

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
EILDON AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the EILDON
AREA FORUM held in the Town Hall, Stow on
14 August 2014 at 6.30 p.m.

- Present:- Councillors B. White (Chairman), S. Aitchison (from para 3), M. Ballantyne, I. Gillespie, B. Herd, J. Mitchell.
Community Councillors P. Docherty (Oxton & Channelkirk), R. French (Newtown St Boswells), J. MacKenzie (Stow), Ian Purvis (Galashiels & Langlee), B. Harrison (Ettrick & Yarrow), T. Cotter (Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk and Midlem).
- Apologies:- Councillors, V. Davidson, G. Edgar, D Parker, J. Torrance; Inspector A. Hodges (Police Scotland), J. Douce (Scottish Fire & Rescue), Earliston, Lauderdale and Selkirk and District Community Councils.
- In Attendance:- SBC Neighbourhood Area Manager (Eildon), Strategic Community Engagement Officer (C. Malster), Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

Member of Public - 7

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

MINUTE

2. There had been circulated copies of the minute of 30 April 2014. It was noted that Councillor Ballantyne should be added to the list of apologies for that meeting.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

MEMBER

Councillor Aitchison joined the meeting.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES AND CAPITAL, REVENUE AND PAY PARKING WORKS

3. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director of Neighbourhood Services seeking approval for the proposed new Neighbourhood small schemes. Neighbourhood Area Manager, Craig Blackie, advised that two schemes had been requested by the Eildon Members. Requests had been made to supply and install new metal posts for the painted 'Lauder' sign adjacent to the A68 just north of Oxton, at a price of £630. There had also been a request to surface with bituminous material an old shrub bed and tree pit on Back Row, Selkirk near the junction with Tower Street at a price of £1800. Members agreed the proposed schemes. Mr Blackie went on to advise Members of 3 schemes accepted under the 'Quality of Life' budget for the Eildon Area as follows:-

Contribution to installation of Fountain at Gunknowe Loch, Tweedbank	£500
Purchase of water bowser for Lauder in Bloom	£677
Purchase of chairs for Kirkhope Hall	£300

4. With regard to the list of Revenue and Capital Works, which had also been circulated, and in particular with regard to carriageway patching scheduled to be carried out on the A709 between the Gordon Arms and Glenlude, Councillor Ballantyne asked that road safety on the B709, Gordon Arms to Berrybush, be investigated at the same time.

DECISION

APPROVED the following Neighbourhood Small Schemes for implementation:-

- (a) new metal posts for painted 'Lauder' sign £630
- (b) surface old shrub bed and tree pit, Back Row, Selkirk £1800

YARROW FEUS – 40 MPH SPEED LIMIT EVALUATION

5. With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 1 May 2013, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Commercial Services to advise the Eildon Area Forum of the results of a monitoring exercise undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of a 40 mph speed limit provided in 2013 through the village of Yarrow Feus. Assistant Engineer, Robbie Yates, was in attendance to present the report. He explained that, to allow a meaningful evaluation to be carried out it was considered appropriate that some 'before and after' speed surveys be undertaken at various locations along the 2 kilometres covered by the speed limit. The speed limit signs were erected on 17 September 2013 and the formal Traffic Regulation Order came into effect on 7 October 2013. In May to June 2013 speeds were collected at three approximately equidistant points over the length which would be covered by the speed limit. Repeat surveys were undertaken at the same location in May to July 2014. Appendices to the report showed the locations of the surveys and a summary of results of both sets of surveys. In a discussion of the results the report explained that an approximate reduction of around 10 mph was demonstrated in terms of average and 85 percentile speeds at two of the monitoring sites. At the other site there was a marginal increase for which there was no obvious explanation. However the report concluded that given the reduction in speeds as demonstrated in the results it would be advisable to retain the 40 mph speed limit through Yarrow Feus. In the ensuing discussion Ms Harrison, the Ettrick and Yarrow Community Council representative, explained that there had been a significant level of response to the report from local residents. The Community had expected to be involved in the evaluation of the speed limit and there was a perception that the Council had not carried out local consultation on the proposals. Although the Community Council had not carried out a formal scoping of local opinion Ms Harrison believed that on balance there was support for the speed limit. However there were issues with regard to the start of the section of road subject to the limit in relation to the location of the school. She suggested there should be consultation with local residents with regard to the effectiveness of the speed limit and whether it should be extended eastwards. In agreeing to approve the report's recommendation Members were open to the possibility of extending the speed limit in the future should this be shown to be effective and necessary.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED** the findings of the evaluation exercise in respect of the 40 mph speed limit provided through the village of Yarrow Feus.
- (b) **AGREED** that the 40 mph speed limit be retained.

VARIOUS STREETS GALASHIELS – TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

6. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Commercial Services seeking approval for amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order for Galashiels. Assistant Engineer, Gary Haldane, was in attendance to present the report. He explained that recent amendments to the Galashiels Traffic Regulation Order had been in relation to the Galashiels Inner Relief Road (GIRR) Scheme. The amendments, shown and described in appendices to the report, were proposed to aid the movements of vehicles within the town, including the provision of a loading bay in Scott Street, time-restricted parking in Paton Street and the introduction of parking on Huddersfield Street. Also included were proposed amendments to the restrictions in High Street related to the finalisation of the GIRR Scheme and restrictions associated with the new Transport Interchange. Statutory Consultation on the proposals had been carried out from 26 August 2013 to 24 September 2013 and the proposals were advertised to the public from 22 May 2014 to 19 June 2014.

No objections or adverse comments had been received. In a discussion on the report Members expressed concern over the prospect of enforcing parking and other restrictions in the light of the withdrawal of the Traffic Warden service by Police Scotland.

DECISION

AGREED to APPROVE the proposed amendments to The Scottish Borders Council (The Borders Regional Council (Various Streets, Galashiels) (Regulation of Traffic) Order 1990)

PARTNER UPDATES

7. The Chairman referred to emails from partner organisations in the absence of the respective representatives. Jeff Douce of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) had given a short summary of operational activity undertaken by SFRS within the Eildon Area during the period 1 May to 31 July 2014. This included attending 15 calls to secondary fires. These related to a number of fires involving grass and bushes, rubbish and bonfires. It was noted that a number of these turned out to be false alarms due to individuals burning garden waste.

DECISION

NOTED

THE BORDERS RAILWAY

8. Borders Railway Community Liaison Officer, Jonathon Hepton, was in attendance to give a presentation and update on the Borders Railway project. He began his presentation with a brief history of the line, referring to the station at Stow which had first opened in 1848. It was closed in 1969 and would now be re-opened with the railway line in 2015. A draft timetable for the new service had been published and Mr Hepton gave a summary of the service to and from Stow. The journey from Stow to Edinburgh Waverley would take 45 minutes. On Monday to Saturday there would be 6 trains before 9 am, the earliest being at 5.30 am. There would be 4 trains from Stow to Galashiels before 9 am and the journey would take 9 minutes. There would be an hourly service at off-peak times and all day on Sundays. The presentation went on to look at the type of trains to be used on the line as well as details of the seating, disabled access, cycle storage and facilities such as toilets and free wi-fi. There would be detailed information at the station displayed on clear electronic signs. Rail fares from Stow to Edinburgh were estimated to be £7.70 single, £12-£13 peak return and £11-£12 return off-peak. Fares would be less with a railcard or season ticket; if the journey was part of a longer trip; and for children up to 15 years of age. Children under 5 travelled free. Mr Hepton ended his presentation with maps of the rail network and the location of stations along the Borders Railway route.
9. A discussion followed about the railway and Mr Hepton answered questions. In response to comments about the likely popularity of the line, he advised that provision had been made for an increase in services should there be the demand, but there was no provision in the design for the line through the Borders to be dual tracked. It was confirmed that parking at the stations in Tweedbank and Stow would be free, the proposed number of parking spaces being 120 at Tweedbank and at least 30 at Stow. Discussion continued about the transport of cycles on the train. There was general recognition of the importance of providing sufficient space in carriages for cycles bearing in mind the increasing popularity of cycling in the Borders. Mr MacKenzie of Stow Community Council gave as an example that Stow hoped to provide facilities for cycle hire as a tourist attraction which would be linked to the railway. The Chairman thanked Mr Hepton for his presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

OPEN QUESTIONS

10. There were no open questions.

**DECISION
NOTED**

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

11. Galashiels and Langlee Community Councillor, Ian Purvis, referred to the apparent proliferation of commercial For Sale signs within Galashiels and asked if anything could be done to reduce the impact of these in respect of their number and size. The Chairman advised that this would be noted and included in a discussion on the issue of empty shop premises which was planned for the next meeting of the Community Council.

**DECISION
NOTED**

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

12. In a discussion about possible future agenda items, Community Councillor Rick Kenny referred to the legacy of the Commonwealth Games and asked if there could be representation from Scottish Borders Council and Borders Sports and Leisure Trust in a discussion on what is happening for sport in the Scottish Borders and what is required to develop sport. Another suggestion was for a presentation on the economic regeneration schemes taking place in Scottish Borders towns. Concern was expressed and further information requested in respect of the withdrawal of the Traffic Warden service by Police Scotland. However the Chairman advised that in this regard findings should be awaited of a review of options for the way forward currently being carried out by Scottish Borders Council.

**DECISION
NOTED**

The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.