

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 5 June, 2018 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors S. Aitchison (Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, W. McAteer, T. Miers, M. Rowley (from para 5), G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

Apologies:- Councillors S. Haslam, E. Jardine and S. Mountford

Also present:- Councillors S. Bell, S. Scott.

In Attendance:- Chief Financial Officer, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor Haslam the meeting was chaired by Councillor Aitchison.

1. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of Executive Committee held on 1 May 2018.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. UNION CHAIN BRIDGE - HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING UPDATE

2.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 15 August, 2017, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, providing an update on the progress of the Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund application and the way forward for the Stage 2 application in respect of refurbishment of the Union Chain Bridge. The Project Management Team Leader explained that Northumberland County Council, Woodhorn Charitable Trust and Scottish Borders Council had submitted a stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund application in December 2017. The Stage 1 application was successful and Heritage Lottery Fund would contribute 49% of the £729,934 project development costs to deliver a Stage 2 application by March 2019. There were a significant number of design and heritage development activities to be undertaken by March 2019 and Heritage Lottery Fund would undertake a mid-point audit of progress and direction in December 2018. The project was still reliant on a significant number of external funding commitments. A project fundraiser would be commissioned during this stage to secure the current anticipated funding. The fundraiser would also support the Friends of Union Chain Bridge group to help them achieve their commitment to the project. There remained a £624k funding gap but the risk had been mitigated by the commitment from Northumberland County Council to underwrite any shortfall. The financial strategy for delivery of the project was outlined in a table within the report and the Stage 2 delivery programme was detailed in an appendix.

2.2 Members welcomed the success of the Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund application and were supportive of the proposals for submission of the Stage 2 application whilst noting the added level of competition at this stage brought about by changes in the assessment process. In response to questions, officers clarified that, although Scottish Borders Council and Northumberland County Council were each committing £1m towards the project, Northumberland County Council was acting as the lead authority. There was a Memorandum of Understanding between the authorities which would be strengthened for

the Stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund bid. The significance of the bridge was recognised by Members, not just as an historical asset but as an important infrastructure connection for the community in that part of East Berwickshire.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED the information within the report.**
- (b) AGREED the way forward, as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report, to assist Northumberland County Council with the successful delivery of the Stage 2 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.**

3. COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME - GENERIC BUDGET 2018/19

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities recommending three applications for funding from the Community Grant Scheme (CGS) generic budget. The report explained that the CGS could provide grants to groups who were constituted as working Borders-wide. It could also provide grants to groups who were non-Borders based but who delivered projects which provided direct benefits to identified groups in the Borders. The Communities & Partnership Manager provided details of the three applications.
- 3.2 The Learning Space SCIO, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, was based in Gavinton but offered its services Borders-wide. The request was for a contribution towards phased refurbishment of The Old Bakehouse in Gavinton to provide additional recreational space to support more children/young people with complex learning needs. It was requesting a grant of £5,000 towards an overall £5,505 project. Members supported this application.
- 3.3 Scottish Borders Community Development Company (The Bridge) was the Council for Voluntary Service for the areas covering Central Borders, Roxburgh and Tweeddale. It provided low cost community transport services badged locally as Gala Wheels, Teviot Wheels and Tweed Wheels. The request was for a contribution towards the purchase of an additional 11 seater passenger vehicle for Gala Wheels to meet the growing demands of the service. It was requesting a grant of £5,000 towards the overall £36,343 project cost. Members supported this application.
- 3.4 First Light Trust, a Company Limited by Guarantee based in England, was also a Scottish Registered Charity and extended its activities into Scotland. The request was to contribute towards the creation of a cafe/shop and workshop facility at 1 & 3 High Street, Hawick to provide a drop-in/meeting place for ex-army veterans and local community to aid better integration. It was requesting a grant of £5,000 towards an overall £5,350 project. Members' attention was drawn to other similar projects in Hawick being supported by grant funding. It was also not clear at this stage how this hub model would fit into existing Borders Veterans strategies and if they supported the proposal of a Scottish hub based in Hawick. After discussion Members asked officers to provide further information in relation to operational aspects of the project and its relationship with other groups. It was agreed to defer a decision on the application until this additional information was available.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to approve the following grants:-**
 - (i) £5,000 to The Learning Space SCIO; and**
 - (ii) £5,000 to The Bridge.**

- (b) **to defer to the next meeting consideration of the application for a grant of £5,000, from Firstlight Trust, to enable further information to be obtained.**

4. **AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

There had been circulated copies of an extract from the Audit and Scrutiny Committee Minute of 19 April 2018 regarding an update provided by the Service Director Children and Young People on legislative and guidance changes to home schooling within the Scottish Borders. Chairman of Audit and Scrutiny, Councillor Bell, explained that the update had been requested following concerns that had been raised following a presentation to Scrutiny Committee on home schooling in February 2017. An interesting presentation had been received from the Service Director who reported that there were currently 50 families within the Scottish Borders who home schooled their children. It was highlighted that the Council did not have the right or duty to visit the home, see the child, check parents' qualifications, ensure the curriculum was adequate, see samples of work, monitor home education or make an annual enquiry. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee recommended that home schooling should be monitored annually providing a summary of the number of requests, how many pupils remained in school, how many were flexi-schooled and the split between primary and secondary schools. The Committee had been particularly concerned that the majority of home schooling requests were linked to children with anxiety. After discussion Members agreed with the recommendation that in future the home schooling monitoring role be the responsibility of the Education-themed Executive Committee and, with reference to the second recommendation, asked that all Members received an early briefing on home schooling.

DECISION

AGREED that:-

- (a) **Executive (Education) Committee review home schooling on an annual basis; and**
- (b) **all Members receive an early briefing on home schooling.**

5. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

6. **DELIVERY OF THE JEDBURGH INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING CAMPUS PROJECT**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure providing an update on the progress with the delivery of a new Jedburgh Intergenerational Learning Campus.

The meeting concluded at 11.10 am