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| <p><b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN<br/>2018-2023</b></p>             |  |
| <p><b>Report by Chief Executive</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>20 February 2018</b></p>  |  |
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## **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report seeks approval for a new Corporate Plan for Scottish Borders Council for the period 2018- 2023 and a campaign to promote the new approach proposed within the plan.**
- 1.2 Scottish Borders Council (SBC) approved its last Corporate Plan in April 2013, with eight priorities to address for the Scottish Borders over a five year period.
- 1.3 Recent years have seen significant progress across the eight priorities in the Corporate Plan, as well as internal and external changes, and combined with the ongoing tightening of public sector finances a review of the corporate plan and priorities is now necessary and timely.
- 1.4 A new Corporate Plan, attached at **Appendix 1**, proposes a strategic direction for SBC for the five year period 2018 to 2023 and builds on the priorities in the previous Corporate Plan, as well as SBC's Administration's vision within "Connected Borders", current opportunities and challenges now facing by the Scottish Borders. The Plan focuses on what SBC will do, under four themes:
  - Our services for you
  - Independent achieving people
  - A thriving economy with opportunities for everyone
  - Empowered, vibrant communities
- 1.5 To ensure that SBC is able to respond effectively to ongoing budget pressures in line with what is being proposed within SBC's 5 year Financial Plan, a change in approach is proposed within the Corporate Plan. Not only does it state the work that SBC is committing to for the next 5 year but it suggests where individuals, families, businesses, partners and communities can "play their part" to improve outcomes for the Scottish Borders. A campaign to promote this approach has been designed to sit alongside the plan and will include the involvement of Community Planning partners.
- 1.6 When the last Corporate Plan was approved, a Performance Management Framework (PMF) was also developed to ensure that the Council, its partners and the public could monitor progress on a regular basis. Given changes to the internal and external context, and the proposed new plan and approach, this PMF now requires to be amended.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council:**

- (a) Approves the new Corporate Plan 2018-2023 as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report;**
- (b) Approves the new approach and the “#yourpart” campaign to support the approach, involving community planning partners;**
- (b) Notes that a revised Performance Management Framework be brought back to Council in August 2018 for approval.**

### **3 CONTEXT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CORPORATE PLAN**

- 3.1 SBC approved its last Corporate Plan in April 2013, with eight priorities to address for the Scottish Borders over a 5 year period. The plan was updated in October 2015, with an ongoing commitment made to the eight priorities and to improving outcomes for people in the Scottish Borders.
- 3.2 Over the last five years:
- a) SBC has put economic development at the heart of its plans and successfully made the argument with Scottish Government that Scottish Borders should have special status for additional investment and support;
  - b) the Borders Railway opened, with communities across the region involved in the celebrations, and SBC working to maximise economic opportunities and the ongoing benefits;
  - c) SBC has built new schools in Kelso, Duns, and Langlee (Galashiels), and established the Scottish Borders Leader Valley school to provide high quality support for pupils with additional needs;
  - d) Partnership working with NHS Borders has expanded and strengthened through the Integrated Joint Board, to join up health and social care services and improve outcomes;
  - e) SB Cares (with over 800 employees) and the Integrated Culture and Sport Trust "Live Borders" have been established;
  - f) Significant investment has been made in projects across the region including Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme, Wilton Lodge Park in Hawick, Galashiels Transport Interchange and town centre regeneration projects in Kelso and Selkirk;
  - g) A 13 year contract was signed with CGI for the provision of modern ICT across the Council.
- 3.3 Since the plan was approved, a range of performance information under each priority is presented to SBC's Executive Committee on a quarterly basis and an annual performance summary is also prepared in June each year. All performance reports can be accessed on SBC's [website](#)
- 3.4 The last plan is now reaching the end of its timeframe (March 2018), but there have been some significant internal and external changes and national policy developments over the last few years (summarised below) which mean that a review of the plan is now not only timely but necessary:
- a) Local Government Elections in May 2017 saw the election of 18 new councillors to SBC (out of 34), and the formation of a Conservative/Independent Administration;
  - b) There has been a corporate restructure within SBC, with the creation of 2 Executive Directors, and 7 Service Directors, and realignment and rationalisation within services;
  - c) The Scottish Government has committed to creating a new South of Scotland Enterprise Agency covering Dumfries & Galloway and the Scottish Borders. This, combined with the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Region City Deal and the Borderlands Initiative, have the potential to lead to a step-change in the development of the Scottish Borders economy;
  - d) The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 has required

SBC to lead the development of a Community Plan (called a "Local Outcomes Improvement Plan" within the Act) for the Scottish Borders, replacing the previous Single Outcome Agreement to which the last Corporate Plan was aligned;

- e) As well as the Act above, Scottish Government has introduced some other significant legislation in relation to:
- Partnership working with NHS Borders (Public Bodies (Joint Working)(Scotland) Act 2014)
  - Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
  - Education (Scotland) Act 2016
  - And in 2017, Education (Scotland) Bill 2017, and the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill were introduced.

3.5 Across Scotland, year on year, there has been an ongoing tightening of public sector finances, which has presented ongoing annual budget setting challenges for SBC. If the Council were to continue delivering services in the same way as it does today, there would be a significant funding gap over the next five years. The requirement to 'balance the books' each year requires SBC to save money, generate additional income and prioritise spending and as demand rises, this gets more and more difficult.

3.6 SBC sets a 5 year financial plan each year and in doing so, engages with staff, partners, stakeholders and the Scottish Borders community using an interactive tool ([Dialogue](#)) that allows residents and other stakeholders to provide ideas and suggestions on how the Council could do things differently to save money in a challenging economic climate as well as allowing them to comment on other ideas already logged. The concept, therefore, for asking people to play their part is not new, but needs to now extended into "business as usual" and not just when setting a budget.

3.7 The changing internal and external context, the opportunities now available to Scottish Borders and the ongoing financial situation means that in order to continue to be ambitious for the Scottish Borders, provide high quality, sustainable services and have an ongoing positive impact within communities, SBC needs to take a different approach to the planning, and in some cases, where appropriate, the delivery of services and the attached plan proposes this new approach.

#### **4 PROPOSED CORPORATE PLAN 2018 – 2023**

4.1 The Corporate Plan attached at **Appendix 1** sets a direction for Scottish Borders Council (SBC) for the next 5 years in order to:

- make the most of current opportunities
- tackle ongoing and emerging challenges
- take account of what SBC's Councillors want to achieve for the Scottish Borders
- ensure that SBC responds to national policies and other statutory requirements.

4.2 Within the Corporate Plan, SBC has laid its commitments out under four themes:

- **Our services for you-** SBC needs to look at the way it provides services, using digital technology where possible to reduce costs and improve processes, whilst focusing resources on helping the most vulnerable within communities. We have also made commitments

- around our property, workforce, waste and infrastructure investment;
- **Independent achieving people**- our commitments will focus on early years, attainment and achievement, resilience of young people, preparing our services for increases in the older population, and on public protection;
  - **A thriving economy with opportunities for everyone**- we need to work with partners to create the best possible environment in which to do business, and encourage inward investment, growth, diversification, innovation and job creation. Business engagement is also a key part of our plan as well as transport and positive promotion of the Scottish Borders;
  - **Empowered, vibrant communities**- under the Community Empowerment Act, we want to work with communities and involve them in the decisions that affect them, as well as ensuring that the third sector is a key partner in delivery.
- 4.3 SBC's last Corporate Plan was very much about what *SBC* was going to do. The difference this time is that SBC is asking individuals, families, businesses, partners and communities to play their part across the four themes.
- 4.4 The Plan commits SBC to the following:
- developing and building its leadership role to drive change and make the most of opportunities (for example in relation to the economy);
  - building partnerships within and out with the Scottish Borders that focus on improving quality of life (like services to keep people living within their community independently);
  - thinking and acting differently to reduce costs and maintain delivery of the essential high quality services Borders residents are used to (and will include, for example, offering more services online).
- 4.5 In return, SBC is asking individuals, families, businesses, communities and partners to:
- help plan what it does with its resources
  - be involved with delivering some service
  - think differently about what is expected from SBC, and what people might be able to do themselves or might be done differently
- 4.6 In order to communicate and promote this new approach, a campaign, titled "**#yourpart**" has been developed where SBC is asking stakeholders to play "**#yourpart**" to ensure high quality services are maintained for everyone in the future despite being faced by various challenges. The objectives of the campaign are to:
- Communicate this new approach within the council and community
  - Raise awareness of our progress, challenges, opportunities and key areas of focus moving forward
  - Ensure communities are clear about what SBC expects from them, in return for the services SBC provides ("give and take")
- 4.7 SBC's Chief Executive has asked all Community Planning partners to formally endorse and become involved in the campaign, as there are significant benefits to be had from SBC *and* partners taking this new approach together. During 2017, the Scottish Borders Community Planning partnership approved a Community Plan, with four key outcomes for the

Borders (LIST). As resources are tight right across the public sector, it is as relevant for the CPP to ask people to “play their part” as it is for SBC in the delivery of its services.

- 4.8 The campaign will focus on the need for individuals, families and communities to take responsibility for their own actions. A few examples are provided below:
- SBC will:** design and deliver as many services as we can online, so we can focus our face to face contact on supporting vulnerable individuals and families
- Your part:** Use the services we put online for example, applying for Housing Benefit, reporting a complaint to help us to reduce costs – check online before you call
- SBC will:** provide the best possible learning and teaching environments for all children and young people
- Your part:** make sure your child attends school, is ready to learn and is encouraged at home
- SBC will:** Ensure that our 5 revamped Area Partnerships provide you with a regular and structured opportunity to get involved in what matters to you within your area
- Your part:** participate in your area partnership- this is your opportunity to shape and develop a locally based forum that can really understand and respond to the opportunities and challenges within your community
- 4.9 As well as a formal launch of the campaign with partners, press releases etc., a range of media will be used on an ongoing basis to promote the approach and will include a clearly designed landing page with relevant links, creation of a friendly URL ([www.scotborders.gov.uk/yourpart](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/yourpart)), #yourpart hashtag, and use of the Dialogue tool for a “your part” campaign. This will ensure that when an individual, business, or group wishes to get involved, it is as easy, open, co-ordinated and reactive as possible. A staff campaign has also been designed to run alongside the outward facing campaign.
- 4.10 The 5 new Area Partnerships will also form a key part of engagement around this new approach, ensuring that communities are able to have their say, influence and be involved with the service that are delivered and the money that is spent within local areas.
- 4.11 As the attached plan is a very public facing document, an **Appendix 1a** has been prepared to ensure that more detail is provided where required. (Note: this additional information is simply referred to as Appendix 1 within the public facing Corporate Plan).

## **5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 In order to ensure that progress against the last Corporate Plan was being monitored, a Performance Management Framework (PMF) was developed in 2013 and revised in 2015. It details various levels of performance reporting in order that Elected Members, community planning partners and the public can see the impact of the work SBC is involved with.
- 5.2 For the last 4 years, a range of performance indicators has been developed and used under each of the 8 Corporate Priorities in order that reporting can be undertaken for various purposes (e.g. to report publicly) and at various levels (e.g. within operational services). These indicators vary, from the more strategic outcome indicators (e.g. Employment Rate) to

more process orientated indicators that show the efficiency and effectiveness of services (e.g. processing times for planning applications).

- 5.3 The Framework references the requirement for the Council to demonstrate how it contributes to the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) for the Scottish Borders (which focused on growing the economy, reducing inequality and low carbon) but under the Community Empowerment Act, the SOA has now been replaced by the recently published Scottish Borders Community Plan (Dec 2017).
- 5.4 It is proposed that the Q4 2017/18 and the 2017/18 annual performance reports are prepared using the current format and structure (i.e. around the 8 Corporate priorities and existing indicators) to complete the reporting cycle but that reporting from Q1 2018/19 onwards is aligned to the new Corporate Plan and a revised Framework. The Corporate Performance Team will now develop the revised PMF to reflect these changes, and bring this to SBC for approval in August 2018.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

There may be some small campaign costs associated with recommendation (b) within this report, but will be minimised with the use of web and social media, providing only limited printed copies for use across SBC premises and when requested.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The new Corporate Plan and campaign seek to mitigate the risks that SBC may not be able to continue to provide high quality service due to restricted budgets and other ongoing challenges, by setting out a new approach to service delivery and asking people to play their part. The main risks to delivering the commitments in the new Corporate Plan include:

- (a) *Stakeholder Engagement*: There is a risk that residents and businesses in the Scottish Borders believe that as Council tax and/or non-domestic rate payers, it's not their responsibility to "play their part". However, the Council is reliant on the support and buy-in of primary stakeholders – residents, businesses, partners, staff – to enable the changes required to deliver services in the future. Ineffective engagement with these stakeholders may result in stakeholders not understand what is required of them or in resistance, resulting in delay or non-achievement of outcomes. To mitigate this risk an engagement and communications campaign has been developed, as described in sections 4.6 to 4.10, and SBC is confident that the likelihood of this risk will be significantly lower as a result.
- (b) *Digital Inclusion*: the Council recognises that there is a possibility that some citizens may be at risk of being 'left behind' as the Council moves to providing more services online. The Council has signed Scotland's "Digital Participation Charter" as part of its commitment to ensuring that it does all it can to ensure digital inclusion. SBC's Digital Transformation Programme and the Community Planning Partnership are also addressing digital inclusion within their remit, so there is a focus on skills, access to the internet (affordability and availability), trust and motivation. However, it is still important to recognise that the Council cannot do this in isolation and is reliant on

communities, businesses, partners and third party organisations to play their part. More detail is provided within the new Corporate Plan.

**6.3 Equalities**

Delivery of the commitments and actions within the Corporate Plan, be that through a service or a project, will be subject to SBC’s Equality Impact Assessment process and any potentially negative impacts will be mitigated as part of that work.

The #yourpart campaign is being designed in conjunction with Corporate Communications and Community Engagement and will ensure that the reach is as extensive as possible and routes in are easy to find, use and navigate for everyone.

**6.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are significant economic, social and environmental benefits of addressing the four themes covered in the new Corporate Plan and of considering different approaches, involving communities and stakeholders, to delivering services in order that they are more sustainable into the future.

**6.5 Carbon Management**

There are no effects on carbon emissions as a result of the recommendations in this report.

**6.6 Rural Proofing**

The new Corporate Plan continues to seek to address the challenges of delivering services and improving quality of life in a rural context through the priorities and actions that have been identified. Any work undertaken in the context of the Corporate Plan should reflect these challenges.

**6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made.

**7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

7.2 Others to be consulted if required are:

- Corporate Equalities and Diversity Officer – for any new or revised policies/strategies to assure Equality Impact Assessment.
- Procurement Officer – if you are buying any goods or services.
- Corporate Communications – if what you are proposing involves likely media interest or high public information dissemination.

**Approved by**

**Tracey Logan, Chief Executive**

**Signature .....**



**Author(s)**

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**Background Papers:****Previous Minute Reference: Scottish Borders Council, 7 October 2015**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Sarah Watters can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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