

## COUNTY COUNCIL

21 JUNE 2017

### QUESTIONS FROM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

#### **Question from Mid-Durham AAP**

The Mid Durham AAP alongside the other 13 AAPs conducted a major priority survey exercise at the end of 2016 and into 2017 with nearly 8,000 residents providing feedback. This included a secondary school survey which had feedback from over 3,300 pupils across the county.

On the back of this our AAP Board chose community safety as a priority task group for 2017/18. This is the first time the AAP have had this as a key priority and it has been chosen because this was a key concern for our young people in the schools survey, as it was across the county for all young people who took part. 'Feeling safe' and 'Anti-Social Behaviour' were key concerns for our pupils. When you compare this to the adult's feedback, community safety was far less an issue for the adults in Mid Durham and across the county.

Could the Council please explain the key interventions that are in place to address this issue and suggest areas where Mid Durham AAP could make the greatest impact to enhance this work?

#### **Response**

Community Safety is a key function of the local authority and joint working arrangements are in place through the Safe Durham Partnership Board.

Durham remains one of the safest places to live in comparison to other areas of the Country.

Local intelligence is a valuable resource in tackling community safety issues and Area Action Partnership focus on community safety is welcomed.

There are a number of initiatives taking place to improve community safety for our young people and the wider community, which includes:

- **In relation to Anti-Social Behaviour**
  - "Operation Aries" is a partnership approach to tackling underage drinking & associated Anti-Social Behaviour across Durham & Darlington.
  - A Multi-Agency Problem Solving approach is undertaken for anti-social behaviour including working with communities, schools and One Point.
  
- **In relation to Preventing people becoming or supporting violent extremists**
  - Training and awareness raising has been provided to partner organisations along with the private, voluntary and independent child care and out-of-school sectors.
  - Area Action Partnerships have also received a briefing.

- **In relation to Open Water Safety and Cold Water Shock**
  - The Safe Durham Partnership's 'Dying to be Cool' award winning campaign aims to educate 10-16 year olds about the potentially fatal risks of jumping into open water.
- **In relation to Cybercrime**
  - The Safe Durham Partnership has delivered a number of 'Cyber Day' events focussing on keeping children safe from cyber-bullying, online exploitation and identity theft.

Communities are very important as the "eyes and ears" in relation to community safety issues and reporting is a key area where the Area Action Partnership can play their part, as well as supporting projects with a focus on community safety and sharing key messages about the specific issues in the local communities. This will ensure a local response to a local issue.

I would also be interested in gaining any feedback from the Area Action Partnership about how they plan to find out what the specific local issues are within the Mid-Durham area and how they feel they can make a difference to improve people's confidence around feeling safe and anti-social behaviour in their local area.

#### **Question from Teesdale AAP**

Through the most recent community survey Teesdale Action Partnership identified that apprenticeships and jobs for young people were a key priority for the area. DurhamWorks offers excellent opportunities for young people and employers but it is often difficult for small traders to consider an apprentice. What support is available to those small businesses, who wish to develop and be in a position to take on apprentices?" (The Teesdale area has a very high percentage of sole traders).

#### **Response**

Firstly, I'd like to thank the AAP for their question which I'm delighted to answer, especially as it is often a question raised directly by small businesses which make up the majority of the business base across County Durham.

The County Council has prioritised the economy since 2009 and as part of that has focused on the employment opportunities for young people. We have established a countywide apprenticeship programme and led the establishment of Durham Works to ensure that the appropriate level of advice and ongoing support is available to both our young people and our small businesses.

Through Durham Works, the employability team have established a team of Business Advisors who work with businesses across the County that are seeking to recruit young people. The Advisors perform a flexible range of activities, including helping to develop a job description, identifying training providers that could train young people, as well as linking the business with potential recruits from our Durham Works participants. At present financial incentives through the Learning Working Earning programme are also in place

to help support small businesses with the costs of taking on young people and the advisors can assist in making applications for this funding.

Over the past year, this has led to 14 young people in the Teesdale area progressing into employment or training through the Durham Works programme, building on the 43 young people in the Teesdale area that have commenced apprenticeships with 26 small or medium sized employers in the area since November 2011 through the County Durham Apprenticeship Programme.

With the Durham Works programme set to continue its delivery through to the end of June 2018, the employability team are keen to talk to any business, large or small that is looking to recruit and thinks that the County Council can assist.