

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
BERWICKSHIRE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the
BERWICKSHIRE AREA FORUM held in the
Chamber, Newtown Street, Duns on 6 March
2014 at 6.30pm.

- Present:- Councillors M. Cook (Chairman), J. Campbell, J. Greenwell, D. Moffat, F. Renton.
Community Councillors:- Abbey St Bathans – David Morrison, Ayton – John Slater, Cocksburnpath – Pauline Hood, Coldingham – Rhona Goldie, Coldstream and District – Martin Brims, Edrom, Allanton and Whitsome – Trixie Collin, Eyemouth Town – Neil McMurdo, Foulden, Mordington and Lamberton – Howard Doherty, Gordon and Westruther – Ian Thomson, Grantshouse – Kym Bannerman; Hutton and Paxton – June McGregor, Reston and Auchencrow – B Forrest, Swinton and Ladykirk – Bill Purvis.
- Apologies:- Councillor J. Fullarton.
Community Councils:- Burnmouth – Lynne Craighead, Duns – David McCormick.
- In Attendance:- Daren Silcock, Neighbourhood Area Manager (Berwickshire), Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

Members of the Public:- 8

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1. The Chairman welcomed those present and everyone introduced themselves.

MINUTE

2. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 9 January 2014. It was noted that Mr Ian Thomson, representing Gordon and Westruther Community Council was present at the meeting of 9 January and that the Minute should be amended accordingly.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman subject to the above amendment.

PRESENTATIONS

WASTE AND RECYCLING

3. The Chairman welcomed Mr Ross Sharp-Dent and Ms Julie Rankine, from the Council's Waste Management team to give a presentation on the Integrated Waste Management Strategy (IWMS). The presentation began by outlining the drivers for change. In addition to EU directives and Scottish Government regulations, Waste Services needed to save £800k by 2017/18 as its share of the £28 million of savings which Scottish Borders Council needed to achieve by 2017/18. The recommendations approved by Council in December 2013 included the removal of the garden waste collection service on 31 March 2014; a new Community Recycling Centre (CRC) to be developed in Kelso; a review of CRC access by traders; and a review of CRC locations, opening hours and layout. The IWMS would provide clear strategic direction for municipal waste management in the Scottish Borders through to 2025. The first three high priority action areas identified were CRC provision, food waste and garden waste. In accordance with the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 the Council would be required, by 1 January 2016, to collect food waste from Galashiels (including Tweedbank), Hawick, Peebles, Selkirk and Jedburgh. Food waste collections would therefore be rolled out in the Scottish Borders between April and October 2015. Ms Rankine advised she would be happy to attend a future meeting of the Forum to discuss food waste issues.

4. With regard to garden waste collection it was pointed out that local authorities did not have a statutory duty to provide this service. After looking at other options it was calculated that the removal of the service would deliver £450k of savings. A comprehensive communications plan had been put in place around the change which included press and radio adverts, Members' briefing notes and a leaflet to all urban households. Alternative garden waste disposal routes were being promoted with help being provided by the Council in relation to home composting. Householders were advised that they could keep their garden waste bins if they wished or alternatively unwanted bins would be collected in a schedule of pick ups. The presentation went on to look at future requirements for businesses under the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. From 1 January 2014 businesses would be required to present separately for collection dry recyclables and food, if producing more than 50kg per week. From 1 January 2016 those producing between 5kg and 50kg of food per week would require this to be separately collected. The Council would provide support for businesses via its website and in the form of letters and flyers, seminars and roadshows.
5. Discussion followed and a number of questions were raised in relation to the new scheme. Concern was raised regarding the possible increase in fly tipping due to these changes and also to the possibility that composting bins would cause of vermin being attracted to residential areas. In terms of fly-tipping, Mr Sharp-Dent confirmed that this was something that the Council constantly monitored and Mr Silcock further explained that dealing with fly tipping was a reactionary response in that the areas used and the flytippers themselves had to be identified before action could be taken. Ms Rankine offered to circulate leaflets about composting which might go some way to alleviating fears about vermin. The Officers were thanked for their presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

LAND USE STRATEGY PILOT

6. The Chairman welcomed Mr Andy Tharme, the Council's Ecology Officer to the meeting to give a presentation on the Land use Strategy (LUS). He explained Scottish Borders Council and Tweed Forum were working together on the Strategy and that it sought a more integrated approach to land management in recognition of the increasing pressures and demands placed upon the countryside. Mr Tharme also explained that further demands were now being made in terms of enhanced recreational opportunities, food security, forest cover, more carbon storage, renewable energy projects and increases in biodiversity. It was recognised that the ways in which land was used had to be optimised and that there were difficult choices that had to be made to ensure that future generations benefited from it. The Scottish Government was keen that the LUS engagement process was led by local authorities. Scottish Borders Council had recognised that this could only be achieved in conjunction with land managers and other relevant stakeholders. In summary the Scottish Borders LUS aimed to "Pilot a mechanism which used an ecosystems approach to consider existing and future land uses in a collective and integrated way and to establish a means to prioritise or guide decisions so as to optimise the use of the land and to resolve competition or conflicts relating to land use change".
7. Mr Tharme explained that the Council and Tweed Forum had worked together to promote the pilot initiative and had established a partnership body dedicated to integrated land and water management. The objective was to produce a common flexible framework which would guide different 'users' to make informed decisions, achieve their objectives more effectively and facilitate debate on conflicting demands. It was noted that the framework would be non-statutory and non-regulatory. Mr Tharme advised that following Baseline Mapping which had involved data gathering through strategies, policies and map based information, the timetable now included Stakeholder Engagement and the identification of constraints and opportunities. The draft Framework would be produced by the Autumn 2014 and be subject to public consultation throughout the winter months. Mr Tharme detailed the key outcomes of the LUS pilot, namely that it would help the Borders to constructively inform the next national Land Use Strategy 2016, it could be adopted by the Council to inform Community Planning and the

Local Development Plan and it could help inform land use decision making drawing down EU and Rural Development funding. Finally, Mr Tharme hoped that it would develop into a simple, accessible and user-friendly tool which would also help to protect the quality environment within the Scottish Borders. There were a number of questions from the floor in relation to the landscape and Mr Tharme confirmed that all comments from stakeholders would be considered as part of the development process of the strategy. The process was about finding ways in which to resolve issues and move forward at the same time. The Chairman thanked Mr Tharme for his presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE LOCAL PLAN

8. The Chairman welcomed Local Group Commander John Mallin, of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) to the meeting to give a presentation on the SFRS local plan for the Scottish Borders 2014-17. Copies of the draft plan were circulated at the meeting and GC Mallin advised that, although the formal consultation period had concluded on 16 February 2014, further comments would be welcomed. GC Mallin explained that the SFRS was created in 2013 and that this had resulted in eight Services being merged into one with a one year Local Plan in place until April 2014. The draft Local Plan 2014-17 provided information on SFRS priorities in relation to the Scottish Borders, how these would contribute to community safety and how this would be measured. GC Mallin advised that there were three Station Commanders throughout the Scottish Borders and introduced David Girrity, who would attend the Berwickshire Area Forum on behalf of SFRS. GC Mallin went on to explain how the plan linked to the national strategic objectives and detailed the key delivery principles. The key priority areas for the Scottish Borders were the reduction of dwelling fires; reduction in fire fatalities and casualties; reduction of deliberate fire setting; reduction in road traffic collisions; and reduction of unwanted fire alarm signals. Each of these priorities was underpinned by a number of performance indicators which would be used to monitor performance against objectives. GC Mallin advised that the next step in the process was to develop Ward Plans which would drill down even further to identify the priority areas for individual Wards within Scottish Borders Council and that this would be achieved by working with all Community Partners. Discussion took place and a number of questions were raised from the floor and answered by GC Mallin. He confirmed that recruitment of retained firefighters had changed over the years and that retainers no longer lived as locally as in previous years and commuted much longer distances. This, and the long training period required before a firefighter was allowed to operate in the field, added to the length of the recruitment process. GC Mallin also advised that information relating to home alarms could be accessed via the Community Safety website. The Chairman thanked GC Mallin for his presentation and looked forward to seeing David Girrity at future meetings of the Area Forum.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

SBLOCAL SMALL SCHEMES

9. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure on proposed new SB Local Small Schemes. The report explained that the following schemes had been requested for consideration by the Berwickshire Members and local Community Councils: testing lighting columns for the Herring Queen Festival, Eyemouth; purchase community litter pickers, Coldstream; repair the verge at Station Road, Gordon; re-paint play equipment play park, Ayton; manufacture and erect planters, Westruther; purchase ornamental chip bark for roses, Eyemouth; replace trees and shrubs in the Public Park, Duns; purchase material for road safety defects, Berwickshire.

DECISION

(a) AGREED to approve the following small schemes:-

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| (i) Testing lighting columns for the Herring Queen Festival | £2850 |
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(ii)	Purchase community litter pickers, Coldstream	£210
(iii)	Repair the verge at Station Road, Gordon	£720
(iv)	Re-paint play equipment play park, Ayton	£470
(v)	Manufacture and erect planters, Westruther	£595
(vi)	Purchase ornamental chip bark for roses, Eyemouth	£123
(vii)	Replace trees and shrubs Public Park, Duns	£650
(viii)	Purchase material for road safety defects, Berwickshire	£2711

- (b) **NOTED** that the above spend would leave a zero balance in the Small Schemes budget for Berwickshire.

OPEN QUESTIONS

10. **Reston Station** – Hutton and Paxton Community Council asked if consideration had been given to any impact of this on the current hourly national service. The Forum was advised that a meeting with FIRST was imminent and that further information would be available in due course. It was noted that all efforts should be made to avoid any adverse impact on the national hourly service from Berwick to Edinburgh.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11. **Police Scotland** – Coldstream and District Community Council raised concern about the impact that the removal of police counters might have on the local community and regarding relationships with Police Scotland more generally. Discussion followed on this topic and more widely on the operational aspects of the new Police Scotland. A number of differing views were made and it was noted that a police presence on the street was felt to be more obvious in some areas than in others. In addition, some Community Councils felt that the formal police reports needed to be specific to the local area rather than be too generic and carry the risk of being meaningless to its audience. In conclusion, the Chairman noted that relationships with Local Commanders were good but that recent information on relationships with Police Scotland indicated that there were some issues which needed to be worked through.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

12. **NHS Borders Out of Hours Service** – Duns Community Council reported that a formal letter had been sent to John Raine, Chairman of NHS Borders and to Callum Campbell, Chief Executive NHS Borders inviting them to attend a public meeting of the Community Council in April 2014 to discuss this issue.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12. The next meeting of the Berwickshire Area Forum would be held on Thursday, 5 June 2014 at 6.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Newtown Street, Duns.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

PRIVATE BUSINESS

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business contained in the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

Stopping-Up of Bushelhill Road and Bridge – D171/6

1. The Forum noted a report by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure.

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm.