, has reviewed his Police and Crime Plan which was launched to the public and partners on April 1 2014. This refreshed plan sets out the PCC's vision and commitments and the objectives needed to achieve this. This plan provides strategic direction for the Chief Constable, who has responsibility for day to day operational policing.
80. The vision for County Durham and Darlington remains unchanged and it is 'to achieve excellence in local policing and the highest levels of public confidence by working alongside communities and partners to address what matters locally'.
81. The Police and Crime Plan 2014-17 is available to view on Ron Hogg's website: www.durham-pcc.gov.uk and is also available in large print, as a leaflet for residents and as a video on YouTube.

Altogether greener

82. The **Environment Partnership** will host the 25th annual Environment Awards with the launch to coincide with World Environment Day on Thursday 5 June. A revised and refreshed format is proposed for the 25th year including a new category for creation and improvement of public open space, more recognition of role of regeneration and health benefits in schemes and more low carbon technologies as part of the Climate Change category.
83. The judging process will also be streamlined and more focussed in specialist areas of Communities, Sustainability and Built and Natural Environment. New judges are being sought to join the panel in a shadow capacity and Board members asked to consider candidates.
84. The awards will be launched at the Gala Theatre, to include presentations from past outstanding winners in the key areas (Communities, Sustainability and Built and Natural Environment). The finalists' ceremony will be held on 13th November at the Radisson Hotel in Durham when the commemorative book will be launched so that 2014 winners can be included.
85. Environmental initiatives are increasing in some AAP areas and the **Chester le Street AAP's** Improved Environment Task Group of the AAP is supporting a bid to the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) to undertake a feasibility study into the potential viability of large scale renewable energy projects. The bid (if successful) will allow the AAP to explore some of the natural resources locally and give scope to consider alternative energy projects. Alongside this the group is talking to the local social housing provider about domestic related opportunities (solar panels), as this is outside of the parameters of the funding criteria for RCEF.
86. The whole aim of this exploration is to potentially create a community energy company which would be able to draw in its own sustainable funding through the gain from renewable energy. The development of a 'community owned' renewal energy company would be able to have its own 'trust' in order to decide how locally generated income could be recycled locally, into a whole range of existing and new community projects supporting the voluntary sector without the need to be as reliant on external grants. The RCEF bid is for £20,000, which would be funds drawn in to the local area.
87. Working with colleagues in the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) the AAP is working with effected communities within the area to help develop a series of community resilience plans designed to ensure communities are better prepared for/in disaster type situations. Chester-le-Street (town) has a recorded history of flooding and with recent events in 2012 in particular this has sparked a whole series of actions by the council's Neighbourhood Services Team, Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency. The AAP saw a 'gap' in terms of how the community are 'better prepared' should the town and surrounding villages suffer again through severe flooding.
88. Through the AAP Improved Environment task group at the first stage we are planning to host a 'drop-in' session and invite communities, parish councils and community building representatives as well as the general public. The nature of the drop-in will be to showcase the emergency services and how they respond to

emergency situations and what support and activities they undertake to negate issues. These agencies will also give some prevention advice.

89. There will also be a session about community resilience planning and hopefully identify champions or key people in communities where we can continue that dialogue and hopefully develop a series of plans where different potential risks are identified in different geographic areas. The plans would be developed in support of the community knowing and understanding their roles and what they may need to do should such an event occur. The drop-in session is planned for 30th April 2014. If this goes well the CCU are looking at a potential role out of this 'model' in other areas. There is a correlation to the 'Operation Valencia' model which took place in Lanchester, which some people may be familiar with.

Area Action Partnerships Update

90. In addition to individual projects the AAPs are collectively involved in a number of different pieces of work. All AAPs have received feedback on the budget consultation that took place late last year with information tailored to each area showing the specific findings. Also as part of this presentation there has been focus on the offer also discussed at the joint VCS and local councils working groups as highlighted earlier in the report. Local groups involved in AAPs may also be interested in running council services or buildings and working together in a more effective way in order to maximise resources for the benefit of County Durham's residents.
91. The 14 AAPs all implement projects that are relevant to their own area. Some of these are not specific to one of their task and finish groups or one of the priority themes directly but have a positive impact on the local area and have come out of local consultation or been brought forward by local people. The following information highlights a selection of projects from AAPs additional to the work already mentioned in the report.
92. **Stanley AAP** is producing two editions of a directory via their area budget. The directory will contain activity details and support information for local residents; elderly, carers, disabled, children and young people who all reside in the Stanley AAP area. The directory will have input from Stanley AAP's Support for the Elderly, Carers, and Disability Task Group and the Opportunities and Activities for Young Peoples Task Group.
93. At the core of all AAPs is its ability to engage effectively with the local community, partners and other stakeholders. Part of this engagement is to ensure that the AAP communicates and publicises local activities and support information of its partners and local community buildings for the benefit of the residents of the area it covers.
94. The directory will include up to date information about what is available in local community buildings (libraries, community centres, sports centres, social clubs, youth centres, care homes, offices, schools etc.) in the Stanley area and will range from a local toddler group to a seated exercise class for elderly and disabled residents. The directory will also include information from key partners detailing the support and advice they are able to provide to local residents.
95. It will also promote the work and priorities the Stanley AAP are focusing on and the associated Task & Finish Groups that come up with project ideas to address the

priorities and their underlying issues, support better communication links between the AAP and local residents, and to empower the community with relevant local information on other local services and avenues for how they can interact effectively with them to improve service delivery in their area and better meet their needs. The information will go some way in assisting the AAP to work more effectively with local residents, workers, businesses, agencies and services within the Stanley AAP locality to help address the AAP's priorities.

96. The **Derwent Valley AAP** is supporting Consett Amateur Swimming Club (CASC) to develop the swimming skills of children and swimmers of all ages to national NPTS standards by developing Level one coaches up to Level two. Support provided by the AAP will enable six coaches to undertake the necessary training to provide a higher level of coaching to the current 350 Club members.
97. The club is an entirely amateur club run by volunteers dedicated to the health, fitness and swimming development of their membership and the six beneficiaries of the AAPs support will be committing to at least 12 months of voluntary coaching for the club.
98. **Weardale AAP's** support has led to the restoration of the Westgate Memorial Clock which is now back to its former glory and has been re-dedicated. The clock was erected as a memorial to those that fell in the Great War, and suffered from 100 years of Dale's weather. The clock has been fully restored using support from the community, grant aid bodies and the AAP.
99. Working with local farmers the AAP is also building on the artisan expertise within the Dale to revive some long forgotten pastimes of spinning and weaving. Utilising local farms wool supply, the Spinning group now spin the wool into yarn that can be either knitted or woven. The skills shared within the group ensure this craft continues. Working with the 'Matters' in Wearhead, the AAP have facilitated some commissions, these will support the group financially, to ensure their suitability.

Recommendations and reasons

100. Members are requested to note the report.

Contact: Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer
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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

Partnership Events 2014

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event Title</u>	<u>Lead Partner</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
June 5 2014	Launch of 25 th Annual Environment Awards	Durham County Council/Environment Partnership	Victoria Burrell, 03000 266099
June 18 2014	Community Buildings Conference. To be held at Durham County Cricket Club, Riverside, Chester le Street.	Durham Community Action (DCA)	Sarah Robinson, DCA, 01207 529621