

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the
TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM held in the
Burgh Hall, Chambers Institution, Peebles on
24 June 2013 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald, S. Bell, N. Buckingham, G. Garvie, G. Logan.
Community Councillors A. Campbell, R. Howard, C. Lewin, B. McCrow, A.
Stewart, J. Taylor, G. Tulloch.

Apologies:- Councillor C. Bhatia.
Community Councillor W. Raine,

In Attendance:- Dr E. Bajjal, Director of Public Health, SB Local Area Manager (Tweeddale) (J.
Hedley), Democratic Services Officer (K. Mason).

Members of the Public:- 5.

MINUTE

1. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 6 March 2013. At the request of Community Councillor B. McCrow the following words should be added to paragraph 9 of the Minute – “During discussions the Forum noted the need to have a complementary programme of job creation for those receiving benefit but who were able to work.”

DECISION

NOTED the Minute subject to the above amendment.

SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

2. The Chairman of the Sub-Committee, Councillor Bell advised that there had been a meeting of the Sub-Committee on 12 June 2013, the Minute was not ready for circulation. The Sub-Committee had received a very detailed analysis of the two day parking survey which had taken place in May. Further meetings of the Sub-Committee would be held before a report on recommendations/proposals would be brought to the Forum for consideration.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

3. (a) Community Councillor G. Tulloch in referring to Christmas Lights advised that West Linton Community Council had received a bill from Scottish Power for £900 for 12/14 motifs which was felt to be excessive. The original bill had been for £1,100 but Scottish Power after being contacted reduced the bill by £200. He explained the Community Council had been told there would be no extra charges resulting from the installation of new boxes but their worst fears had been realized. He asked for feedback from other Community Councils about the bills they had received. Community Councillor Howard advised Clovenfords Community Council had not yet received an invoice for Christmas Lighting. It was pointed out that some areas had separate Committees to deal specifically with the provision of Christmas Lighting. The Chairman expressed concern and asked to be kept informed if any other Community Councils received excessive bills for Christmas Lighting in their areas.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

- (b) Community Councillor A. Campbell referred to the inadequacy of Police Reports at meetings of Manor, Stobo and Lyne Community Council and asked whether other Community Councils were happy with Police Reports and/or Police attendance at Community Council meetings since the new Police Force came into operation. The majority of Community Council representatives advised a monthly report was adequate and they did not expect a Police Officer to attend every meeting. The Chairman advised that a Police plan of action could be issued and referred to in an online monthly report.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- (c) Community Councillor C. Lewin advised of safety concerns in relation to timber lorries using the B712 – Broughton – Stobo – Peebles. Although he understood there was no other road which could be used, he wondered whether any measures could be taken such as white lines and rumble strips to make the road safer. The Chairman advised that the Timber Transport Group normally dealt with such matters.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- (d) Community Councillor J. Taylor referred to the increased use of the Meldons area and expressed concern at the absence of the public toilet facilities there which used to be open. He advised people were using the bins as latrines, whilst the site was cleaned by the Council this was still very unpleasant. He asked if it would be possible for the public toilets at the Meldons to be re-opened to the public at the weekends.

**DECISION
AGREED that the Chairman would liaise with the Director of Environment and Infrastructure about the request for the public toilets at the Meldons to re-open for the public at the weekends and report back.**

- (e) Community Councillor A. Stewart asked that the disappointment of Peebles Community Council be recorded in the Minutes at the decision to close Peebles Sheriff Court.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

OPEN QUESTIONS

4. (a) With reference to paragraph 6(a) of the Minute of Meeting of 8 May 2013, the SB Local Area Manger referred to the landslip where vegetation had been deposited on the main A72 and advised that the Council had engaged a consultant to inspect the site. The consultant had concluded that the exposed slope of the landslip could not be left in its current state because further movement was likely. Their recommendation was for containment of any further movement on the slope by the use of a draped and contoured rock netting. Council Officers were in communication with Forestry Commission Scotland, (FCS) (the owners of the land in question), regarding the legal responsibilities for carrying out these works. In engaging with the FCS, Officers were taking advice from the Council's legal section and discussions were on going. The SB Local Area Manager further reported that in regard to the larger area of embankment adjacent to the slip, the FCS had looked at this section and agreed to undertake a course of action which would involve felling a number of the larger trees to reduce wind rock falls and the potential further movement of the bank while keeping the root systems in place to help maintain the stability on this steep slope. As this site was an SSSI, the FCS

had arranged with Scottish Natural Heritage to permit the felling works and were working with Council Officers to agree a date when these works could be carried out. FCS had intimated that to carry out this operation the road would need to be closed for the majority of the tree removal works, and there was agreement between the Council and the FCS to allow this closure to take place overnight between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. A further day would then be required to complete the works and this would be carried out under a temporary traffic light arrangement. In response to a question raised about contingency plans the SB Local Area Manager advised it was currently planned that the overnight closure be carried out during the latter half of August and Council Officers were finalising details over the exact dates and these would be confirmed in due course.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

- (b) Mr George Winter, Eddleston resident presented various statistics in relation to the lack of enforcement of the 30 mph speed limit in the Eddleston Area. He submitted that the Police were not tackling the situation and asked why no camera van was in place. The Chairman advised of the difficulties in Eddleston in relation to site lines and road safety issues. It was pointed out during the discussions that local Police Officers had been trained in hand held speeding guns although there was a need for Officers to wear high visibility vests.

DECISION

NOTED.

SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY

5. The presentation was withdrawn.

“FACT OR FANTASY – YOUR HEALTH IN 2010”

6. Dr Eric Baijal, Director of Public Health, for both NHS Borders and the Council, was in attendance and gave a presentation on his third Annual Report (2011-2012). In the Borders, people live longer than the Scottish average, although not always in good health. The number of pensioners and children was increasing faster than the working age population. There were inequalities and pockets of deprivation and one of Dr Baijal's roles was to promote equality. Dr Baijal discussed the work of the Healthy Living Network using Walkerburn as a case study. Residents had been encouraged to use allotments to grow vegetables. Cooking skills had been taught and people were encouraged to be physically active. The project had been successful and most residents no longer felt disadvantaged. In the Scottish Borders there were already established interventions to encourage healthy living. For babies and children, initiatives such as increasing breastfeeding and immunisation were encouraged. In middle age, promoting responsible drinking, discouraging smoking and early detection of cancer were important. In older people, improving diet, preventing loneliness and coping with dementia were among the interventions. The presentation concluded with three examples which highlighted the importance of early interventions at different stages of life. Information could be downloaded from the following link:- <http://www.nhsborders.org.uk/news/fact-or-fantasy-is-the-challenge-for-health-in-borders>
7. Following the presentation Dr Bajal proceeded to answer questions in relation to emergency out of hours health care service and the inadequacy of accommodation for the elderly. He also referred to the remit of the Integrated Health and Social Care Partnerships. The Chairman thanked Dr Baijal for his attendance and his presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

HALMYRE COMMUNITY COMPANY

8. Mr Mike Madden in presenting information on the Halmyre Community Company advised there was a clear shortage of affordable housing in the Halmyre Mains part of the Borders and that which was available was often of poor quality and pricing was affected by the proximity to Edinburgh. There was demand from people already working in the area to upgrade. Those applying for jobs in the area had often to turn these down because they could not find reasonably priced accommodation. He explained that land at Halmyre Mains, West Linton had been sold to a property developer 5 years ago to build 16 luxury homes but the developer had gone into liquidation and the site was taken over by the Royal Bank of Scotland and attempts to sell the land at auction had failed.
9. Halmyre Housing Community had been set up as a not for profit company limited guarantee after Scottish Borders Council's Planning Department had indicated they would be prepared to consider an amendment to planning permission to allow the number of homes to be increased to 22. Funding from the E U Leader Programme had been provided and a design team had been appointed to undertake a feasibility study into building an environmentally friendly community of houses. It was intended to build homes to include 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses and a unit of single rooms with communal public area for short term workers and accommodation for visiting families. The original footprint had been reduced by 30% for the purposes of the study, despite the increase in the number of houses, and would release space for community plots, etc.

DECISION

NOTED and THANKED Mr Madden for his interesting and informative presentation.

CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

10. Community Councillor A. Stewart, a Trustee of the Chambers Institution Trust in giving background information advised that the original Trust had been established in the 1850's and was subsequently enshrined in law by an Act of Parliament in 1911 when Andrew Carnegie gave £10,000 to establish a library. The Trust had been administered by Scottish Borders Council (SBC) since 1996. In 2010 it was decided there should be a complete separation from SBC and a separate Trust should be formed and should seek charitable status. It was therefore agreed that six independent trustees together with the six Tweeddale Councillors should be appointed, achieving an equal balance of trustees between those who were Councillors and those who were not. Six independent trustees were appointed and in June 2012, and one of those, Ronald Ireland, was appointed Chairman.
11. The Trust's lawyers advised there were a number of technical issues to resolve around the separation from SBC. Officials from SBC, the Trust and the Lawyers had met and agreed that the way forward was to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding which would clarify the position and satisfy all parties. Community Councillor Stewart concluded his presentation by listing a number of actions taken to date by the Trust and advised that they were hopeful that the discussions currently being held with SBC would resolve the position by the end of August 2013 and the Trust would become an independent entity. After that the future development of the Chambers Institution would be explored by the Trust.

DECISION

NOTED and THANKED Community Councillor Stewart for his interesting presentation.

PEEBLES – INNERLEITHEN SHARED ACCESS PATH

12. The Chairman advised that the new bridge over the River Tweed had been unofficially opened on 7 June 2013. This would now allow people to walk, cycle and ride from Innerleithen to Peebles unhindered. The route was being well used with lots of children and families taking advantage of the flat off-road route to travel safely between the local communities and settlements. Local people should be urged to use the route and perhaps join the local volunteer group organised through Sustrans to help look after and enhance the facility. A Minister from the Scottish Government had been invited to formally open the

route later in the year and on receiving a response information would be issued. The possibility of extending the route to Walkerburn and north of Peebles to Edinburgh would be looked into. However, this was a long term plan and would be dependent on potential funding opportunities.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

SB LOCAL SMALL SCHEMES

13. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director of Environment and Infrastructure seeking approval for the following proposed new SB Local Small Schemes:-
- Lyne Station Cycleway, Improvement works - £5,000
 - Victoria Park, Innerleithen, Improvement works - £3,500
 - Millbank Road, Clovenfords, Restoration and improvement works to the John Leyden tablet, including dry stone wall repairs, at *The Luggie* – £520
 - Clovenfords village, provision of plants and materials to create and sustain floral displays in the village. - £372
 - Millennium footbridge, West Linton - £4,500
 - Burnside, Eddleston, Footpath works - £3,144
 - Provost Melrose Place, Peebles, Landscape improvements - £500
 - White footbridge, West Linton which would include for repairs to the wooden spars, the deck anti skid surface and repainting - £2,000
 - The Strand/Church Street, Innerleithen, Footway improvement works - £1500
 - Old A703 Eddleston, drainage improvement works on the footpath where surface water ponds - £915
 - Broughton “School” Sign and collapsible bollard - £950
 - Clovenfords village, repairs to the Millennium notice board - £350
14. In discussing the proposals, Councillor Logan submitted that the proposed for Tweeddale East totalled £6,742 and those for Tweeddale West totalled £16,509. He referred to the unfairness of the distribution of grant funding and moved that the SB Local Small Schemes budget be split evenly between the two wards with any excess funds not being used by November being put into a pot for both wards to submit bids. Councillor Logan received no seconder and his motion fell. He asked that his dissent be recorded in the minutes. Thereafter, the forum considered the proposed small schemes.

DECISION

APPROVED the following new SB Local Small Schemes:-

- (a) Lyne Station Cycleway, Improvement works - £5,000**
- (b) Victoria Park, Innerleithen, Improvement works - £3,500**
- (c) Millbank Road, Clovenfords, Restoration and improvement works to the John Leyden tablet, including dry stone wall repairs, at *The Luggie* – £520**
- (d) Clovenfords village, provision of plants and materials to create and sustain floral displays in the village - £372**
- (e) Millennium footbridge, West Linton - £4,500**
- (f) Burnside, Eddleston, Footpath works- £3,144**
- (g) Provost Melrose Place, Peebles, Landscape improvements - £500**
- (h) White footbridge, West Linton which would include for repairs to the wooden spars, the deck anti skid surface and repainting - £2,000**
- (i) The Strand/Church Street, Innerleithen, Footway improvement works - £1,500**
- (j) Old A703 Eddleston, drainage improvement works on the footpath where surface water ponds - £915**
- (k) Broughton “school” sign and collapsible bollard - £950; and**
- (l) Clovenfords Village, repairs to Millennium notice board - £350**

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15. The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 11 September 2013.

DECISION

NOTED that the next meeting of the Tweeddale Area Forum would be held on Wednesday 11 September 2013 – venue to be confirmed.

URGENT BUSINESS

16. Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the items dealt with in the following paragraphs should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to keep Members informed.

ALCOHOL BYELAWS

17. The Chairman advised that Community Councils would receive correspondence seeking views on the Council's proposed Byelaws Prohibiting the Consumption of Alcohol in Designated Public Places across the Scottish Borders. He explained that the proposed Byelaws would not apply for the Border Common Ridings, summer festivals and Hogmanay.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE – TOUCH SCREEN SYSTEM

18. Councillor Bell drew attention to the touch screen system which was located outside the Tourist Information Office on Peebles High Street. This was a trial system allowing visitors how to access information when the Tourist Information Office was closed.

DECISION

NOTED.

The meeting concluded at 8.40 p.m.