

SCOTTISH BORDERS
COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on 18 April 2013 at 2.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillor J. Brown (Chairman), Councillor S. Bell, Councillor C. Bhatia, Mr P. Heath (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service), Mr A. Herd (Border Community Development Co.), Mr R. Licence (SBHA), Mr I. Lindley (Berwickshire Housing Association), Chief Superintendent J. McDiarmid (Scottish Police), Mr J. Raine (NHS Borders), Mrs R. Stenhouse (Waverley Housing), Mr J. Wright (Borders College).

Apologies:- Councillor M. Cook, Ms H. Cuckow (Eildon Housing Association), Ms C. Duthie (NHS Borders), Mr A. McKinnon (Scottish Enterprise), Councillor D. Parker.

In Attendance:- Dr E. Baijal (Joint Director of Public Health), Mr R. Dickson (Director of Environment & Infrastructure, SBC), Ms T. Logan (Chief Executive, SBC), Mr D. Cressey (Head of Strategic Policy, SBC), Clerk to Council.

CHAIRMAN

1. In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Brown chaired the meeting.

MINUTE

2. The Minute of Meeting of 14 February 2013 had been circulated. With reference to paragraphs 5 to 7 of the Minute, Councillor Bell advised that he had referred to the need for prioritisation and the inclusion of timeframes in a number of the updates on projects being taken forward under the Strategic Themes and Work Programmes and that these references should be included within the Minute. With reference to the second sentence of paragraph 3(a) of the Minute, Community Planning Partners should have read Community Planning Partnership. With reference to paragraph 1 in the private section summary of the Minute, in response to a question, Councillor Bell was advised that the draft Action Plan stemming from the Community Planning Partnership Audit report would be brought to the June meeting of the Partnership Board when the Auditors would be present.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute, including the above amendments, for signature by the Chairman.

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT – STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

3. With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 14 February 2013, the Chairman referred to the context for the Strategic Assessment, in particular of Scottish Government guidance on the Single Outcome Agreement(SOA) whereby each SOA should demonstrate a clear and evidence-based understanding of place and communities, including the inequalities facing different areas and population groups; the need to draw strategic conclusions from the evidence and data; setting out clear and agreed priorities for improving local outcomes; and showing what would be different for communities in 10 years time. The Community Planning Partnership audit in March 2013 had recommended that the Partnership identify what their improvement priorities were for the Scottish Borders and where community

planning could make an impact. It would be necessary for the Partnership to show that it had really considered the evidence available and understood the key issues that faced the Borders' communities.

4. SBC Head of Strategic Policy, David Cressey, gave a presentation on the task ahead, which – based on an examination of evidence – would establish the shared priorities and a clear vision for the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership. The Key Findings from the Strategic Assessment were an underperforming economy, with low productivity, persistently low wages, and a rise in long term unemployment, especially amongst 16 – 24 year olds; poor connectivity in terms of mobile, digital and physical; and long standing pockets of deprivation in health, opportunity, child poverty, fuel poverty and attainment. The consequential effects of these showed a downward spiral and could also cause further deprivation such as a rise in acquisitive crime, domestic abuse, decline in town centres, etc. The Partnership needed to focus on reversing this downward spiral with shared problems and shared solutions. An example given at the meeting of how one big idea could make a huge difference to a community was that of Kingston Communications (<http://www.kcomplc.com/about-us/our-history/>) which was started by Hull City Council in 1882 to run a local telephone service and in 1999 was floated on the London Stock Exchange, still with the City Council retaining a 44.9% stake, increasing its residential and business customers with various acquisitions and agreements and delivering superfast broadband across the area.
5. The members of the Strategic Board then broke into three smaller groups to come up with at least 3 big ideas that could help tackle the key challenges faced in the Borders. These ideas had to be truly transformational and not incremental and require a partnership approach, with the potential for significant impact, addressing multiple issues. The groups then reported back to the meeting.
6. Mr Lindley summarised Group 1's ideas, which would provide multiple benefits -
 - (a) Training – bring together the demand side from companies struggling to find the skill sets required in the Borders with local training providers struggling to provide courses/certification. Some companies eg in the renewable energy (wind turbine erection/maintenance) sector, could offer sponsorship of training. By bringing together expertise, a centre of excellence could be created involving road construction, maintenance, site erection and apprenticeship schemes.
 - (b) Energy saving programmes in deprived areas – building fabrics, windows and walls in the housing stock could be improved through a re-cladding project, using local labour and resources, to stop heat loss, thus having an impact on the economy, fuel poverty, health inequalities, etc. Other renewables such as solar panels and wind turbines could also be considered.
 - (c) Local heat networks – energy from waste (Easter Langlee) and wood biomass plant (Charlesfield) could be developed. Proposals with planning consent required a demand for the product so that they could be built. This would provide a sustained supply of local energy from local resources with a local supply chain, helping to alleviate fuel poverty, contributing to carbon reduction targets and creating local employment. Any excess could be sold to the National Grid.
7. Councillor Bell reported on Group 2's ideas, which were aimed specifically at Langlee (Galashiels) and Burnfoot (Hawick) as the two most deprived areas in the Borders, and would tackle persistent inequalities there -

- (a) Apprenticeship/Job Guarantee Schemes – set up Hawick and Galashiels apprenticeship/job guarantee schemes in both public and private sector, using the ‘Edinburgh Guarantee’ as an example.
 - (b) 100% targets - while there may be 90% Borders wide targets, for these two areas there should be 100% targets in health, education, Healthy Living Network, early years, drugs and alcohol.
 - (c) Co-ordination of provision of public services around school hub – this would provide focus for the two areas and have community schools operating exactly as that, including during school holiday times and after school hours.
 - (d) 100% target in Fuel Poverty – loft and cavity wall insulation in the two areas.
8. Mr Douglas Scott reported on Group 3’s ideas -
- (a) Inward Investment – major opportunities existed for building on the Borders’ level of attainment of pupils, natural resources, tourism attractions, etc.
 - (b) Multi-agency team for Burnfoot and Langlee – this team could tackle environmental problems, young people, unemployment and support social enterprise. There could be a focus on, and a holistic approach to, “difficult” families with the provision of advice and support.
 - (c) Making the Most of an Aging Population – in terms of volunteering, advice and support, making the most of their life skills.
 - (d) Place based support for Town Centres – tackling empty shops and supporting business and enterprise.
 - (e) “Oyster” card equivalent – for integrated public transport service.
9. The Board considered the various ideas which had been suggested and questioned whether the Scottish national indices of deprivation truly took into account rural areas. Resources and capacity could be an issue in taking forward the ideas and while it may be possible for things not to cost more, resources would need to be spread more wisely. To provide further funding for the ideas, ways would need to be found to grow the Borders economy. The datasets held by each of the Partners could inform each other eg less bronchial conditions to treat if homes were better heated. Communities also needed to be incentivised to do things for themselves, with the example of Walkerburn health initiative. It was recognised that some of the ideas were long term aims which would take time to come to fruition but milestones could be added in to check on progress. The ideas would need to be distilled down and benefits mapped out.

DECISION

AGREED that the ideas be circulated round the Partnership for feedback, prior to the completion of the Single Outcome Agreement.

LOW CARBON ECONOMIC STRATEGY

10. There had been circulated copies of the Draft Low Carbon Economic Strategy and Action Plan. The Board was advised that consultation on the Strategy and Action Plan was open to 25 April 2013 and all organisations were being urged to respond. Ms Glendinning, SBC Business Consultant, requested that if anyone had any private sector company contacts, could these be passed on so that the Strategy and Action Plan could be sent out to them. Mr Raine highlighted that this was a Council policy, the assumption being that other

organisations would have similar policies and suggested that these also be brought forward to this forum to see where added value could be made. Mr Lindley suggested that while the action plan was comprehensive, it was not in depth, and should be taken down to one or two steps which all the Partners could buy into.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC THEMES AND WORK PROGRAMMES

11. There were no updates on any issues.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

JOINT DELIVERY TEAM

12. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Delivery Team held on 13 March 2013.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

URGENT BUSINESS

13. Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to make an early decision.

A VISION FOR THE BORDERS

14. The following suggestions were made for a Vision for the Partnership -

- (a) *By working in partnership, we will ensure that:*
- *Our communities are strong and inclusive*
 - *Our economy is dynamic and provides opportunities for everyone*
 - *Our precious environment is respected, protected and enhanced.*
- (b) *We will seek the best quality of life for all the people in the Scottish Borders, prosperity for our businesses and good health and resilience for all our communities.*
- (c) *Health is improving, healthcare is safe, high quality and best value.*
- (d) *By 2020, quality of life will have improved for those who are currently living within our most deprived communities, through a stronger economy and through targeted partnership action.*

DECISION

AGREED that the Vision at (d) “By 2020, quality of life will have improved for those who are currently living within our most deprived communities, through a stronger economy and through targeted partnership action” be adopted by the Partnership, although should anyone have any comments or an alternative Vision to propose, after further consideration, then they send these to Mr David Cressey, SBC Head of Strategic Policy.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

15. **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 detailed in the Appendix to this Minute 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 aforementioned Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

1. **Minute**

The private section of the Minute of Meeting of 14 February 2013 was approved. Members noted that a draft improvement plan following the audit of the Community Planning Partnership would be considered at the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4.10 p.m.