



Joanne McMahon

I have worked in the public sector within County Durham for over 28 years, working for Police and Local Authorities.

I am a qualified Accountant and Finance Business Partner and currently work as a Strategic Finance Manager within Durham County Council.

I am committed to addressing issues of social and financial inequalities and believe that the credit union, along with its partners, plays a key role in enabling this across County Durham and other areas.

The skills I bring to the board are:

Financial Management (including the development of Financial Policies and Financial Management standards and procedures), financial controls, risk management, governance and regulatory requirements, service delivery and development via a partnership and whole system-based approach.

Angela Surtees

I am a County Councillor at Durham County Council and the Cabinet Member for social inclusion – my portfolio includes overseeing the councils poverty strategy, response to welfare reforms, welfare rights and advice services and the approach to equality and diversity agenda to name a few areas. I have held the position of County Councillor for the last 8 years and have always held a keen interest in tackling and supporting vulnerability, improving quality of life and alleviating poverty or inequality.

I have previously worked within the Information, Advice & Guidance sector and also within Adult Learning, working directly with people to support them with employment, benefits, improving literacy, numeracy and employability skills, so I consider myself as being experienced in grass root working and possessing a deep understanding of issues that affect vulnerable people.

Throughout my career I have developed a wide range of skills including strategic thinking, problem solving and communications. I believe that all people should be able to have access to services on a fair and equal basis. That we should respond to changing cultures and ensure the impacts austerity, which have increased poverties across our region are tackled.

I believe credit unions are an important tool in tackling financial and social inclusion. The availability of affordable and low cost financial solutions and saving opportunities are key tools in improving financial inclusion for people and I would like to be part of an organisation that works towards assisting many more vulnerable people with an aim of financial inclusion for all.



Paul Darby

I have worked in Local Government within County Durham for over 30 years. I am a “local lad” who started out as a YTS trainee and who has worked his way up to the position of Corporate Director of Resources and the statutory responsible (s151) officer of the Council. I was born and still live in a community with many challenges and fully I understand and am passionate about tackling issues of social and financial inequalities.

For many years amongst other things, I have been responsible for the Revenues and Benefits services provided by the Council and have first-hand experience of being responsible for supporting some of the most vulnerable residents across our county. I am proud of the work we have done as a council through the various policies we have adopted and of the Poverty Action Plan we have developed and are implementing.

I have been a key member of the councils Poverty Action Steering Group for the last 12 years and led that group for the last four years and fully recognise the need to build on the partnership arrangements we have in place and expand the reach of the Credit Union across County Durham and other areas to help us tackle financial inclusion together.

Having facilitated the support to the NEFirst Credit Union following the difficulties it experienced as a result of the merger with Prince Bishops CU I have been attending the Credit Union Board meetings for the last 4 years, where I hope I have demonstrated both my commitment and what I can bring to the Board. I have experience of attending many boards and forums throughout my career and always approach matters with a solutions and outcomes focus.