

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHEVIOT AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the CHEVIOT
AREA FORUM held in the Tait Hall, Kelso
on Wednesday, 4 June 2014 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors T. Weatherston (Chairman), J. Brown, S. Mountford, A. Nicol, S. Scott, R. Stewart.
Community Councillors L. Johnston, D. Ogilvie, J. Taylor, E. McNulty, N. Jarvis, C. Balderston, T. Jackson, J. Bassett, J. Cox, Inspector Carol Wood (Police Scotland – J Division).

Apologies:- Community Councillors

In Attendance:- Area Neighbourhood Manager (A. Finnie), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs F Henderson).

Members of the Public:- 1

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1. The Chairman commenced the meeting by offering condolences to those who were affected by the tragic events on Saturday the 31st May during the Jim Clark Rally. The people of the Scottish Borders thoughts were very much with the families of those who lost their lives and to everyone else affected. It was explained that it continued to be an ongoing emergency incident, and Police Scotland remained the lead for the emergency response, therefore specific detail could not be divulged. Senior Council staff continued to hold regular meetings both internally and with key partner agencies in support of Police Scotland's management of the incident and ongoing investigation. The Chairman went on to say that Public events, in particular motorsport and rallying, were a long standing part of the Borders heritage and culture. Indeed, the Jim Clark Rally had taken place in the Borders for over 40 years. The Chairman reassured everyone present that the Council and its partner organisations would always place the highest priority on public safety, however by the nature of some sporting events, risks could never be 100% eliminated. When an event involved the public highway or required restriction to road access, Scottish Borders Council and its partners would continue to undertake a process, whereby the event organisers' plans were subject to an in-depth multi-agency review to ensure public safety was paramount. As announced by the Cabinet Secretary Kenny MacAskill in his parliamentary statement on Tuesday the Council would be participating in the review regarding safety at public events. Those present stood and observed a moments silence to pay tribute to those who lost their lives so tragically on Saturday, 31 May 2014.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

2. The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

MINUTE

3. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of Meeting of the Cheviot Area Forum of 2 April 2014.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

CULTURE TRUST

4. Scottish Borders Council's Cultural Services Manager, Ian Brown, gave a briefing and presentation to the Area Forum on the proposal to transfer Community Services from direct council provision to a charitable trust. Officers had been looking at options for delivery of Cultural Services and associated budget savings of over £400,000 while, at the same time, protecting front line services, local delivery and putting the services on a positive footing for the future. The services currently in scope for transfer were Libraries and Information services; Museums and Galleries; Archives and local history; Arts Development; Heart of Hawick; Public Halls; Community Centres; and the administrative team that supported these services. Mr Brown explained that transferring services to a Trust would enable the vast majority of the savings target to be secured from rates remission. If services were kept within the Council the savings would have to be found from reducing provision, closing facilities and streamlining management and support. A trust could be more demand-led, flexible and responsive to the needs of customers and users, any profits being recycled back into the charitable aims of the company. Nine local authorities in Scotland had already transferred their Cultural Services to a Trust. Following the end of the current consultation period on 31 July 2014 a report would be taken back to Council to determine which services should be included within a Trust and with a view to the Trust being launched by October 2015. The Trust would be managed by a Board of about 12 Trustees of whom no more than 25% could be elected Members of Scottish Borders Council. In response to questions Mr Brown advised that other local Authorities in Scotland who had already transferred their Cultural Services to a Trust had reported relative success although it was not the absolutely perfect solution, there were benefits to working with a small Board of Trustees, who could respond more quickly. Mr Brown further advised that there would be an element of payment in the setting up of the Trust but Board Members would not receive regular payments.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

POLICE FORCE OF SCOTLAND – UPDATE FOR ‘J’ DIVISION

5. Inspector Carol Wood was present at the meeting to update the Cheviot Area Forum on performance, activities and issues across the Ward for the period up to 31 May 2014. Police Scotland had published the local Multi Member Ward plans for both Kelso & District and Jedburgh & District and these were available to download from the Police Scotland website with the following links -<http://www.scotland.police.uk/your-community/the-lothians-and-scottish-borders/scottish-borders/kelso-and-district/> or <http://www.scotland.police.uk/your-community/the-lothians-and-scottish-borders/scottish-borders/jedburgh-and-district/>. The plans were set as a result of public consultation and would be reviewed annually ensuring that the Police were tackling those issues that mattered most to the local communities in the Cheviot Wards and that they were held accountable to the local communities. The Ward Plan Priorities were highlighted as Young drivers; Antisocial behaviour; Youth antisocial behaviour and Drugs use. It was reported that a total of 76 crimes had been recorded in the Cheviot Area to date which when compared to the same period last year of 55 crimes indicated a 38% increase in reported crime compared to the same period last year with a 1.72% decrease in solvency over the same timescale. It was unclear as to why this was the case and Inspector Wood assured the Forum that the reasons for the increase would be fully investigated and there was no cause for concern. It was reported that work continued on 'Making Our Roads Safer – Speeding and Inconsiderate Driving' and four road checks had been carried out in the Jedburgh and surrounding area during May 2014, when one conditional offer was issued to a driver using a mobile phone and no conditional offers were issued to motorists for speeding or seatbelt offences during the same time period. In terms of Rural Theft, Community Officers continued to visit itinerant scrap metal dealers along with their partners in SEPA and licensing to establish if any criminal activity was taking place. Liaison between Cumbria and Northumbria Police continued with Community Officers sharing information to tackle rural crimes, particularly in relation to travelling criminals and theft of quads. In relation to Anti Social Behaviour – Groups of Youths and Dog Fowling, No Fixed Penalty Tickets were issued during May 2014 and

Targeted patrols by our Locality Police Officer Youth and Community Officers continued in areas where youth issues had previously been identified and in areas where dog fouling had previously been identified. A request was made to revert to the Community Beat Officer giving an update and Inspector Wood advised that Inspector Scott would be aware of issues within the area and the Community Beat Officer reported concern further up the chain.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

NHS BORDERS CLINICAL STRATEGY

6. In attendance to give a presentation on the NHS Borders Clinical Strategy consultation were the Joint Director of Public Health, Dr Eric Baijal, and NHS Borders Planning and Performance Officer, Joanne Weir. Copies of the consultation document 'NHS Borders Clinical Strategy – An evolving conversation' were distributed at the meeting. Dr Baijal explained that the aim of the consultation was to outline the need to change and obtain thoughts and views on proposed Key Principles for redesigning services to ensure high quality healthcare. There would be engagement with patients, carers, the wider public, staff and partner agencies and the consultation period would be carried out between 10 March and 6 June 2014. Dr Baijal showed slides which illustrated the challenges ahead and how future demographic, health and economic pressures could combine to form 'the perfect storm'. For NHS Borders, without changing the way services were delivered this would mean a new 28 bedded unit every year for the next 7 years. Demand was increasing and expectations rising, the issues being a changing population, sustainability, changing workforce and financial constraints. Meeting the challenges required new thinking and new models of care.
7. Dr Baijal went on to refer to the six key principles outlined in the consultation document: Services will be Safe, Effective and High Quality; Services will be Person-Centred and Seamless; Health Improvement and Prevention would be as important as treatment; Services would be delivered as close to home as possible; admission to hospital would only happen when necessary and would be brief and smooth; and Services would be delivered efficiently within available means. These principles were in line and fully supportive of the 2020 vision for Healthcare in Scotland; that by 2020 everyone would be able to live longer healthier lives at home, or in a homely setting. The consultation document included appendices with examples of models of care with the Key Principles applied. Following the presentation Dr Baijal answered questions about the strategy. In response to a question about the provision of an adequate workforce to provide care for the ageing population, Mr Baijal explained that life expectancy was better in the Borders than any other area and there was a good stream of people wanting to work in the Borders where the NHS provided a better environment for Dr's and Nurses wanting to give high standards of Health Care. When asked if there would be a move to charging for GP's in the future, Dr Baijal advised that care would be free at the point of delivery. In relation to a question about using Community Hospitals, which had been largely closed in the Borders, it was explained that Community Hospitals required to be complimentary to other services provided. In terms of benchmarking, Dr Baijal advised that NHS Borders benchmarked itself against other Health Boards within Scotland and performed favourably in most areas and exceptionally in others. In conclusion Dr Baijal encouraged those present to respond to the consultation and advised that there would be a summary and feedback of the findings between June and August 2014. The Chairman thanked Dr Baijal and Joanne Weir for their attendance.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

MEMBER

Councillor Nicol left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item.

KELSO HIGH SCHOOL

8. Mr Martin Joyce, Capital Projects Director was in attendance to give a presentation to update Members on the replacement for Kelso High School Project. He advised that the Land required had been acquired for the school site in March 2014 and the Outline Design had been agreed. The detailed design including planning consent would be carried out between June and December 2014 and would include Financial Close. The construction phase was scheduled to commence in early 2015 and the target opening date was the start of the School Term in August 2016. Enabling Works were scheduled to commence in September 2014. Mr Joyce showed examples of the proposed layout of the School and Sports provision and answered questions. In relation to sustainability, it was explained that there was no requirement to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' sustainability rating as the Government had removed that condition, although sustainability would be taken into consideration and the school was still targeting a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. As the school was being procured through a DBFM funding model through Hub South East, the funding for the School was effectively one third public sector and two thirds private sector with excessive profits capped unlike typical PPP projects.

DECISION
NOTED presentation.

STREET LIGHTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT (SLEEP)

9. Team Leader – Street Lighting, Alex Young, was in attendance to give a presentation to update Members on the Street Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. He explained that the Council currently had about 19,000 street lights across its adopted network. The current split of technology in the Borders was 77% traditional lighting (high and low pressure sodium), 22.7% 'white light' and 0.3% LED. The project, being rolled out between April 2014 and March 2020, involved the installation of 13,500 new LED lights fitted to existing street lights. As LED lights had an expected life of 20 years against the traditional sodium lamp life of 4 years, this would derive savings from a reduction in energy costs as well as a reduction in carbon tax and maintenance costs. Capital Funding of £4.95m for the project had been approved. The fact that unit prices for the LED lights were falling might also help the speed of the roll-out. As the project did not include replacement of lighting columns, lamps would be replaced initially where columns were in better condition and likely to last at least 20 years. Within the Cheviot area Initial condition surveys being carried out in Hawick; Denholm and Jedburgh. Mr Young showed examples of light projected from traditional lamps and LED lights, demonstrating how the LED light produced a clearer and more natural colour contrast. He advised that information about the project was now live on the Council website which included a Frequently Asked Questions link. It was recognized that there would be less light pollution from street lights as the LED light was directed down and there would be no orange hue. In response to a question about the requirement of columns being replaced when moving to LED, Mr Young advised that replacement columns would not necessarily be required but there was budget available should some columns require replacement.

DECISION
NOTED the presentation.

ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013 – 2018

10. The last presentation of the evening was by the Donald Scott, Team Leader – Roads and Bridges and concerned the Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP). A RAMP defined the strategy, policies and operational standards for managing and maintaining the Council's roads asset and could be described as the processes designed to ensure that the roads were maintained as efficiently and effectively as possible within the available budget. With regard to an assessment of road condition Mr Scott explained that the Road Condition Indicator (RCI) used nationally to measure the condition of the current road network, consisted of a number of condition measures, including longitudinal profile, lane rutting, texture of the road surface and cracking. Lengths of road were classified as Red: where maintenance was required; Amber: which required further investigation and monitoring; and Green: where condition was satisfactory but where an odd defect

may exist. The RCI was the sum of the Red and Amber classification expressed as a percentage of the total length of road, the current RCI in the Borders being 41.7%. The presentation looked at the different treatments and methods of patching available, which could be categorised as either preventative or corrective and Mr Scott referred to the merits of each relative to their costs. Looking at funding options he explained that current spend plans could not begin to address the wholesale removal of defects and to eliminate all Red and Amber sections would require a "one-off" spend of £65m. To keep the road network in its current state would require £4.3m per annum and that to continue with the current core budget of £1.35m per annum would result in further significant deterioration. The RAMP Status and Options report therefore looked at other funding options to address the road condition defect. An option was chosen of medium term investment to slow the further deterioration in the RCI. The key to management of the roads asset was the right repair in the right place at the right time.

11. Copies of the Asset Programme of Revenue and Capital Works for the Cheviot Area 2014/2015 had been circulated at the meeting. Mr Scott answered questions on the detailed works listed and confirmed that the RCI in the Scottish Borders was increasing and that it was at its highest level for six years.

DECISION
NOTED the presentation

FIRE AND RESCUE

12. The purpose of the report was to inform the Cheviot Area Forum on Scottish Fire and Rescue Service activity for the months of April & May 2014. Mr Russell Bell, Station Manager had been present at the meeting but was called away prior to presentation of the Fire and Rescue report. The report explained the Activity which was ongoing within the Cheviot Area, which included Scottish Fire and Rescue Service staff in all our local stations providing Home Fire Safety Visits all year round. The visits provided the householder with a home visit, focussing on identifying and reducing the risks of fire in the home. Smoke detectors with a 10-year battery life were provided as part of the free service. Firesharp was an initiative for Primary 6 pupils, providing face-to-face education within our local Primary schools on matters of fire risk and prevention. Fire Safety Audits provided a targeted examination of a business premises and their relevant documents to ascertain how the premises were being managed regarding fire safety. The enforcement officer also engaged with members of staff to confirm their level of fire safety awareness. Unwanted Fire Signals were being addressed by our phased intervention actions which identified premises which were producing 'false alarms', provided guidance on how to reduce a reoccurrence, and can also evoke legislation if occurrences fail to reduce in number. Fire Case Study and Adult & Child Protection Policies ensured multi agency involvement was provided for the support and protection for higher risk members of the community.
13. The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Scottish Borders 2014- 2017 had been approved following its consultation period. The local plan sets out the priorities for the Fire and Rescue Service, and work would continue with community planning partners and local communities to make the most efficient use of resources and contribute towards the shared priorities and actions within the community planning partnership and community safety arrangements. The subsequent ward plans for Kelso & District and Jedburgh & District would follow in due course.

DECISION
NOTED the report.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES UPDATE

14. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 2 April 2014, there had been circulated copies of a report which sought approval for the proposed new Neighbourhood Small Scheme Works. There had only been one request from Elected Member for the installation of kerbed grinding margin in

front of a boundary wall within East Bowmont Street Car Park, Kelso at a total cost of £2,380. The Area Neighbourhood Manager advised that the allocated budget (£34,702) for small schemes was available through Neighbourhood Services for the Cheviot Area in 2014/15. The budget remaining following approval of the above scheme was £32,322 for future schemes. In addition, a budget of £20,000 was available for Quality of Life schemes in the Cheviot Area Forum in 2014/15.

DECISION

AGREED to approve for implementation, the following new Neighbourhood Small Schemes:-

	Estimated Cost
	£
Install kerbed grinding margin in front of a boundary wall within East Bowmont Street Car Park	£ 2,380

OPEN QUESTIONS

- 15. There were no questions from the public.

DECISION NOTED.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

- 16. **Skiprunning Burn, Jedburgh** – With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 2 April 2014, the Area Neighbourhood Manager advised that following the previous update in March 2014, it could be confirmed that work had continued to determine the exact detail of the Preferred Scheme. In addition to developing the preferred scheme, SBC Design Services and consultants (CH2M HILL) had been busy over the last few months obtaining the additional information required to design the scheme. This had included topographical surveys, ground investigation works, public utility searches and completing a CCTV survey of the existing town culvert. An ecological appraisal had also been undertaken and as soon as all the information had been collated the ongoing outline design could be developed further. A public exhibition had been arranged for the 28th and 29th August 2014 to provide members of the public with information on the scheme. In advance of the exhibition an article would appear in the June edition of the Jed Eye. Elements of the article would also be used in the July edition of SBConnect and Communications intended putting together a web page for the scheme next month.

DECISION NOTED.

- 17. **Oxnam Road Wall, Jedburgh** – With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 2 April 2014, the Area Neighbourhood Manager reported that following the case heard at Jedburgh Sheriff Court on 25th and 27th March 2014, the Sheriff had issued a final judgment rejecting the appeal made by the owners of the property known as Airenlea, and upholding the notice served by Scottish Borders Council under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. The Sheriff found that the owners of Airenlea were the owners of the retaining wall, that the wall was in a dangerous condition and that the Council had not acted unreasonably in serving a notice on them. In terms of Section 91(9) of the said 1984 Act the Sheriff's decision on this matter was final. A meeting had been arranged between Council officers and the owners of the property known as Airenlea to be held on Monday 9th June 2014. The aim of the meeting was to try and agree an acceptable process and timescale for the wall to be repaired as soon as practicably possible. Should agreement not prove possible, the Council may use its powers under the said 1984 Act to step in and carry out the works and thereafter recover the costs from the owners of the property known as Airenlea.

DECISION

NOTED.

JEDBURGH TOWN HALL

18. Community Councillor Wight expressed concern that it was proposed to transfer Jedburgh Town Hall to a Trust when it required substantial investment and thought it was naive of Scottish Borders Council to think that anyone would want the building in its current condition.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19. The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting of the Cheviot Area Forum was scheduled for Wednesday, 20 August 2014 in Jedburgh.

DECISION

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

The meeting concluded at 8.15 p.m.