



**BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP
THURSDAY, 4TH MARCH, 2021**

**Please find attached the paper in respect of Item 4 on
the agenda for the above meeting**

4.	Fit for 2024: Review of Area Partnership and Community Fund (Pages 3 - 6) Consider proposals from Berwickshire Area Partnership Review Sub-Group on the Community Fund and Area Partnership. (Paper attached)	
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Berwickshire Area Partnership – Review Sub-group

Findings and Proposals

1. Purpose

- 1.1. In 2019 SBC commissioned an independent review into the operation of Area Partnerships and Community Funds across the Borders. The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) delivered their report in early 2020. Key SCDC recommendations related to the purpose and remit of Area Partnerships and the operation of the Community Funds. They recommended that Area Partnerships themselves undertake their own reviews. As a result, at the meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership (BAP) on 3rd December 2020 it was agreed to set up a Review Sub-group to consider these matters.
- 1.2. The purpose of this paper is to seek the agreement of the BAP to the recommendations of the BAP Review Sub-group.

2. Berwickshire Area Partnership

- 2.1. The Review Sub-group have met on several occasions throughout January and February 2021 to consider several questions related to the purpose, remit, constitution and operation of the BAP. Following deep discussion, it was initially agreed that:
- 2.2. The group favoured the continuation of the Area Partnership as a Council committee.
- 2.3. The group was content with the current role, remit and purpose of Area Partnerships, particularly as they relate to:
 - 2.3.1. The development, implementation and monitoring of the Berwickshire Locality Plan & Action Plan.
 - 2.3.2. The delivery of the Berwickshire Community Fund
- 2.4. In the future, significant modifications to the working / operation characteristics of the BAP will be required, to ensure that the core functions of the BAP are discharge in a more effective and participatory manner.

3. Planning

- 3.1. A key activity of the BAP relates to how the Berwickshire Locality Plan is developed and monitored. The group believe the current BAP model is rather unwieldy, lacks focus and fails to engage with many communities. Review Sub-group discussions highlighted how planning at a more local “place” level was seen to be more relevant

and hence attracted greater engagement within Communities. Several examples of successful community plan were given and the group propose a model of bottom-up planning from several (perhaps many) communities. It was recognised that more needed to be done to: collate and review existing community plans; bring “place” plans together into a coherent Locality plan and; regularly monitor all plans.

- 3.2. In order to achieve the above it may be necessary to undertake substantial capacity building within communities. Good practice already exists throughout Berwickshire, however, further efforts will be required to share this experience and operate more effectively as a partnership.

4. Berwickshire Community Fund

- 4.1. The review group spent a good deal of time considering the best way forward for the Community Fund. Initially, it was agreed that, in line with the recommendations made by SCDC, no changes be made to the Community Council, Village Hall and Local Festival grants.
- 4.2. The key outcome from further discussions was that substantial benefit would derive from a change in the criteria and decision-making processes associated with the Community Fund. Following several meetings to consider these matters in detail, the Review Sub-group agreed to a proposal to create a subcommittee of the BAP, the Berwickshire Community Fund Assessment Group (BCFAG), with full delegated powers to undertake the assessment of applications and make awards. All applications to the Community Fund will be dealt with through a single process, to ensure rigour, rational and uniformity in the assessment of applications.
- 4.3. The proposed 10 person BCFAG will be drawn from the membership of BAF and comprise a combination of experience, representativeness and ‘new blood’. Whilst it is important to leave flexibility in the makeup of the panel it is envisaged that membership will include 3 SBC Elected Members. It is proposed to undertake an open recruitment process to ensure impartiality and inclusiveness in the makeup of the group.

5. Meetings

- 5.1. Area Partnerships meetings have yet to realise the level of community engagement and involvement that was envisaged when they were established. The group believe that “Partnership” implies a level of equality between parties and participation in the management of business and wish to have a greater involvement in the setting of agenda themes and the facilitation of meetings. In addition, the group would favour the introduction of a rotating Chair. The group

recognise that, as a committee of the SBC, the Chair must be an elected member appointed by the Council. However, the group believe that the Council, in a spirit of “partnership”, should seek the view of the Partnership prior to the appointment of the Chair.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Berwickshire Area Partnership Review Sub-group seek the agreement of the BAP to the following recommendations:
 - 6.1.1. the continuation of the Area Partnership as a Council committee.
 - 6.1.2. the continuation of the current role, remit and purpose of Area Partnerships.
 - 6.1.3. the development of a model of bottom-up community planning, assisted by appropriate capacity building and the sharing of good practice.
 - 6.1.4. to retain the existing Community Council, Village Hall and Local Festival grant schemes.
 - 6.1.5. to create a subcommittee of the BAP, the Berwickshire Community Fund Assessment Group, with full delegated powers to undertake the assessment of applications and subsequently make awards.
 - 6.1.6. the introduction of a BAP sub group with responsibility for setting and facilitating future meeting topics.
 - 6.1.7. request that the Council seek the view of the BAP prior to the appointment of the Chair.

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