

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM held in the ROOM 205, TOWER MILL, HAWICK on 17 September 2013 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors G. Turnbull, (Chairman), Z. Elliot, S. Marshall, D. Paterson, R. Smith.
Community Councillors M. Short, T. Stevenson.

Inspector C. Wood (Police Scotland).

Apologies:- Councillor A. Cranston

In Attendance:- Neighbourhood Area Manager (A. Finnie), Democratic Services Officers (J. Turnbull).

Members of the Public:- 3 in attendance.

MINUTE

1. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 August 2013.

With reference to the Apologies Inspector C. Wood requested that "Lothian and Borders Police" be amended to read "Police Scotland".

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute, subject to the above amendment, for signature by the Chairman.

THE BRIDGE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

2. Heather Batsch, from The Bridge, was present at the meeting and gave a presentation on The Bridge – Community Transport. It was explained that the Bridge's mission was to encourage and support the growth of Scottish Borders community activity through the development of a high quality, dynamic and effective voluntary and community sector which focused on improving the quality of life for all Scottish Borders citizens. An accessible community transport service was available from Teviot Wheels which covered the Cheviot and Teviot & Liddesdale Area; Tweed Wheels which covered the Tweeddale area and Gala Wheels which covered the Central Borders. All the schemes were managed from the Bridge's office in Jedburgh. The Hawick vehicle was based at Sainsbury's, with Bruce Motors administering the hand over of keys to voluntary drivers, this support from local businesses was much appreciated. The Hawick vehicle had been purchased in May 2011 and had a maximum of 6 seats, including 2 wheelchair spaces and a driver. It provided affordable door-to-door wheelchair accessible transport at 55p per mile inclusive and assisted individuals with mobility needs and also community groups, for example, MS Society, Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland, New Horizons, The Bud Club and Interest Link. The Social Car Scheme, provided by Scottish Borders Council, subsidised the scheme by 25p per mile for eligible individual clients and eligible journeys (social, doctor, dentist, access to other public transport). This subsidy reduced the cost to 30p per mile for the first 60 miles of each journey and was administered through The Bridge. Funding was given from Scottish Borders Council for running costs; Charitable Grants for vehicle replacement and through Roxburgh Thrift Shop. The joint working with Borders Community Transport Network brought all the local community transport providers together for integrated support and joint action. The Bridge (Teviot, Tweed and Gala Wheels), Berwickshire Wheels (BAVS), British Red Cross (cars) and Royal Voluntary Service (cars) were highlighted. With an ageing population, there was an

increasing demand for the service, and there had been a 30% increase in bookings this year. The voluntary drivers had worked 1074.5 hrs from April to June 2013.

3. Mrs Batch discussed the various issues facing the scheme: there was a cap on the annual Social Car Scheme subsidy allocation; the scheme was unable to take concessionary bus passes and the Age Scotland campaign had recently been turned down; there was rising fuel costs, an increasing demand for the service which was almost at capacity, which in turn required more vehicles and more volunteer drivers. Mrs Batch continued that it was important that communities supported the scheme, and that anyone who could assist should contact The Bridge. She reminded Members that funding for the scheme was not ring fenced by Scottish Government and was rolled into one pot for transport.
4. In answer to questions from the Forum, Mrs Batch explained that The Bridge did not want to raise their hire charges as the aim of the scheme was to assist people in need. However, there was a minimum charge of £3.50, which meant that the scheme was not often utilised for short journeys. The Hawick to Borders General Hospital service was proving very popular with approximately 30 people using the service morning and afternoon each day and had now been extended to March 2014. The Chairman thanked Mrs Batsch for her informative and excellent presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

SB LOCAL SMALL SCHEMES AND CAPITAL & REVENUE WORKS.

5. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure which sought approval for the proposed new SB local small schemes from the Area Forum and updated the Forum on Roads Capital & Revenue works and previously approved SB Local Small Schemes. The Neighbourhood Area Manager reported that the installation of a footpath at Wilton Primary School would be completed during the October holiday week.

DECISION

AGREED

(i)	Upgrade equipment at play area, Green Terrace, Hawick	£1,350.00
(ii)	Install new picnic table with integral benches at Speechman's Haugh, Hawick	£ 225.00

OPEN QUESTIONS

6. Mr Martin Craig introduced himself to the Forum, Mr Craig was involved with the steering group for the proposed Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Community Council.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

7. Mr Stevenson from Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water, reported on the continuing problem with wind farm traffic. The potholes had been repaired but the drivers were not allowing sufficient time between vehicles to allow the road to settle. However, the vehicles were now numbered which would allow for easier identification when reporting incidents. Inspector Wood noted their concerns and Councillors Turnbull and Smith would also raise the issue at the next Timber Transport Group meeting.
8. Councillor Smith reported that he had received a communication from a couple in France, thanking Hawick for the warm welcome and hospitality they had received whilst on holiday.

DECISION

NOTED the reports.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9. Agreed that the next meeting be held on 19 November 2013 at 6.30 p.m. in the Lesser Hall, Hawick.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.