

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

EILDON LOCALITY COMMITTEE – INFORMAL MEETING

NOTE of Informal Meeting of the EILDON LOCALITY COMMITTEE held in Committee Room 4, Council HQ on Thursday, 19 October 2017 at 2.30 pm

Present:- Councillors G. Edgar (Chairman), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, K. Drum, T. Miers, H. Scott and E. Thornton-Nicol.

Apologies:- Councillor E. Jardine

In Attendance:- Service Director for Customer and Communities, Communities and Partnership Manager, Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling),

LOCALITIES BID FUND 2017-2018 – EILDON LOCALITY

1. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Scottish Borders Council Minute of 28 September 2017, the purpose of the informal meeting was to agree arrangements for the management of the Localities Bid Fund for the Eildon area. Communities and Partnership Manager, Shona Smith, referred to the report to Council and explained that the £500k fund was allocated per head of population giving a total of £153k for the Eildon area. The proposed model would be managed through the Area Partnerships (Locality Committees) so decisions needed to be made in respect of:-
 - the number of funding releases in the year and the dates for each release;
 - the funding allocation to each funding release;
 - whether bids would be invited across all the Community Plan themes;
 - whether there was a local priority theme identified for the Eildon Locality;
 - whether the Locality should organise any special promotions over and above the marketing and promotion of the fund on a generic Borders-wide level; and
 - whether the voting process should include a voting event.
2. Before discussing arrangements for the Eildon area Members received further clarification about the bid process that had been agreed. It was confirmed that although there was no maximum bid for constituted groups there was a £5k cap for bids from non-constituted groups. It was emphasised that the Localities Bid Fund was seeking new and innovative projects. It was agreed it should be made clear in the guidance that bids should not be to replace Council services that had been removed. Service Director for Customer and Communities, Jenni Craig confirmed that, although there was a review of funding streams underway, other funds such as the Community Grant Scheme, Small Schemes, Quality of Life and Events Fund remained in place at present and applications to the Locality Bid Fund which were unsuccessful or which did not meet the criteria would be signposted to one of these alternative sources of funding if appropriate. Ms Smith advised that she would send Members a summary of what had been granted in the Eildon area from the Community Grant Scheme. With regard to the process, Ms Smith explained that officers would provide initial assistance to applicants if, for instance, further information was required in order for the bid to be taken forward. Projects would then go to the Assessment Panel (made up of the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services, the Area Partnership chairs and key officers) where they would be assessed against the agreed criteria. Ms Smith emphasised that no bids that met the criteria could be taken out of the bid process by the

Assessment Panel or the Area Partnership. All successful projects would go forward to a public vote and be promoted by Area Partnerships.

3. In the discussion that followed, Members recognised that sustainability of a project would be one of the most important factors. Projects would have to be standalone and not rely in future on grants or SBC funding, unless a particular project or service could be proven as sufficiently worthwhile for the Council to consider future support. It was hoped that the Fund would attract good projects at the outset which would themselves provide publicity for the next funding round. It was confirmed that if there were similar projects put forward, applicants may be encouraged to combine the proposals into one bid if appropriate. In consideration of the diversity across the Eildon area there was discussion about towns v rural areas and possible unfairness in the voting due to the differences in population. Ms Smith confirmed that, after discussions with the Democratic Society, it was clear there was no easy answer to this. The Area Partnership could, if it wished, ring fence the fund for rural or town areas, or change the themes for which bids were invited in the next round to encourage or facilitate rural/town projects. There was unanimous agreement that Community Transport should be added as a Local Priority. With regard to the voting process the point was made that a 'voting event' may be the best way to publicise the bids and encourage community involvement. However it was difficult to make a decision about this until there was clarity about the bids being taken forward.

DECISION

AGREED that, subject to ratification on 9 November 2017:-

- (a) the Localities Bid Fund in the Eildon Area be organised into 2 funding rounds as suggested in the model within the report to Council, the first tranche being from the launch of the fund on 15 October 2017 to the close of applications on 1 December 2017;**
- (b) the funding allocation be split between the two approximately 40%:60% translating as £60k for the first tranche;**
- (c) the allocation be aligned to all themes of the Community Plan with the addition of 'Community Transport' as a local priority;**
- (d) no additional marketing of the Fund was required for the Eildon Area over and above that provided on a Borders-wide level by the Council; and**
- (e) a decision be made as to whether it would be appropriate to hold a 'voting event' as part of the public voting process once the bids were in.**

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm