

Cabinet

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County Durham Partnership Update



Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

- 1 To update Cabinet 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 continues to address a number of key issues with the subject of June's Cabinet report of Prioritising Prevention still high on all partners' agendas. This was the focus of the June Forum meeting with workshops looking to identify key strands of work to focus on over the next year.
- 3 The thematic partnerships have all held significant meetings in recent months with the Children and Families Partnership welcoming the Children's Commissioner for England to its September meeting. This follows the successful Takeover Challenge last year where Durham received a Gold Commendation for its work. The Economic Partnership also invited Durham University's Vice Chancellor to its July meeting to outline the University's ambitious plans.
- 4 Work continues across the CDP, particularly focused on AAPs, to support the element of the Transformation Programme focused on supporting communities to become resilient. This features regularly in these Update Reports and is the main focus of this report.
- 5 A significant partnership success highlighted in the report was the official opening of a new leisure facility in Crook. In 2013, the county's largest participatory budget event, attracting over 1,300 participants, selected a proposal to create a new leisure by investing £500,000 of council funding. The community-led project has also attracted external funding from Sport England and the Social Investment Bureau. Membership numbers for the centre are already positive and a number of jobs will also be created.

Key Partnership Activity and Developments

- 6 The **County Durham Partnership Board** meeting in June focused on performance, with a presentation on the overall performance for the Partnership and Council for 2016/17. This showed that whilst there are positives such as

employment and education rates increasing and lower than national crime figures per 1,000 population, there are still significant demand pressures. These include the poverty and deprivation gap, a significant increase in numbers of Looked After Children and an aging population. Work is ongoing across the thematic partnerships to address the issues raised and new ways of managing performance are also being looked at as part of the transformation programme.

- 7 The Chief Constable, Mike Barton, also gave a presentation to the Board in June on why Durham is the top performing force in the country, this is based on a number of different inspections looking at a range of issues including performance and financial management. The Chief Constable said that the Force had looked at professional realignment focussing on problem orientation, restorative justice and a victim/offender focus as well as eliminating bureaucracy. Their approach has brought about positive changes and had been supported by the Office of the Police Crime and Victim's Commissioner.
- 8 The **CDP Forum** meeting in June had two main agenda items: the AAP Priority Survey and Prioritising Prevention, the latter being the focus of the last Update Report. The AAP survey was countywide and included all schools as well as a general survey and in total almost 8,000 people responded, the most a Council survey of this type has received to date. It is also the first time all schools have participated. The survey highlighted which of the ten chosen priorities people prioritised and the differences between those by age and respondent groups. The information will be broken down to AAP level and shared across all of the partnerships in order to inform their work going forward.
- 9 The Prioritising Prevention item followed on from the Partnership – Good to Great focus at the Forum meeting held in February. Prevention was highlighted as a common theme in a number of workshops as it is a cross partnership issue. The presentation and subsequent workshop focused on the five priority themes and asked attendees to choose one area from a long list of issues gathered from a range of sources. This information will be utilised by the Partnership Prevention Steering Group to shape the work over the next year.
- 10 The **Local Councils Working Group (LCWG)** met recently to discuss a review of the Local Councils Charter. The Charter was developed in 2009 following Local Government Reorganisation and set out some key agreements between the two tiers of authorities. It is timely to review and redraft this agreement in light of continuing austerity and changing priorities for all partners. The revised Charter was discussed at the LCWG in June and will be considered at the next meeting in November.
- 11 The **Voluntary and Community Sector** are key partners in supporting and contributing to resilient communities. One of the objectives of the VCS Strategy is to develop the capacity and resilience of individuals to manage and shape change in their lives and their communities. One example of how the sector is seeking to address this is through the fully subscribed bi-monthly training events for practitioners and volunteers being co-ordinated through the Advice Partnership, plus a regular programme of themed networking events with average participating delegate rate of 50-80. Similarly the peer to peer networks set up by Durham Community Action for Community Building Management groups and Trustee peer support groups all help towards creating and sustaining greater resilience within communities.

- 12 The East Durham Solutions project developed and funded **East Durham AAP** Area Budget, is a partnership between East Durham Trust and the council's Housing Solutions Team and has already recruited ten local volunteers. They are 'Community Coaches' who will be responsible for hand holding / befriending local people living in private rental properties who are in crisis situations. They will support residents in to identified services as well as receiving and signposting residents into the Housing Solutions Triage System.
- 13 The project will develop a model that has the potential to shape future countywide working practices, linking the preventative support from volunteers with statutory provision. It is anticipated that the project will provide the link between volunteer led projects and more intensive specialist support, but with a welfare volunteer providing a hand holding role throughout. Specialist advisory and support services are excellent in their delivery, however due to the increase in demand and the reduction in resources, they are finding it difficult to offer longer term support to individuals and families. The aims to improve the mental wellbeing of individuals and support them to access current services including community job clubs, debt support, housing solutions, community drop in's, gardening, arts and crafts, health activities etc.
- 14 **Durham AAP** continues to encourage working with the third sector via its most recent 'It's up 2 You event' which offers an opportunity to network with other groups, raise awareness and to recruit other potential volunteers. Last year saw a 90% increase in attendance but other aims for VCS groups include raising their awareness, networking and ability to recruit volunteers.
- 15 **Bishop Auckland and Shildon (BASH) AAP** has continued to facilitate visits from the F and P Scotto Charitable Trust and has introduced the trust to a number of worthy causes not only in the BASH AAP area but also across the county. This is an excellent and unique opportunity for the AAP to provide additional support and funding to groups in the area. Because of this relationship and the support of the BASH AAP the F and P Scotto Charitable Trust has invested an additional £550,000 into the area. With further visits planned and decisions outstanding, it is anticipated that this figure will surpass £600,000 by the end of the year. Primarily the funding has gone to groups in the BASH AAP area however; support has also gone into another eight AAP areas.
- 16 **Faith Communities** also contribute to building community resilience through their long established presence in every community. An event is planned to take place in East Durham in late October to consider and affirm how churches and faith groups already contribute to the building of flourishing and resilient communities and how they might develop better partnership working with the AAP and potentially each other.
- 17 At a recent breakfast seminar bringing together elected Members, officers, partners and faith communities in a roundtable conversation, the Bishop of Durham offered some reflections on 'The Challenges ahead: What routes to transform communities, people and places?' Recognising that transformation is about change and renewal for all (individuals, organisations and structures) he emphasised the importance of having a clear shared vision; listening carefully to individuals and communities to really hear what they are saying; and focussing on developing and nurturing the gifts and skills of individuals which are our greatest resource. By paying attention to these things we help build more resilient individuals and communities.

- 18 Helping the more vulnerable members of the **Armed Forces Community** who may have had difficulty in transitioning to civilian life to be more resilient will be a focus of the new Armed Forces Outreach Service which is being extended into County Durham. Two ex-forces personnel have been employed to provide advice and guidance to members of the armed forces community who are in particular need. They will be embedded within the Housing Solutions Team and have been funded for two years by the MOD Covenant Fund. This initiative is being supported by the County Durham Armed Forces Forum which meets twice a year to encourage all partners within County Durham to work together to take positive measures to prevent any disadvantage to individuals as a result of military service, or their return from it. The most recent Forum heard presentations from the Durham Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation Company about their aspirations of working with veterans; County Durham's Royal Naval Reservists; a project of the charity 'Forward Assist to set up support groups for female veterans; and an update on the Armed Forces Outreach Service.

Building Resilient Communities

- 19 As highlighted regularly in these County Durham Partnership Update Reports, the focus on partners' work with communities is to support them to become resilient and sustainable and forms a key part of the council's Transformation Programme. This is important both for the communities and local people to be able to shape their own areas and decide on their own priorities and also, it helps the Public Sector meet growing demands with reduced resources by allowing resources to be directed at those areas and people with the most need.
- 20 Area Action Partnerships are closest to communities in many areas and work closely with local people in order to target their work and funding where it is most needed. Through the priority setting work mentioned earlier in this report, they can identify which issues people want to address and help them to do so.
- 21 Over the summer months many AAPs support holiday programmes including Summer Activities with Food (**East Durham, 3Towns and Spennymoor**). These clubs are built around school holiday activities and give young people a place to go as well as receive a meal. This is particularly important for those families in financial difficulty as school holidays can add to this burden. The clubs also enable people who may not otherwise mix with people an opportunity to meet people, both the young people and their parents. Some clubs can focus on cooking tips as well.
- 22 **3Towns AAP** rolled out a full targeted holiday programme which included a summer play scheme, opportunities to take part in creative activities and are already planning for October half term cinema trips and day trips. They also provide a holiday activity fund which complements the programme and has funded seven organisations to date.
- 23 **Spennymoor AAP** has introduced Men's Breakfast Clubs and a Ladies' Club aimed specifically at socially isolated individuals. The project will use a range of methods to identify these individuals and would be looking to start the group with a minimum of ten participants. Identification of clients will come via personal recommendation, foodbanks and community workers, general advertising on social media/Spennynews and by working with agencies such as the Hospital of God, Cornforth Partnership, other community centres etc. By delivering this project it is envisaged that new members of the community will become involved in these activities/clubs with the obvious positive impacts emanating from this.

- 24 **4Together AAP** is also supporting men to maintain social networks and not to become isolated. Their Creative Woodworking for Men project hosts 12 wood-crafting workshops for older males in the local area and to date Endeavour Woodcrafts CIC has delivered six of these, providing an accessible space where older people of all abilities can come together socially to access a fully equipped workshop to work on practical projects including: DIY training, woodwork, repairs and restoration.
- 25 The project provides opportunities for older people who are at risk of loneliness and social isolation, aiming to help them to remain active, independent and positively engaged within their community. Over the duration of the workshops, participants will also work together on a “group build” producing 2-3 larger outdoor items such as benches or planters for use in the local community. Transport is provided to and from the premises for all participants. The workshops have proven to be very popular and well attended throughout. Those attending have gained skills in woodworking and also in team building, and have formed a friendship through their work together on community projects such as the benches designed, made and presented to two local councils.
- 26 The group has benefited in gaining a support network to combat social isolation and loneliness as well as increasing physical activity and building self-confidence. The project has already achieved its outputs which include; safeguarding four jobs, involving 18 people in initiatives aimed at improving mental health/wellbeing, and delivering a scheme aimed at improving the quality of life, independence and support for people.
- 27 **Durham AAP** supported its local Foodbank to run a pilot project to work with other organisations to deliver a comprehensive available service to individuals at first contact with the aim of preventing further contact. This is a partnership between MIND, Citizen’s Advice and the Foodbank to ensure they tackle the reason for a visit to a foodbank be it financial, legal or mental health issues at the outset rather than awaiting repeat visits before solving the problem.
- 28 Building on the ongoing support **Mid Durham AAP** gives to local communities, during June and July they delivered 16 village drop in sessions across the area following on from work started with local parish councils in 2013 whereby 16 Village Action Plans were created which covered the period 2013 to 2016. These plans were created by working closely with residents and community groups to look at how everyone can improve their villages and in turn develop their resilience. The plans drawn up for 2017 to 2020 have involved 600 residents who have identified their concerns and ideas for their villages alongside their views on possible solutions. The plans involve the AAP, Parish and County Councillors and relevant partners working alongside local residents to address these concerns over the next three years.
- 29 Examples from previous plans have included residents carrying out litter picks, grass cutting and working together to build new community facilities and sustain existing ones. The work has involved a large number of volunteers and has brought in £2.6m of additional funding to the area. Recent discussions with residents have shown that many people are now more aware of the impacts of austerity on public sector funding and are more open to working with partners to address local issues collectively.

Altogether wealthier

- 30 The **County Durham Economic Partnership** met in July and focused on the role of Durham University, the potential opportunity for businesses through the NE Access to Finance programme and the importance of linking in existing opportunities with the wider County Durham Partnership Prevention agenda. Durham University is consistently ranked as one of the world's leading universities as shown by its World Top 100 position in two influential global league tables. Partners were very keen to understand opportunities for working together, not only to support local businesses but to bring the university's knowledge and experience to our communities. Partners are looking at better working with schools to accessing knowledge on tackling the challenges on deprivation and job creation in County Durham. The board further welcomed the new approach from the Vice Chancellor, Stuart Corbridge and looked forward to a new and productive relationship.
- 31 The Economic Partnership recognises the importance of community resilience in not only keeping our communities vibrant but also in supporting people to gain and maintain employment while improving skills opportunities for all. Some recent projects and programmes that support this resilience agenda are highlighted below.
- 32 In East Durham, the Council is developing Horden Railway Station to improve local travel links, job and economic prospects in the area. The Department of Transport has awarded the scheme £4.4million from its new station fund to help pay for the station. The total funding for the scheme will be £10.55 million and work continues with Network Rail and other partners to develop the chosen option.
- 33 In other areas communities are being invited to help shape the future of Bishop Auckland town centre. The new Brighter Bishop Auckland Partnership has organised a public consultation at which people will have the chance to contribute to the production of a masterplan for the heart of the town.
- 34 Supporting young people into employment has a proven effect on improving local communities and offering improved life chances to the next generation. DurhamWorks is an exciting, innovative, £17m programme led by the council in partnership with 16 external delivery partners. By the end of the programme, 5,830 unemployed 16 to 24 year old County Durham residents into employment, education or training through intensive and long-term support. The support comprises innovative and engaging activities to develop motivation, work-related skills and work experience and increased employment opportunities. The programme was introduced in April 2016 and the offer of support from the council's employability team is that of a wrap-around employability support and placement service which replicates and significantly enhances the provision offered to 18 to 24 year olds across the county under the Generation North East (GNE) Programme.
- 35 The partnership is aware of the possible impact of welfare reform across all communities. The Welfare Reform Employability Initiative project is designed to support individuals affected by welfare reform and either support them in becoming closer to the employment market or to assist those who would like to explore self-employment as a route to improving their life chances and achieving a positive outcome.
- 36 The priority beneficiaries are:
- (a) Residents living in the county's most deprived settlements

- (b) Unemployed residents in receipt of job seeker's allowance (JSA) who would like to become self-employed, but unable to meet the criteria or timescales of New Enterprise Allowance
 - (c) Under-occupancy – those liable to pay the spare room subsidy or 'Bedroom Tax'
 - (d) Benefit cap – those families whose benefit entitlement has been reduced to the maximum level
 - (e) Employment and support allowance (ESA) – those in the Work Related Activity Group (although those in the support group willing to progress towards the labour market will be supported)
 - (f) Private rented sector – those who have to contribute to their rent from out of work benefits should their local housing allowance not cover the whole rent of the property
 - (g) Ex-forces – those discharged from the regular forces
- 37 To date, the programme has ensured over 2000 people have been referred for support including, training, wage subsidies, skills development and employment opportunities through a host of partners; JobCentrePlus, CfBT Education Services, Housing Solutions and Northern Rights.
- 38 **Teesdale AAP's** Employment, Enterprise and Training group has highlighted key economic areas around supporting individuals into work through the development of skills, qualifications, careers advice and work experience. The group will also push for increased support to be available for small businesses looking to take on more staff as this is a specific issue in the Teesdale area. Many businesses are sole traders and therefore they need help and support to be able to employ staff.
- 39 The **Derwent Valley AAP** will be working with Consett Academy and RTC North (Regional Technology Centre) Ltd to increase the take-up of science by girls at Consett Academy by means of a mentoring programme designed to ensure students are given the best possible chance of securing future success.
- 40 Research undertaken by the AAP shows that many students benefit enormously from the individual support of a mentor, and specifically regional employers, who can inspire and help young people consider further study. Mentors can support students to make more informed decisions about career choices as well as highlighting the essential skills needed in the workplace and young students with mentors have more positive visions of themselves and their futures, and achieve more positive outcomes in school, work and life generally.
- 41 It is anticipated that 15 female students in Consett Academy from Year 8, 9 or 10 would be selected to be part of the programme (ideally Year 8 or 9) and participating students will undertake a 30 week programme (term time only) and be matched with an adult female volunteer mentor from a science industry or higher education who will offer one to one mentoring sessions delivered on site at the school, mentors for the project will be drawn from RTC's STEM Ambassador Hub's community. If a student is interested in a specific sector or career, the programme will match her with a mentor with similar interests and experience of that industry. Mentors will meet with students regularly (every two weeks) and challenge them to make full use of the support available in school and in industry to fulfil their potential.

- 42 The AAP will also be working with the CDC Enterprise Agency to deliver a Start, Sustain and Grow project, offering support to individuals with one-to-one coaching, training, advice and guidance to assist them to overcome barriers to self-employment, business sustainability and growth. Research undertaken by the AAP suggests that whilst conditions remain favourable for people to move into self-employment in the local area, there is still more work to be done to bring our employment rates up. Self-employment is an effective way to drive this growth and we need to continue to provide support to those looking to create their own jobs by starting up in business.
- 43 The intended aim of the project is to create new jobs and safeguard existing jobs in the local area. Through the project, support will be delivered to individuals at various stages including:
- (a) Pre-start stage: the project will support those looking to start-up in business. These individuals may be unemployed, underemployed or looking for a change in career. They will receive help to develop their ideas and make necessary preparations to give themselves the best chance possible of achieving success.
 - (b) Early Stage Trading: the project will support those individuals who have recently started up in business but require support to establish them in the market or overcome barriers.
 - (c) Established businesses: the project will support businesses that have been trading for over 2 years but seek assistance to help safeguard jobs or achieve their growth ambitions.
- 44 The support provided will be bespoke, tailored to the needs of the individual or business. It will be delivered by qualified and experienced business advisers with proven track record of achieving results.

Altogether better for children and young people

- 45 The **Children and Families Partnership** has recently reviewed its objectives around a smaller set of priorities where it can have the most impact, and moving forward will focus on the following:
- (a) Reducing Child Poverty
 - (b) Building Resilience
 - (c) Best Start in Life
- 46 A range of initiatives are already underway to support the new objectives. Work is taking place with health professionals, peer supporters and children's centre workers to promote the Baby Buddy app within the county. National charity, Best Beginnings were commissioned to develop the free app, which offers new parents in County Durham tips and advice from professionals on bringing up their baby, via their mobile phone any time of the day or night.
- 47 The app features daily facts, videos and useful information aimed specifically at the individual users. Parents and parents-to-be can use the app to keep track of medical appointments, locate nearby services and even create a time lapse video of their growing bump and baby. It is hoped that Baby Buddy will help to develop better informed and more confident parents, which should, in turn, improve breastfeeding rates and increase the number of parents who attend ante and postnatal medical appointments and will be beneficial in reaching parents who may not otherwise ask for help.

- 48 An online portal is being developed to offer a single online landing space for children and young people across the county. The mission statement of the portal is: 'To be the preferred digital reference point for children and young people in County Durham meeting their advice and information needs across a range of subject matters'
- 49 It will provide young people with advice and information across a range of topics including health, safety, education and employment, enabling them to find things out for themselves in a timely way. The site will include links to a Directory of Services and signposting to relevant organisations and opportunities which are available to the young people.
- 50 To ensure the portal appealed to young people, it has been developed with their involvement and provides opportunities for them to become actively involved in the development and content of the site. Two apprentices are working to populate the site and will visit groups of young people to create and publish stories with them. The Cornforth Partnership are leading on development of the portal.
- 51 The Takeover Challenge is an England-wide event where organisations open their doors to children and young people to listen to their views and get them involved in decision making. The Children and Families Partnership was awarded a Gold Commendation, the highest level of recognition by the Children's Commissioner for England, for the events which took place in 2016.
- 52 As a result of this Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner for England, visited Durham on 8 September 2017 when she had a tour of Aycliffe Secure Centre, talked to an extended membership of the Children and Families Partnership about her role, and shared best practice around engagement. The Children and Families Partnership shared some of the work that is taking place across County Durham, and invited young people to attend the meeting to showcase projects they are involved in.
- 53 Following the 2016 Takeover Challenge, partners were asked to consider ways in which children and young people could be involved in decision making throughout the year and a programme of work has been implemented to make the Takeover Challenge more than one day. Progress has been made in a number of areas including engagement platforms, food banks, intergenerational projects and links with local businesses and the voluntary and community sector.
- 54 In order to build on this success the 2017 Takeover Challenge will be launched on 24 November and a number of activities have already been confirmed. All partners are encouraged to take part in the Takeover Challenge.
- 55 The Children and Young People's Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Plan has initiated a number of developments focused on promoting resilience and emotional wellbeing in schools. The Youth Aware Mental Health (YAM) programme promotes increased knowledge and understanding about mental health through dialogue, role-play and reflection. YAM helps young people to explore how they can help peers in need and provides a guide that helps them to connect with local mental and general health resources as well as organisations who work with youth rights and empowerment in their communities.
- 56 The YAM programme is being implemented in County Durham following trials elsewhere which demonstrated a clear link to reduced levels of suicide attempts and severe suicidal ideation among young people.

- 57 To complement this work, **Stanley AAP** has supported Stars Youth & Community CIC with Area Budget funding to provide weekly drop-in sessions for young people of Stanley to access, provide support, reduce potential suicide and social isolation. This service will be able to provide the extra support required to young people in an increasingly challenging times for the Local Authority, NHS and charitable organisations.
- 58 The drop-in sessions will be moulded around the five steps to Well-Being: Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning and Give. Young people will be able to access support at these sessions alongside activities such as: Art and Crafts, Sports, Cooking, Issue based work, Self-esteem and confidence building, Community engagement and Information, advice and guidance. A residential for the young people who have engaged, improved their confidence and self-esteem, and reduced their social isolation and risk to suicide will also be organised.
- 59 The term goals of the project is for young people who access this support will be given the opportunity to help create a group resource pack which can be used by other Youth provision organisations. Young people who are involved in the project to gain the confidence to volunteer by supporting other young people who are access the project and finally provide a sustained project for long term support in the Stanley area.
- 60 **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP's** is supporting young people through its Mentor and Campaign project which will be delivered in two ways as follows:
- (a) A Children's Campaigning Group will be established for children aged 5- 10 years, and will meet fortnightly, focusing on two areas of work. Firstly, the Children will identify issues around safety, which will include; bullying, feeling safe where they live, reducing barriers between older young people and children, and identifying what might make them feel safer. Secondly they will focus on litter and dog fouling in their local community, and look at ways that this might be tackled. Children will be supported to develop a local campaign that could include posters, awareness raising sessions, community cohesion events and meetings with key stakeholders.
 - (b) A Peer Mentoring Programme will be designed to create opportunities for young people aged 11-18, to talk openly about issues they say affect them, and gain the correct advice and information they need to develop and reach their full potential. The programme will deliver a series of sessions to the young people, on specific issues such as life skills, internet safety and risk taking behaviours (drugs, alcohol, smoking, sexual exploitation), and 4 – 6 young people will be supported to deliver sessions as Peer Trainers.

Altogether healthier

- 61 The County Durham vision for Integrated Health and Social Care, led by the **Health and Wellbeing Board**, is to bring together health, social care and voluntary organisations to achieve improved health and wellbeing for the people of County Durham. This includes:
- (a) Delivering the right care to patients by teams working together
 - (b) Helping individuals and others in the community lead a healthy life
 - (c) Building on existing teams already working together to help people stay well and remain independent
 - (d) Providing improved services closer to people's home

- (e) Offering a range of services working alongside GP practices which meet individual's needs
- (f) Improving access to information and advice to help people make better choices

- 62 To support integrated care in County Durham 'Teams Around Patients' (TAPs) are being established, which will offer a range of coordinated services centred around groupings of GP practices and there will be 13 across the county. Development work is progressing with 'early adopter' TAPs in the Dales and Sedgefield areas and engagement with key stakeholders has begun in Derwentside and Chester-le-Street.
- 63 Demographic pressures place emphasis on the need to manage demand for social care more effectively, therefore the services provided in the TAPs will vary according to the needs of the local population. Some examples of services which may be included are: Community Nursing, Continence Services, Falls Prevention, Occupational Therapy, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Voluntary and Community Services, Vulnerable Adult Services and Wellbeing for Life.
- 64 NHS and local authority colleagues are working with partners and the voluntary and community sector to look at how we can make the best use of partnerships and networks and simplify referral routes for patients and front line practitioners. This will help enable patients to access the right care, in the right place at the right time.
- 65 The Wellbeing for Life Service (WfL) is operating within the 30% most deprived areas, and is also providing outreach support to individuals and communities with specific needs outside of these boundaries. The service provides 'one to one' support, group activities, volunteering opportunities and community development approaches. Wellbeing for Life is connected to community activities that are already being delivered through the voluntary and community sector and Area Action Partnerships.
- 66 The last CDP update to Cabinet provided examples of the work that the WfL Service is doing within communities. These included individuals engaging in friendship, walking and seated exercise groups, receiving help with confidence, self-esteem and weight loss/maintenance and using volunteering opportunities as a route into employment.
- 67 The WfL Service has undertaken a specific drive to promote LOCATE, the council's online information service, ensuring that organisations are including their range of available services on the website so that individuals can easily find and access this information themselves. In most cases key performance indicators for the WfL 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.
- 68 Making healthy options available in the public sector is a key strategy by HM Government Childhood Obesity plan and sugar reduction is seen by Public Health England as an integral way to improve population health. Currently sugar intake of all population groups is above the recommended rates and can lead to tooth decay and obesity and its related health consequences.
- 69 Sugar Smart UK is a campaign to help local areas use various measures to tackle excessive sugar consumption. The campaign aims to encourage local organisations to consider sugar reduction and the health of their communities as part of their daily business. The campaign recommends specific action plans, which

offer a broad range of approaches individuals can take to reduce their sugar intake, such as:

- (a) Promoting free drinking water
- (b) Reducing high sugar options in vending machines
- (c) Promoting healthy meal deals
- (d) Reducing advertising of high sugar products
- (e) Stocking healthier food and drink
- (f) Providing clearer information about the sugar content of food and drink
- (g) Many local organisations have already made pledges linked to the Sugar Smart initiative, including all member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Taylor Shaw - the school meals provider, Durham University and the Claypath Deli.

- 70 The Sugar Smart campaign has also launched a community survey to gather views on the impacts of sugar on the county's residents, and the changes people want to see to make County Durham healthier.
- 71 Work is taking place across the County to establish and promote Dementia Friendly Communities, which involves all sectors of the community. The aim is to support people with dementia to retain their independence by feeling understood and included in their community so that they can confidently contribute to society. This can be easily achieved by using appropriate signage or displaying coin recognition charts to assist customers who may struggle to understand the money they have with them. Dementia Friendly Communities have been established at Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland and Stanley, and progress in establishing these at Barnard Castle, Chester-le-Street, Trimdon and Evenwood is being made.
- 72 A number of AAPs are focusing their work with older people in this way. A further Community is being developed in the **Derwent Valley AAP** area with the main aims of the dementia friendly projects in the Derwent Valley area being to:
- (a) Create a dementia friendly café; the café will be a hub of activities offering a set time for sufferers and their carers to visit for refreshments and wider social interaction with others suffering from the same condition.
 - (b) Train staff from local businesses and representatives from community groups as dementia friendly volunteers/champions so they can welcome people with dementia and their carers to their businesses and premises.
 - (c) Supply appropriate signage, welcome maps and other adjustments to local premises to make them dementia friendly.
 - (d) Raise awareness and the profile of dementia within the locality.
 - (e) Support the purchase of home protective equipment to assist dementia sufferers in their own homes.
 - (f) Support the Alzheimer's Society to employ a Dementia Friendly Coordinator to work across the collective Northern AAP area with partners and residents to make all villages/towns accessible for dementia sufferers.
 - (g) Support the creation of dementia friendly cinema screenings/productions at the Empire Theatre in Consett.

- 73 A range of partners will be involved in the development and implementation of the above work which is in its early stages and will include BBBSB Community Partnership, Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, County Durham Dementia Action Alliance, Durham Constabulary, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue and local businesses.
- 74 **Teesdale AAP's** priority group for older people would like to see ideas that support individuals and families living with Dementia, projects that improve older people's physical and mental health or application that address the issue of social isolation.
- 75 In February 2013 a participatory budget event was held by the **3Towns AAP** in Crook to allow the community to decide where they would like to see a resource of £500,000 allocated. 1353 people turned out to vote at the event, this was one of the highest turn outs and participation by local people in the Country and the highest in the County where people were eligible to vote from the age of 11. The proposal to create a new leisure facility for Crook received overwhelming public support receiving almost double the voting score compared to the second most popular proposal. Along with the £500,000 awarded from Durham County Council Crook Community Leisure received £74,000 from Sports England and £68,000 from Social Investment Business.
- 76 Crook Community Leisure opened the doors to the public this summer at its new £650,000 leisure facility at Peases West in Crook. The new centre features a gym, café bar, and function room, multi-use rooms for fitness classes, showers and changing facilities and brings together outdoor and indoor sport and fitness opportunities. Membership take up has been excellent with many joining the facility in the first six weeks of opening, and up to eight jobs will be created, the Centre was officially opened on the 8 September by Baroness Hillary Armstrong.
- 77 Community Wellness Co-ordinators are operating in both the **Weardale and Teesdale AAP** areas and aim to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of local communities therefore reducing the need for people to visit their GP surgeries. The co-ordinators also help to combat social isolation which is a particular issue in the rural areas of the county. They are linked to GP surgeries and supported by the Durham Dales Health Federation.

Altogether safer

- 78 The **Safe Durham Partnership** and 'Durham Agency Against Crime' have used £30,000 of Home Office Innovation funding for a creative arts project which aims to raise young people's awareness of, and build their resilience to, radicalisation. College students delivered a performance at the Majestic Theatre in Darlington, in front of over 100 guests.
- 79 Video interviews with the young people involved in the project highlight how young people were unaware of radicalisation prior to being involved in the project. Following their involvement, young people understood the importance of having their own beliefs and sticking to them and felt empowered to challenge behaviours of others. A Home Office Evaluator has given the project positive feedback and the education resource developed alongside the project has generated interest from the Department for Education and the national Educate Against Hate website.
- 80 A multi-agency calendar of cybercrime events demonstrate the level of community engagement and awareness raising. These events included:
- (a) A cybercrime stall ran by police colleagues at a recent Bikewise community event which gave out cyber security advice with the help of Get Safe Online.

- (b) A community event delivered to over 500 members of the public with the help of Get Safe Online delivering cyber hygiene awareness. Community resilience themes as part of this work included helping people to develop secure passwords, highlighting the awareness of scams and avoiding them and awareness of security when buying products online.
- (c) Awareness and how to deal with cyber-bullying within schools.
- (d) Fulfilling Lives event for people with learning disabilities enjoyed a talk about how to stay safe online with the audience undergoing a cyber-safety quiz.
- (e) Publicising events with local communities through existing channels such as the organisation's Facebook page.

- 81 Various activities are planned in October as part of Get Safe Online week which commences on 23 October 2017. These include free awareness raising exploitation, grooming and radicalisation seminars aimed at team managers, frontline staff and practitioners who work with parents, carers, children and young people to gain improved understanding of the issues. County Durham and Darlington Children's Safety Carousels will also take place from the 31 October to 1 December 2017.
- 82 A working group has been established to add value to current work coordinating activity relating to businesses with a focus on preventing them from becoming victims of cybercrime. A survey of businesses is being undertaken that will provide a clear focus on the key issues concerning business regarding cybercrime.
- 83 E-Cadets is a preventative solution that empowers school students to become knowledgeable about how to keep safe online and teach their peers to do the same, building resilience across the whole school. It provides a safe web based platform through which children can share ideas with each other, ask questions of the E-Cadets team and communicate, share and collaborate about online safety and learning with other children who they can be sure are the same age as they are.
- 84 The SDP's Dying to be Cool campaign won a national Municipal Journal (MJ) Achievement Award 2017 for Excellence in Community Engagement, and has now prompted the LGA to call on the Government to make teaching children about cold water shock compulsory. The campaign seeks to educate 10 – 16 year olds on the potentially fatal risks of jumping into rivers, lakes and streams without acclimatising. Awareness raising sessions have been delivered to over 10,000 school children through assemblies and water safety sessions for pupils. The work has contributed to a reduction in deaths, injuries and near misses in the county's rivers and other open water sites.
- 85 **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** is the latest AAP to invest in the Mini Police initiative. As featured in previous update reports, this is an innovative, school based programme, designed to increase engagement between Durham Constabulary, and children and their families within the community. The project is designed to be used for a variety of activities; for example Community Speed Watch, Meets and Greets, crime reduction and crime prevention. It involves years 5 and 6 at primary school which is primarily 9 to 11 year olds; this allows early engagement, intervention, and builds on the children's confidence and self-esteem. It also allows the children to take responsibility for local problems, giving them a voice. Four schools to date are involved in the project and they have been part of a royal visit as well as visiting a mosque in Newcastle and Spennymoor Police Station.

Altogether greener

- 86 The **Environment Partnership Board** met in June with Oliver Sherratt as interim Chair. Recognising the continued challenges and opportunities across the environment for County Durham, the board as a main part of its agenda considered its own strengths and forward opportunities and how as a partnership it can continue to better shape and align delivery. Maintaining an influencing voice for the environment, continued need for partnership working across communities and maximising resources came through as very important to the partnerships forward thinking.
- 87 Environment led community initiatives can start to make a real difference in building local community capacity and motivating a transition towards a more resilient and environmentally sustainable community. These initiatives have seen delivery to support community infrastructure, open spaces, quality of place, community housing and amongst others energy efficiency and carbon reduction. Many of these initiatives are submitted into one of the 12 categories of the annual Environment Awards. These awards highlight the fantastic effort that organisations, communities and individuals go to in ensuring County Durham remains a great place to live, work and visit.
- 88 The Environment Partnership also recognises activity throughout the year through 'Caring for your Environment' awards. One example of positive partnership activity is 'The Elms' group, a supported living development by Cestria Community Housing. The residents all contributed towards transforming their environment which has made a big difference to their immediate local surroundings. Named 'The Paradise Garden', it was designed into the development and is composed of two large raised beds, two polytunnels and some fruit trees. One of the beds is planted with flowers and the second with vegetables. Once grown, most of these were sold to other residents with the proceeds going toward buying seeds and other garden materials.
- 89 The Climate Change Group has worked with students from across County Durham to use art to raise awareness of climate change and the impact it has on communities, such as the potential for an increase in localised flooding. Six secondary schools have worked with artists from Bearpark Artists Co-operative to produce innovative designs that are only visible when it rains.
- 90 St John's Church in Shildon has won a £10,000 national award for their community garden work as part of the 'Shildon Alive' project. The project brings together people of all ages for a range of activities including learning, growing, cooking and eating, with a view to strengthening community spirit and inspiring a sense of pride in the area. The award means the project can continue and build on the 1,000 people they had through the garden in 2016.
- 91 The council's 'Operation Spruce Up' programme continues to receive positive feedback from communities since its launch last November. Seven areas across the county have now benefited from a 'spruce up' involving jet washing; painting; gully cleaning; shrub planting; highways re-marking and much more. Children at Evenwood Primary School, received an education assembly and took part in a poster competition to encourage people to keep the village clean and tidy and support a sense of community pride.
- 92 **3Towns AAP's** 'It's Your Town' project focuses on educating primary school pupils on the impact of litter, how it can be reduced and how they can influence others not to drop it. This project involves the civic pride team visiting all 12 primary schools

with the council's litter mascot Tidy Ted and carrying out an assembly about how the problem of litter can be addressed. Each school will have an educational assembly, have the chance to take part in an organised litter pick either in the local area or on school grounds and be asked to complete a poster asking residents to dispose of their litter responsibly. The winning posters displayed at a number of retail and community buildings within the AAP area.

- 93 The second strand is around local communities developing and improving areas to make them nicer places to live and work. The key idea of this strand is to develop a small grant fund which allows VCS groups, schools and businesses to take part in the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' initiative. The grant of up to £500 for ten groups will enable environmental improvements within town and villages within the AAP area.
- 94 Complementary to this project, 3 Towns AAP, in partnership with Groundwork North East, is running a Local Heroes scheme which brings together residents and local businesses to tackle 'grot spots' and environmental issues in specific areas, empowering residents to take ownership of problem sites and rewarding 'Local Heroes' with practical and resourceful additions. The scheme will create a positive response to community action and will allow communities to further understand their roles, responsibilities and priorities so that they feel empowered to tackle the challenges in their own areas.
- 95 Volunteers are at the heart of resilient communities and are an integral part of a number of **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP)** funded projects. One such initiative is allowing local residents to develop their horticultural skills and make new friends within the grounds of the Pioneering Care Centre.
- 96 The 'Growing Our Community' project offers weekly gardening tutorials at the centre. Recent refurbishment works also funded by GAMP have further improved access to the plant beds in the garden, making the garden fully accessible for people with additional needs. A key part of the project is combating isolation amongst local residents by bringing people together. The vision for this project is that it will eventually become self-sustaining through the active involvement of volunteers. A core group of gardeners is already established. Other local groups also use the garden; these include, Options Disability Day Service members and the local Men's Cree Group. The Men's Cree group is a social club aimed at reducing social isolation among men.
- 97 **Chester-le-Street & District AAP** has helped develop a Community Resilience Plan (CRP) for the town centre area for both businesses and residences. The plan was developed in response to the impact of flooding in the town and the devastation of homes and businesses this caused.
- 98 The plan was developed in partnership with the Business Association, Central (town) residents group and the council's Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU). Other partners involved include the fire service, environment agency and the churches together group.
- 99 Community 'awareness raising' events have taken place locally to develop the plan so that people can better protect themselves against incidents of flooding and other emergency incidents. The plan is living document and is reviewed and updated regularly.
- 100 The AAP initially led this work through its Environment Task Group and co-ordinated partnership activity with the Business Association now taking on the

leadership role. The AAP remain involved in helping to co-ordinate activity around the plan.

Recommendations and reasons

101 It is recommended that Cabinet 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