

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE held in Council Chamber,
Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells,
TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 1 May, 2018 at 10.00
am

Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chair), C. Hamilton (Chair – Education business), S. Aitchison, G. Edgar, E. Jardine, W. McAteer (to para 2.6), T. Miers (to para 2.6), S. Mountford, M. Rowley, G. Turnbull (from para 2.6), T. Weatherston.

Also present:- Councillors K. Chapman, J. Fullarton, S. Marshall.

Apologies:- Mr L Mendoza, Ms J Sibbald, Ms C Thorburn.

In Attendance:- Service Director, Children and Young People, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

EDUCATION BUSINESS

Present:- Ms A Ferahi, Mr I Topping, Alex Morgan

CHAIRMAN

Councillor Hamilton chaired the meeting for consideration of Education business.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman asked for a round of introductions and welcomed those present to the meeting, in particular Alex Morgan - Pupil Representative, the Year of Young People Ambassadors and Galashiels Academy Pupil Council.

MEMBER

Councillors Aitchison and Rowley joined the meeting during discussion of the following item.

2. YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE 2018

2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director, Children and Young People which outlined the approach taken in the Scottish Borders to the Year of Young People 2018. This included a full consultation in a range of contexts from young people who had roles such as Year of Young People Ambassadors, to on-line surveys and consultations in schools and youth groups. The consultation had helped the Council and partners in the Children and Young People's Leadership Group to identify a full plan of action, as well as signpost a longer term approach to participation and engagement with young people in the Scottish Borders. Ms Manson introduced the Year of Young People Ambassadors who were in attendance to give a presentation on the local activities and opportunities they were involved in within their communities.

2.2 The Year of Young People Ambassadors began by explaining the aims for the Year of Young People (YoYP) included: providing a platform for young peoples' voices to be heard and have their views acted upon; showcasing the talents of young people through events and the media; developing a better understanding, co-operation and respect between generations; and, providing young people with opportunities to express themselves through culture, sport and activities. The YoYP would enable young people to have a greater say in decisions that affected their lives, improve public perception, create opportunities for intergenerational work, and participate in positive activities and experience. The Ambassadors then highlighted the YoYP themes which were:

Participation – to influence public services and decisions; Education – to achieve stronger roles in shaping education; Health and Wellbeing – to lead healthier, active lives and improve mental health; Equality and Discrimination – to challenge negative perceptions and discrimination in all its forms; Enterprise and Regeneration – to celebrate enterprise and the Scottish economy; and, Culture – to celebrate talent and contribute to Scottish culture and arts. They explained their role as Ambassadors was to support, raise awareness, promote and get people involved in YoYP events and showcase the talents of young people by collecting and sharing positive stories using blogs and social media. There had already been a number of events/activities and, they gave as an example of intergeneration work, the Selkirk YoYP2108 Picnic in the Park. This event had been successful and it was hoped would continue in the future.

- 2.3 In response to a question about what the Council could do for young people, the Ambassadors highlighted the need for town wi-fi; encouraging extra-curricular activities; and more relevant work experience at different times, with Alex Morgan explaining that this latter could be improved with better dialogue between the schools and businesses. With regard to communicating activities, this was in the main via social media; however, activities were also publicised in school newsletters. It was noted that the Ambassadors were not aware of the Localities Bid Fund and the Executive member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services suggested that they contact him for a discussion about the Fund. Ms Manson made reference to a meeting the previous day, linked to the new South of Scotland Enterprise Agency, about developing the young workforce. The Ambassadors comments would also be actioned as part of modernising the school curriculum. The Chairman thanked the Ambassadors for attending and their interesting presentation.
- 2.4 The Chairman then welcomed Galashiels Academy Pupil Council. The Pupil Council discussed each of the YoYP themes in turn, highlighting the key issues identified by their school. In terms of education, these included the need to improve sporting facilities, supply heating to the Games Hall, introduce break-out/study areas, and the provision of IT and free Wi-Fi. With regard to Culture, it was hoped that the Great Tapestry of Scotland facility would incorporate a free Wi-Fi café and would also be used for arts and touring exhibitions. The Pupil Council also suggested that a music and book festival could be held in a pedestrianised Bank Street incorporating a talent show, motivational speakers and poetry reading. In terms of Enterprise and Regeneration they proposed a garden allotment space in Scott Park where generations could come together to grow produce for local foodbanks and also showcase new technologies such as solar powered lighting. They also asked for free water fountains to be made available in Galashiels. The theme of Equality and Discrimination was discussed and they advised that while homophobia and the use of language was an issue with younger pupils - mainly out-with school - teachers did challenge insulting language at every opportunity. With regard to Health and Wellbeing the Pupil Council felt that there was not enough mental health support in Galashiels, there was a need for a clinic space, perhaps within a supermarket. They also suggested a digital screen be located in the town which could advertise local events. In terms of participation, the school had introduced additional assemblies and were working on a suggestion box so that every pupil within the school could have an input and influence change.
- 2.5 Following discussion, Councillor Jardine asked the Pupil Council to contact him out with the meeting to take forward, with Live Borders, suggestions for the YoYP. It was also suggested that the school should be given a copy of the Galashiels Masterplan for the library. It was noted that Galashiels Academy was holding events in June and September, which would include discussion on the Masterplan; Members were invited to attend and participate. In response to a question about how threatened young people felt about drugs and under-age drinking, the pupils acknowledged this did happen and perhaps the lack of spaces for young people to go in the evening contributed to this. Members asked the young people to contact them if they had any suggestions or concerns they wished raised. To encourage dialogue, it was asked that Members could hold surgeries within schools. Young people attending and participating in Area

Partnership meetings and local community council meetings, perhaps even becoming community councillors was also encouraged. In response to some of the suggestions raised, Ms Manson advised that in respect of the Games Hall, they were progressing a solution. Study and break-out areas would be considered over the summer and there would also be an evaluation of libraries. To celebrate YoYP, there would be a music festival in the autumn at Springwood Park, Kelso. In respect of mental health, additional funding had been allocated to address gaps in provision. The Chair thanked Galashiels Academy Pupil Council for their attendance and useful feedback.

- 2.6 Ms Manson then advised that the Council had been in discussion with religious representatives across the Scottish Borders regarding YoYP and introduced Graham Donald, Member of the Church of Scotland Education Committee, and Ian Topping, Education - Executive Committee, Religious Representative, who spoke about the work churches were doing for YoYP. Mr Donald advised that in cities and towns there had been an increase in young people participating in church led events, but this was not the case in the Scottish Borders. To encourage young people to participate, Melrose and Galashiels Presbytery was organising six events including a Chaplaincy Conference and a Question Time event. He also advised that every secondary school would be provided with the God Question DVD to facilitate classroom discussion. The church would also be welcoming four young people from Malawi and two from Lebanon who would be attending local schools and the Borders College. Mr Topping then advised that the Director was supporting in principle the churches' direct engagement with young people to develop an understanding and celebrate intergenerational work. To facilitate, there would be a series of events, the first of which, on 17 May, at Tweed Horizons would focus on the work of the school chaplaincy in terms of spiritual development. The church would also be discussing what types of events young people would prefer and based on feedback would host a special event in September to celebrate the YoYP. In response to questions, Mr Topping advised that the event would include all denominations. He explained that as the majority of school chaplains were Church of Scotland, other faiths had been invited from the school and wider community. Alex Morgan, Pupil Representative, suggested that a Question Time event should include a mix of young people and representatives from all faiths. Ms Manson confirmed that schools could benefit from intergenerational support from a range of denominations. She advised that as well as the Church, the Council was working with a range of organisations such as Live Borders and Youth Borders. The message today was that young people had been given the lead in YoYP, they were being heard, and what they were saying would be acted upon and their achievements would be celebrated.
- 2.7 Councillor Hamilton, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Pupil Representative, Galashiels Academy Pupil Council and the Year of Young People Ambassadors for their valuable contribution and the Committee showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) The Year of the Young People Partnership Plan;**
- (b) That an update on progress would be brought back to the Executive Committee in September 2018; and**
- (c) To circulate a list of YoYP events to Members.**

OTHER BUSINESS

MEMBERS

Councillors Miers and McAteer left the meeting during consideration of the above item; Councillor Turnbull joined the meeting.

CHAIRMAN

Councillor Haslam took the Chair for the remaining business.

3. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL LIBRARIES MANAGEMENT RULES REPORT

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 13 March 2018, there had been circulated copies of a report updating on the proposed Management Rules for Public Libraries in the Scottish Borders. The report concerned the making of new Management Rules for Public Libraries under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. This was in preparation for the expiry of the 10-year lifespan of the current Management Rules at midnight on 14 May 2018. The Executive Committee had authorised a public consultation on the proposed Rules, which commenced on 22 March 2018 and ended on 22 April 2018. Any substantive comments received during the consultation were to be reported back to the Executive Committee. The response to the consultation indicated significant support for the proposed Rules, with the majority of respondents supporting the proposals detailed. There had, however, also been substantive comments on the Rules. After review, minor amendments had been made to the proposed Rules, which were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report. The Chief Legal Officer was in attendance and highlighted that the main changes to the Rules reflected new technology, the change in culture that no longer required libraries to be places of silence, and that Live Borders now managed libraries on behalf of the Council. In response to questions, she explained that training on Management Rules would be undertaken by Live Borders staff. The rules were also intended to be flexible depending on the service provided. With regard to the availability of free wi-fi in libraries, she would enquire and advise Members accordingly.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) To authorise the Service Director Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, to make the Rules;**
- (b) To appoint the Live Borders Libraries Staff as officers of Scottish Borders Council as regards the enforcement of the Management Rules; and**
- (c) That the Chief Legal Officer would check on the availability of free wi-fi in libraries and send a list out to all Members.**

4. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of Executive Committee held on 17 April 2018.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

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. MINUTE

The private section of the Minute of 17 April 2018 was approved.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am