

SCOTTISH BORDERS
COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY
PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD held in Council
Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on 1 October
2013 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillor J. Brown (Chairman), Councillor S. Bell, Councillor M. Cook, Chief Superintendent J. McDiarmid (Police Scotland), Ms H. Cuckow (Eildon Housing Association), Mr A. Herd (Scottish Borders Community Development Co.), Mr I. Lindley (Berwickshire Housing Association), Mr P. Heath (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service), Mr A. McKinnon (Scottish Enterprise), Mr J. Raine (NHS Borders), Mr C. Campbell (NHS Borders), Mr A. Jackimciw (Borders College), Mrs R. Stenhouse (Waverley Housing).

Apologies:- Councillors D. Parker, C. Bhatia; Mr R. Licence (SBHA).

In Attendance:- Mr D. Cressey (SBC Head of Strategic Policy), Mr R. Dickson (SBC Director of Environment & Infrastructure), Ms T. Logan (SBC Chief Executive), Mrs E. Torrance (Programme Director for Health and Social Care Integration), Mr. B. McGrath (SBC Head of Economic Development), Mr E Baijal (Joint Director of Public Health), Clerk to Council, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

CHAIRMAN

1. In the absence of Councillor Parker, the meeting was chaired by Councillor Brown. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a round of introductions.

MINUTE

2. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 13 June 2013.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute, for signature by the Chairman.

UPDATE ON SOA PRIORITIES

3. (a) **Grow Our Economy**
There had been circulated copies of a report detailing the Strategic Aims A to D of the Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 that had been approved at the last meeting, which addressed this priority. Mr Bryan McGrath, SBC Head of Economic Development, gave an explanation of the document, advising that for each key strategic aim there was a series of Objectives, under which the resourced actions (those currently underway) and the Project Pipeline (those projects still to start which required resources had been shown; and details of either progress or the blocks to progress. Work was still to be carried out to develop the model further for other workstreams and feedback on the document was sought. Some of the actions were aspirational and the lower the %, the fewer actions were resourced and therefore underway. Members discussed the format and content of the document which they felt was not immediately clear, and considered the inclusion of columns on outcome and completed actions as well as the percentage resourced. It was felt appropriate to know what stage each project had reached, and how far away they were from the objectives.

DECISION

NOTED that the document was a work in progress and comments should be sent to Mr McGrath.

(b) Reducing Inequalities

Mr D. Cressey, SBC Head of Strategic Policy, explained that while no strategy for reducing inequalities had been produced yet, work was currently underway in the Council, in conjunction with other partners, to prepare an approach to develop a draft strategy for consideration by the Early Intervention and Prevention Group on 14 October 2013. The intention would be to use a similar format to both the Economic and Low Carbon Economic Strategies. Dr Baijal explained that a workshop event linked to the Director of Public Health's Annual Plan had considered definitions, with Deprived Areas being the main focus to build any strategy. Sarah Watters of SBC Policy Unit went on to explain that the focus had been on two geographical areas with a huge range of practitioners i.e. from Schools, Health, Community Development, Police etc attending and talking about what they were doing, which had highlighted that there was a lack of awareness amongst all the practitioners about the many activities each was undertaking. David Cressey explained that SBC was currently scoping a pilot project focussing on 10 challenging families, the results of which would be reported through the Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG) to enable the sharing of relevant information. Members questioned the timescales and how the information would be driven forward. The Project required to be scoped with the agreement of CSOG, and Helen Forsyth, Chief Executive of Berwickshire Housing Association, had taken the lead role within the Berwickshire area on behalf of the partnership. This meant that the methodology would be tested outwith the 2 main areas of deprivation but that "lessons learned" from the Berwickshire area would be valuable for the next two main areas that the Board wished to target.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

(c) Maximising the Impact from the low carbon agenda – Sustainable Transport Review

Rob Dickson reported that the Joint Delivery Team had looked at the contract with the consultants to consider current operations right across the Community Planning partnership but also looked at future capacity and customer information held by various bodies i.e. SBC, NHS and College. The timescales were to complete work by end of the year/early next year with final report being considered by the Board at its meeting scheduled for February 2014. This was a key part of this priority, alongside the Low Carbon Economic Strategy .

**DECISION
NOTED.**

LOW CARBON ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

4. There had been circulated copies of the Scottish Borders Low Carbon Economic Strategy 2023 and Action Plan which were aligned to the Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 and with the wider community Planning Partnership priorities. The Director of Environment and Infrastructure explained that the vision for a Scottish Borders low carbon economy had been developed based on consultation with stakeholders, and was well aligned with the Community Planning Partnership Board's three key priorities within the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). In order to set out the first steps towards the vision, the Low Carbon Economic Strategy focused activity around four interlinked Strategic Aims which had been developed through consultation and in response to the challenges identified and to achieve the proposed vision. Councillor Cook expressed concerns that the aspirations of the Board may not match those of Scottish Government: the Scottish Borders was 'fuel poor' compared to the rest of Scotland and there was some discomfort with some of the propositions in the strategy as they flagged up some tension between high level government strategy. The SBC Chief Executive advised that the Scottish Government had, by in large, signed up to the SOA targets. David Cressey advised that consultation with the RSLs' Chief Executives

were ongoing with some meetings yet to be concluded. Mr Lindley reported that it was the Board's remit to identify actions to which each partner could sign up and contribute.

5. The members of the Strategic Board then divided into four smaller break out groups to consider the four Strategic Aims – Improving our competitiveness; Improving our residents quality of life; Adapting our infrastructure and Increasing Community Resilience. The groups then reported back to the meeting,
6. **Improving our competitiveness** – by addressing resource efficiency and costs within local businesses, and by exploiting low carbon business opportunities in supply chains and new markets. Alistair McKinnon summarised the group's discussion:-
 - (a) There was some confusion in terms of low carbon and not enough of a distinction between the three strands identified by the group:-
 - Energy Efficiency for households/businesses
 - Energy generation (renewables)
 - Low carbon products and services (niche products)
 - (b) It would be necessary to consider supply and demand, how to stimulate demand then how to satisfy that demand, bearing in mind that priorities differed from sector to sector.
 - Farming sector - efficiency of operation and less energy use
 - Manufacturing sector - Efficiency of operation, minimisation of raw materials, low carbon markets further afield
 - Supply of skills – needs to be demand in order to get uptake of training
 - Education in its widest sense – vocational opportunities, down to Primary School level, and sustaining this through Secondary School and College
 - Availability of funding – using Scottish Government and EU funding to stimulate the local economy, whilst improving quality of life for individuals
 - Articulating and creating region-wide initiatives to meet Borders' needs and present these to Scottish Government and Europe
 - All this had to be converted into something tangible on the ground.
7. **Improving our Residents' Quality of Life** – by addressing fuel poverty and encouraging behaviour to change towards lower carbon lifestyles, supporting individuals to develop new low carbon related skills and localisation of service access. Elaine Torrance summarised the group's discussion:-
 - Agreed that the Strategic Initiatives were correct
 - Home energy was number one priority
 - District Heating Schemes – Easter Langlee Pilot – considered not ambitious enough and should be widened out to engage more partners on a phased approach. A co-ordinating role moving forward was important.
 - Gaps were identified as :-
 - Some projects were quite small and needed to be prioritised with key projects identified
 - Possibly look at 6 strategic projects and identify which of the partners could feed into these
 - Link to fuel poverty action plan
 - More focus
 - Project pipeline actions: demand/supply of land for community food production had only a small gain, so resources could perhaps be targeted at areas with a greater outcome

8. **Adapting our Infrastructure** – to encourage a low carbon built environment that will reduce carbon emissions and is better prepared for changing weather pattern including extreme weather events. Rob Dickson summarised the group's discussion:-
- Strategic theme of Flood Risk with a range of stakeholders (households/businesses)
 - Gaps identified as:-
 - Lack of co-ordination across collective measures which partners could achieve; more work required on this
 - Broadband investment could come into infrastructure as it could potentially lead to a reduction in travel
 - Project pipeline – level of ambition; future investment in infrastructure eg buildings, BGH to be included in Easter Langlee project
 - Whole concept of public sector buildings/transport
9. **Increasing Community Resilience** – we will work with our communities to increase their capacity to withstand future climate change impacts and access opportunities including local food production and renewable energy generation. Douglas Scott summarised the group's discussion:-
- A lot of work was underway and need to capture actions across partners
 - A quick win for communities would be using energy more efficiently
 - Work on making communities aware of what was available
 - Strong link into work in Burnfoot and Langlee to reduce inequalities
 - Pipeline actions – opportunities through volunteering e.g. Walkerburn Watch Project' tenant participation officers
10. In summary, Councillor Bell highlighted that 'low carbon' was too general a term, with low carbon efficiency and low carbon energy different. The majority of input from the groups in relation to gaps was around prioritisation and focus; communication between partners; if there was clarity about how the different partners' projects operated, this could make the Strategy and Actions more ambitious and draw down further funding. It was important that the whole was greater than the sum of the parts, and it was acknowledged that the documents had to remain fluid. The feedback from all the groups would be incorporated and further engagement would take place with partners, before a refined Strategy and Action Plan would be considered by the Council at its meeting in October 2013. Councillor Bell thanked the Board members for their input.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

11. **Quality Assurance** – there had been circulated copies of a letter dated 20 June 2013 from Mr Colin Mair, CE of Improvement Scotland Service, in which were identified 5 area for further development.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

12. **Response to Quality Assurance Process** - there had been circulated copies of a letter from the SBC Chief Executive to Mr Colin Mair, CE of Improvement Scotland Service, in response to the five specific points made by Mr Mair in his letter of 20 June 2013.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

13. **Community Planning Statement** - there had been circulated copies of the agreement on Joint Working on Community Planning and Resourcing. The SBC Chief Executive advised that she would like the Joint Delivery Group to consider this at its next meeting scheduled for 6 November 2013. The aim was then to dedicate most of the meeting of the Board scheduled for 28 November 2013 to considering the Community Planning Statement and how it would be resourced and taken forward by each of the partners.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

JOINT DELIVERY TEAM

14. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Delivery Team held on 4 September 2013.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

URGENT BUSINESS

15. 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 keep Members informed/make an early decision.

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

16. Mr Douglas Scott, SBC Policy Unit, advised that a report on the Scottish Borders Household Survey results had been considered at the meeting of Scottish Borders Council held on 25 September 2013, where it had been decided that these results would be considered by the Council's Executive and Service Committees. Each partner would need to take the results to their own organisation. Mr Scott requested that each partner allow a link to the survey results on their own website. Feedback was also requested on the survey results and the respective Chief Executives would do this through the Joint Delivery Team.

**DECISION
AGREED that the value of the Household Survey be an agenda item for consideration by the Board at a future meeting.**

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm