

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

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Cabinet

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County Durham Partnership Update



Report of Corporate Management Team

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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 Members on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including the board, the five thematic partnerships and all area action partnerships (AAPs). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county.

Summary

- 2 The County Durham Partnership's Good to Great element of the broader Transformation Programme has increased in activity in recent months. Through Board and Forum meetings, as well as specific working groups, actions are underway with a particular focus on best practice and scaling successful projects up being a key theme. Further integration into the broader partnership is planned through Board and Forum meetings which will be utilised to ensure priorities are shared as are solutions.
- 3 Linked to transformation is the Prioritising Prevention agenda which is a high priority and will continue through the work of the CDP Board and June Forum meeting. It is recognised that this is a cross partnership issue and covers health as well as education, employment and work with children and young people. A number of presentations have taken place on this subject and will continue through a specific working group and a range of specific workshops to identify examples of best practice that can be scaled up across the partnership.
- 4 Broader partnership working with faith groups and armed forces continues with a successful funding application for the latter recently announced. A successful joint bid worth £240,000 from the MOD Armed Forces Covenant Fund will extend the Armed Forces Outreach Service, operating in Gateshead since 2012, into County Durham and Northumberland. This will provide advice and guidance on what the council offers in terms of housing and financial management, training and education and job finding assistance as well as introducing people to appropriate voluntary and community sector organisations.

Key Partnership Activity and Developments

- 5 The **County Durham Partnership Board** has had joint presentations on the Prioritising Prevention Agenda at its January and April meetings. This approach shows that it is a cross partnership issue and therefore requires a joint approach in tackling it. In January, the Interim Director of Public Health, highlighted some of the work being undertaken by the North East Combined Authority 'Health and Wealth' report as well as the emerging Sustainable Transformation Plans. The Office of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner also highlighted their broader work undertaken under the Prevention agenda that encompasses criminal activities and the high costs associated with this. The Council's Transformation Programme is looking to join up a range of workstreams on the Prevention agenda to have a greater impact.
- 6 The presentation highlighted that, whilst continuing austerity will impact on services, there are also opportunities to build on existing and emerging initiatives that are being developed within local communities and scale these up, therefore ensuring a joined up approach. This also encompasses the opportunity and need for evaluation and shared learning in order to achieve better outcomes. The Prevention agenda covers all of the wider determinants of health including social, economic and environmental factors which is why it is important to look across the whole partnership. By focussing on this and making changes to services and how they are delivered it can help people to have fulfilled lives and help communities to become more resilient and self sufficient.
- 7 The April meeting then followed on from this and focused on that joining up and putting in place some clear actions to make this happen. The presentation emphasised the importance of building community capacity and resilience and enabling people to maintain their independence. The aim of this work is to be more proactive and to drive a decisive shift across all partners and in all parts of the system.
- 8 It was agreed to establish three workstreams: Building on Best Practice; Maximising Funding and Meeting Local Needs and to set up a cross partnership steering group. Discussions will take place within partner organisations as well as with thematic partnerships through workshops before coming back to the CDP Board before the end of the year.
- 9 The focus on Prevention continued at the **County Durham Partnership Forum** meeting in February which focussed on the 'Partnership – Good to Great' element of the Council's Transformation programme. Recognising that partnership working in Durham is very strong and nationally and internationally, the programme is looking to take the strongest elements of the way partnerships work and embed these across all partnerships:
 - (a) One Durham' approach - achieving better outcomes by focusing on prevention, building community resilience and scaling up good practice;
 - (b) Standing together strongly and speaking loudly for the county in a more complicated world;
 - (c) Improving the focus and developing leaner partnership working.
- 10 It is widely acknowledged that much of the work of the partners and AAPs support the Prevention agenda and help to empower local communities to become more resilient which therefore reduces the need for people to access services. There are also many opportunities to identify exemplar initiatives that have been developed by AAPs and partners and to identify a small number to be scaled up. At the Forum,

video testimonials were seen from people involved in AAP supported projects as well as Board members speaking about their experiences of partnership working and what difference it has made to their organisation or thematic partnership.

- 11 In order to inform and shape the programme moving forward, the workshop at the Forum looked at the following three key questions:
 - (a) What makes an exemplar project and what should it demonstrate?
 - (b) How do we make scaling up work?
 - (c) Are there any obvious projects that we should consider for scaling up?
- 12 The group discussion was very lively with a lot of positive ideas coming forward with some shared themes across the groups for new and innovative projects and areas of work. Examples of projects that have already been scaled up were available as were potential opportunities for scaling up, to help groups understand the scope of the work. This will be shared with the Transformation Working Group and exemplar projects identified as a result. The CDP Forum will look at these again at its June meeting to ensure partnership input at every stage.
- 13 The **Voluntary and Community Sector** are key partners in the preventative agenda. The main aim of the Better Together VCS Forum is encouraging and supporting increased collaboration within the sector. Better Together recently held a special workshop involving over 50 participants from a wide variety of small, medium and large VCS organisations from across County Durham to give consideration to the question of why work in partnership and what are the benefits and pitfalls. This will complement the work of the CDP Forum as lessons from existing partnerships were explored and key messages identified for future working together with all partners.
- 14 The VCS Working Group continues to champion the role of the sector and to look at ways of supporting collaboration and consortia working by providing opportunities to tender for services. The recently updated Market Position Statement outlines likely forthcoming procurements and tender opportunities many of which are aimed at being preventative so that people can regain independence and move away from support or on to less intensive support as well as encouraging personal and community resilience.
- 15 **Faith Communities** also contribute to the prevention agenda and building community resilience through their long established presence in every community. Work is continuing to assist AAPs to improve their engagement with local faith groups and to work collaboratively for the benefit for the whole community. Durham Christian Partnership run a network of foodbanks across the county supporting around 1,400 individuals monthly and involving over 400 volunteers. Faith Communities also have a role, amongst others, in helping to build relationships across divisions in society. A breakfast seminar bringing together elected Members, officers, partners and faith communities in a roundtable conversation recently addressed this issue. The value of creating environments where people can disagree and the importance of facilitating difficult conversations was recognised, and participants acknowledged that small scale actions and cooperation matter and that low key community activity to encourage face to face and side by side conversations can make a real difference.
- 16 The **Local Councils** Working Group met in February with the main item for discussion the Delivering Differently Evaluation Report prepared by colleagues from St. Chad's College, Durham University. The Delivering Differently programme was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government and focused on

increased shared clean and green initiatives. Representatives from some of the town and parish councils involved took part in face to face or telephone conversations against a series of questions. Whilst some issues were raised by the town and parish councils around communication and the feeling from them that they are better placed to deliver some services rather than the County Council, there are opportunities for development and further shared schemes.

- 17 The Council, in partnership with Gateshead and Northumberland Councils, has been awarded a grant worth over £240,000 from the MOD **Armed Forces** Covenant Fund to extend the Armed Forces Outreach Service, operating in Gateshead since 2012, into County Durham and Northumberland. Two outreach workers will be appointed in Durham to act as a single point of contact for members of the armed forces community who are in particular need. They will provide advice and guidance on what the council offers in terms of housing and financial management, training and education and job finding assistance as well as introducing people to appropriate voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 18 Opportunities continue to exist through the Armed Forces Covenant Local Grants scheme for local VCS organisations to deliver valuable local preventative services to the armed forces community, which includes dependant family members and veterans, as well as helping to integrate armed forces personnel and veterans with civilian communities. Grants of up to £20,000 are available from the Ministry of Defence and these have been advertised through the AAPs and local VCS and Armed Forces networks.
- 19 Terry Collins, the Council's Chief Executive, is visiting all 14 **AAPs** as part of an annual programme to keep communities updated on the Council's activities and to listen to comments and suggestions from local people about services in their area. In addition to the ongoing liaison with communities via AAPs, He feels that this is important particularly as the public sector continues to change due to austerity.

The Prevention Agenda

- 20 As highlighted above, partnership working is key to the prevention agenda and for empowering and enabling communities to be able to support themselves and each other in order to reduce the need for some services, particularly those delivered by the public sector. Prevention, in its broadest context, can apply to all aspects of the work of the County Durham Partnership. For example, if crime or anti-social behaviour is prevented, then the positive impact will affect the local economy and environment as well as the physical and emotional wellbeing of local people. Often the drivers of crime can be poverty or substance misuse so if these are reduced there will be less need for more acute services. Therefore by prioritising prevention the difference to people's lives and local communities can be very significant.
- 21 To help inform the work of the cross partnership steering group and workstreams, this report has gathered some of the many examples of activities taking place across the partnership. AAPs are very well placed to address many of these issues due to their integration within local communities as well as the way their priorities are locally developed and implemented. The projects below are a small selection of work carried out by all partners across the county and whilst many do focus on health prevention, others are around the other four priority themes of the CDP.
- 22 Tackling issues that may cause people to be unable to work is key to the preventative agenda. It is widely recognised that people in work, and children who grow up in households where at least one parent is employed, are more likely to benefit from positive physical and mental health. All AAPs have focussed on

employability in recent years with a range of successful interventions. **East Durham AAP** is piloting a project looking at reducing stress linked to unemployment, working with Housing Solutions and the local VCS. Its aim is to provide a comprehensive approach to supporting those individuals that are experiencing stress or depression linked to being in receipt of low wages or unemployed. This pilot could potentially shape future service provision and includes volunteer led provision as they will provide the link between the client and specialist support services. The co-location of a Welfare Volunteer Co-ordinator and Housing Solutions Co-ordinator will extend choice and opportunities for individuals and families to access the level of support they need.

- 23 **Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP)** is one of the many AAPs that has supported the County Council's Employability programme. The needs in rural areas such as the Dales are often compounded and more complex due to transport and accessibility issues. Local community venues are regularly utilised, with the recently asset transferred Randolph Community Centre in Evenwood offering courses to help people become 'work ready'.
- 24 Transport is sometimes a barrier for affordability as well as location and **Stanley AAP**, alongside **Chester-le-Street** and **Mid Durham**, is funding the 'Wheels to Work' project to help tackle this issue. It is supported by £50,000 from the North East Combined Authority (NECA), which aims to ensure travelling is not a barrier for people starting a new job or undertaking training. Thirty mopeds have been bought through the NECA funding that can be hired for a small weekly charge. After the initial loan period there is the option to either purchase the moped or return it to the scheme to enable other people to benefit from it.
- 25 Welfare Reform implications can be greater for people in low paid jobs and those who are unemployed particularly around monthly outgoings for utilities and food. A significant increase in the use of foodbanks across the county has seen many AAPs, including **Durham** and **4Together**, working with partners including Durham Christian Partnership, MIND and County Durham Citizens Advice Bureau in order to reduce repeat visits from families. As well as giving families food parcels and other household products, volunteers offer support on finances, legal issues and also emotional health needs they may have. This broader support can mitigate a range of problems for those people affected and can potentially also reduce crime as there is evidence that people will steal food, household products as well as nappies and formula milk if they can't afford them due to financial circumstances.
- 26 The Advice in County Durham Partnership is made up of local advice providers, committed to working together to improve the provision of advice across the County through a seamless service for those seeking advice and enables organisations to work in a more collaborative way for the benefit of all concerned. It has developed the 'No Wrong Door for Advice' programme which **Stanley AAP** and **Stanley Town Council** are supporting based out of the recently asset transferred Venue (formerly Stanley Day Care Centre). The broad range of advice services available includes debt and money management, benefits, housing and income maximisation.
- 27 Other community safety based initiatives that support this agenda start with young people. Mini Police is an initiative that started in **Durham AAP** area and has been rolled out to the majority of AAPs as well as other Police Forces nationally. Along with the Young Firefighters programme, it builds relationships between young people, local communities and emergency services. The longer term strategy of these and similar projects is to reverse the decline in relations in some areas between the uniform services and those communities they serve. The preventative

aspect comes from reductions in anti-social behaviour and crimes in communities particularly those with established 'crime families'.

- 28 **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP) and Spennymoor AAP** have also funded 'Prison Me! No Way!' to deliver a crime and safety awareness day at local secondary schools. The national educational charity has a core aim of raising awareness among young people about the causes, consequences and penalties of crime and risk taking behaviours and utilises workshops, role plays and drama. Pupils are taken from their usual class timetable and treated like offenders and are shown the consequences of risk taking behaviours and also tackles the myths and misconceptions around prison life. This programme can help prevent future involvement in risk taking behaviours and their consequences.
- 29 **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP** has worked with Lifeline, Health Express and Durham University on a project to raise awareness of the dangers and negative health impacts of energy drinks on young people. This builds on a study done by the University that showed more research is needed to explore longer term effects of the drinks on young people. Preventing diabetes, negative oral health as well as associated negative risk taking behaviours are all important when working with children and young people. An education leaflet and two infomercials have been produced with positive feedback received and interest locally, regionally and nationally to roll this out more broadly.
- 30 **Three Towns AAP** has done a lot of work with children and young people particularly around mental health. They have supported the Jack Drum Arts Transition project which was developed as a direct response to a rise in issues around LGBTQ+ and sexual awareness and safety as well as poor mental health and incidents of self harm. The project has achieved a number of outcomes:
- (a) Young people are supported to have a voice through being part of an inclusive groups.
 - (b) Young people have opportunities to gain both crucial life and employability skills.
 - (c) Young people have access to high quality IAG and are signposted to various agencies if appropriate.
 - (d) Young people gain a national accreditation through arts award.
- 31 The AAP has also worked with primary school children on emotional and mental health through the If U Care Share Foundation, as have a number of other AAPs.
- 32 Helping people, particularly older people, be aware of online scams can prevent the need for community safety interventions as well as helping to protect people's finances. The Beat the Scammers project is a good example of one that has been rolled out across the County with five AAPs delivering this. Social marketing activity in the **Spennymoor AAP, East Durham Rural Corridor (EDRC) AAP, Derwent Valley AAP** and **Stanley AAP** is utilised alongside training for older people as volunteers to help other older people avoid being scammed by cold callers. Last year 25% of fraud in the County involved telephone calls and older people are a target market for these criminals who aim to obtain personal and financial information. The volunteers undertake training to give presentations to older people across the community about how to deal with cold telephone calls and demonstrate how people can protect themselves. The mental health implications as well as economic ones can be significant if people lose their life savings, some may even lose their home and require local authority housing which carries huge financial implications.

- 33 **Mid Durham AAP** led the way on prevention with their Silver Talk project and have since rolled their project information together in 'byte adverts' which are designed to provide a simple message to promote their work in this area. Their two leaflets, one specifically for over 50s and the other for those needing information on employment and welfare, have been delivered to every household in the area with plans to replicate this for the second later in the year.
- 34 The focus on wellbeing extends to the broader community and the Wellbeing for Life programme has been adopted by a number of AAPs. This partnership initiative, led by Public Health with four other key partners, focuses on helping people make lifestyle changes including activity, food, smoking and mental health. **TAP and Weardale Action Partnership (WAP)** have both supported the employment of a Wellness Co-ordinator in their areas. They are GP surgery based and can target individuals who attend the surgeries and might benefit from physical activity sessions amongst other interventions. WAP has also worked with Wolsingham Parish Council to improve a local recreation ground which will help with activities being available for local people.

Altogether wealthier

- 35 The **County Durham Economic Partnership** met in February and focused on the annual report for the State of the County which presented findings on the performance of the economy in relation to the agreed measures of success for the Altogether Wealthier thematic area.
- 36 The board welcomed more positive trends against the measures of success, target indicators and trackers following the recession in 2008. However, what is evident is that Durham experienced a more acute impact of the recession when compared with both the national and regional picture and therefore there is still a significant distance to travel. The key messages from performance against the current measures of success are:
- (a) Since 2012 the employment rate has risen from 64.8% to 69.5% (an increase of 14,600 people). However, this remains low compared to the pre-recession peak.
 - (b) Latest Office for National Statistics estimates of the number of businesses show there were 13,370 active enterprises in County Durham in 2016. This is a net increase of 330 (+2.5%) enterprises since 2015 lower than regional (+3.1%) or national (+4.3%) changes. The total number of businesses remains relatively low compared to the national average.
 - (c) Total value of North East economy (2015) is £49.7bn and County Durham contributes 16.2% of this total (£8bn). In 2015, Gross Value Added per head grew at 1.7%, below both the North East growth rate (2.8%) and the national average (2.1%) from 2014.
 - (d) Gross Disposable Household Income has increased 18.1% since 2008 more than regional (17.4%) or national (14.9%) comparisons. However, locally growth over the longer term has been relatively low.
 - (e) The 2015 Indices of Deprivation (released in September 2015) revealed that 150 County Durham LSOAs are ranked in the top 20% most deprived on the Employment Domain. This is 18 fewer than in previous release but remains more than double the target of 65
- 37 Alongside this report the board and subsequent partnership working groups are looking at wider opportunities and more cross collaboration of agendas. Prioritising

Prevention has been a continual theme across economic development and regeneration. Within the Business, Enterprise and Skills Working Group, partners have recently discussed and agreed actions in regard to work as a protective factor for health. Evidence shows that people who achieve good standards of wellbeing at work are likely to be more creative, more loyal, more productive and provide better customer satisfaction than those with poor levels of wellbeing at work. Interventions range from better wellbeing policies, linking to existing community based activities and better promotion of healthy lifestyles through work.

- 38 An existing project within Altogether Wealthier looking to support intervention in Health is 'Smart County'. This is a ground-breaking project using open innovation to open up longstanding societal challenges to the private sector. This particular round of 'Smart County' is bringing together businesses, academia, government and communities to put the region at the forefront of innovation in tackling the healthcare causes and consequences of social isolation, supporting companies as they come up with innovative products and services which will make a difference to people's lives.
- 39 Altogether Wealthier supports and develops wider preventative services across its sub group arrangements. Included within these are Housing Support for example, Homelessness Action, Care Connect and community employability projects delivered by a variety of partners. Other preventative services are based within Rural Working Group and Youth Employment. Often many of these projects work with Area Action Partnerships to ensure wider engagement, funding and strategic alignment with our main priority of increasing our employment rate in County Durham.

Altogether better for children and young people

- 40 The **Children and Families Partnership** supports children, young people and families to achieve the best possible outcomes. The vision of the Partnership is that 'all children, young people and families believe, achieve and succeed'.
- 41 The Partnership has been awarded a gold commendation, the highest level of recognition by the Children's Commissioner, for the successful events which took place under the banner of the Takeover Challenge in 2016, as highlighted in the previous Update Report to Cabinet in January. Organisations opened their doors to children and young people as part of the Challenge, which is an England-wide event where organisations are encouraged to involve children and young people in decision-making. Over 3,500 young people took part in a range of activities and were able to see what it was like to 'take over' key roles and share their thoughts. Children benefit from having their views heard, having fun and being inspired, and partners get a fresh, unique and creative perspective on important issues.
- 42 The Stronger Families Programme is a way of working with families who would like support with any problems or difficulties any member of the family may be having. If a member of the family has a problem, it often has an impact on others in the family, therefore if the whole family is supported it is more likely that things will improve. Phase one of the Stronger Families programme started in April 2012 and following its success, County Durham was invited to be one of 50 local authorities to be 'early starters' for Phase two of the programme, "turning around" 4,360 families by 2020. Current target forecasts show a positive trend and feedback from neighbouring authorities suggests that Durham's performance is in line with theirs at this stage.
- 43 As part of the prevention strand of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has been raising awareness in

services not traditionally associated with safeguarding. All 14 AAP Boards have now received a CSE presentation, this has resulted in further presentations to various community groups attending or represented on AAPs. The AAPs have also circulated CSE information to over 12,000 contacts on their various distribution lists.

- 44 The LSCB has continued to target wider partner agencies for CSE awareness training. All registered taxi drivers in County Durham have received training and an ongoing programme for new drivers is in place. Specific training for services such as housing solutions, passenger transport, road safety and neighbourhood warden has been delivered or is planned.

Altogether healthier

- 45 The **Health and Wellbeing Board** supports people to achieve their optimum health and wellbeing. The vision of the Board is to 'improve the health and wellbeing of the population of County Durham and reduce health inequalities'. The following update provides some examples within the myriad of Prevention focussed work that is being undertaken to improve the public's health in County Durham.
- 46 In County Durham 24% of 4-5 year olds, 37% of 10-11 year olds and an estimated 72% of adults have excess weight. Levels of obesity in County Durham are on the rise and put adults and children at increased risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, back pain and some types of cancer.
- 47 The multi-agency Healthy Weight Alliance has been successful in their bid to be a pilot region in Public Health England's (PHE) three year programme to take forward a whole system approach to tackling obesity, delivered by Leeds Beckett University (LBU). County Durham is one of four local authorities to be involved in the national programme and lead on obesity.
- 48 Work is taking place across the county to support this agenda and build on the issues outlined in the 2015 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health (DPH) which focussed on obesity. A number of initiatives to increase physical activity are being piloted across the county:
- (a) 'Beat the Street' which is being piloted in Chester-le-Street and Ferryhill aims to get people competing to clock up walking, running and cycling miles as a whole community.
 - (b) The 'Ready Set Go' programme piloted in South West Durham teaches early years children movement and sports skills. It is hoped that this will be rolled out across the county.
 - (c) The 'Daily Mile' encourages schools to get children walking or running around for 15 minutes every day, focussing on the mental health and attainment benefits of physical activity. This is a simple initiative all schools could take up.
 - (d) Cycling, road safety and 'Slow to 20' schemes are making communities safer places for children to play.
- 49 A new Oral Health Strategy for County Durham, setting out how partners will work together to improve oral health over the next three years, has been agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Statistics reveal oral health is an area of inequalities between areas of the county, for example in Woodhouse Close over 60% of children have had experience of tooth decay compared to only 6% in Chester-le-Street South.

- 50 Oral health is important for general health and wellbeing and poor oral health can affect someone's ability to eat, speak, smile and socialise normally, for example due to pain or social embarrassment. The strategy will target the inequalities in the region through initiatives such as tooth brushing schemes in early years' day care facilities and training and support in residential care homes.
- 51 The Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) identifies a number of risk factors for heart disease and other related conditions that may, through lifestyle and other forms of intervention, be reduced. Along with work around healthy weight, the following programmes are in place to tackle CVD:
- (a) NHS Health Checks for people aged 40-74, targeted at people demonstrating risk factors such as smoking and obesity.
 - (b) Help for people at high risk of Type 2 diabetes to change their risk-enhancing behaviours.
 - (c) Further work to reduce smoking in pregnancy.
- 52 Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death and tobacco is a key contributor to poverty. County Durham delivers tobacco control through the County Durham tobacco alliance with local partners. The Tobacco Control Alliance aims to reduce exposure to second hand smoke and denormalise smoking by increasing public support for smokefree areas. It has introduced campaigns for smokefree play areas, to reduce smoking in bus stations and to promote the new law which bans smoking in cars with children.
- 53 The negative impact of isolation and loneliness on physical and mental health was highlighted in the 2014 DPH annual report. Reducing isolation and loneliness is one of the main outcomes of the Wellbeing for Life Programme. The Wellbeing for Life Service is operating within the 30% most deprived areas as well as providing outreach support to individuals and communities with specific needs outside of these geographical boundaries. The service provides 'one to one' support, group activities, volunteering opportunities and community development approaches. Wellbeing for Life is connected to existing community activities delivered through the VCS and AAPs.
- 54 People have engaged in friendship, walking and seated exercise groups, received help with confidence, self-esteem and weight loss/maintenance and used volunteering opportunities as a route into employment. The Wellbeing for Life Service has undertaken a specific drive to promote LOCATE, the DCC information service. In most cases key performance indicators for the service have been exceeded with those engaged with the service reporting improvements in their sense of wellbeing and being more engaged in their local community.
- 55 The second phase of the Wellbeing for Life approach has a primary aim of tackling the impacts of poverty through closer links between housing and health. The service will engage social housing providers focussing on:
- (a) Tackling fuel poverty and links to managing long term conditions;
 - (b) Making every contact count (MECC) training for housing staff to deliver brief intervention messages and sign post to relevant health providers.

Altogether safer

- 56 The **Safe Durham Partnership Board** works collaboratively to improve community safety across County Durham. The vision of the Board is for a county 'where every adult and child will be, and will feel, safe.'

- 57 The internet opens up many possibilities and opportunities to children but it can also present serious risks. This means that it is important to make sure that children stay safe online. The Cyber Crime Task & Finish Group has implemented a range of preventative activities that aims to raise awareness of children, their parents and those who work with them:
- (a) Police Cadets trained to provide online safety awareness in schools.
 - (b) Teachers using assemblies to deliver prepared resources on internet safety and online exploitation.
 - (c) Funded Art Education internet safety project for Year 8 children at Greenfield School, Newton Aycliffe, expanded to other schools.
 - (d) “Exploitation, Grooming, and Radicalisation” seminars to over 200 professionals in January which focused heavily on online safety.
 - (e) Cyber bullying creative arts projects in four schools.
 - (f) Regional work with Barclays, Lloyds and Nat West banks to help children have fun and learn with computers while keeping safe.
- 58 The Operation Encompass pilot started in January 2017 and seeks to support children after a high or medium risk incident of domestic abuse is reported to the Police which involves a child of school age being present in the home at the time of the incident.
- 59 Police will notify a link worker from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) who will share information with a ‘Key Adult’ within the participating school. This allows the provision of immediate early intervention through either ‘silent’ or ‘overt’ support which has proved to be a successful intervention in similar programmes across the country. The project is resourced within the Public Health domestic abuse contract and supported with funding from a number of county councillors which provides for a dedicated link worker. The Office of the Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner has contributed towards the launch of the project including training and marketing materials.
- 60 A new approach is being taken to build the confidence of professionals working with children and young people in reporting and raising concerns on areas of risk that share common factors and where offending behaviour share common traits. Exploitation, grooming and radicalisation awareness-raising brings together staff working across different thematic areas to demonstrate the similarity between grooming and radicalisation. It highlights common behaviours shared by victims and common methods used by offenders. It also highlights the way in which mobile technology is used to target children and young people and raises awareness of how it is possible to use knowledge from the sessions to prevent risky behaviours and recognise when a child may already be at risk. The first two sessions were held in January this year with over 200 professionals in attendance.
- 61 On 30 November 2016 the Checkpoint Project won the Howard League award under the “Policing in Adults” category. Checkpoint is a voluntary multi-agency adult offender diversion scheme within County Durham and Darlington, targeting low and medium level offenders within the criminal justice process, and offering them a credible alternative to criminal prosecution. It gives service users an opportunity to address the underlying causes of their offending, by encouraging them to engage with services instead of going to court.
- 62 Checkpoint aims to reduce the number of victims of crime by reducing reoffending, which will also make all our communities safer places. It also aims to improve

health and wellbeing, and reduce demand in the longer term on the police and other agencies.

- 63 The Safe Durham Partnership Funding Group is working to maximise opportunities to increase the financial capacity of the Partnership in light of ongoing reductions to available grant funding, with a particular focus on the preventative agenda. The group is also working more collaboratively with the VCS around funding opportunities to support the strategic objectives of the Safe Durham Partnership. Key areas of development for the group to take forward include:
- (a) Seeking to maximise grant funding and working with the VCS on the preventative agenda and developmental work;
 - (b) Developing a new approach to collaborative commissioning, integrated with the VCS;
 - (c) Assessing needs and identifying gaps to inform commissioning and grant applications;
 - (d) Pooling resources across the partnership and the VCS;
 - (e) Building community capacity to support delivery on strategic objectives.

Altogether greener

- 64 Terry Collins has stepped down from his role as Chair of the **Environment Partnership** and Oliver Sherratt, Head of Direct Services, has taken over this role while a review of the Partnership's objectives, priorities and structure is undertaken.
- 65 In advance of the Environment Awards 2017, comments have been sought on the categories, media and proceedings via a short survey. Following this the 2017 Awards have been launched with information available on the County Durham Partnership website and in the May edition of the newsletter.
- 66 Activities continue across the sub-groups of the Partnership following some changes in activity and actions as well as personnel involved. There is a continued focus on community based activity particularly including the AAPs with programmes such as Operation Spruce Up and the annual Big Clean events.

Recommendations and reasons

- 67 It is recommended that Members note the report.

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Appendix 1: Implications

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

Staffing - None

Risk - None

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

Accommodation - None

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

Human Rights - None

Consultation - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners.

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications – None