

MINUTE OF THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Wednesday, 4 June 2014

Present:	James Smith (Chair)	North Lanarkshire Council
	James McCabe	North Lanarkshire Council
	Paul Jukes	North Lanarkshire Council
	Shirley Linton	North Lanarkshire Council
	Pauline Nicholas	North Lanarkshire Council
	Nelson Telfer	Police Scotland
	Jim Kerr	HMP Shotts
	Martin McGuire	New College Lanarkshire
	Dr Harpreet Kholi	NHS Lanarkshire
	Gabe Docherty	NHS Lanarkshire
	Stephen Kerr	NHS Lanarkshire
	Neena Mahal	NHS Lanarkshire
	Ross McGuffie	NHS Lanarkshire
	Val McGrory	Jobcentre Plus/DWP
	Allan McQuade	Scottish Enterprise
	Brian Hughes	Scottish Fire & Rescue/NLC
	Paul Devlin	Scottish Fire & Rescue
	Allan Comrie	SPT
	Hazel Mathieson	Skills Development Scotland
	Kenny Moffat	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
	Stephen Fraser	North Lanarkshire Council
	John Campbell	North Lanarkshire Council
	Jonathan Smith	North Lanarkshire Council
	Susan Cloke	North Lanarkshire Council
	Liz Fergus	North Lanarkshire Council
	Kirstin Thomson	North Lanarkshire Council
	Lesley Ann Henderson	North Lanarkshire Council
	Jennifer Lees	North Lanarkshire Council
	Mark Hamill	North Lanarkshire Council
Apologies:	Gavin Whitefield	North Lanarkshire Council
	Linda Johnston	North Lanarkshire Council
	Colin Sloey	NHS Lanarkshire
	Ian Ross	NHS Lanarkshire
	Andrew Scott	Scottish Government
	John Miller	Scottish Fire & Rescue
	Francis Fallan	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
	June Vallance	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
	Bruce Kiloh	SPT

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

1. **Minute of previous meeting (9 April)** – agreed as an accurate record
2. **Matters arising**

- British Transplant Games (item 7) - discussions continue around a bid being made by North Lanarkshire to host the Games in 2017. **Continued.**

3. Launch of North Lanarkshire Economic and Regeneration Strategy 2014-2017 (Paul Jukes, North Lanarkshire Council)

The Strategy entitled "Our Plan for Growth" sets out North Lanarkshire Council's priorities for growing the local economy over the next 3 years and highlights how it will go about achieving these. The Strategy has three main priorities –

- Supporting businesses
- Increasing employment/improving skills of the workforce; and
- Regenerating town centres and communities

A photo opportunity followed the meeting and the launch of the Strategy will be highlighted in the coming weeks in the local press.

The document can be downloaded from here -

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29195>

4. Obesity within the context of health inequalities (Dr Harpreet Kholi/Gabe Docherty, NHS Lanarkshire)

The Board heard from Dr Kholi and Gabe Docherty on the rise of obesity levels within North Lanarkshire, which is the main result of unhealthy diet and low levels of physical activity across the area.

To address this issue, it is intended that NLP undertakes a needs assessment regarding obesity, focusing on key themes highlighted in the Board report. The needs assessment would be carried out in the summer with results presented to the NLP Board by the end of 2014. The report also highlights potential priorities for action including –

- Restricting the number of outlets selling unhealthy foods around schools
- Setting up a North Lanarkshire wide, community led, weight reduction programme
- Promoting participation in physical activity
- Maximising existing physical activity programmes

Action: The Board noted the content of the report and agreed the undertaking of a strategic obesity needs assessment.

Councillor McCabe requested that the partnership record the disappointment at the withdrawal of the Keep Well project.

5. Accounts Commission report – an Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014 (Jennifer Lees, NLC)

The Accounts Commission report (Appendix 1) provides the Board with a summary of the issues raised in its local government overview published in March 2014.

A full management response will be considered by the Council's Audit & Governance Panel in August, which will highlight how the Council and partners are responding to issues and challenges identified. Meantime, Partners are asked to forward comments on the document

to ClokeS@northlan.gov.uk. The chair requested that he has sight of the responses before they are forwarded to the Audit & Governance Panel

Action: All + Susan Cloke, Service Improvement Team

6. Third Sector update (Kenny Moffat, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire)

- Local Participation in national Community Planning “deep dive” study – Voluntary Action Scotland has identified VANL as well as Voluntary Action Angus and Edinburgh Third Sector Interface, to participate in a “deep dive” study on community engagement and co-production commissioned by the National Community Planning Group. The study will *identify the extent which community engagement is influencing activity planning and outcomes within the Community Planning process and how engagement can be increased*. VANL has provisionally agreed to participate in the study which will be conducted over a 3 month period and the findings of which will be produced late Summer/early Autumn 2014.
- Third Sector Interface Community Planning Improvement Programme
Plans have been launched by the Scottish Government Third Sector Unit, Voluntary Action Scotland and the Improvement Service to launch a resourced programme focusing on improving the impact on Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) on community planning and achieving better outcomes for communities across Scotland. Five Pathfinder TSIs will be selected to undertake intensive action research and self evaluation within their local Community Planning structures in order to develop a benchmarking tool and learning which will offer a basis for development across the TSI network. North Lanarkshire has registered interest in being one of the Pathfinder TSIs and decisions are expected early June.
- Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games voluntary sector activity – North Lanarkshire Council recruited 200 volunteers to support the Games’ events taking place in North Lanarkshire (triathlon at Strathclyde Park and cycling time trial in the Northern Corridor). VANL will contribute to four training sessions during June to prepare the volunteers for their role in the Games which include stewards, security assistants, ambassadors, transport assistants, information providers and field of play assistants.
- North Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Conference 2014 – this year's conference is scheduled to take place on 4 June at New College Lanarkshire's Coatbridge campus. As in previous years, the NLP Board will receive in due course, a full report on the conference

Action: Noted.

7. Role of the Prison Service in relation to Community Planning (Jim Kerr, Governor HMP Shotts)

Jim Kerr recently took up post as Governor of HMP Shotts and gave an overview of the prison and the services which it provides. The prison has a capacity of 538 spaces and holds long term (+4 years sentence) adult male prisoners. It also offers interventions and services geared to provide activities, education and family contact. All prisoners are subject to the Integrated Case Management process which assesses the range of needs and risk of each and is designed to return those within the prison to the community safely. Key partners

involved in the Integrated Case Management process are Criminal Justice Social Work, NHS and New College Lanarkshire.

Action: Noted

8. Welfare Reform update (John Campbell, Housing & Social Work Services)

- Rent Arrears – have increased by 51% since March 2013.
- Scottish Welfare Fund – this has assisted 6,422 residents with crisis grants and 3,245 with Community Care grants (since March 2014)
- Universal Credit online package – this has rolled out to staff and elected members during May via the Login to Learn site. NHS Lanarkshire and other partners will also access the package via their respective Login to Learn systems.
- Welfare Rights Clinics – these will be piloted in Coatbridge, Wishaw and Airdrie localities and following successful trialling/testing, will be rolled out to all six GP practices
- Tackling Food Poverty – the Council has approved £100,000 as part of the 2014/15 budget to deliver on findings set out in the Tackling Food Poverty and Insecurity Strategic Framework which was jointly commissioned by NLC and NHS Lanarkshire.

Action: Noted

9. Early Years Collaborative progress report (Lesley Ann Henderson, Learning & Leisure Services)

The meeting heard that the Early Years Collaborative is the first national Quality Improvement Programme to be led by Community Planning Partnerships. The Programme will assist in making the transformational change needed in services aimed at families from pre-conception to 8 years.

The report highlights the 5 “stretch aims” which have been agreed as national targets which include –

- Ensuring women experience positive pregnancies
- Ensuring 85% of all children reach the expected developmental milestone (at the 27-30 month review)
- Ensuring 90% of all children have reached expected milestones by the start of primary school

In relation to the first stretch aims above, North Lanarkshire is already meeting the target but will continue to pursue improvement.

No base information available for attainment of stretch aim three

The Board noted the content of the report and agreed to receive further updates on the Programme.

Action: Noted

10. Local Community Planning report

Appendix 1 of the report provides an update on key local community planning developments identified within the Local Area Team Action Plans for the period October 2013 - March 2014:

Airdrie

- Focus continues on supporting the delivery of the Whinhall Action Plan
- Hallcraig Street car park – information panels are ready to be installed in the stair wells and will include information on local activities for young people as well as health messages and services
- Town Centre Action Plan – second stage consultation events have been held and summary reports are available from the Airdrie Town Centre page of the Council's website
- Upperton Community Action Plan has been agreed and signed off by the Residents' group. Funding applications to support the delivery of actions have been submitted.

Bellshill

- Improve casualty reduction – Fire Safety Awareness training will be delivered to all home support workers over the next six months
- Town Centre Framework and Action Plan – consultation on this took place between February and April 2014 with officers and elected members and formal consultation on the draft document will take place in late spring/early summer 2014.

Coatbridge

- Shawhead – the new out-of-hours anti-social behaviour response team has undertaken patrols of Shawhead and issues which are identified are reported to the LAT for consideration/discussion. Planned improvements for the area include upgrades to street lighting and new security lighting attached to buildings
- Best Bar None initiative – training for local businesses has now been completed following completion of Phase 1. Local businesses have reported a positive impact as a result of their involvement with the initiative. Phase 2 of the programme has been agreed
- Anti-social behaviour – a new-out-of hours anti social behaviour process is in place with new day and night hubs in operation. IT systems are being developed to support this and are nearing completion

Motherwell

- Craigneuk – the multi agency estate team continues to take forward partnership activity in the area and to date, initial work includes –
 - 240 homes surveyed around service delivery, perception of the estate and financial inclusion issues
 - Launch of Action Lone Parents - to assist parents back to work
 - Progress of Participatory Budgeting exercise – community will agree environmental projects to be taken forward
- Engaging with local young people – Blocks of Street Soccer have been undertaken which has resulted in a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour

North

- Kilsyth Town Centre Framework – the survey has been completed and town centre workshops held. Summary reports can be obtained from the Kilsyth town centre page of the council's website.
- "See Me "pledge – work has been ongoing to promote this and Sanctuary Cumbernauld has signed the pledge along with 6 other organisations. The initiative is being promoted through libraries and an action plan is being developed

Wishaw

- *Tenant Led inspections* – an issue with youth disorder was addressed through collaborative working as a result of tenant led inspections. The issue was highlighted to key partners through Sharepoint which resulted in Police Scotland addressing the problem through the community police and night time team
- *Gowkthrapple issues* – There has been a significant reduction in crime, offences and disorder in the area since the deployment of two dedicated police officers. Local groups have been encouraged to work better together following a second Gowkthrapple Partnership event held on 13 March.

Action: Noted

11. Joint Resourcing progress report

The report updated the meeting on progress in relation to Joint Resourcing in North Lanarkshire. The Board previously agreed two strategic actions i.e. –

- *all partners represented would ensure that reference is made in all budget statements/strategic documents to the alignment of these resources with the Community Plan (Single Outcome Agreement) strategic priorities and to the joint discussions that have taken place reflecting this, and*
- *a Joint Resourcing Group would be established which would include representation from North Lanarkshire Council, NHS Lanarkshire, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, New College Lanarkshire, plus the Third Sector and will be chaired by the Chief Executive's Office.*

The first meeting of the Joint Resourcing Group took place in April and initial discussion focused on the inclusion of the SOA strategic priorities in budget statements and strategic documents.

The Improvement Services has provided a proposal to support the NLP in joint resourcing and the next steps will be to progress to Stage 1 as outlined in the Improvement Service proposal. An "initiation" meeting, scheduled for August 2014, will agree the extent of the support and engagement with the Improvement Service. Following this, a Project Initiation Document will be produced, the content of which will be agreed by both the NLP and the Improvement Service and will include – *project activities, organisational development change requirements, timescale, resource commitments and performance requirements.*

Action: The Board noted the content of the report and the work which is underway on joint resourcing.

12. Economic update

- *Employment* – an estimated 167,700 residents in North Lanarkshire are considered "economically active" which represents 78% of the population aged 16-64. This is slightly above the Scottish rate of 77%
- *Claimant Count* – In April 2014, the Jobseekers Allowance count stood at 8,810 – a decrease of 21% on the corresponding figure for April 2013 and a decrease of 4% on last month's figure
- *State of the Economy* – the Scottish Economy grew by 1.6% during 2013 as announced by the Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
- *EU funding* – within the 2007-2013 programme, over £18.5 million of grant has been secured towards employability, business support, social enterprise development and lifelong learning initiatives for North Lanarkshire

Full details of the latest economic and labour market performance information at both local and national level are contained within the report and its appendices. This information is provided by Official labour market statistics and the Chief Economist's State of the Economy report.

A new economic baseline and employment forecast for North Lanarkshire has been commissioned by Planning and Regeneration, NLC. The consultants, Oxford Economics, intend to run a briefing session on the process on Monday 30 June at 11am (Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Motherwell).

An invitation to attend the briefing session was extended to Partnership members or their staff who have a particular interest in the forecast. Partners should confirm their interest in attending the event at their earliest convenience. Depending on the uptake of places, there may be a requirement to set up a separate briefing session.

Details of nominees should be forwarded to Sharonsmith@northlan.gov.uk by Friday, 13 June.

Action: Noted

13. Partnership Risk Register

Pauline Nicholas provided background to the report in that the current NLP Risk Register was updated for 2013/14 and agreed by the NLP Board at its meeting in May 2013. The register for this year, 2014/15, requires minimal change and key updates have been inserted for approval by the Board. Agreed actions will inform the Action Plan for Developing the Partnership Working Group. This group will be responsible for monitoring the register on a quarterly basis. An annual update will be provided to the NLP Board.

Action: The Board approved the Risk Register; agreed to receive update reports; and agreed to the Developing the Partnership Working Group monitoring the implementation of the Actions

14. Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2014 (Liz Fergus, Learning & Leisure Services)

The meeting heard that the National Youth Work Strategy – "*Our ambitions for Improving the life chances of Young People in Scotland*" was launched on 3 April 2014 and was developed jointly by the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Youthlink Scotland. The document provides the framework for the delivery of youth work in Scotland and seeks to -

- *ensure that Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in*
- *puts young people at the heart of the policy*
- *recognise the value of youth work*
- *build workforce capacity; and*
- *ensure our impact is measured.*

The strategy also reflects the priorities and outcomes are detailed in the Single Outcome Agreement.

In addition to the National Youth Work Strategy context, the meeting approved the refreshed North Lanarkshire Youth Work Strategy, which has been developed by Community Learning

and Development on behalf of the partnership. Partners agreed to work towards developing youth engagement structures in line with the recommendations and the strategy.

Action: Noted

15. Budget Statement

Noted as at end of Period 13 (31 March 2014). Unallocated resources of £16,056.

16. AOCB

- *Joint Inspection of Services for children and Young People in NL Community Planning Partnership areas* - North Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership will be subject to a joint inspection on the provision of services to children and young people, commencing Monday 6th October 2014. This is a requirement under section 115 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

The persons and bodies taking part in the joint inspection will include - the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and; Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland.

There will also be collaboration between the Care Inspectorate and Audit Scotland in relation to the work.

The inspection lead is Helen Jackson from Care Inspectorate and the whole inspection process will be held over 13 days from 6th October until Friday 7th November 2014. Following this, there will be an opportunity for discussion on the findings with Chief Officers and Community Planning Partners (CPP).

Duncan Mackay, Housing & Social Work Services, will lead on this inspection and will respond to the Care Inspectorate by Friday, 6th June 2014 detailing key people and contacts. Thereafter, Helen Jackson will be in contact to make arrangements to brief the Chair of this CPP (Councillor Jim McCabe), Chief Executives of the Council, Health Board and the Chief Constable from Police Scotland. These briefings will take place between Monday 18th until Friday 22nd August 2014.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday, 13 August 2014, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell (9.30am)

MINUTE OF THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 13 AUGUST 2014, NEW LANARKSHIRE COLLEGE, MOTHERWELL

PRESENT

Councillor James McCabe (Chair)	North Lanarkshire Council
Councillor James Smith	North Lanarkshire Council
Gavin Whitefield	North Lanarkshire Council
Shirley Linton	North Lanarkshire Council
Pauline Nicholas	North Lanarkshire Council
Linda Johnstone	North Lanarkshire Council
Jonathan Smith	North Lanarkshire Council
Stephen Fraser	North Lanarkshire Council
John Tierney	North Lanarkshire Council
John Campbell	North Lanarkshire Council
Mark Hamill	North Lanarkshire Council
Nelson Telfer	Police Scotland
John Miller	Scottish Fire and Rescue
Craig Russell	VANL
June Vallance	VANL
Heather Urquhart	New College Lanarkshire
Janice Hewitt	Chief Officer, North Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Danny Logue	Skills Development Scotland
Hugh McAloon	Scottish Government
Gabe Docherty	NHS Lanarkshire
Ross McGuffie	NHS Lanarkshire
Ian Ross	NHS Lanarkshire
Bill Higgins	Department of Work and Pensions

APOLOGIES

Martin McGuire	New College Lanarkshire
Catriona Morton	Department of Work and Pensions
Alan Comrie	SPT
Andrew Scott	Scottish Government
Neena Mahal	NHS Lanarkshire
Stephen Kerr	NHS Lanarkshire
Frank Fallon	Voluntary Sector
Jim Kerr	HMP Shotts
Brian Hughes	Scottish Fire and Rescue
Allan McQuade	Scottish Enterprise
Alison Loveday	Scottish Enterprise

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

1. **Minute of Previous Meeting – 4 June 2014**

The Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 4 June 2014 was agreed as an accurate record.

2. **Matters Arising**

The Chair intimated that following the submission of a bid to host the British Transplant Games in 2017 the Council had been shortlisted along with five other 'cities' to host the Games.

3. **North Lanarkshire Community Learning and Development Strategy 2014-18**

John Tierney, North Lanarkshire Council, outlined the background to the Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 which placed a requirement on the Council to publish the North Lanarkshire Community Learning and Development Partnership Strategy 2014-18.

The Strategy was enclosed in the Appendix to the report and it was noted that it would provide a framework for locality community learning and development providers to jointly assess the needs of local communities and identify any barriers that may exist through six local locality CLD partnership action plans, and that targeted support to groups and individuals would also be planned and provided in a response to those needs.

Thereon, John Tierney provided a short presentation on the Strategy and the work undertaken with key partners.

Action:

- (1) the requirements arising from the Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and in particular the requirement to publish a three year plan no later than 1 September 2015 be noted, and
- (2) that the contents of the North Lanarkshire Community Learning and Development Partnership Strategy for 2014-2018 be approved.

4. **Themed Partnership Working Groups – Annual Update Reports**

(Linda Johnston, North Lanarkshire Council)

(1) **Health and Wellbeing**

The report provided an update on the progress made by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group between 1 April 2013 and 30 March 2014.

Thereon, Linda Johnston set out details of the nine local outcomes, an update on the key achievements to date and those indicators which were not performing within an acceptable threshold.

(2) **Lifelong Learning Partnership Group**

The report provided an update on the progress made by the Lifelong Learning Partnership Group for the period from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 and details of the four local outcomes, the performance of the 11 indicators and 35 actions contained within the Lifelong Learning theme and the key achievements to date.

(3) **Community Safety Partnership Annual Update Report**

The report provided an update on the progress made by the Community Safety Partnership for the period from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. The report outlined the three local outcomes:-

- to reduce disorder, anti-social behaviour, violence and abuse within our communities
- to increase public confidence in relation to community safety and wellbeing
- to reduce the harm caused to our communities by organised crime groups.

Thereon, Linda Johnston provided information on the performance of the 30 indicators and 40 actions contained within the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan and details of a number of key achievements.

(4) **Regeneration Group**

The report provided an update on the progress made by the Regeneration Partnership Group for the period from 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014. The report provided details of the seven local outcomes contained within the Regeneration Partnership Group, details on the

performance of the 13 performance indicators and action points contained within the plan and a number of key achievements, including the hosting of a number of events during the Commonwealth Games 2014.

During discussion, Councillor McCabe advised that whilst acknowledging the vast majority of targets were on track he emphasised the need to look at ways to continually improve performance and particular reference was made to the statistics for children involved in road traffic accidents.

John Miller, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service intimated that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service would make resources available should any of the partners wish to undertake road safety initiatives.

Action: to note the position.

5. **Third Sector Update**

The Board heard from June Vallance and Craig Russell who provided an update on Third Sector activity for the period up to 31 August 2014, including the North Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Conference 2014 which had taken place on 4 June 2014 and the Special Awards Ceremony which celebrated youth volunteering.

Thereon, Craig Russell provided further information in respect of the Community Planning Improvement Programme. He advised that VANL had been selected as one of the five Third Sector interface partners to participate in year one of the Third Sector Interface Community Planning Improvement Programme in Scotland and had received £40,000 from the Scottish Government to develop a robust self assessment and improvement planning programme of activity.

He requested that all partners identify a lead representative to participate in the Programme which would take place over three stages, details of which were enclosed in the self assessment journey document.

Action: that all community planning partners in North Lanarkshire identify a lead representative for the Third Sector Community Planning Improvement Programme and self assessment journey and provide details to Craig Russell at VANL no later than Friday, 22 August 2014.

6. **Craigneuk, Wishaw – Update**

Jonathan Smith, North Lanarkshire Council provided an update on the progress of the implementation of the Action Plan developed in respect of the Craigneuk Project.

Thereon, the Board discussed the future requirements in respect of Craigneuk and the need to address future challenges which would require input from all partner agencies.

Action: to note the position.

7. **Economic Update**

Stephen Fraser, North Lanarkshire Council provided information in respect of:-

- Employment – an estimated 168,700 residents in North Lanarkshire were considered to be economically active which represented 78.5% of the population aged 16-64 years and remained above the Scottish average of 77.3%;
- Claimant Count – as at June 2014 the Jobseekers Allowance count stood at 8,405, a drop of 21% on the corresponding figure for June 2013 and a decrease of 2% on the previous month's figure
- State of the Economy – the Scottish economy grew 2.1% over the year to April 2014.

- North Lanarkshire Economic Outlook – a report commissioned by the Council suggested that in terms of output North Lanarkshire would enjoy strong growth relative to the rest of Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area and Scotland as a whole in 2014 and 2015.

Thereon, Stephen Fraser intimated that full details of the latest economic and labour market performance information at both local and national levels were contained within the report and its appendices and information was provided by official labour markets statistics and the Chief Economist's state of the economy report.

Action: to note the position.

8. Financial Outlook

Gavin Whitefield, North Lanarkshire Council intimated that the Council was in the second year of a three year Savings Plan which had presented the Council with a number of significant challenges.

He added that the Council was looking at its own Transformation Programme and would be undertaking an intensive consultation exercise in the first week in November 2014 with the workforce, Trade Union representatives, partner agencies and the Scottish Government to set out the direction beyond the current Programme.

Action: to note the position.

9. Welfare Reform

John Campbell, Housing and Social Work Services provided an update in respect of the action taken to mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform within North Lanarkshire and provided the following information:-

Communication – the Welfare Reform Communication Group was continuing to progress the short term Action Plan in line with the overall communications strategy.

Benefits – following a new scan of households it was noted 36 households remain affected by the benefit cap.

Under Occupancy Rule/Preparing for Universal Credit – a programme of visits to tenants affected by the 14% and 25% reduction of housing benefit (bedroom tax) commenced on 7 February 2014 and to date 4,551 visits had been completed, 216 cases reported that they had no bank account, 550 tenants stated that they would pay by direct debit/standing order, 519 tenants were currently on the waiting list for smaller accommodation, 2,038 tenants advised they had a disability, 729 cases state that they require an extra bedroom because of a disability, and 910 people have been referred to Employability Services.

Housing Services – rent arrears have increased by 74% since March 2013.

Discretionary Housing Payments – as part of the process for 2014/2015 all DHP awards due to under occupancy or the benefit cap have been rolled forward so there was no requirement for claimants to make a fresh application and 97.4% of the available budget for 2014/2015 had been committed as at 27 June 2014.

Scottish Welfare Fund – 6,692 residents had been assisted with crisis grants and 3,599 with Community Care Grants.

Thereon, following discussion on a number of issues related to Welfare Reform the Partnership noted that:-

- (1) the Job Centres in Airdrie and Motherwell would be digital Job Centres and would have a number of PCs available for job seekers.

- (2) Motherwell Job Centre was creating an Employability Hub and had space for a permanent or temporary Hub for a partner organisation. Pauline Nicholas to discuss with Caitriona McAuley.

Action: to note the position.

10. **Accounts Commission for Local Government Overview Report**

There was submitted the Council's response to the recommendation from the Accounts Commission Local Government Overview Report "Councils need to provide stronger leadership for community planning partnerships/working with partners to make the best use of overall public resources available in the area."

Following discussion, the Board agreed the contents of the response.

Action: that the Council's response to the Accounts Commission Local Government Overview Report as detailed within the report be approved.

11. **Budget Statement**

It was noted that at the end of period 4 on 11 July 2014 there was unallocated resources of £16,056.

12. **Letter from Pat Watters – National Community Planning Group**

The Board noted the contents of the letter from Pat Watters in respect of the work of the National Community Planning Group and agreed that the Council would not be participating in the case study for What Works Scotland.

Action: that the position be noted.

13. **Timetable of Meetings for 2015**

The Partnership Board agreed the timetable of meetings of the Board for 2015 as undernoted:-

18 February 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell
15 April 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell
17 June 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell
19 August 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell
21 October 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell
9 December 2015 at 9.30 am, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Motherwell.