

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHEVIOT AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the CHEVIOT AREA
FORUM held in Town Hall, Kelso on 7 November
2012 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors A. Nicol, S. Scott, R. Stewart, T. Weatherston.
Community Councillors R. Breeze, N. Jarvis, M. Land, E. McNulty, I. Athey, H. Oliver,
F. Scott, R. Thomson; Inspector B McFarlane (Lothian & Borders Police).

Apologies:- Councillors J. Brown, S. Mountford.

In Attendance:- SB Local Manager - Divisional Manager, Clerk to the Council, Committee and
Elections Officer (Fiona Henderson).

Members of the Public:- 8

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

1. This being the first meeting of Cheviot Area Forum, set up under the Council's new Scheme of Administration, the Committee considered the appointment of Chairman. Councillor Scott, seconded by Councillor Stewart, moved that Councillor Weatherston be appointed as Chairman.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Weatherston be appointed as Chairman of Cheviot Area Forum.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

2. The Committee considered the appointment of a Vice-Chairman. Councillor Nicol, seconded by Councillor Scott, moved that Councillor Stewart be appointed as Vice Chairman.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Stewart be appointed as Vice-Chairman of Cheviot Area Forum.

MINUTE

3. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of Meeting of the Cheviot Area Committee of 15 August 2012. Councillor Nicol drew the Committee's attention to the sederunt which had recorded him as present and as an apology. Councillor Nicol confirmed that he had not been present at the meeting.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute, subject to the sederunt being amended.

4. With reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of the Cheviot Area Committee of 15 August 2012, it was reported that the Flood Prevention Team had been instructed to arrange for the removal of the fallen tree on the Anna Cauld, Jedburgh.

DECISION

NOTED.

5. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the Cheviot Area Committee of 15 August 2012, Mr Finnie advised that the junction boxes for the lights at Jedburgh Abbey required to be installed and

approval was awaited from Historic Scotland. All materials had been ordered and once approval had been received the work would be undertaken.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of Cheviot Area Committee of 15 August in terms of travellers at St Boswells, it was reported that the matter had been referred to Mr George Higgs (Travelling People Liaison officer) and he had advised that a debrief had been held with St Boswells Community Council following the 2012 Fair. It had been agreed that in the future the Community Council would meet representatives of the Gypsy Community to discuss and hopefully agree the arrival date for coming on to the Green; the Number of days allowed on the Green and to discuss a financial contribution.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

THE REMIT OF THE AREA FORUM

7. With reference to paragraph 1 of the Minute of the Cheviot Area Committee of 15 August 2012, there had been circulated copies of an extract from the Council's new Scheme of Administration, as approved on 30 August 2012. The Cheviot Area Committee had been replaced by an Area Forum and Jenny Wilkinson, the Clerk to the Council, was in attendance to explain the main changes with respect to the Area Forums, which would be formally launched across all areas in November 2012. Cheviot Area Forum would consist of the six elected Scottish Borders Councillors representing the Wards of Kelso and District and Jedburgh and District. In addition there would be a representative from each of the Police and NHS Borders and the Chairman or a representative from each of the Community Councils in the Cheviot area. It was also open to the Scottish Borders Councillors to agree to include a representative from any other local body, for any length of time considered appropriate, according to the issues being addressed. To enhance opportunity for community engagement there would be a market-style approach adopted between 4 and 6 pm, before the formal part of the meeting, to enable members of the public to drop-in to consult, engage and obtain information from officers and Elected Members. Issues for focus would depend on topical activities within the Council and the area but would also be taken from agenda items put forward by members of the public. Councillor Nicol encouraged the Community Councils and members of the public to contact the Council with the views and ideas for future market stalls which would be advertised through the Council's website, facebook page and twitter. A 5 week campaign to advertise all the Area Forums was currently running on local radio.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND AREA FORUMS

8. Continuing on the theme of community planning, Senior Consultant, Douglas Scott, was in attendance to give a presentation on the revised arrangements for Community Planning and the role of Area Forums in that process. Copies of the presentation were circulated at the meeting for reference. Mr Scott explained that there was a new emphasis on Community Planning from the Scottish Government and COSLA, the published "Statement of Ambition" having clear expectations for Community Planning Partnerships. In order to address the challenges, every local authority was exploring ways to work and Scottish Borders Council were preparing clear principles for moving forward, including emphasis on cross-cutting themes with elected Member involvement. The presentation summarised the background on the evidence based approach and set out the external context, the results of the most recent Household Survey, a strategic assessment and the findings of the Christie Commission which proposed that public service organisations should work

to extend and deepen a local partnership approach. This culminated in a suggested strategic objective for the Borders which was:-

“to work in partnership with other key public, voluntary and private bodies together with communities and businesses, to maintain and improve the quality of life and meet the needs of Borders residents and their communities through the delivery of high quality public services, projects, advocacy and other actions”.

The strategic objective had been divided into four themes, namely: Early Intervention and Prevention; Place and Communities; Economy and Infrastructure; and future Model of Public Service Delivery for the Scottish Borders. Within the theme of Place and Communities the priorities were Whole Town Programmes; Community Safety; Community Resilience; Engagement and Development; and Cultural Services.

9. The presentation went on to detail the demographics of the Cheviot Area and the particular challenges faced within the area, illustrated by comparisons with average figures from the Scottish Borders and Scotland. There followed a discussion on the priorities for future discussion and for attention at future meetings of the Cheviot Area Forum. One issue raised related to Health Care and whether this included Social Care and Councillor Scott agreed to clarify. Clarification was also given on the geographic area for Cheviot. Jim Marshall, Locality Manager - Cheviot challenged the Education attainment figures quoted for Kelso and Jedburgh and stated that there was evidence that the Education attainment was very high for the Cheviot Area.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES 2013-2018

10. The Chief Financial Officer, David Robertson was in attendance to give a presentation on the Financial Challenges faced by Scottish Borders Council. Mr Robertson explained that Scottish Borders Council received £264m in Revenue Terms, 80% of which was from Central Government through Government Funding (NDRI) and Government Funding (RSG) and 20% raised from Council Tax. The level of funding was illustrated over future financial years to 2014/2015. The proportion of budget spent on each service was explained and it was noted that the highest proportions were spent on Education and Lifelong Learning (£94.366m) and Social Work (£75.620m). Mr Robertson went on to explain that Government expenditure would reduce by some £39m by 2015/2016 which would impact on how services were delivered. It was further highlighted that the Scottish Government had frozen the level of Council Tax collected for 7 years and while this had clear advantages for households it had reduced the Council's ability to invest and fund services. Some of the Challenges facing the Council in the years to come were highlighted. There continued to be a need to modernise the School Estate; more frequent and extreme weather conditions including flooding were an issue and flood prevention schemes would be developed; the Council's duty to reduce emission levels as part of the Climate Change Act and meet their target to reduce CO2 emission levels by 29% by 2020/21. The roads and infrastructure required to be maintained and repaired, together with bridges, car parks and road signs. It was highlighted that there was a need to ensure the Borders was accessible to the rest of the UK, for the economy and tourism. The Council had approved investment of £8.4m in the development of next generation broadband in partnership with the Scottish Government and Dumfries and Galloway to keep up with modern technology and ensure that the Borders remained a great place to do business. Investment in the early years was needed to meet the needs of all children and young people, including those with additional care and support needs and investment to care for the ageing population within the Borders.
11. A five year finance plan, together with solutions to bridge the funding gap and which impacted on services the least, had been developed. It was clear that the status quo was not an option and difficult choices would need to be made which may affect the Council's ability to deliver some services. The budget was about priorities, meeting the challenges and spending taxpayers' money

in the most efficient and effective way possible. The Chairman sought information on the impact on Council Services of the Welfare Reform and was informed that it was inevitable that there would be implications.

NEW KELSO HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

12. The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, Mr Glen Rodger and Mr Steven Renwick, Project Manager, were in attendance to give a presentation on the development of a new High School for Kelso and re-use of the existing school site. Mr Rodger explained that the existing Kelso High School had been built in the 1930's and was in a significant state of disrepair and not fit for purpose. Members had therefore approved the submission of a bid to Scottish Futures Trust in June 2012. The bid submitted was based on the Scottish Futures Trust space and construction metrics and totalled £14.8m plus land acquisition costs. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning announced that the Scottish Government would support the delivery of Kelso High School based on the options and recommended way forward derived from "Kelso High School Review" (17 October 2011).
13. Mr Rodger explained that the present site was 2.45ha in size and had no scope for expansion. In order to build a School fit for purpose to house 650 – 700 pupils a site of 4.8 ha was required which would include pitches/parking and accesses. The presentation identified sites which had been considered large enough and close enough to the town centre. The preferred site was the Angraflat on the Golf Course Road, Kelso and negotiations with the landowners had commenced. There were initial drawings for the site, although it was explained that these were for illustration purposes only. There was some discussion with regard to future uses of the existing site which was a listed building and within a constrained site. The next stage of the New School project was the land acquisition and statutory consultation which was programmed to end in September 2013, which would be followed by the Design Development for Phases 1 and 2 and would be carried out in 2014. Construction of the New School was programmed for the end of 2016 with the new school programmed for hand over in February 2017.
14. During questioning members of the public raised the fact that there was new housing developments within Kelso and questioned if the proposed school would be large enough. Mr Rodger advised that the new School would only attract funding for the number of pupils within the existing school. However the new School would be future proofed. Designers for the new School would be encouraged to be creative with the space available as the new school would have to last 20-30 years and no one could predict pupil numbers that far in advance. The provision of a gym hall was raised and it was confirmed that there would be provision for good sports facilities for use by the Community. The use of alternative energy sources was raised and Mr Rodger confirmed that these would be included as they had been in other new schools built. There would be space for workshops for outside practitioners. Possible expenditure on the current school to keep it fit purpose over the coming 4 years was raised and Mr Rodger confirmed that there would be minimum expenditure on the current school. Mr Rodger reassured those present that there would be continual consultation with pupils, parents, the Headteacher and the Parent Council throughout the process. The Chairman thanked Mr Rodger and Mr Renwick for their presentation and for answering questions.

DECISION NOTED.

REVENUE, CAPITAL AND SB LOCAL WORKS

15. There had been circulated copies of details of potential Members Priority Schemes for consideration by the Area Forum. The following Members Priority Schemes were proposed:-

	Estimated Cost
	£
Tarring works at Chalkieheugh Terrace, Kelso	£ 3,015

Footway works, Dukes Field, Ancrum	£ 2,482
Drainage works at C61 Primsidemill, Yetholm	£ 3,930
Drainage works at D91/3 Cleughside, Jedburgh	£ 1,894
Total	£ 11,321

16. With regard to the SBLocal Small Schemes in the Cheviot area the SB Local Manager advised that a budget of £34,702 was available through SB Local for small schemes in the Cheviot area in 2012/13. Approval of the above schemes would reduce the budget to £20,098 for future schemes. It was explained that the drainage schemes had been brought forward in addition to those schemes contained in the report as they were not contained in the Revenue Budget as priority schemes. The Members were reluctant to approve the two drainage schemes as they considered that these should be funded from the revenue budget and questioned why the schemes were being considered for the SBLocal Budget. Mr Finnie advised that the schemes were not considered priority schemes under the Revenue Budget criteria. However, there were concerns that the water lying on the road through poor drainage could freeze during the winter months and create a hazard for road users. Following considerable discussion the Councillors agreed that such schemes should not be funded from the small schemes budget but as a one-off project to prevent a possible hazard for road users the work be approved on this occasion.

DECISION

AGREED to approve and implement the following new Members Priority schemes:-

	Estimated Cost £
(a) Tarring works at Chalkieheugh Terrace, Kelso	£ 3,015
(b) Footway works, Dukes Field, Ancrum	£ 2,482
(c) Drainage works at C61 Primsidemill, Yetholm	£ 3,930
(d) Drainage works at D91/3 Cleughside, Jedburgh	£ 1,894

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME

17. With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of Scottish Borders Council of 25 October 2012, it was reported that a Working Group was to be set up to review the current Community Council Scheme and each Area Forum had been asked to nominate an Elected Member and a Community Councillor to be members of this Working Group. Councillor Nicol, seconded by Councillor Scott, moved that Councillor Weatherston be appointed as the Elected Member representative. Councillor Nicol, seconded by Community Councillor Fiona Scott, moved that Mr Ron Breeze be appointed as the Community Council representative. As there were no further nominations Councillor Weatherston and Mr Breeze were appointed.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Weatherston and Mr Ron Breeze be appointed as the Elected Member and Community Council representatives respectively.

OPEN QUESTIONS

18. There were no questions from the public

DECISION

NOTED.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

19. It was reported by Community Councillor R Thomson that a salt bin, which had been filled by the Community Council, had been removed from Nenthorn and when queried had been advised that it had been removed due to the amended prioritisation of the gritting routes. Community Councillor Breeze also questioned why the salt bins had been removed from Yetholm.

DECISION

AGREED that the SBC Manager investigate and report back to Mr Thomson and Mr Breeze.

20. Community Councillor Jarvis enquired about the possibility of a contribution from the SBLocal Small Scheme Budget towards the access works being undertaken at Coronation Hall, Sprouston. It was explained that an alternative entrance to the Hall had been created by builders working on the housing development behind the Hall and had proved a safer exit from the Hall to the car park and then onto the main road, which was situated on a bend. The Community Council had had little success securing funding to complete the work and Mr Jarvis enquired if the project could be considered under the SBLocal schemes. Mr Jarvis was advised that it would have to be established who owned the car park and Hall and the SB Local Manager - Divisional Manager agreed to look into the matter.

21. Community Councillor Oliver requested that progress reports be brought to the next meeting of the Cheviot Area Forum on the following:-

31 High Street, Jedburgh
Pavement subsidence on Oxnam Road, Jedburgh

DECISION

NOTED.

LOCAL PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2013

22. There had been circulated copies of the proposed public holidays for 2013 for Jedburgh and Kelso, together with a copy of those public holidays previously approved for 2012 for comparison.

DECISION

AGREED to determine the Public Holidays for Jedburgh and Kelso as set out in Appendix I to this Minute.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

23. The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting of the Cheviot Area Forum was scheduled for Wednesday, 13 February 2013 in Jedburgh.

DECISION

NOTED the date of the next meeting of the Jedburgh Area Forum and that the venue was to be confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 p.m.

Appendix 1

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES - 2013

JEDBURGH

NEW YEAR 2013	TUESDAY 1 and WEDNESDAY 2 JANUARY
MERCHANTS' HOLIDAY	MONDAY, 4 MARCH
SPRING	MONDAY, 1 APRIL
MAY DAY	MONDAY, 6 MAY
CALLANTS' FESTIVAL (Annual Festival Week 7th – 13 th July)	FRIDAY, 12 AND SATURDAY, 13 JULY
ANNUAL TRADES	*COMMENCE ON MONDAY, 22 JULY FOR TWO WEEKS
AUTUMN	MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER
CHRISTMAS	WEDNESDAY, 25 AND THURSDAY 26 DECEMBER
NEW YEAR 2014	WEDNESDAY 1 AND THURSDAY 2 JANUARY

KELSO

NEW YEAR 2013	TUESDAY 1 and WEDNESDAY 2 JANUARY
SPRING	MONDAY, 1 APRIL
MAY DAY	MONDAY, 6 MAY
MAY / JUNE (This date replaced Spittal Trip holiday)	MONDAY, 27 MAY
ANNUAL CIVIC WEEK (Annual Civic Week 14 th - 20 th July)	*FRIDAY, 19 AND SATURDAY, 20 JULY
AUTUMN	MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER
CHRISTMAS	WEDNESDAY, 25 AND THURSDAY 26 DECEMBER
NEW YEAR 2014	WEDNESDAY 1 AND THURSDAY 2 JANUARY

* most shops and offices remain open.