Item No. 4

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of the MEETING of the TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM held in The Eastgate Theatre, Peebles on 7 May 2014 at 6.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors C. Bhatia (Chairman), S. Bell, K. Cockburn, G. Garvie, G. Logan. Community Councillors B. McCrow, R. Howard, C. Lewin, M. McIntosh, W. Raine, A. Stewart.

Apologies:- Councillor W. Archibald, Community Councillor G. Tulloch.

In Attendance:- Inspector A. Hodges (Police Scotland), J. Douce (Group Manager – Response and Resilience (East) Scottish Fire & Rescue), Dr E. Baijal (Joint Director of Public Health), J. McLaren, Employee Director (NHS Borders), J. Weir (NHS Borders), SBC Neighbourhood Area Manager (Tweeddale) (J. Hedley), Engineer (P. Gilhooly), Cultural Services Manager (I. Brown), Asset Manager (D. Richardson), Democratic Services Officer (K. Mason).

Members of the Public:- 7.

CHAIRMAN

1. In the absence of Councillor Archibald, Councillor Bhatia, chaired the meeting.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

2. The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

MINUTE

3. There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 5 March 2014.

DECISION
NOTED the Minute.

4. With reference to paragraph 12(a) of the Minute, Jason Hedley advised that a report would be brought back to the next meeting of the Forum relating to accident statistics and road conditions along the A72 from Clovenfords to Skirling together with any planned maintenance schedule to establish whether there was a basis for the establishment of an A72 Action Group.

DECISION
NOTED.

5. With reference to paragraph 5(i) of the Minute, the Democratic Services Officer advised that Dr K. Foreman had declined the invitation to be a representative on the Forum owing to work pressures. Further, there had been no response from the Head Teacher of Peebles High School relating to the suggestion that a senior pupil of the school interested in local government be nominated by the school to be a representative on the Forum.

DECISION
NOTED.

6. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute, the Chairman advised that no decision had been taken in relation to the spend of Quality of Life funding between Tweeddale East and Tweeddale West. Community Councillor R. Howard was concerned that spending in the East would not be as much as spending in the West and proposed that funding be split until a certain point in the year. Members noted that the matter would be discussed at a future juncture.

DECISION
NOTED.

OPEN QUESTIONS

7. With reference to paragraph 10(b) of the Minute of Meeting of 5 March 2014, the Lord-Lieutenant asked for a progress report on his suggested wordings for the signs on the main entry routes in to Tweeddale. Councillor Bell advised there was nothing to report, but that discussions were ongoing between the Council and Transport Scotland.

DECISION
NOTED.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT

8. (a) Community Councillor A. Stewart expressed concerns relating to (a) to dog fouling; and (b) parking on Peebles High Street following the cessation of the Traffic Wardens, advising that some business owners left their cars parked all day on the High Street. Inspector Hodges advised that Police Officers would respond to dangerous parking or obstructions. Community Beat Officers would look at car parking problems in their respective wards. He referred to a call grading system which was in place. Officers had been issued with parking books and were clear in their role of issuing tickets. Police Officers were not Traffic Wardens but they would do their best regarding car parking issues. He advised that Police Officers relied on members of the public to report on dog fouling and a fresh supply of lamppost notices warning against dog fouling had been ordered from the Council. If Members had any special areas of concern, he asked that he be advised of them.

DECISION
NOTED.

(b) Community Councillor B. McCrow referred to Innerleithen Youth Club and advised he had met with CLD staff and had agreed actions to allow the Club to move into the Memorial Hall when the Youth Club vacated the Church Hall on 16 May 2014. He asked all Members for their support. He referred to an article in the Peeblesshire News last week relating to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland's recommendation in a review to cut the number of Scottish Borders Councillors from 34 to 32. He said it would be useful for Scottish Borders Council Community Councillors to see the Boundary Commission's recommendations and the Council's response. The Chairman advised that COSLA had undertaken a Commission on Local Democracy which would look at the wider issue of Local Government and its future role in Scotland.

DECISION
NOTED.

(c) Community Councillor C. Lewin referred to the decision making process of the Council, in particular he referred to the Carlowse Bridge situation. He explained there had been no opportunity for the local action group to meet with Councillors prior to the meeting, despite requesting such a meeting. The relative Committee Members did not visit the site to see the situation for themselves and he submitted there was a weakness in the decision making process. He referred to the review taking place under the guidance of the Council's Chief Executive and asked that the review

determined a recommendation for the future in that deputations be allowed to address Council Committees of concerns in relation to recommendations within reports. Councillor Cockburn was supportive of this request. Councillor Logan felt that the Council's decision process was flawed and referred to the old scheme where the decision of the Executive Committee could have been called in, and the Community Council could have been given the opportunity of making a recommendation to Scrutiny Committee.

DECISION

* **AGREED to recommend that under the review of the Council's Scheme of Administration that consideration be given to deputations, in certain defined circumstances, being allowed to address Council Committees re local concerns in relation to recommendations within reports.**

(d) Community Councillor W. Raine referred to the large amount of email correspondence received by Community Councils and asked other Community Councillors how they dealt with such correspondence. She was advised that a common practice in some Community Councils was for emails to be filtered and some deleted. Some more important issues would become items on Community Council agendas, and minutes posted on websites or notice boards could summarise details of what had been discussed at Community Council meetings.

DECISION
NOTED.

POLICE SCOTLAND

9. Inspector Hodges advised that Inspector Mike Wynne had retired last month. He explained he was now responsible for Tweeddale East and West, Galashiels etc. He had worked for 22 years in the Police Force, having started his career in Peebles. Although based in Galashiels, on Wednesdays he would work from Peebles Police Station. He asked what Members would like him to address when he attended the Forum. The Chairman referred to ward plans and asked that the Inspector report on issues relating to these at future Forum meetings.

DECISION
NOTED.

A72 RUMBLE DEVICES

10. There had been circulated copies of a report by Service Director Commercial Services proposing the investigation of possible mitigation measures which alleviate noise and vibration concerns raised following the recent installation of rumble strips on the A72 at Kingsland Primary School. As a result of an evaluation of Kingsland Primary School's Travel Plan in November 2013 the Tweeddale Area Forum decided that rumble strips be installed on the eastern approach to the Puffin Crossing on the A72 at Neidpath, with the aim of reducing speed and informing drivers of potential hazards ahead. Following that action there had been a number of complaints received by the Council about noise disturbance within neighbouring houses, which were more than 200 metres away, with regard to vehicles traversing these strips and it was appropriate that the Council look in to this matter. The Engineer, Ms Philippa Gilhooly was present at the meeting and answered Member's questions.

DECISION
AGREED

(a) that the Services Director Commercial Services investigate the modification of the rumble devices on the A72 at Neidpath in Peebles with a view to reducing substantially intrusive noise and vibration; and

(b) if identified solutions were within budget then the works should proceed as soon as possible.

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

11. Mr Jeff Douce, Group Manager – Response and Resilience (East) was present and asked what Members wished to hear from him. He explained that at each meeting he intended to give an overview of the last quarter's incidents; significant trends, and problem areas. He referred to the key priority areas in the Scottish Borders which had been considered in the Local Assessment. Over the last quarter in Tweeddale there had been 82 emergency calls, as 47 of these related to automated fire alarms this area needed to be targeted to reduce these alarms going off. The Fire and Rescue Service worked with other emergency services when dealing with road traffic collisions of which there had been six over the last quarter, all of them were of a minor nature. In responding to a question by Community Councillor C. Lewin about response times for the Fire and Rescue Service to be in Broughton, Mr Douce advised that the agreed aim was for the first appliance to reach Broughton within 20 minutes of a call being made. Community Councillor B. McCrow asked about retained fire fighters. Mr Douce advised that in the Scottish Borders there were two Fire Stations, one in Galashiels and the other in Hawick employing full time fire fighters. All other fire stations in the Scottish Borders operated with retained fire fighters. In previous years staffing of these had not been a problem because most of the retained fire fighters worked locally but now more and more people commuted to work. He referred to the gartan system which meant that retained fire fighters could book in and out when they were available for work and this was monitored by those operating the control systems. Councillor Bhatia asked that at future Area Forums, Mr Douce report on the key priorities within the Tweeddale Forum area.

DECISION
NOTED and thanked Mr Douce for his informative presentation

NHS BORDERS CLINICAL STRATEGY – PRESENTATION

12. In attendance to give a presentation on NHS Borders Clinical Strategy were Dr Eric Baijal, Joint Director of Public Health and John McLaren, Employee Director together with Joanne Weir, Planning and Performance Officer. It was explained that the "Key principles" for redesigning NHS Borders Services were to ensure high quality healthcare. NHS Borders Vision was that by 2020 everyone would be able to live longer healthier lives at home, or in a homely setting, through integrated health and social care; a focus on prevention, anticipation and supported self management. When hospital admission was necessary there would be a focus on getting people back into their homes as soon as appropriate, with minimal risk of readmission. Demographic, health and economic pressures were explained. Patient safety was the number one priority within NHS Borders Corporate Objectives, encompassing delivery of safe, effective and high quality services; improving the health of the population; and promotion excellence in organisational behaviour. Public consultation on the strategy would take place between 10 March and 6 June 2014 with summary and feedback of the findings being made available June – August 2014. Community Councillor C. Lewin requested that out of hours G.P. rotas should be introduced. Community Councillor B. McCrow referred to supporting infrastructure commenting on the importance of the accessibility of patients' medical records.

NOTED and thanked Dr Baijal for his informative presentation.

TOUR O' THE BORDERS – PRESENTATION

13. In attendance to give a presentation on the Tour O' The Borders was Neil Dalgleish. Mr Dalgleish gave an overview of the benefits of the event which would take place on 10 August 2014 when approximately 3,000 cyclists (there were 1,500 entrants to date) would leave Peebles before 8.00 a.m. He advised on the road closure section layout and times and explained that contra flow measures would be in place. There had been one negative response in relation to the road closures and it was explained that the organisers had engaged with local businesses in regard to the proposals. The Engineer, Mrs P Gilhooly,

advised that a meeting would be held on Monday to look at keeping road closures to a minimum.

DECISION
NOTED and thanked Mr Dalgleish for his informative presentation.

CULTURE TRUST – PRESENTATION

14. The Cultural Services Manager, Ian Brown in referring to challenges facing the following - Libraries and Information Services; Museums and Galleries Services; Archives and Local History Services; Arts Development, Heart of Hawick, Public Halls, Community Centres, advised that budget cuts in the sum of £407k had to be delivered by October 2015. He referred to the demand led Services and of the changing needs and expectations. Investigations had taken place to explore the best way to protect Cultural Services from budget cuts and, at the same time, put the Services on a positive footing for the future. Two high level options were available:- (a) keep them within the Council, or (b) transfer the services out of the Council to a new Culture Trust. The Culture Option came out top because the Service could substantially secure its savings target from rates remission and therefore protect front line services. This would also mean that the Service would be more demand led and more responsive to what people wanted from the Services. A Culture Trust would be registered as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). In order to get charitable status, the Trust must be clear with OSCR about its social, educational and cultural objectives and as a result public service values could be safeguarded in this new set up. The Trust would also be a Company Limited by Guarantee with a trading arm and managed by a Board of Trustees, normally about 12 Trustees of whom no more than 25% could be SBC Councillors. Any profits made by the trading arm must be recycled back into the charitable aims of the company, giving the Trust a permanent incentive to do better from income generating activity. Nine local authorities in Scotland had already transferred their Cultural Services to a Trust and Scottish Borders Council would try to take all the best aspects of the Culture Trusts in other parts of Scotland into the new Trust. If permission was granted to go ahead with the Culture Trust in the autumn, it was expected that the new Trust would be operating by no later than October 2015. It was noted during the discussions which took place that St Ronan's Community Centre would not be transferred to the new Trust.

DECISION
NOTED and thanked Mr Brown for his informative presentation.

MOTION

15. Councillor Bhatia, seconded by Councillor Cockburn, moved approval of her motion as detailed on the agenda and with an amendment as follows:-

"That a report be brought forward proposing a Traffic Regulation Order for West Linton Main Street detailing provision of 3 parking spaces to replace a length of the current double yellow lines as per the plan already produced by the Environment and Infrastructure and we ask the Environment and Infrastructure Department to commission a review of the traffic and parking issues on Main Street, West Linton at the earliest opportunity. The review to be for the purpose of attempting to find a solution to the traffic, congestion and parking issues on Main Street, West Linton."

Councillors Bhatia and Cockburn spoke in support of the motion which was unanimously approved.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the Motion as detailed above.

MOTION

16. Councillor Garvie, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of his motion as detailed on the agenda as follows:-

"That the Tweeddale Area Forum of Scottish Borders Council, in view of the considerable inconvenience to passengers calls on first bus to rescind their decision to re-locate to Waterloo Place the Edinburgh terminus of their service to Tweeddale and to return to the Edinburgh Bus Station in St Andrew's Square".

Councillor Garvie spoke in support of the motion which was unanimously approved. Members also requested that a Senior Manager of First Bus be invited to the next meeting of the Forum to discuss the situation.

DECISION
AGREED
(a) to approve the Motion as detailed above; and
(b) that Senior Manager of First Bus be invited to the next meeting of the Forum to discuss the situation.

STREET LIGHTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT (SLEEP) – PRESENTATION

17. The Asset Manager, David Richardson, was in attendance to give a presentation to update Members on the Street Lighting Energy Efficiency Project. He explained that the Council currently had about 19,000 street lights across its adopted network. The current split of technology in the Borders was 77% traditional lighting (high and low pressure sodium), 22.7% 'white light' and 0.3% LED. The project, being rolled out between April 2014 and March 2020, involved the installation of 13,500 new LED lights fitted to existing street lights. As LED lights had an expected life of 20 years against the traditional sodium lamp life of 4 years, this would derive savings from a reduction in energy costs as well as a reduction in carbon tax and maintenance costs. Capital Funding of £4.95m for the project had been approved. The fact that unit prices for the LED lights were falling might also help the speed of the roll-out. As the project did not include replacement of lighting columns lamps would be replaced initially where columns were in better condition and likely to last at least 20 years. Initial condition surveys of columns were being carried out in Hawick, Denholm, Jedburgh, Selkirk, Newtown, Tweedbank, Newstead and Bowden. Mr Richardson showed examples of light projected from traditional lamps and LED lights, demonstrating how the LED light produced a clearer and more natural colour contrast. He advised that web information about the project was now live on the Council website which included a Frequently Asked Questions link.

DECISION
NOTED the presentation.

ROADS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN – PRESENTATION

18. The last presentation of the evening was also by the Asset Manager David Richardson and concerned the Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP). A RAMP defined the strategy, policies and operational standards for managing and maintaining the Council's roads asset and could be described as the processes designed to ensure that the roads were maintained as efficiently and effectively as possible within the available budget. With regard to an assessment of road condition Mr Richardson explained that the Road Condition Indicator (RCI) used nationally to measure the condition of the current road network, consisted of a number of condition measures, including longitudinal profile, lane rutting, texture of the road surface and cracking. Lengths of road were classified as Red: where maintenance was required; Amber: which required further investigation and monitoring; and Green: where condition was satisfactory but where an odd defect may exist. The RCI was the sum of the Red and Amber classification expressed as a percentage of the total length of road, the current RCI in the Borders being 41.7%. The presentation looked at the different treatments and methods of patching available, which could be categorised as either preventative or corrective and Mr Richardson referred to the merits of each relative to their costs. Looking at

funding options he explained that current spend plans could not begin to address the wholesale removal of defects. To eliminate all Red and Amber sections would require a "one-off" spend of £65m. To keep the road network in its current state would require £4.3m per annum and that to continue with the current core budget of £1.35m per annum would result in further significant deterioration. The RAMP Status and Options report therefore looked at other funding options to address the road condition defect. An option was chosen of medium term investment to slow the further deterioration in the RCI. The key to management of the roads asset was the right repair in the right place at the right time.

19. Copies of the Asset Programme of Revenue and Capital Works for the Tweeddale Area 2014/2015 had previously been circulated.

DECISION
NOTED the presentation

OPEN AIR MARKET, EDINBURGH ROAD, PEEBLES

20. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director – Commercial Services presenting an update on the Peebles Open Air Market which was held each Thursday in the Edinburgh Road Car Park, Peebles. Approval was sought to advertise and let the site for a five year period. The previous lease holder of the market site was declared bankrupt in March 2013. As a result of the bankruptcy, his lease was automatically terminated and since April 2013, the Council had collected the rent direct from the stall holders. Following consultation with interested parties, the Edinburgh Road Car Park site was considered the most appropriate location in Peebles for the market. A new tenant of the market site would ensure the proper running of the market and pay a regular rent to the Council. Councillor Bell advised that confusion had arisen in the Edinburgh Road Car Park in relation to the signs for the new regime and asked that this be rectified. Community Councillor Lewin asked that a report on parking charges on market day be brought to the next meeting.

DECISION
AGREED

(a) that the Service Director – Commercial Services advertise and agree a five year let of the market site at the Edinburgh Road Car Park, Peebles on terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager; and

(b) that a report on parking charges on market day be brought to the next meeting.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEME WORKS - QUALITY OF LIFE/PAY PARKING

21. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director – Neighbourhood Services seeking approval to deliver projects throughout the Tweeddale Area using Neighbourhood Small Schemes, Quality of Life and Pay parking budgets. The following Neighbourhood schemes had been requested for consideration by the Tweeddale members from Small Schemes budget:- Improve the car park at Victoria Park, Innerleithen; Installation of a road gulley at Manor; Resurfacing to footway surface at Bridgegate, Peebles; Creation of new gulley system at the primary school drop off point, Broughton; Resurfacing to footway at Wemyss Place, Peebles; Refurbishment to Whitestone Park and Haylodge Park Gates; Contribution to floral improvements, Clovenfords; Creation of hard standing area at Victoria Park, Walkerburn. The following Quality of Life scheme seeking funding support:- Installation of pedestrian bus shelter on the west bound carriageway, Peebles Road, Innerleithen.

22. In consideration the recommendations Members asked that Neighbourhood Small Schemes – Car Parking improvements at Victoria Park, Innerleithen in the sum of £18,000 be deferred to the next meting pending clarification on costs. Further in relation to Quality of Life Funding and the proposal to create a new pedestrian bus shelter at Peebles Road, Innerleithen pending clarification as to whether the costs could be shared with another department.

DECISION

(a) APPROVED the following new Neighbourhood Small Schemes for implementation:-

(i)	**Road gulley installation, Manor**	**£500.00**
(ii)	**Footway resurfacing, Bridgegate, Peebles**	**£4,442.50**
(iii)	**Road gulley installation, Broughton Primary School**	**£1,100.00**
(iv)	**Footway resurfacing, Wemyss Place, Peebles**	**£2,320.30**
(v)	**Refurbishment to Whitestone park and Haylodge Park Gates (joint funded scheme with Property Maintenance)**	**£2,968.50**
(vi)	**Contribution to floral improvement, Clovenfords**	**£ 100.00**
(vii)	**Creation of hard standing area at Victoria Park, Walkerburn**	**£2,500.00**

(b) AGREED to defer consideration of the following for further information:-

(i)	**Neighbourhood Small Schemes – Car parking improvements at Victoria Park Innerleithen**	**£18,000.00**
(ii)	**Use of Quality of Life funding to create a new Pedestrian bus shelter at Peebles Road, Innerleithen**	**£12,000.00**

<u>CAPTAIN SIR DAVID YOUNGER, KCVO – LORD-LIEUTENANT OF TWEEDDALE</u>

23. The Chairman advised that Captain Sir David Younger, KCVO, would stand down as Lord-Lieutenant of Tweeddale on reaching his 75th birthday on 20 May 2014. He had served as Lord-Lieutenant for 20 years. She thanked him, on behalf of the Forum, for his support over the years in attending meetings of the Area Committee and latterly the Forum, and wished him all the best for the future.

DECISION
NOTED.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 p.m.