



## Election of Directors

### New Directors

#### Paul Darby

I have worked in Local Government within County Durham for 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 10 years and see 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 NE First 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 12 months, 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.

#### Alison Dunn

I am a charity chief executive officer, non-practising solicitor and Local Authority Director with a passion for social justice, the alleviation of poverty and tackling social and health inequalities. Through a career that spans the private, public and charitable sectors in both strategy and operations I have dedicated my work to changing the policy, practice and perceptions preventing us from having a fair society for all, with lives well lived.

The skills I bring to the board are legal, HR, risk management, governance, service delivery, business development and networking. I have a strong commitment to social justice, an interest in financial inclusion and believe the credit union has an important role to play in changing fortunes for many.

## **Joanne McMahon**

I have worked in the public sector within County Durham for over 25 years, working for Police and Local Authorities.

I am a qualified Accountant and Finance Business Partner and currently work as a Principal Accountant supporting Adults and Health Services.

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.

## **Mike Smith**

I have vast experience in large scale, fast paced, operational environments delivering business performance and results improvements for a range of clients across the UK.

My background includes over 30 years in mortgage finance operations, servicing the fastest growing book in the UK, from cradle to grave. I have held line leadership responsibility for over 1,500 colleagues leading through significant restructure and transformation.

I have extensive experience in developing customer experience including digital development, influencing corporate culture, managing operational risk and fulfilling regulatory adherence.

I also have a strong track record in people development, positive, enterprising workplace engagement and managing through growth as well as challenging, uncertain and traumatic times - transformation at its best and most challenging.

I have extensive experience in management and reporting of Risk and Compliance in Financial Services and through a series of Board roles has a strong understanding of Governance and the responsibility and process of Board matters.

I am currently working with clients who are seeking to align their Strategy, Structure and frameworks of organisation to meet and enable their growth plans.

I have established my own company, Mike Smith Management Services Ltd, working under the umbrella of Ashmore Consulting Ltd and am a non-executive director at Durham Cricket and Durham Cricket Board Limited and Ashbrooke Sports Club Ltd.

## Angela Surtees

I am a County Councillor at Durham County Council and the Cabinet Member for social inclusion – my portfolio includes overseeing the council's 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.