

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD**

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY  
PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD held in the  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL  
HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST  
BOSWELLS on 27 November 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

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Present: Councillors J. Brown (Chairman), S. Bell, M. J. Cook; Cllr G. Edgar (SESTRANS); Mr J. Dickie, Mr A. Girrity (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); Chief Superintendent G. Imery (Police Scotland); Mr A. Jakimciw (Borders College); Mr B. Sweeney (3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Interface); Mr R. Licence (SBHA); Ms M. Peers (Berwickshire Housing Association); Mr J. Raine, Dr D. Steele (NHS Board).

Apologies: Councillors C. Bhatia, D. Parker; Mrs M. Hume (3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Interface); Ms R. Stenhouse (Waverley Housing).

In Attendance: Dr E. Bajjal (Joint Director of Public Health), Mr R. Dickson (SBC Corporate Transformation and Services Director), Mr N. Istephan (Eildon Housing Chief Executive), Mrs J. McDiarmid (SBC Depute Chief Executive [People]), Mr D. Scott (SBC Senior Policy Adviser), Ms S. Smith (SBC Communities and Partnership Manager), Clerk to Council.

**CHAIRMAN**

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

**MINUTE**

2. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 11 September 2014.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman.**

3. With reference to paragraph 8(c) of the Minute, Ms Smith, SBC Communities and Partnership Manager, advised that final comments had only been received from partners that day on the proposed Community Planning Partnership Community Engagement Framework, therefore the amended Framework would be brought to the Board for consideration at its next meeting.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**ACTIONS MONITORING**

4. There had been circulated copies of an Outstanding Actions Monitoring Summary Sheet for Board Meetings held from 29 November 2012 to 11 September 2014. With reference to paragraph 16 of

the Minute of 1 October 2013, Ms Smith advised that a proposal on the Household Survey would be brought to the Board for consideration at its meeting on 5 March 2015.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

**BORDERS RAILWAY BLUEPRINT**

5. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 3 April 2014, there were circulated at the meeting copies of "Borders Railway – Maximising the Impact: A Blueprint for the Future". Mr Rob Dickson, SBC Director Corporate Transformation and Services, gave a presentation on the Blueprint document, the brief for which would show ambition, significance, international, integrated, impact and consensus. The Blueprint document had been launched by the then First Minister at Abbotsford House on 17 November 2014 and had been developed by a partnership for the railway consisting of Scottish Borders Council, Midlothian Council, City of Edinburgh Council, Transport Scotland, Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland. The areas for focus would show that the Borders had great locations for working and investing; great communities for living and learning; and great destinations to visit. A National Action Plan in support of the Blueprint was likely to be approved in December 2014 and would be used to unlock Scottish Government funding of £10m. A Regional Action Plan was also being developed and it was likely to be approved in February 2015 by the Council and then taken to the CPP Strategic Board. With regard to the Community Planning Partnership, leadership for the railway would come from the Economy and Low Carbon Board, reporting through to the Strategic Board. A workshop for partners was planned for January 2015, with a separate workshop for tourism. It was intended that the opening events in September 2015 would reflect the ambition for and within the Borders of the return of the railway. The official opening would take place on Friday 4 September 2015, with a community day on Saturday 5 September, and the first train for paying passengers would run on Sunday 7 September. There had been press coverage locally and on social media and this was expected to increase over the coming year, now that the new train operator had been announced. Mr Dickson would provide further information to any of the partners and Mr Licence suggested an article in tenants' newsletters. In response to a question about an integrated transport system, Mr Dickson advised that this was being worked on to ensure connecting bus services from across the Borders, with "through ticketing" - whereby a ticket bought on the bus could be used on the train, tram and bus in the City – being agreed in principle. The Chairman thanked Mr Dickson for his presentation and emphasised the need for everyone to put out a positive message about the railway.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

**ECONOMY AND LOW CARBON THEME GROUP**

6. SBC Director Corporate Transformation and Services, Mr Dickson, advised that the Economy and Low Carbon Theme Group had met on 30 October 2014 and it had been a very productive meeting, with the Economic Development Strategy and Low Carbon Action Plan being populated with monitoring information. This was due to come to the next Strategic Board meeting, although there was still inconsistency in the way the various partner organisations reported in to the plan. Fire & Rescue, Police and Health were not fully represented in terms of information provision, although this was most likely due to a lack of awareness among the relevant officers that this information was being sought. The Group was scheduled to refresh the Economic Strategy next year and this would be done in light of the railway but not to the exclusion of other areas of interest. The delivery of the Railway action plan would be monitored through this Group. In terms of mobile phone coverage, Mr Dickson requested that partner organisations let him know of any examples where lack of coverage was having an impact on the work or development of particular services, so this could be fed in to the national programme. Mobile phone coverage needed to be seen as a utility, with significant adverse implications for communities if there was no or little coverage. The use of mobile technology was also becoming a key part of service delivery e.g. e:care, home working; remote working. The

Group had been in discussions with Michael Moore MP and Paul Wheelhouse MSP to try to take matters forward.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED that all Community Planning partners:-**

- (a) **ensure that actions and monitoring information was provided for inclusion in the Economic Development Strategy and Low Carbon Action Plan; and**
- (b) **provide any examples to the SBC Director Corporate Transformation and Services of areas of work or development of services which were being impacted by a lack of mobile phone coverage.**

#### **FUTURE SERVICES REFORM THEME GROUP**

7. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 11 September 2014, Mr Istephan, Chief Executive of Eildon Housing, gave an update on progress. The Theme Group had now secured representatives from each of the Partner organisations and was due to hold its first meeting on 11 December 2014. That meeting would work on four themes: Estates and Asset Management; Procurement and Community Benefits; Shared Services and Health and Social Care Integration; Welfare Reform and further development of digital services. Mr Istephan was conscious that there may be overlaps with other Groups for this work and he would check with other Theme Group leaders what they were doing. The Group would look for a range of quick wins along with longer term projects. Mr Istephan apologised for the delay in getting this Theme Group up and running, and proposed that a Work Programme would be brought for consideration to the Board's next meeting.

#### **DECISION**

- (a) **NOTED the update.**
- (b) **AGREED that a paper from the Future Services Reform Group on a draft programme of work, including outcomes, be considered at the next meeting of the Board.**

#### **REDUCING INEQUALITIES THEME GROUP**

8. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of 11 September 2014, the Depute Chief Executive (People) gave an update on progress of the Theme Group. Mrs McDiarmid advised that within the six strands to inequality work - Employment and Income, Health and Wellbeing, Keeping People Safe, Housing, Skills and Attainment, and Accessibility – the Group had wanted to understand fully where inequalities lay across the Borders. Two analysts from the Council had collated all the information gathered from the CP partners into one document. The Group had met on 14 November and gone through each theme, and while they had expected the majority of inequalities to be prevalent in Burnfoot and Langlee, being the most deprived areas of the Borders, there were pockets of inequalities across the whole of the Borders. The team would now consider the information further and see whether existing groups could tackle this or whether new groups and actions were required e.g. fuel poverty could be dealt with by the Low Carbon Group. An action plan and presentation would be prepared for the meeting of the Board on 6 March 2015.

**AGREED to receive a presentation and consider an action plan from the Reducing Inequalities Theme Group at the meeting of the Board scheduled for 6 March 2015.**

#### **BORDERS YOUTH GUARANTEE**

9. With reference to paragraph 14 of the Minute of 11 September 2014, Mr Scott, SBC Senior Policy Adviser, updated the Board on the Borders Youth Guarantee. A working group had met to consider the positive destination pathway for young people and a structure was being developed. The Council was looking to put in place 50 opportunities for young people for training, apprenticeships

and placements. Other Partnership partners were also looking at the Youth Guarantee. A full report would be brought to the Board for consideration at its next meeting. Councillor Bell requested that in terms of the Borders Young Person's Guarantee, as a progress report should have been at this meeting of the Board, that within the next two weeks, an update be sent to all Members.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED that an update on progress with the Borders Young Persons' Guarantee be issued to all Board members within the next two weeks.**

## **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL**

10. Mr Scott, SBC Senior Policy Consultant, gave a presentation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill which was currently at Stage 1 consideration by the Local Government and Regeneration Committee in the Scottish Parliament and its potential implications for the CPP and partner organisations. The Bill was due to be laid before Parliament in June 2015 and aimed to empower communities by making the most of the talents which existed in them to deliver high quality and improving services, in support of strong local democracy. There were a number of components to the Bill which included national outcomes, community planning, community participation requests on public bodies, asset transfer arrangements, community right to buy, Common Good property, allotments, and changes to non-domestic rates. The Bill would place a duty on Scottish Ministers to develop, consult on and publish a set of national outcomes for Scotland, review these at least once every five years, and make regular and public reports on progress towards these outcomes. There would be a statutory duty to participate in Community Planning, with core bodies which must facilitate community planning, and other bodies which may participate for a specific purpose. A local outcome improvement plan would be required, including reviews and progress reports. An option was also given to establish (if this was wanted) the Community Planning Partnership as a corporate body. Participation requests could come in to any public body from an established community body to participate in an outcome improvement process. The public body would be required to develop a process for taking forward these requests, unless there were reasonable grounds for refusal, and issue a decision notice. Once the improvement process had been carried out a report had to be published on the outcome. The community group would need to be involved in or consulted on the improvement process. There would also be an appeals procedure for communities who were dissatisfied with the reasons given for refusals in the decision notice. The Bill also set out a process to be following in dealing with requests from community bodies for the transfer of assets, which included a decision notice setting out the arrangements for of transfer, and an appeals mechanism which was different for local authorities and other public bodies. The community Right to Buy power, currently available in rural areas, would be extended to some urban areas which included Hawick and Galashiels.
11. The Board considered the various aspects of the Bill and what consequences there could be for Community Planning Partnerships and the Partners individually. Further information was required on the implications of the Partnership becoming a corporate body, examples of participation requests, the availability of funding to assist communities, and potential conflict between communities, partners, and budget. The Clerk to the Council explained that the Bill was currently at Stage1 in Parliament, with assent proposed in June 2015, although it was not yet known if the Bill would be enacted in its entirety straight away. Also the details of participation requests and the processes surrounding these were not yet clear. The Bill allowed for further details through Regulations but no draft Regulations had been published. Members also referred to the Accounts Commission report "Community Planning: Turning Ambition into Action" – an overview on what was happening with community planning across Scotland - which had been published that day, and the lack of energy, purpose and challenge for the CPP Board going forward. The Board required evidence of progress in future, rather than updates on meetings of the various Theme Groups. It was important to link up the Community Planning overview with the specific implications for the Community Planning Partnership collectively and the Partners individually within the Community

Empowerment Bill and bring evidence back for the Board to consider and gain an understanding at an extra meeting of the Board early in 2015.

**DECISION**

**AGREED to delegate authority to the SBC Chief Executive and senior officers to prepare evidence on the Scottish Borders position with regard to the Accounts Commission overview report and the collective and individual implications for the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership and its partners and bring this to a special meeting of the Board for consideration early in 2015.**

*The meeting concluded at 3.25 p.m.*