

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM held in the LESSER HALL, HAWICK on 17 December 2013 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors G. Turnbull, (Chairman), A. Cranston, D. Paterson, R. Smith.
Community Councillors T. Stevenson, G. Roberts, C. Levell.

Apologies:- Councillors Z. Elliot, S. Marshall, Mrs M. Short (Hawick Community Council),
Inspector C. Wood (Police Scotland).

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 19 November 2013. With reference to the decision in paragraph 11.(d)(i) Councillor Smith asked that Home be amended to Holm and Necastleton be changed to Newcastleton.

DECISION

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

DESIGNING OUR LEARNING FUTURE (DOLF) – DISCUSSION

2. In attendance to give a presentation on Designing Our Learning Future (DOLF) project were Ann Blackie, Locality Manager, Teviot and Liddesdale and Resources and Fiona Hume, Hawick High School. Circulated at the meeting was a copy of the Vision and Values statement which had been agreed by all partners and the Learning Community Board. In her introduction, Ms Blackie explained that the Teviot and Liddesdale Learning Community would strive to provide a culture of achievement for all children and young people from the locality. All agencies and their representatives within the area had contributed to this by ensuring that young people were encouraged to participate in regular and varied opportunities, promoted and celebrated success and achievement at all levels, encouraged a multi-generational attitude in the opportunities and experiences on offer and embedded a 'can dae' message across and throughout the community. The DOLF ethos would allow young people to flourish and access wider opportunities leading to increased achievement. Ms Blackie continued that volunteers from the full group had developed an Action Group, comprising members from primary and the secondary school, children's services, school nurse and health visitors. This Group had prepared an Action Plan to take forward to the wider community and would report back through the Learning Community Board.
3. The Chairman invited questions. Ms Blackie was asked what barriers existed to prohibit young people from achieving their potential. It was explained that there was a whole host of barriers: financial, difficult home situations, physical or learning disabilities and being fearful of trying. Ms Blackie gave an example of the Vision 2014 programme where young people had received a sporting achievement card which was stamped whenever they tried a new sport e.g. archery, basketball etc. The programme had been very inclusive and had been a gateway into sport for many young people. Ms Blackie was asked for a breakdown of the number of young people who were not in education, employment or training in the area? Ms Blackie would investigate and report back to the Forum. In answer to a question, Ms Blackie clarified that the main focus of the Action Plan was to initiate a culture shift which would result

in a positive influence on future generations. The Chairman thanked Ms Blackie and Ms Hume for the informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

SCOTTISH EMPTY HOMES CONFERENCE

4. The Chairman, Councillor Turnbull, reported on his recent attendance at the Scottish Empty Homes Conference. He highlighted Redcar's Coast Country Housing Limited project, which had restored empty properties back into use for sale or rent. The project utilised the skills of tradesmen who were long term unemployed and had also taken on apprentices, who were trained on site as they redeveloped the buildings. The project had been a success and officials from the company had agreed to meet with Scottish Borders Council for discussion and to view possible development opportunities in Hawick, they would also give a presentation to a meeting of the Area Forum early next year. The Chairman continued that two property owners had already approached him stating their interest in the project. In answer to a question, the Chairman explained that town centre regeneration had been discussed at the Conference the main emphasis had been to ensure that empty properties above shops were occupied. An example of Bathgate had been given whereby subsidised rental had proven to be a success in rejuvenating the town centre.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

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. The Neighbourhood Area Manager reported that he was awaiting approval from BEAR for the bus shelter and would report back at the next meeting. He would also report on the price for the tree pruning at Cheviot Road. It was hoped that the Criminal Justice Team would be able to take on the project of forming a path at the rear of Fisher Avenue which would reduce costs significantly as there would not be any labour charges. He was pursuing the erection of a shelter at Wellogate Cemetery and would report back on progress at a future meeting of the Forum.

DECISION

(a) AGREED:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| (i) Refurbish five existing benches on Holm Hill, Newcastleton. | £1,150 |
| (ii) Crown reduction to trees at Teviot Crescent, Hawick | £ 3,000 |
| (iii) Install notice board at Moat Park, Hawick | £ 450 |
| (iv) Replace two existing benches at Sandbed, Hawick | £1,210 |

(b) NOTED

The upgrade on previously approved SB Local Small Schemes as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

POLICE FORCE OF SCOTLAND

6. There had been circulated a report from Police Scotland which updated the Forum on the performance, activities and issues up to 17 December 2013. Teviot and Liddesdale ward had recorded an 8% reduction in reported crime compared to the same period last year with a 2.17% increase in solvency over the same timescales.
7. The Ward priorities were as follows:

- Tackling serious and organised crime - Visits to itinerant scrap metal dealers and planned road checks to be carried out, theft of quad bikes and an increased police presence in Newcastleton.
- Making our roads safer - Five conditional offers were issued to drivers using mobile phones during November 2013, three conditional offers were issued to motorists not wearing their seatbelt during the same period, road checks were planned to encourage safer winter driving.
- Tackling substance misuse – There had been 22 stop and searches carried out during November 2013 but no seizures of alcohol from underage drinkers. Two items of drugs had been recovered through street searches.
- Reducing Anti Social Behaviour – Groups of Youths and Anti Social Driving. There had been 10 Anti Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Tickets issued during November 2013. A number of interventions with youths had taken place and the situation would continue to be monitored. Activity targeting inappropriate driving and driving offences was planned for the area.

8. It was noted that the Multi Ward Plans were important as they were tailored to the outcomes. Police Scotland needed to be informed of what the priorities and main concerns were. Police Scotland would be asked how quickly their response would be activated when a particular concern had been raised.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

OPEN QUESTIONS

9. (a) A member of the public asked when the Holm Hill benches would be installed and that the positioning of the benches should be such as to provide vistas and to make an impact. The Neighbourhood Area Manager responded that the benches would be installed in the next few weeks and the comment regarding positioning was noted.

DECISION

Noted.

- (b) Councillor Smith reported that there was missing and broken block paving around the town centre; at what stage did maintenance become an emergency repair. The Neighbourhood Area Manager replied that he would bring the matter to the attention of the Assistant Manager who would arrange to have an inspection carried out. Formal inspections were carried out to specific timescales. The priority would be to make safe as quickly as possible.

DECISION

Noted.

- (c) Councillor Paterson reported that raised paving blocks next to High Street shops were unsightly. The Neighbourhood Area Manager replied that unless they were a trip hazard this would not constitute a safety defect and would be picked up during formal inspections.

DECISION

Noted.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

10. Mr Stevenson from Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water conveyed his thanks for the good wishes he had received with regards to his wife. He also wished Forum members compliments of the season.

11. Denholm Community Council reported on the transportation of the wind farm structures through the village. The Christmas tree, provided by SBC, was less than expected being only 6' high, the Community Council had arranged to purchase and erect a larger tree. The gates at Cavers Cemetery were dilapidated and unsightly. Would SBC address the status of the white lining in the Cavers area?
12. Councillor Paterson would investigate the cemetery gates and report back to the Community Council. The Neighbourhood Services Manager would look into the status of the white lining in the Cavers area.
13. Mr Levell from Hobkirk Community Council reported that traffic management and the community development fund continued to be issues, both had been reported to Michael Moore MP. They had received only four responses to the Resilient Communities initiative which had been disappointing. Their Christmas tree was ideal. Mr Lovell thanked the Neighbourhood Services Manager for all his hard work regarding the War Memorial.

DECISION

NOTED the reports.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14. Agreed that the next meeting be held on 21 January 2014 at 6.30 pm. The Chairman thanked all those for attending and extended his best wishes for the festive season.

The meeting concluded at 7.33 pm.