
DARLINGTON PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update on the progress of Darlington Partnership since December 2013 and introduce the revised One Darlington Perfectly Placed strategy.

Summary

2. Since December 2013 Darlington Partnership has published a revised One Darlington: Perfectly Placed document, it is in the process of establishing an Action Priority to support local employers with Workplace Mental Wellbeing and has oversight of a range of initiatives it has established over recent years.
3. In addition Darlington Partnership held an Assembly which involved many of Darlington Borough Council's elected members and attracted 170 delegates.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Members receive this report for information.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on Health and Well Being
Carbon Impact	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on Caron Impact
Diversity	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on Diversity
Wards Affected	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on specific Wards
Groups Affected	This report is for information and will have neither a positive or negative impact on Groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report outlines how the Council discharges the core function outlined in its Corporate Plan to “Support strong partnerships to set a vision and direction for the Borough”
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report outlines the primary means by which the Council engages with partners to deliver One Darlington : Perfectly Placed
Efficiency	The report highlights how other public agencies and other sectors are engaged to support the Council in addressing the needs of the residents of Darlington through agreed priorities.

MAIN REPORT

One Darlington Perfectly Placed

1. Following approval at Council, Darlington Partnership ratified the revised One Darlington Perfectly Placed document (tabled). A video has been made setting out some of the key objectives of the more detailed document <http://youtu.be/mX37QtZa4qc>
2. As outlined in the strategy for Darlington to thrive three key conditions need to exist:
 - A Growing economy
 - Strong resilient communities
 - Every public pound being spent wisely

The Partnership activity is therefore focused on achieving these conditions. Action Priorities are a key mechanism the Partnership uses to achieve this.

Action Priorities

3. The Partnership Board agreed in September 2011 that, in support of the delivery of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, it would focus on only a limited number of 'Action Priorities', the aim being to instigate action which visibly addressed issues facing Darlington.
 - (i) is the issue a significant concern or does it present a significant opportunity
 - (ii) would addressing it rely on the contributions of each sector, private, public, voluntary and community and
 - (iii) can a measurable impact be made in the short term. (12 months)

The Action Priorities process has led to some significant successes over recent years.

Foundation for Jobs

<http://www.foundationforjobs.co.uk/>

4. The award winning Foundation for Jobs initiative is a Partnership response to youth unemployment. The programme directly increases vocational opportunities for young people in Darlington through the creation of apprenticeships. It capitalises on the partnership's strong networks to stimulate Darlington's employers to sign up to commitments and to foster alliances with schools and other public sector providers.
5. Since it began operating in April 2012 Foundation for Jobs is responsible for securing 280 additional apprenticeships for young people in Darlington and

having provided meaningful links with businesses and industry for over 2,500 school age children in Darlington.

Good Friends

<http://www.goodfriends.org.uk/>

6. In 2013 the Partnership determined to establish a comprehensive borough wide good neighbour scheme to respond to the needs of the elderly and vulnerable people outside of core service provision.
7. The resultant Good Friends scheme involves Durham Constabulary, Neighbourhood Watch and Age UK Darlington.
8. Good Friends' provide a range of support to their older and vulnerable neighbours, enabling them to live safely and independently. They make brief contact to check up on vulnerable people who live nearby but will escalate the contact during known difficult times e.g. cold weather or when alerted to a specific problem.
9. The aim was to recruit 1,000 Good Friends within the year and a continuous evaluation is running alongside the initiative. Within the first nine months there have been over 650 Good Friends recruited supporting over 250 neighbours. The lives of many lonely and vulnerable people are being transformed.
10. The scheme helps to reduce vulnerability reducing the risk of a need for social care services as well as reducing isolation and helping to reintegrate older and vulnerable individuals into their communities with benefits to both the befrienders and those they befriend.

Darlington Cares

<http://www.darlingtoncares.co.uk/>

11. In October 2012, a Darlington Partnership group, led by a committed private sector member, established Darlington Cares, an initiative which harnesses and combines the corporate social responsibility activity of its members. Teesside University host the initiative which has the following objectives:
 - a) Increase the benefit to the communities of Darlington from local companies' corporate social responsibility activity
 - b) Engage more businesses in corporate social responsibility activity
 - c) Increase numbers of volunteers in Darlington.
12. It has established four areas that it focuses on:
 - Older people

- Children
- Community and
- Environment

13. From an initial membership of 5 Darlington CARES has grown to a membership of 23 employers and is fully funded by contributions from its membership. The initiatives it delivers range from a 'busy readers' scheme supporting school children with their literacy skills to providing volunteer technicians for 'Bike Stop', a cycle sale and repair shop which provides employment opportunities for homeless people. The scheme also enables skills sharing between business and existing not for profit bodies such as the HR expertise provided by one leading employer to the Borough's Credit Union.

Help Hubs

14. In November 2013 the Partnership commissioned an assessment of the level and nature of poverty in Darlington and determined to act.

15. Building on an approach the Council has adopted in its Town Centre Contact Centre and in collaboration with voluntary sector organisations the Partnership has established community based facilities across the Borough which provide :

- i. access to a food bank
- ii. advice (debt, benefit, housing)
- iii. access to the Credit Union and
- iv. Council Customer Services

16. There are now three help hubs operating within the community with a further two proposed with a model of mixed funding.

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace

17. Over recent months Board members across all sectors have been raising their concerns about their experience of increasing issues related to mental wellbeing. In response the Partnership has identified mental wellbeing as an Action Priority for 2014, with a particular focus on the workplace.

18. After significant consultation with local employers a scheme is being developed which will help larger employers share their expertise with smaller and less experienced companies.

Partnership Assemblies

19. Darlington Partnership held an Assembly focused on Every Child Gets the Best Start in Life which is a key outcome of the revised One Darlington Perfectly

Placed. The event attracted 170 delegates and proposed actions to be taken forward through the Darlington Children and Young People's Collective.

20. A conference titled 'Prosperity for All' is scheduled for 28th November. National level speakers have been secured for this event which will attract an audience from across the region.