

Please find attached the Public Minutes in respect Item of Item 6 on the agenda for the above meeting

6.	<p>Committee Minutes (Pages 3 - 50)</p> <p>Consider Minutes of the following Committees:-</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;">(a)</td> <td style="width: 60%;">Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership</td> <td style="width: 35%; text-align: right;">7 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(b)</td> <td>Selkirk Common Good</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(c)</td> <td>Jedburgh Common Good</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(d)</td> <td>Kelso Common Good</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(e)</td> <td>Eildon Area Partnership</td> <td style="text-align: right;">16 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(f)</td> <td>External Services-Providers Monitoring Group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">21 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(g)</td> <td>Peebles Common Good</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(h)</td> <td>Cheviot Area Partnership</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(i)</td> <td>External Services-Providers Monitoring Group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">28 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(j)</td> <td>Executive Committee</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5 December 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(k)</td> <td>External Services-Providers Monitoring Group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5 December 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(l)</td> <td>Galashiels Common Good</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7 December 2023</td> </tr> </table> <p>(Copies attached.)</p>	(a)	Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership	7 November 2023	(b)	Selkirk Common Good	13 November 2023	(c)	Jedburgh Common Good	13 November 2023	(d)	Kelso Common Good	14 November 2023	(e)	Eildon Area Partnership	16 November 2023	(f)	External Services-Providers Monitoring Group	21 November 2023	(g)	Peebles Common Good	22 November 2023	(h)	Cheviot Area Partnership	22 November 2023	(i)	External Services-Providers Monitoring Group	28 November 2023	(j)	Executive Committee	5 December 2023	(k)	External Services-Providers Monitoring Group	5 December 2023	(l)	Galashiels Common Good	7 December 2023	5 mins
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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 7 November 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors C. Ramage (Chair), W. McAteer, N. Richards and A. Smart together with 14 Community Councillors and Members of the Public.

Apologies:- Councillors J. Cox, and S. Marshall.

In Attendance:- Community Co-ordinator (G. Jardine), Community Engagement Officer (S. Culverwell), and Democratic Services Team Leader (D. Hall)

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 4 OCTOBER 2023**

There had been circulated the Minute of the meeting held on 4 October 2023. The Chair confirmed that there were no actions to be taken forward from the previous meeting.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minutes for signature by the Chair.

3. **POLICE SCOTLAND UPDATE**

3.1 The Chair introduced Chief Inspector Stuart Fletcher, who had recently taken over as the Local Area Commander for the Scottish Borders. Chief Inspector Fletcher explained that he had 25 years working in the Police force across the Scottish Borders and Edinburgh. Particular focus of his work had been on working in partnership with communities on quality-of-life issues. Chief Inspector Fletcher confirmed that he was committed to being visible in the community, and that he would be spending 2 days per week at Hawick Police station. The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Fletcher for his introduction and wished him well in his new role.

3.2 The Chair invited Inspector Robbie Noble to provide an update. Inspector Noble outlined the Scottish Borders Police resource structure, drawing particular attention to the Community Policing elements such as the 6 School Link Officers, 11 Community Beat Officers and 12 Community Action Team Officers. Hawick High School had one School Link Officer who worked in the area and worked across all of the local feeder schools. Additional support for Burnfoot came from the officer working in Selkirk. The work of those officers was focused on education and developing positive relationships with young people. Police Scotland had assumed a central role in trying to resolve issues regarding anti-social behaviour and violence amongst young people. Inspector Noble highlighted that the CAT officers were active in Teviot and Liddesdale. The Chair expressed thanks for the update and the organisational chart which had been displayed. Inspector Noble confirmed that discussions were ongoing regarding the resourcing of the Common Riding, in response to a question regarding wind farm delivery loads, Inspector Noble explained that because the operation is being undertaken by private companies, Police Scotland were notified of the movements and assisted in such deliveries.

DECISION NOTED.

4. **BORDERS COMMUNITY ACTION DRAFT STRATEGY - FIONA BENTON**

The Chair explained that this item had been withdrawn. Attendees were encouraged to have their say on the draft strategy online.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

5. NHS - TIME FOR CHANGE INPUT

5.1 Ralph Roberts, Chief Executive NHS Borders delivered a short presentation, the slides for which had been circulated with the agenda. This was to be the first of the five Area Partnership sessions to present 'Time For Change' a wide ranging conversation with communities to consider the range of NHS services in the Scottish Borders and to feed into a refresh of NHS Borders Medium Term Plan. The scale of challenges in planning and delivering health services to meet need were unprecedented; significant workforce challenges allied with a smaller working age population (45% vs 65% nationally), over a large rural area and a growing financial deficit. Under the four suggested discussion headings: Services In the Community; Community Bed Based Services; Acute Hospital Services; and Mental Health Services there had been an audit of provision, public feedback, achievements and areas of focus. The input from the public would form the basis of the medium-term plan for the NHS. The Chair highlighted the considerable budget difficulties faced by the Health Service. In response to a question regarding patients being sent out of area for treatment, Mr Roberts explained that the rate charged to NHS Borders in such a scenario would depend on where the patient was sent for treatment. NHS Borders was assigned a proportion of certain budgets, and usage above that would then incur charges. Mr Roberts stressed sending patients for treatment out of area, with a view to providing more equitable care, would likely form part of the considerations on the future operating model.

5.2 In response to a question regarding how well the region was adopting technology to tackle the challenges that it faced in providing healthcare, Mr Roberts explained that there was no one size fits all way of implementing technology to solve problems. The use of technology to deliver services in rural areas had the potential to make a large impact, however considerable investment in digital resources would be required to ensure that they were effective. It was agreed that the timetable for community engagement session would be shared with the attendees. The Chair confirmed that a session would be held on Wednesday 15th of December from 2 pm to 6.30 pm at the Heart of Hawick. Attendees highlighted that staff wellbeing had to be taken into account. The Chair thanked Mr Roberts and his colleagues for their attendance.

**DECISION
NOTED**

6. TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE FUNDING TABLE 2023/24

There had been circulated copies of the Teviot and Liddesdale Funding Table 2023/24 with the agenda. The Community engagement Officer, Ms Sarah Culverwell, outlined that £86k of the budget of £132k had been awarded through different schemes. Ms Culverwell encouraged any potential applicants to submit an application as soon as possible to ensure that it could be considered before the end of the financial year.

**DECISION
NOTED .**

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND - POT A FUND

Hawick's Men Shed had applied for £1.3k as part of a project to replace their computers. The funding applied for would allow them to purchase 2 laptops; one printer and ink; 2 a desktop computer; and computer monitor. The total value of the application was £1362.62. Ms Culverwell explained that the Assessment Panel had not been able to prepare a recommendation due to time constraints. Councillor Ramage, seconded by

Councillor McAteer, proposed that the applicant be approved in full which was unanimously approved.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the application for £1362.62 from Hawick Men's Shed.

8. INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND PANEL MEETINGS

There was a discussion regarding involving young people in Neighbourhood Support Fund Panel meetings as well as wider discussions on Place Making. Other localities were also trying to involve young people in the decision-making process. Mr Kerr highlighted that Southdean were working hard to get young people involved, however challenges remained. It was highlighted that attendees could liaise with the Mr Corrie Patterson, a youth representative on the Children and Young Peoples Planning Partnership for help in boosting the involvement of young people. The Community Co-ordinator, Ms Gillian Jardine, undertook to check the criteria to be able to join the Assessment Panel, but suggested that there was no restriction regarding the age.

DECISION

NOTED.

9. UPDATE ON PLACE MAKING PROGRESS

The Chair welcomed Mr Gordie Campbell, from the newly formed Denholm and District Place Making Team. Mr Campbell explained that the group had been formed 2 months previous, and that work had been focused on involving the smaller hamlets in the area. The core of the group was composed of the local community, the community council, the householder's council and other smaller organisations such as the horticultural society and the Village Hall. Work was ongoing to set up a database of contacts and building capacity in the area. The Group was in the process of understanding Place Making by studying other Place Plans and how different groups had operated. Mr Campbell highlighted that the Denholm area faced unique challenges due to its rural character, and that work was ongoing to overcome those challenges. The Chair highlighted that Hawick's town team was continuing to undertake work as part of Place Making.

DECISION

NOTED.

10. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Hobkirk's survey had gone live, and Mr Kerr confirmed that he was happy to help analyse the results and provide feedback. Mr Kerr requested that an update on a potential meeting with Scottish Borders Council officers on windfarms. Ms Culverwell confirmed that she was following up on the request and would provide an update on a potential date as soon as one was available.

DECISION

NOTED.

11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Copies of the additional information document had been circulated with the agenda.

DECISION

NOTED.

12. DATE OF NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING - 20 FEBRUARY 2024

Councillor McAteer highlighted that a meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday, 14 November would consider a report on the Review of Financial Support to Community Councils. It was agreed that officers would explore whether dates for an additional meeting to be held prior to the end of the financial year to consider any outstanding

Neighbourhood Support Fund applications. The Chair highlighted that an age specific Community Conversations event had been at Hawick High School.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of Meeting of the SELKIRK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE
conducted remotely by Microsoft Teams on
Monday 13 November 2023 at 15.00 pm.

Present:- Councillors C. Cochrane (Chair), L Douglas (from para 2.) and E. Thornton-
Nicol and Community Councillor I. King
In Attendance:- Estates Surveyors (T. Hill), Solicitors (F. Rankine and J. Webster),
Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall).

1. **PRIVATE BUSINESS
DECISION**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

2. **28 MARKET PLACE, SELKIRK**

Members considered a report by the Director – Infrastructure and Environment and approved its recommendation.

The meeting concluded at 3.35 pm.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of MEETING of the
JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND
SUB-COMMITTEE held via Microsoft
Teams on Monday, 13 November 2023
at 4.30 p.m.

Present: - Councillors S. Hamilton, S. Scott and Community Councillor J. Taylor.

Apologies: Councillor P. Brown.

In Attendance: - Chief Officer Financial and Procurement Services, Solicitor (Fraser Rankine), Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

Members of the Public: - 0

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Scott, proposed that Councillor Hamilton be appointed as Chairman for the meeting. There being no other nominations, Councillor Hamilton was appointed as Chair.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Hamilton be appointed as the Chair for the meeting of Jedburgh Common Good Fund Sub-Committee.

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of Minute of the Jedburgh Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 11 September 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute of Meeting held on 11 September 2026.

2. **ACTION TRACKER**

There had been circulated copies of the Action Tracker. The Democratic Services Officer advised that completed evaluation forms for Grants paid were awaited.

DECISION

NOTED the remaining Actions.

3.0 **MONITORING REPORT FOR 6 MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director of Finance and Procurement which provided the income and expenditure for the Jedburgh Common Good Fund for the six months to 30 September 2023, full year projected out-turn for 2023/24, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2024. Appendix 1 provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2023/24 and showed a projected deficit of £34,241 for the year.

Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024, which projected a decrease in reserves of £47,278. Appendix 3a provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 3b provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property expenditure of 2023/24 and actual property expenditure to 30 September 2023. Appendix 4 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property valuations at 31 March 2024. Appendix 5 showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2023, which highlighted the fund had a 13.16% unrealised loss in market value since investment, largely due to continued volatility in investment markets. Overall, taking account of the income received, the fund had achieved a return of 15.88% since investment in February 2018. The Chief Officer was present and answered Members questions. In response to a question from the Chairman regarding the management, by Live Borders of Jedburgh Common Good sites, Mr Rankine agreed to bring information to the next meeting.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- (i) the actual income and expenditure for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix I to the report;**
- (ii) the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2;**
- (iii) the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4; and**
- (iv) the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 to the report.**

The meeting closed at 4.47 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL KELSO COMMON GOOD SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the KELSO
COMMON GOOD SUB-COMMITTEE held
via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 14
November 2023 at 5.15 pm

Present:- Councillors E. Robson (Chairman), S. Mountford, T. Weatherston, Community
Councillor Gavin Horsburgh (from para 3.3).

In Attendance: - Chief Officer – Finance and Procurement, Principal Solicitor (Gillian Sellar),
Democratic Services Officer (F Henderson).

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair 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.

1. MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER

- 1.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Kelso Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 12 September 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to APPROVE the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

1.2 Action Tracker

The Action Tracker had been circulated. In terms of the Borders Forest Trust, the Chairman advised that he had arranged to meet Mr Dundas, The Engagement Officer on Monday, 20 November 2023 at 1 p.m. to discuss without commitment and would report back to the Common Good at the next meeting.

- 1.3 In terms of the actions required at the Pinnaclehill Woodland, Mr Wilkinson had confirmed that work remained outstanding. It was unclear if the outstanding work would be covered by the invoice already paid and Mr Wilkinson to be contacted to ascertain what the outstanding work would cost.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) **to receive an update at the next meeting on the meeting with the Borders Forest Trust;**
- (b) **that Mr Wilkinson confirm whether further work was required to address Residents claims of encroaching trees; and**

2.0 MONITORING REPORT FOR 6 MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director of Finance and Procurement providing details of the income and expenditure for the Kelso Common Good Fund for the 6 months to 30 September 2023, a full year projected out turn for 2023/24, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2024. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected Income and Expenditure position for 2023/24, which showed a surplus of £8,280 for the year, which was less than previously reported due to an increase in the property repairs budget. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected balance sheet as at

31 March 2024 and showed a projected decrease in reserves of £70,108. Appendix 3(a) to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income and net return for 2023/24, and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 3(b) provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property expenditure for 2023/24, and actual property expenditure to 30 June 2023. Appendix 4 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property valuations at 31 March 2024. Appendix 5 detailed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2023. The Chief Financial Officer highlighted the main points in the report and answered Members' questions.

DECISION NOTED

- (a) **the actual income and expenditure for 2023/24 in Appendix 1;**
- (b) **the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2;**
- (c) **the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4; and**
- (d) **the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5.**

3.0 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Kelso Over 60s Club

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of an application for Financial Assistance from Kelso Over 60s Club requesting £400 towards the Over 60's Annual Christmas Lunch. The application explained that the Club had been running for a number of years and the main objective was the Health and Wellbeing of the Members. Members were encouraged to remain active as much as possible through organised events and trips. Everyone in Kelso and the surrounding area over the age of 60 were welcome to attend the Club and a Membership fee was charged. The highlight of the year was the annual Christmas Lunch held in Ednam House Hotel and attended by Lady Jane Grosvenor, Patron. Each Member received a meal, a dance and a free raffle ticket which ensured that everyone received a gift. The Committee was made up of volunteers who gave their time to run the club for the benefit of others and there were events and trips organised to allow them to feel involved. The Club did have funds, however given the rising cost of living and the fuel crisis a donation from the Common Good would enable the event to continue. It was acknowledged that there was a hard-working Committee of Volunteers running the club and the Annual Christmas lunch was of significant value to those who were at risk of becoming socially isolated and who look forward to this event every year.

DECISION

AGREED to support the application for financial assistance for Kelso Over 60s Club in the sum of £400 towards the costs of the Annual Christmas Dinner in 2023.

Cheviot Youth

- 3.2 There had been circulated copies of an application for Financial Assistance from Kelso Cheviot Youth - Kelso Hub requesting £1,800 to cover the costs of drawing up plans for the creation of a disabled entrance, two new toilet blocks with disabled toilets and new unisex stalls. The application explained that although the project had yet to be fully costed, it had been approved by the Board of Cheviot Youth and that of the Borers Ice Rink Ltd (the landlords) and was estimated to be in the region of £50,000. Cheviot Youth had a policy of funding reasonable small projects from its own funds. Cheviot Youth run three service divisions Mental Health Support Services (MHSS); Training, Employability and Advice (TEA); Youth Work Services (including Community Café and Food Redistribution Programme) from the two main Cheviot bases in Jedburgh and Kelso and at two village satellite centres in Ancrum and Yetholm.

DECISION

AGREED to support the application for financial assistance from Cheviot Youth in the sum of £1,800 towards the cost of drawing up plans for the creation of a disabled entrance, two new toilet blocks with disabled toilets and new unisex stalls.

3.3 PINNACLEHILL PARK – ORCHARD PROJECT

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 27 June 2023, there had been circulated copies of an application from the Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association in the sum of £3,151.26 towards the purchase of Fruit Trees, Hedging plants, water storage unit, picnic table and seating mulch, compost and plant supports to establish an organic community orchard and wildflower area to be enjoyed and maintained by the residents to meet and interact with each other. The application explained that the activities were foundational to the project, whose purpose was to create a space, which would welcome everyone living in the estate, particularly those vulnerable to isolation, providing the opportunity to meet people and enjoy spending time outdoors, in nature particularly as the biodiversity increased.

DECISION

AGREED; -

- (a) to support the application for financial assistance for the Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association in the sum of £3,151.26 towards the costs of the creation of a Community Orchard, should funding for other sources be unsuccessful;**
- (b) that the grant only be drawn down on completion of a formal lease; and**
- (c) that the budget for Grants and Other Donation be increased.**

4.0 CROFT PARK TOILET BLOCK

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 12 September 2023, the Principal Solicitor reported that the meeting scheduled to be held with Kelso RFC to discuss the Croft Park Toilet Block had been cancelled and scheduled for the following week.

DECISION

NOTED that an update would be circulated in due course.

5.0 TAIT HALL, KELSO – ERECTION OF FAMILY PLAQUE

Councillor Weatherston explained that the family of a late Kelso Resident who had been heavily involved in the Kelso Opera had approached him with a request to erect a small commemorative plaque inside the Tait Hall, Kelso. Whilst the Common Good were not against it in principle, there were a number of questions highlighted i.e., where, size and Design, maintenance and cleaning of the plaque.

DECISION

AGREED that the Democratic Services Officer contact the Kelso Operative Society to obtain their views.

The meeting concluded at 6 pm

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MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 16 November 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), C. Cochrane, L. Douglas, E. Jardine, J. Linehan, N. Mackinnon, D. Parker, J. PatonDay, F. Sinclair and H. Steel together with 9 representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

In Attendance:- Community Co-Ordinator (K. Harrow), Community Engagement Officer (E. Coltman), Democratic Services Team Leader.

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held via Microsoft Teams.

2. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

There had been circulated copies of an additional information document with the agenda.

3. **FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION FROM MEETING OF 7 SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 7 September June 2023 had been circulated and was noted. The Community Engagement Officer, Mr Erin Coltman, highlighted that the speed introductions held at the previous meeting had been well received and had demonstrated the range of experiences and interests amongst the attendees. The feedback on the presentation by Borders Community Action had been positive. The Community Development Support Team at Borders Community Action continued to hold regular talks and meetings, with the next one due to be held at Eildon Housing Headquarters on Tuesday, 21 November 2023.

3. **TIME FOR CHANGE – NHS BORDERS**

The Chair welcomed Mr Ralph Roberts, Chief Executive of NHS Borders and Mr Chris Myers, the Chair of the Integrated Joint Board. Mr Roberts explained that presentation were being delivered at the five Area Partnership sessions on 'Time For Change' a wide ranging conversation with communities to consider the range of NHS services in the Scottish Borders and to feed into a refresh of NHS Borders Medium Term Plan. The scale of challenges in planning and delivering health services to meet need were unprecedented; significant workforce challenges allied with a smaller working age population (45% vs 65% nationally), over a large rural area and a growing financial deficit. Under the four suggested discussion headings: Services In the Community; Community Bed Based Services; Acute Hospital Services; and Mental Health Services there had been an audit of provision, public feedback, achievements and areas of focus. A further community engagement drop-in session was to be held at the Great Tapestry of Scotland Building in Galashiels from 2-7pm on Wednesday, 29 November. Mr Myers highlighted that the community, and all major parties would be key to delivering a health service that was fit for purpose into the future. Whilst the rural nature of the region presented challenges it also presented good conditions for innovation to thrive. The Chair highlighted that "older people" rather than "elderly" was the preferred term to refer to people as they grew older. The Chair further highlighted the importance of more long-term contracts for care providers such as physios, and that providing care directly in communities had huge potential cost and patient satisfaction benefits. It was highlighted

that the message to the general public on Time for Change needed to be managed effectively to ensure that rumours did not cause unnecessary panic. Attendees stressed that any change to services which would require people to travel out of their local area needed to be carefully considered to ensure that people were not disadvantaged. The importance of the range of services being more joined up was suggested as something that needed to be taken into account. Mr Roberts acknowledged the concerns which had expressed throughout the discussion and confirmed that there were no plans in place to close any services or facilities. The Health Service, like most of society, was facing considerable pressure on its resources and needed to ensure that it could balance its priorities and deliver for the people of the Scottish Borders. The Time for Change discussions would feed into and inform how the Service was shaped for the future. Mr Coltman undertook to share the details with community networks prior to the session.

4. **DESTINATION TWEED**

4.1 The Chair welcomed Marina Piper, the Project Manager with Destination Tweed to provide a presentation. Ms Piper explained the Destination Tweed project was focused on celebrating and sharing the nature, history and stories of the River Tweed, as well as caring for and enjoying the river in a sustainable way. The project would involve developing a source to sea trail and enhancing habitats. Over 30 partners and funders, including Scottish Borders Council, Visit Scotland, SOSE and Visit Scotland were involved. Work was ongoing to build up resources and capacity to ensure that the 5 year project could be delivered. The source to sea trail was an element which SBC had led the way. The focus was on ensuring that various existing paths and ways were linked up and joined to deliver the trail. Design principles were in place, with ramped access and self-closing gates in place of styles expected to ensure that the route was accessible. Ms Piper highlighted the various elements of the river Tweed trail which were complete, underway, or pending. The Melrose to Maxton route was expected to involve a bike route, with scoping ongoing. Work was ongoing to determine how best to tell the story of the river alongside the route, to ensure that people were engaged. Ms Piper highlighted the various projects alongside the Destination Tweed project, including the Crook Inn Bunkhouse, where there was a planned accessible room, connecting threads story telling workshops and bug life planting sessions. Tweed Watch was holding sessions in Old Melrose with Newstead Primary School students as part of health and wellbeing sessions. Uncovering the Tweed were identifying sites using LIDAR data and aerial photographs. A Community Grants scheme totalling £200k over 3 years was in development. Work on tackling invasive non-native species was ongoing. Pollinators Along the Tweed, focused on improving the number of and biodiversity of the species along the river Tweed, was expected to improve 15 sites in the current year. The overall plan involved transformational and meaningful change of the landscape in partnership with multiple partners and funders. The benefits were expected to be seen across the economy, environment and communities. The entire scheme was focused on a low carbon tourism model, with effective public transport links and active travel.

4.2 Attendees thanked Ms Piper for her presentation and encouraged her to keep up the good work. In response to a question regarding whether the potential for the Tweed corridor to be designated as a National Park, Ms Piper explained that the group would embrace the opportunity if that happened but would continue on their work if that did not turn out to be the case. Ms Piper acknowledged the potential benefits of a national park.

5. **EILDON FUNDING TABLE**

There had been circulated copies of the Eildon Funding Table 2023/24 with the agenda. Mr Coltman outlined that £13.1k of the Neighbourhood Support Fund 2023/24 pot remained if the application to be considered at the meeting was approved.

6. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND 2023/24**

There had been circulated copies of an application for £10k from Melrose Football Club. The funding applied for would be used as part of the Club's plans to refurbish the Engine Room on Gibson Park and construct an extension to provide a community hub and

changing rooms. The funding would be used to complete the RIAS stages. In its consideration the Assessment Panel had noted the significant number of community comments by the public on the planning portal in relation to the planning application and the considerable work which the Club had undertaken as part of the project. The strong community focus of the application had acknowledged, and the Panel had recommended to fund the application in full. Members unanimously approved the application in full. The Chair welcomed Mr Greg Simpson of the Club to the meeting. Mr Simpson expressed his thanks for the grant.

7. **MEETING EVALUATION VIA MENTI**

The meeting evaluation link for Menti was displayed, and the Chair encouraged attendees to share ideas for future meetings.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Community Co-ordinator, Mr Kenny Harrow, highlighted that Scottish Borders Council was undertaking a varied grass cutting trial in areas of Galashiels, Tweedbank, and Selkirk. The cutting regimes in certain areas would be changed to allow longer between cuts in specific areas to link in with the Destination Tweed project.

9. **NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP – THURSDAY 25 JANUARY 2024**

The Chair advised that the next meeting would be held via Microsoft Teams. The meetings in March and June would be held in-person.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXTERNAL
SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING
GROUP held via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 10.00am

- Present:- Councillors M. Rowley (Chair), J. Anderson, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, S Hamilton, E. Jardine, J. Pirone, E. Thornton-Nicol
- Apologies:- Councillor P. Brown, Director Infrastructure & Environment.
- In Attendance:- Contracts Manager (P. McNulty), Estimator (M. Douglas) and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden).

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 28 August 2023.

DECISION

AGREED the Minute for signature by the Chair.

2. **SBC CONTRACTS 2ND QUARTER REPORT 2023-24**

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Officer Roads, the purpose of which was to provide Members with a summary on the performance of SBc Contracts for the financial year 2023/24 up to 30 September 2023. Mark Douglas presented the report and provided a workload update. In relation to road surfacing activity, there had been 23 surface dressing patching site, 4 carriageway patching sites, 11 screed sites, 8 capital resurfacing schemes and contracts for private clients. SBc Contracts had completed the year's surface dressing programme across an area of approximately 187,040 sq.m.
- 2.2 Work had been completed on numerous Civil Engineering projects: bridgeworks, floodworks, building and footpaths. Some contracts were scheduled to extend beyond the end of 2023/24 financial year. Since April 2023 work had commenced on 81 new sites, 12 of which remained active.
- 2.3 The report contained detailed information on three projects undertaken to highlight the work and the benefit to communities. A summary of the Peebles to Eddleston Cycleway, Peebles Swimming Pool and the Hawick Active Travel Network was provided.
- 2.4 A management update was provided. The Pothole Pro had been deployed to 6 sites of the A Class network which included the entire length of the A72 and the A701 south of Blyth Bridge. To date, 885 potholes had been repaired with 4799 sq.m. of asphalt. With reference to recruitment, SBc Contracts had recently recruited four modern apprentices (three in general civil engineering and one bricklayer). The employees had embarked upon college work and on job training and continued to make good progress. Work experience had been provided for two Earlston High School pupils at Hawick ATN operations and in the design team. A site visit to the Earlston Primary School had been arranged and a Contract Manager and an Engineer facilitated a Q & A session with several 3rd and 4th year pupils in relation to operations and career opportunities at SBc Contracts.

- 2.5 The Chair welcomed the engagement of local contractors where possible, and Members expressed gratitude for the ongoing beneficial work undertaken by the department. In response to a question about the reopening of Peebles Swimming Pool and any planned review of further work required, Mr Douglas was to discuss the matter with Director Infrastructure & Environment. There followed a brief discussion during which the impact of narrow sections of the Peebles-Eddleston Cycleway was raised, particularly in relation to horse riders. Mr Douglas agreed to consult with engineers on the matter and report back. It was confirmed that SBc Contracts continued to hold regular meetings with HR partners to develop a more structured approach to recruitment of local youth and school leavers. There was a suggestion that female employees within the service be approached to act as mentors at careers events to promote roles to female school leavers. The Chair undertook to liaise with HR staff to discuss school engagement.

DECISION

NOTED the performance of SBc Contracts for the 2nd quarter of 2023/24; and

AGREED:

- (a) to the Chair to liaising with HR staff to discuss school engagement; and
(b) to Mr Douglas consulting with engineers on the matter of narrow sections of the Peebles-Eddleston Cycleway.
3. **ITEMS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**
DECISION
AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.
4. **MINUTE**
Members considered the Private Section of the Minute of the Meeting held on 28 August 2023.
5. **SBC CONTRACTS TRADING OPERATION TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**
Members considered a report by the Chief Officer – Roads.

The meeting concluded at 10.45 am

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday,
22nd November, 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), D. Begg, M. Douglas, J. Pirone, E. Small
and V. Thomson

In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Estates Surveyor (T. Hill),
Community Engagement Officers (H. Lacon, K. Harrow), M. Bruce, I. Gibson
(Peebles Youth Voice), Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

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. Item No. 16 was to be considered as part of public business.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Pirone declared an interest in respect of Item No. 6 and withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on Victoria Park Shelter. The Chair and Councillor Thomson declared an interest in respect of Item No. 20 and withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the funding application from Nomad Beat.

3. MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 11 October 2023 and the updated Action Tracker.

DECISION

AGREED the Minute for signature by the Chair and Action Tracker.

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Director Finance and Procurement, the purpose of which was to provide details of the income and expenditure for the Peebles Common Good Fund for the six months to 30 September 2023, a full year projected out-turn for 2023/24 and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2024. Chief Financial Officer Lizzie Turner presented the report. Appendix 1 showed the projected income and expenditure position for 2023/24 with a projected deficit of £82,348 for the year. Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 with a projected decrease in reserves of £262,856. Appendix 3a provided a breakdown of the property portfolio with projected rental income and projected net return for 2023/24 and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 3b provided a breakdown of the property portfolio with projected property expenditure for 2023/24 and actual property expenditure to 30 September 2023. Appendix 4 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio with projected property valuations at 31 March 2024. Appendix 5 showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 Sept 2023.

4.2 Ms Turner reported that the £82k deficit had been incurred due to works on Jedderfield Bungalow and the Old Corn Exchange. Of the £25k Common Good grants fund, £8k remained for disbursement. There followed a brief discussion on the disinvestment of funds from the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to manage the deficit. Ms

Turner agreed to provide a forecast of long-term deficit relief through disinvestment against short-term relief by balancing out across the fund.

DECISION

APPROVED the recommendations as follows:

a) Noted the actual income and expenditure for 2023/24 in Appendix 1 and the revised budget for 2023/24;

(b) Noted the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2;

(c) Noted the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4; and

(d) Noted the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5.

MEMBER

Councillor Pirone declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

Councillor Pirone had been assisting Peebles Youth Voice.

5. VICTORIA PARK: SHELTER & TOILET FACILITIES

5.1 With reference to paragraph 7 of the minute of 24 May 2023, the Chair proposed to continue the matter of Victoria Park lighting to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee. There was to be a site meeting with residents and Alex Young, Lighting Officer in due course.

5.2 There had been circulated copies of a presentation from Peebles Youth Voice, the purpose of which was to inform Members of the proposal to build a youth shelter in Victoria Park and summarise the results of the public consultation exercise. Malcom Bruce and Iain Gibson of Peebles Youth Voice were in attendance to answer Members' questions. The public consultation had received in the region of 650 responses, with site 2 the preferred option. There followed a brief discussion, during which it was confirmed that the costs of the supply and installation was to be met through grants and donations from various local groups, Small Schemes and Play Parks budgets. Kenny Harrow agreed to bring a more detailed costing exercise back to Members in early 2024. Members agreed that Common Good land be allocated to the shelter installation at site option 2. Members asked for clarity on the matter of maintenance and associated liabilities. Further discussion with local young people was to be arranged with a view to continuing their involvement and to develop their sense of ownership of the project.

5.3 On the matter of toilet facilities in Victoria Park, Members were reminded by Director Corporate Government that the Sub-Committee had delegated authority on those matters within the Scheme of Administration. Discussion on the matter was concluded.

DECISION

AGREED to the use of Common Good land in Victoria Park for the installation of a youth shelter at site 2.

6. COMMERCIAL USE OF COMMON GOOD LAND

Director Corporate Governance reported that work was ongoing with officers from Infrastructure & Environment, Estates, Event Planning and Finance to formalise the process for public asset use. A report was due to be brought before Scottish Borders Council by the end of financial year 2023/24.

DECISION

NOTED.

7. ENERGY AUDIT OF COMMON GOOD PROPERTIES

With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 24 May 2023, a response from Head of Estates, Ray Cherry outlined that an audit of Scottish Borders Council's entire estate was

in the planning stages and would take precedence over any energy audit of Common Good properties.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. PUBLIC PROFILE OF COMMON GOOD SUB-COMMITTEE

With reference to paragraph 6.4 of the Minute of 23 August 2023, The Chair reported that he had attended a meeting with members of the public to discuss the work of the Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee. Several matters were discussed and further information was to be obtained from Estates. An annual report of all Common Good Funds was standard practice; it was agreed that the Peebles annual report was to be augmented with additional information and photographs to illustrate the work of the Peebles Common Good Fund, along with an annual public meeting. There was a request for a Peebles Common Good exhibition and further discussion was to be arranged with Live Borders and interested parties. It had also been suggested that the group establish a 'Friends of Peebles Common Good' facebook page'. The public minute of the Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee meetings were to be on public display via the notice board at the Burgh Hall.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

9. CHARITABLE DEREGISTRATION OF COMMON GOOD FUNDS

There had been circulated copies of a report by Director Finance & Procurement, the purpose of which was to advise Members of the intention by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) to remove the SBC Common Good Funds, charity number SC031538, from the Scottish Charity Register (the Register). Appendix 1 top the report detailed the advance notification from OSCR.

**DECISION
NOTED the notification from OSCR to remove the SBC Common Good Funds,
charity number SC031538, from the Register.**

10. POLICE SCOTLAND RESPONSE TO FUNFAIR

There had been circulated a copy of a response from Police Scotland regarding policing of future funfairs in Peebles.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There had been circulated a copy of a request from the Tweeddale Astronomy Society for the use of Tweed Green for free, ad-hoc 'Sidewalk Astronomy' sessions in the coming weeks between 1800 and 2100 for the purpose of stargazing and the promotion of the Society and its facilities at Kailzie. Telescopes were battery operated with no trailing cables and light levels on Tweed Green were sufficient.

**DECISION
AGREED to the Tweeddale Astronomy Society holding free, ad-hoc stargazing
session on Tweed Green.**

**12. AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to
exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed
in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure
of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.**

13. MINUTE

Members considered the Private Minutes of 11 October 2023.

14. **OLD CORN EXCHANGE HALL LEASE AND ROOF REPAIRS**
Members considered a report by Estates Surveyor and a quotation for roof repairs.
15. **BRIEFING NOTE: OLD CORN EXCHANGE SHOP**
Members considered a briefing note on the lease for the Old Corn Exchange shop.
16. **BIKE PARKING – KINGSMEADOWS CAR PARK**
Members considered a briefing note and quotations on the installation of bike loops at Kingsmeadows car park.
17. **FUNDING APPLICATION**
Members considered an application for funding from Nomad Beat.
18. **JEDDERFIELD: REPLACEMENT WATER TANK**
Members considered a quotation to replace the water tank.

The next meeting of the Peebles Common Good Fund was scheduled for 28 February 2024 at 5pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.15 pm

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHIEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the
CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP
held on Wednesday, 22 November
2023 at 6.30 pm. Via Microsoft
Teams.

Present: - Councillors S. Hamilton, E. Robson, S. Scott, T. Weatherston, together with Representatives of the following Community Councils and Partner Organisations: -

John Taylor - Jedburgh Community Council
Graham Hayward – Jedburgh Community Council
Gavin Horsburgh – Kelso Community Council
Charles Strang – St Boswells, Mertoun and Community Council
Dean Weatherston - Chair of Cheviot Assessment Panel
Alison Grainger – Police Scotland
Katy Jackson – SOSE
Fiona Benton – The Bridge
Susan Oliver – Headteacher, Jedburgh Campus
Yvonne O’Hara – SBHA
Annette Patterson – Newtown St Boswells

Apologies: - Councillor P. Brown
Councillor S. Mountford
Jill Lothian – Kelso High School
Louise Rawlins – CLDS Worker
Hazel Woodsell – Kelso Heritage
Carol Spalton - Crailing Nisbet and Eckford Community Council
Clare Starla-Nicoll – Heiton & Roxburgh CC
David Watson – Ednam, Stichill and Berry Moss
Gus Russell – Kelso Community Council
Pam Rigby – Youth Engagement Officer
Patricia Watt – Sprouston Community Council
Carol Tugman – Social Security Scotland
Colin Taylor - Kelso North and Ednam Parish
J. Steele - Jedburgh Community Trust
Andrew Findlay - Interest Link Borders

In attendance: - Community Co-ordinator – Gillian Jardine, Community Engagement Officer – Emma Husband, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

1.0 VICE CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Weatherston - Vice Chair, chaired the meeting.

DECISION NOTED.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair 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.

2.0 **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which included Elected Members, Community Council representatives, Community Organisations and guests attending within the meeting and outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

3.0 **FEEDBACK FROM THE MEETING ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023**

- 3.1 At the last Area Partnership, there was a question raised about the return of traffic wardens to the Kelso area. Traffic wardens were previously employed by Police Scotland who had the enforcement powers in the Scottish Borders. It would be a decision for Police Scotland if they reinstated traffic wardens. Council officers do not have any enforcement powers for on- street parking as there is not decriminalised parking in the Scottish Borders. Police officers can, and do, issue parking tickets and the CAT team are asked to enforce parking at the request of Members in areas causing problems. Parking in Kelso does come up and the Police have asked for some double yellow line to be repainted to assist with this. If this is something the Community feel strongly about then it would be encouraged to raise the matter with elected members and include it within the place making process. Perhaps there are some space or traffic management schemes that could be implemented. Dumfries and Galloway were undertaking a consultation on parking enforcement, and worth having a look.

SECTION 1: SERVICE & PARTNER UPDATE AND CONSULTATIONS

4.0 **TIME FOR CHANGE**

The Chair welcomed John McLaren - Employee Director; Andrew Carter – Director of HR and Carol Graham from NHS Borders to the meeting to discuss a Time for Change, a wide ranging conversation with communities to share the challenges they were facing with workforce and finance, and the impact pressures were having on the services they provided. It was explained that the scale of the challenges faced in planning and delivering health services to meet need were unprecedented and a balance had to be found between the delivery of safe, quality care within the financial and human resources available to the NHS. There were significant workforce challenges for NHS Borders, with a smaller working age population (45% vs 65% nationally) operating across a large rural area and national shortages of specialist workforce in many areas. The financial deficit had continued to increase over the past few years due to growth in demand and changes in the cost of healthcare and an overspend of £26 million by March 2024 was projected. Under the four suggested discussion headings: Services In the Community; Community Bed Based Services; Acute Hospital Services; and Mental Health Services there had been an audit of provision, public feedback, achievements and areas of focus. The planned public conversations were to be a means to discuss further how to start doing things differently.

- 4.1 The review would feed into a wider national discussion on the future of NHS services and would overlap with the Lothians and South of Scotland. In relation to pandemic planning, it was acknowledged that there was currently not enough capacity in the system and there were lessons to be learned from the outcome of the Covid-19 inquiry. The need for the consultation process to be accessible for all was highlighted and it was envisaged that this 3-year plan was to inform much longer-term plans into the future and a Borders specific plan was needed.

DECISION NOTED.

5.0 **POLICE REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Alison Grainger to the meeting to give an update on policing in the Cheviot Area. Sergeant Grainger advised that resources remained unchanged from the previous update. She reported that speed checks had been carried out in Roxburgh, Ancrum, Crailing and Heiton and the pop-up Bob had also been

deployed at Crailing and Heiton. Parking continued to be an issue and parking tickets were being issued. The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit were working with the police in terms of Youth patrols and detecting and reducing vandalism within the area. In terms of people congregating in Jedburgh Square on Court days, Police were out patrolling and those Officers attending Court to give evidence were also patrolling the area. A shop watch network had been established in Kelso to try and alleviate thefts from small business, which appeared to be on the increase. In terms of Crime Prevention, White Ribbons would be worn between 25 November and 10 December to highlight the Violence Against Women Campaign. Double yellow lines had been requested for Bridge Street to try and reduce parking on side of road.

DECISION NOTED.

6.0 RELATIONAL MENTORING SERVICE: THE WISE GROUP

The Chairman welcomed Katy Leigh from The Wise Group. Katy explained that The Wise Group was a leading social enterprise working to lift people out of poverty, and been in existence for over 40 years, although it was new to the Borders. As an enterprise, they build bridges to opportunity for the most vulnerable in society, through mentoring support, employment, skills, and energy advice. Customers were supported everyday into jobs, to enable people out of fuel poverty, and help people coming out of prison to build a better future. The work was varied, and underlying everything was a passion and commitment for social justice and a fairer society for all. In the past year demand for fuel vouchers at HES in SC&C had more than doubled to 2,860, which illustrated the astounding rate at which the COL crisis had increased poverty in communities. These numbers were purely from Home Energy Scotland and only for Strathclyde and Central belt and did not take into account the other organisations who could make applications to the FBF.

Renfrewshire 900
Glasgow City 827
North Lanarkshire 589
South Lanarkshire 322
Inverclyde 222

- 6.1 Families affected by fuel poverty were typically affected by other forms of poverty too. In terms of fuel poverty in Central Scotland, 87% of people were only able to access one voucher and, in many cases, people returned asking for more support. 65 requests for a voucher were denied in the second half of the last financial year due to the household reaching the limit for fuel voucher support, which was during the awful winter last year. We need to step in when someone requires quick help through a fuel voucher and address the other factors contributing to their circumstances, the cycle could be interrupted and lift this household out of poverty. The maximum number of vouchers is three for most customers trying to access help through fuel vouchers and having worked with HES the past few years, it is evident the difference the advice and support makes to the families who are supported, however many of the customers needed support for other factors contributing to their struggles which were outwith the role of energy advisor.
- 6.2 The Relational Mentoring Service was fully funded by the Scottish Government and covered 6 key areas in Scotland. The service would be based on a wide range of face to face holistic approaches which would be tailored to the needs, not only for the individual but for the whole family unit. The relational mentors would work in Communities providing support to the most vulnerable households where fuel insecurity funding eligibility applied. The Wise Group's aim was to have £100 mil of social value going back into communities through our relational mentoring services. **Progression:** A belief between mentor and mentee that positive change was possible and could be facilitated through mentoring. This does not mean that progression was on a linear, upward trajectory, but can be in constant flux. **Communication:** Clear communication in both directions facilitates mentoring and effective communication channels maintained.

Relationship-based: Mentoring between one person, or group of people, and another person or group of people. Relational mentoring, which was voluntary for the customer was a face to face two way relationship based either in the family home or in a setting suitable and comfortable for the customer. The presentation concluded with an explanation of the eligibility criteria and referral process, for more information contact katy_leigh@thewisegroup.co.uk

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7.0 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker for SBC regularly attended the Area Partnership meetings but was unable to attend and Emma Husband, Community Engagement Officer gave the update.

7.1 Three young people aged between 11 and 22 from the Cheviot Area had signed up to be part of the coproduction team that would research and write the SBC and Partners Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy. Sessions with the 20 young people from across the Borders would start on Tuesday the 5th of December and it was hoped that the strategy would be launched no later than summer 2024.

7.2 Youth engagement with the Cheviot Funding Assessment Panel had fluctuated and recruitment for a new person to join Alex on the board was underway, after Grace had to step down. It was hoped that the replacement would be in place by the January Assessment Panel meeting.

7.3 It was reported that problems had been encountered with the Scottish Youth Parliament elections. Due to a malfunction on the Young Scot voting platform, the voting process had to be stopped. This was due to the platform not recognising mobile devices (i.e. not counting the votes). It had been decided that all previous votes would be cancelled, and the process would be started from scratch, as this was seen as the only fairest option available. Discussions are underway to get this back up and running for December and failing that January 2024. The problem only applied to the Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire constituency as the other was uncontested. There were three candidates for the election, one of whom was from Cheviot area. It was hoped that the successful candidates would attend the area partnership meeting in the new year.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8.0 SECTION 2: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY FUNDING

8.1 Cheviot Funding Tables 2023/24

There had been circulated copies of the Cheviot Funding for 2023/2024 which detailed the funding available together with information on the allocation of the Neighbourhood Support Fund in 2023/24. The opening balance at 1 April 2023 was £46,383. Other sources of funding included Local Festival Grant Budget totalling £16,675.00, Annual Support Grant to Community Councils totalling £10,470.00, Common Goods, SBC Enhancement Grant, SBC Welfare Grant and SBC Small Schemes totalled £192,112.69. Following the previous Cheviot Area Partnership Meeting, all funding recommendations were supported totalling £40,771.30 leaving a balance of £19,057.06 and applications assessed and awaiting decision totalled £5,019.18.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

Neighbourhood Support Fund

8.2 It was noted that, since the last meeting of the Panel, the two young people, R. Flint and E. Chalmers had decided to step down from the panel due to other commitments and they

were thanked for their input during the time they were on panel. Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Officer was working with another two young people interested in joining the panel. Mr Harry Tomczyk had joined the panel since the last meeting. There had been 3 applications received for the Cheviot Neighbourhood Support Fund totalling 5,019.18. There had been circulated copies of a report which provided a brief description of each application received and a recommendation on the sum to be awarded to each project. As previously reported, projects with a mean score of 80+ in terms of their ability to deliver, clear evidence of need, potential impact, use of public money, innovation and sustainability and therefore would be recommended for approval and those were detailed below:-

8.3 Jedburgh Community Council

An application had been received from Jedburgh Community Council in the sum of £2,500 to support the costs of electrical testing, erection and dismantling of the Town Christmas lights.

8.4 Kelso Writers Club

An application had been submitted by Kelso Writers Club in the sum of £262.62 to engage local schools in a writing competition. The winning authors would have their stories published in an anthology, together, with stories from Kelso Writers.

8.5 Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association

An application had been submitted by the Pinnaclehill park Orchard Association in the sum of £2,256.56 to establish an orchard in a 600m² piece of land in Kelso. The area would include a picnic table and benches to enable community members to meet and enjoy the outside space.

8.6 It was reported that the outstanding posts had been marketed through SBC Comms and E. Husband had shared amongst contacts, as well as reaching out to local community members.

Remaining positions: -

- Member of the Public (Jedburgh & District)
- Community Councillor (Jedburgh & District)

DECISION

(a) **AGREED** that the following sums be awarded to each of those listed: -

- **Jedburgh Community Council**
- **Kelso Writers Club**
- **Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association**

(b) **NOTED**

- (i) **that approval for the Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association was subject to confirmation of the landowner’s permission; and**
- (ii) **that approval for Jedburgh Community Council was subject to confirmation that information had been received from Neighbourhood Services.**

(iii) **The timetable for future meetings as follows: -**

Application Deadline	Assessment Panel	Area Partnership
13 December 2023	10 January 2024	31 January 2024
14 February 2024	06 March 2024	27 March 2024

SECTION 3: PLACE MAKING

- 9.0 The Community Engagement Officer explained that within Cheviot, there were 10 communities interested in Place Making, and increase of one since the last meeting. There was no major update since the last meeting, other than communities starting to request support from the consultancy framework to support their capacities.

Place Making Consultancy Framework:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b8af497ec5d0471597354de63ff05fe4>

- 9.1 The first engagement event for the Jedburgh Town Team was scheduled for Tuesday, 28th November 2023, where there would be open session in the Jedburgh Abbey from 11-3pm and again from 5-7pm. This was an opportunity for the community to have their say on what's important within Jedburgh and also to hear what the Town Team were doing and what the plans were for going forward.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

SECTION 4: Other

10.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The Chairman advised that additional information was included in the agenda pack which contained information on current consultations and links to useful information.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11.0 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future Meetings of the Cheviot Area Partnership would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday, 27 March 2024

The next meeting would be held on **Wednesday, 31 January 2024 at 6.30 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams.

12.0 MEETING EVALUATION

Ms Jardine reminded those present about the meeting evaluation form which could be accessed via the link <https://forms.office.com/r/HHH1dEcmz3>. She added that feedback about the Area Partnership meetings was really helpful and always appreciated.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXTERNAL
SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING
GROUP held via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at 10:00 am

- Present:- Councillors M. Rowley (Chair), J. Anderson, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, E. Jardine, S. Hamilton and E. Thornton-Nicol
- Apologies:- Councillors P. Brown and J. Pirone, N. Byers
- In Attendance:- Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships, J. Wordsworth-Goodram (CGI), and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 29 August 2023.

DECISION

AGREED the Minute of the Meeting

2. **CGI CONTRACT PERFORMANCE**

- 2.1 There had been circulated a report by Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships and associated slide deck, the purpose of which was to provide Elected Members with key information with respect to the CGI contract for the second quarter to the end of September 2023: the governance of the contract; updated information on the transformation programme; key performance information with respect to the service delivery of the contract and a note of key issues associated with contract management, including change requests signed in the quarter and Impact Assessment status.
- 2.2 John Wordsworth-Goodram presented the slide deck. Several actions from the previous meeting had been completed: updates to project status now included baseline date alongside current end date and a blue status now identified projects fully accepted into service; iPad Direct Lease Agreement was to be shared with Members today; Digital Security Board Terms of Reference to be shared with Members today; and wider promotion of Digital Skills Support via SBScene. It was reported that 11 tickets had been raised in relation to Microsoft365. The Community sponsorship application form and process had been shared with Members and several submissions had been received. All governance meetings with partners had been held for quarter 3.
- 2.3 A summary of Transformation Status highlights was provided: The Pathfinder Programme in Social Work was in its final stage and engagement with Protective Services Department was ongoing; completion of Inspire iPad Refresh project; increased CGI resource to accelerate proposal output; completion of joint marketing and communication initiatives; and next phases of Digital Customer Access had commenced and was to deliver an upgrade of the SBC website capability, integration and software by January 2024. In relation to the Agreed Transformation Priorities, six were in delivery, two had been completed, three were in solution development and the Corporate Device Refresh was to begin in January 2024. With reference to the Unified Comms Telephony to Teams, it was agreed that advice be provided to all staff to use the new version of Teams platform. It was confirmed that the use of Teams externally required a business review. A summary

of other Key Projects was provided with associated RAG status as follows: green – 8; amber – 5; red – 0; blue – 1 and 1 on hold.

- 2.4 A summary of service quarter highlights was provided and included among others: MS Office to 365 rollout completed by November; Amelia chatbot testing completed; screen pop-up capture for end users to confirm C MDB assets rolled out; Inspire Churn - 1100 shared iPads completed. There had been three minor KPI missed targets in relation to Impact Assessment SLA for which improvement activities were in place. There had been 7 updates across several systems in the last quarter and all Application Management KPIs had been met during the same period.
- 2.5 A summary of recent community benefits was provided along with a list of current club/community group sponsorships which contained several more since the last meeting as Members had circulated the application process to their community groups. A tree planting day was to be held in January 2024 that was to see 300 trees planted in the area around the Borders General Hospital.
- 2.6 Recruitment levels had improved slightly since the last meeting, with Tweedbank Office now fully operational with 69 Borders based members and 107 members engaged in Borders activity. A recruitment day was planned at the CGI premises, Tweedbank for 22 January 2024 in conjunction with Scottish Borders Council and partners, where there was to be an opportunity for the public to find out about career opportunities and potentially have an interview that day for roles across all disciplines and all CGI business units. Councillor Anderson, Employability Champion requested involvement to support where possible and there was a suggestion that transport be provided to allow school leavers to attend. It was reported that there were currently 70 vacancies across the CGI business units in roles that could be undertaken from the Scottish Borders. Details of these vacancies were to be circulated to Members. There was an agreement to invite CGI Head of Recruitment to the next meeting on 20 February 2024 to discuss concerns around levels of local recruitment.

DECISION

NOTED:

- (a) the report and the associated slide deck; and,
- (b) the information provided within the report and the associated slide deck that detailed the performance of CGI contract to the end of Q2 2023; and

AGREED:

- (a) to CGI Head of Recruitment to be invited to the meeting of 20 February 2023; and
- (b) to information on CGI job vacancies to be circulated to Members.

3. ITEMS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act

4. MINUTE

Members considered the Private Section of the Minute of the Meeting held on 29 August 2023.

5. CGI CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

Members considered a report by Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships and noted its recommendations.

The meeting concluded at 11:35 am

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Blended Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in Committee Rooms 2 and 3 Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 5th December 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors E. Jardine (Chairman), L. Douglas, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, J. Linehan, S. Mountford D. Parker, J. Pirone E. Robson, M. Rowley, F. Sinclair, R. Tatler, and T. Weatherston.

Also Present:- Councillors W. McAteer

Apologies:- Councillors C. Cochrane and E. Thornton-Nicol,

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Director – Corporate Governance, Director – Education and Lifelong Learning, Director- Infrastructure and Environment, Director - Resilient Communities, Director - Finance and Procurement, Democratic Services Team Leader (D. Hall).

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair 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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS

Present: Ms Kathleen Mason (Federation of Small Businesses)

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Resilient Communities which provided elected members with an update on key areas of economic development delivery in the Scottish Borders. The report identified the major policies and strategies that were driving regional economic development and detailed key pieces of work. The Local Employability Partnership (LEP) was established in September 2021 to help drive the employability agenda and to foster a strong collaborative approach to delivery. One of the key areas of work was the delivery of the No One Left Behind (NOLB) funding programme which had a greater focus in 2023/24 on Child Poverty. At the end of the first half of 2023/24 the Council's Employability Service had a working caseload of 419 clients across the region with a range of barriers to employment. Scottish Borders Council and South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) agreed to form a strategic partnership for delivery of the Business Gateway service in November 2020, with the transfer of services completed in April 2021. The report provided an update on delivery through the second quarter of the current financial year and indicated strong enquiry numbers and confirmed a continued general increase in Business Gateway activities. All of the key partners in the South of Scotland, including Scottish Borders Council were collaborating on the development of a single Responsible Tourism Strategy for the South of Scotland. The development of the new strategy was progressing well following consultation events led by the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA) over the summer, and it was proposed to launch the strategy at the SSDA Tourism Conference on 20 March 2024. Following assessment of the latest round of funding applications in November, twelve projects in the Scottish Borders had been awarded approximately £1.45m of UK Government Shared Prosperity (SPF) Funding, and the Scottish Government Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme was fully committed after the approval of a series of successful applications by the Local Action Group. As part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, the Business Infrastructure Programme (Scotland) was a £13.7m capital programme for the South of Scotland, for building industrial units and the servicing of land at five sites across

the South of Scotland, including £3m of Borderlands funding for the Scottish Borders and a contribution of £632k from Scottish Borders Council for investment in Coldstream and Hawick in the Scottish Borders. Following recent business case approval by the Scottish and UK Governments and the Borderlands Partnership Board, the Coldstream project had started and site work would commence early next year. The Chief Officer – Economic Development, Ms Sam Smith, presented the report and highlighted that reference in the report to the first half of the year, should refer to throughout 2022/23.

- 2.2 The Chairman welcomed Ms Lesley Forsyth and Ms Tracey Graham of SOSE to the meeting to provide an update on the work that had been undertaken on the Scotland Starts Here project. Ms Forsyth explained that work to develop a website to act as a place to tell the story of the South of Scotland and to attract National and International investment. The website had been designed to be visually engaging, with embedded videos amongst other features. Maps, outlining the location of the region's key infrastructure, would also be available on the site. The key economic sectors of the area, including case studies, news and resources would also be present. Ms Smith highlighted that the website had the potential to provide a shop window for the region, and that work was ongoing to ensure that appropriate signposting to Council departments was in place. In response to a question regarding information on the workforce of the area, it was confirmed that information on the available labour force would be included on the site. The Director – Resilient Communities confirmed that a report evaluating the outcomes of shared prosperity investments would be presented in due course. In response to a question regarding collaborative work with national partners, Ms Graham confirmed that discussions had been held with the Department for Trade and Industry and Scottish Development International. The importance of providing effective transport infrastructure to the region was highlighted. The Chairman thanked attendees for their presentation and highlighted that 6 Thistle Awards had been won by businesses from the area.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **note the information that was provided regarding the current economic development landscape affecting the Scottish Borders; and**
 - (b) **note where future delivery updates would be reported back to Executive.**
3. **CYCLING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IMPACT REPORT**

The Chairman invited Mr Jim Law of Jim Law Research Associated Ltd to present an Economic and Social Impact Evaluation of the World Cycling Championships events which had taken place between Sunday 6 August 2023 and Saturday 12 August 2023 in Glentress Forest. 483 competitors from 61 countries had taken part in the mountain bike cross country, whilst 164 competitors from 37 countries had taken part in the mountain bike marathon. 360 volunteers had assisted at the event. 23,493 spectators were estimated to have attended across all the days, with the number of unique spectators estimated to be 11,082, with 4,339 event specific visitors to the region. It was estimated that there had been 3,410 commercially staying visitors who had come to the region specifically to attend the event. Mr Law explained that they had been commissioned by SBC to conduct the study at Glentress, with face-to-face primary research conducted on site. From all of the sources of information gathered it was estimated that the direct economic impact of the event was £6,039,308. £3,379,277 was generated in the accommodation sector, from 18,273 bed nights. A further £2.1m was spent by athletes/teams on food, drink and other items. £600k was spent by organisers with contractors based in the Scottish Borders. The breakdown of the spend by teams made up 59% of the economic impact, with 31% by spectators. The feedback from local residents and visitors had been extremely positive. 99% of all spectators agreeing that the region was friendly, whilst 98% of spectators thought that the Scottish Borders had beautiful countryside. A satisfaction rate of 100% was reported by attendees. Mr Law provided an overview of the viewing figures, highlighted that there was a cumulative

broadcast audience of 43.6 million views. Engagement with Scottish Borders Council event specific media included 426,569 Facebook impressions and 83,894 Twitter impressions. Members thanked Mr Law for his presentation, and expressed their gratitude to Jane Warcup and Cameron Balfour of SBC's events team for their outstanding work organising the event and ensuring that it went as planned. In response to a question regarding visitors experiencing difficulties finding hotel rooms in Peebles, Mr Law outlined that whilst he was aware of anecdotal reports of problems, no issues had been formally recorded. The Chief Officer – Economic Development undertook to explore with SBC's Communications team further promotion of the event and the positive feedback that had been received.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

4. PLACE MAKING UPDATE

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Resilient Communities which provided an update on progress with Place Making, including an update on funding allocated and the planning process in relation to the development of Local Place Plans, including the four Borderlands priority towns. Place making continued to represent a significant opportunity for communities across the Borders to unlock external funding opportunities and shaping and informing the planning and delivery of critical public services. It was increasingly being built into legislation (the Planning Scotland, Joint Working (Scotland), and Community Empowerment Acts). It would impact on and transform the way both Council and Community Planning Partners worked together with communities to understand, support and respond to local needs and ambitions. Continuing to follow the inclusive approach agreed with Area Partnerships to open up place making opportunities to all communities, over 50 places had noted an interest in developing community-led plans and their progress was supported through the place making officers within Community Engagement, Planning and Transformation teams. Over the coming year, the main focus of place making activity would be around four main areas of work: a) supporting the plans of Borderlands communities - Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick and Jedburgh - through the approval process to develop Borderlands Town Investment Plans; b) continuing to support other participating communities to progress their plans and ambitions; c) ensuring that funds such as the Shared Prosperity Funds were used to best effect in supporting communities; d) ensuring that place making was seen as “the way things get done” – informing service and community planning, the way that projects were identified and developed and the key to accessing external funding – all built on community needs, aspirations and priorities. Members welcomed the report and highlighted that Place Making had been well received by communities across the region. The Director – Resilient Communities explained that once work to update the Scottish Borders Council website had been completed there would be an opportunity to share case studies and other key information and documents online. It was agreed that a briefing on the support available for communities involved in Place Making for Elected Members would be held.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to note the progress made with place making activity across the Scottish Borders; and**
- (b) that the continued focus for delivery in the coming year was on the four Borderlands towns as outlined in the report.**

5. STRANRAER PLACE PLAN

The Director – Resilient Communities introduced Mr Stuart McMillan of Dumfries and Galloway Council and Ms Barbera Chalmers, an independent consultant who had led work alongside Stranraer Development Trust to develop the Place Plan for Stranraer. Mr

McMillan explained that Dumfries and Galloway were in a similar position to the Scottish Borders, with 5 Borderlands towns. Each of the towns had unique challenges and had developed their own Place Plans. Support for developing the Plans had been provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council and from South of Scotland Enterprise. Ms Chalmers explained that the development of the plan had involved considerable engagement, involving different stakeholders and local people. A range of events had been held, with a total of 2849 engagements. Five key strands, including quality of life; work and opportunity; play and creativity; environment and climate; and pride and citizenship, had emerged from those sessions, with six priorities identified within those strands. Those elements had formed the basis of the Place Plan, which had been subject to a month-long consultation. 600 responses had been received, with the public able to vote via Citizen Space on which elements they thought were the most important. Members thanked Ms Chalmers for her presentation and insight into work on Place Plans. In response to a request that the presentation be shared at Area Partnership meetings, Ms Chalmers indicated that she was happy to share the presentation as part of a short film. Officers undertook to ensure that the video recording of the presentation could be shared.

OTHER BUSINESS

6. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 November 2023.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

3. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S QUARTER 2 2023/24 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting held on 12 September 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – People, Performance and Change which presented a summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 2 2023/24 performance information. The information contained within the report would be made available on the SBC website: www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance. The Director presented the report and highlighted that of the 18 milestones reported in the quarter, 9 had been achieved as planned. One was rescheduled to a future quarter, and there were 8 milestones which had been partly completed. Of the 90 indicators presented, 68 were in a good position. 13 were highlighted as areas of focus for improvement. There was a delay in receiving information for 4 of the indicators. The Power Bi dashboard had been developed and allowed the public to view data on any of the performance indicators that they wished to see. The Community Action Team had been operating at full strength since 1 June 2023. There had been an upturn in statistics, particular for high visibility foot patrols and mobile patrol hours. In response to a question regarding the increase in time taken to process new housing benefits claims, the Director – Resilient Communities explained that there had been a considerable number of vacancies in the team, which combined with a spike in the number of staff on annual leave had led to performance levels dipping. Performance had returned to expected levels, however an analysis to fully understand the issue was ongoing. Regarding capacity to deal with the increasing volume of complaints being received, Ms Craig explained that complaints were dealt with by front line staff and that most complaints could be dealt with at that stage. Digital transformation efforts were expected to enable the Council to continue to effectively manage its complaints as the volume increased. In response to a question regarding the system in place for the closure of complaints, Mrs Craig highlighted that a report concerning the complaints system had been presented to the Committee at its meeting on 14 November 2023, and that a relatively small number of people reported being unsatisfied following the closure of their complaint. The Chief Executive outlined that a review of all outstanding complaints had been undertaken which had indicated that a number of complaints which were thought to have been closed had in fact been left outstanding in the system. Such instances had made a negative impact upon the overall

statistics. Training for complaint handlers was planned to resolve such issues. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that the dashboard was user friendly, easily accessible, and requested that context could be provided alongside the statistical information where possible. It was agreed that a workshop session on the complaints system be held with elected members.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) note the Quarter 2 2023/24 Council Plan Key Milestones and Performance Indicators Report contained in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (b) note the quarter 2 2023/24 Community Action Team Performance Report contained in Appendix 2 to the report.**

8. SECOND HOMES COUNCIL TAX AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENT BUDGET PROPOSALS

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Infrastructure and Environment which sought approval of an allocation of £961k in financial commitment from the Council’s Second Homes Council Tax Affordable Housing Investment Budget to support the delivery of the identified affordable housing project at Upper Langlee and an additional £12k to support community led affordable housing opportunities across the Borders. As first reported in SHIP 2019-2024, the Council had been working closely with Waverley Housing to progress the regeneration of former public sector housing in and around the Beech Avenue area in Upper Langlee. That was a high-cost regeneration project with estimated costs of over £30m, requiring a total of £961k grant assistance to progress phase 1 delivery. South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) provided long-term support to community organisations relative to the planning and delivery of community-led housing. £12k was required to support SOSCH with the early stages of project development work on behalf of communities. The sums recommended for approval supported the delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024-2029 which was approved in October 2023 and the Local Housing Strategy 2023-28. Contextual commentary on the SHIP and current challenges in delivery and the financial assistance required was also outlined. Members welcomed the report and highlighted the positive impact that the project could have on Galashiels.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) approve the use of £961k to ensure the delivery of phase 1 of the affordable housing development at Upper Langlee;**
- (b) approve the use of £12k to support South of Scotland Community Housing with community led affordable housing projects; and**
- (c) delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Procurement to liaise with Waverley Housing and agree the timing and payment arrangements for the £961k.**

5. SECOND HOMES COUNCIL TAX AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENT BUDGET PROPOSALS (PART 2)

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Infrastructure and Environment which sought approval of a reallocation of £273k from a £450k commitment from the Council’s Second Homes Council Tax Affordable Housing Investment Budget, initially earmarked for a project at Heather Mill, Selkirk to a project at Fairhurst Drive, Hawick. In May 2023, an allocation of £450k to support SBHA with the acquisition of Heather Mill, Selkirk and £512k to ensure the delivery of affordable homes at Fairhurst Drive and Leishman Place, Burnfoot, Hawick had been agreed. Due to significant change

in the costs associated with the delivery of the homes at Burnfoot in Hawick there was a substantial funding deficit of £374k. A Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) application had been submitted to the Scottish Government which would help to fund the deficit at Burnfoot but the outcome of the application to Scottish Government would not be announced until the end of January 2024. Delaying the site start until after the outcome of the VDLF decision could result in a potentially greater project deficit due to continued construction price inflation and it would also delay the project delivery times detailed in the SHIP 2024-2029. As a result, that added further risks related to maximising the Affordable Housing Supply Programme grant funding allocated to the Borders in the current financial year. In response to a question regarding the potential impact of the project being unsuccessful in its VDLF application, the Principal Housing Officer, Ms Donna Bogdanovic, explained that the funding pot which had been allocated to Heather Mill, Selkirk would be reduced to £177k. The Chief Executive highlighted that the second homes council tax budget was replenished by £800k per year. In response to a question regarding the pipeline of schemes, Ms Bogdanovic explained that projects were usually prioritised based on their deliverability and in line with the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) approve the reallocation of £273k of the £450k approved to support Heather Mill, Selkirk to the project at Fairhurst Drive, Burnfoot, Hawick;**
- (b) note that initially this was an underwriting position. If the VDLF application was successful the reallocation of funds would not be required, but if the VDLF application was not successful the reallocation would be required to ensure the project is able to progress; and**
- (c) delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Procurement to liaise with SBHA and agree the timing and payment arrangements for the £273k reallocation should the outcome of the VDLF application not be favourable.**

10. KALEMOUTH SUSPENSION BRIDGE

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Infrastructure and Environment which provided an update on the status of Kalemouth Suspension Bridge. The report proposed that further detailed design work was undertaken and that external grant funding be sought to allow essential repair works to be undertaken on the timber elements of the bridge. The Bridge was a Category ‘A’ Listed structure which carried the unclassified D101/4 public road over the river Teviot. It was an example of a historic wrought iron chain-bar suspension bridge with timber deck. The bridge was closed to vehicular traffic in August 2020 when substantial decay was discovered in some of the main timber deck elements. Prior to its closure the bridge had a 3T weight restriction which allowed single file traffic to cross the river between the A698 and the small settlement of Ormiston Mains which consisted of around 12 properties. Various investigations and detailed assessment work had since been carried out and this had found that the main wrought iron suspension structure of the bridge was unable to demonstrate sufficient strength to safely carry 3T vehicles or sufficient strength to carry full pedestrian crowd loading. Passage had therefore been further restricted to a maximum of 10 people at any one time. Due to the very high costs that would be associated with strengthening a Category ‘A’ listed wrought iron suspension bridge and the potential for adverse impacts on the bridges special architectural and historic nature it was proposed to progress a scheme to only replace and renew the timber elements on the bridge. Those elements had reached the end of their serviceable life and replacing them would safeguard the bridge into the future and ensure it could remain in use for pedestrians and cyclists. Costs associated with replacing all timber elements on the bridge were estimated to be around £1M and as such a proportion of external grant funding was being sought to allow these works to go ahead. Members acknowledge local

frustration with the condition of the bridge and recognised that the report represented the best outcome based on the financial situation.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the updated position regarding Kalemouth Suspension Bridge;**
- (b) the proposed way forward of developing a project to replace all timber elements on the bridge in 2025/26, subject to successful external grant funding applications; and**
- (c) that local Elected Members be provided progress reports on a 6-month basis.**

11. OUT OF AREA PLACEMENTS

11.1 The Chairman welcomed the Resources Group Manager – Social Work, Mr Gareth Stott to the meeting to provide a presentation on the topic of Out of Area Placements. Mr Stott explained that due to issues with recruitment and retention there had been a net decrease in the number of foster carers in the Scottish Borders. The trend has also been seen nationally. That decrease had contributed to pressure on the looked after children sector. The cost of external placements had also increased, whilst the needs of children, young people and parents were more complex. A Senior Officer Panel at the Council had been convened to explore alternative options to external placements where appropriate. A range of actions included building options for managing complex needs, developing community-based family support, and reviewing recruitment of foster carers were being explored. Mr Stott presented the number of cases involved and highlighted that the number of placements in 2023/24 had increased considerably compared to 2019/20. The associated costs had also increased considerably, ranging from an 75.7% increase in the costs of residential/secure placements to an 81% increase in the costs associated with complex needs. Fostering costs had remained largely stable. Mr Stott highlighted that a 1% increase in the costs of residential placements required an additional £129,287 of budget resource.

11.2 As part of the review of external placements, several emerging themes had been identified. The number of children aged under 11 years old being placed in external placements had increased dramatically over the preceding 5 years. That often had a negative impact on education and familial ties. Whilst many of the emerging trends were not new, they had become more significant in recent years. The Senior Officer Panel which had had been convened had also examined the decision-making process for current placements and had not identified any inappropriate placements. Meetings with SBHA for the provision of buildings for complex need provision were ongoing, and work was ongoing to scope options for an additional children's provision in the Scottish Borders. That required appropriate education and healthcare provision to be in place. Other areas of progress included the establishment of a Childrens Health and Disabilities Team and positive joint working arrangements with the Education department. Mr Stott explained that long-term solutions required multi-agency co-operation including the Council, NHS Borders, Police Scotland and the third sector. Systemic developments were required to improve the overall situation. Members thanked Mr Stott for his presentation and acknowledged that the solution to resolving the ongoing issues would be complex and multi-faceted. In response to a question regarding the factors behind the difficulty in recruiting foster carers Mr Stott explained that a consistent message was more effective at improving numbers compared to a large campaign. Regarding the potential for people to move from continuing care to foster care, Mr Stott explained that the legislation and rationale which underpinned continuing care was focused on replicating a healthy family environment. Mr Stott confirmed that there were instances where young people in continuing care moved out of the area for further education or employment but returned for visits and holidays. In response to a question regarding the evaluation of how well the

Council was performing, Mr Stott explained that the Council was good at evaluating outcomes for young people, and that work was ongoing to ensure that its delivery model continually improved.

**DECISION
NOTED**

The meeting concluded at 1.30 pm

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXTERNAL
SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING
GROUP held via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday, 5 December 2023 at 2.00 pm

- Present:- Councillors M. Rowley (Chair), M. Douglas, J. Greenwell and E. Thornton-Nicol.
- Apologies:- Councillors J. Anderson, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine and J. Pirone
- In Attendance:- Director Resilient Communities, Chief Officer Audit and Risk, E. Jackson (Live Borders) G. McMurdo (Live Borders) and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden).

CHAIR'S REMARKS

With the announcement of his retiral, The Chair thanked Mr Ewan Jackson for his 20 years of stewardship of Borders Sport and Leisure Trust and latterly Live Borders. Members expressed gratitude for his work in preparing for the meetings of this Committee and the Joint Steering Group and wished him well for the future.

1. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 5 September 2023.

DECISION

AGREED the Minute for signature by the Chair.

2. LIVE BORDERS CONTRACT PERFORMANCE: QUARTER 2 2023/24

- 2.1 There had been circulated a report by Jenni Craig, Director Resilient Communities, the purpose of which was to provide Members with performance information regarding the Live Borders partnership agreement for Quarter 2 2023/24. The report at Appendix 1 provided Members with performance information on the delivery of the commissioned sport, physical activity and cultural services. Live Borders continued to face challenges including lower than anticipated participation levels due to the cost of living crisis and a protracted recovery from the pandemic; inflation and energy costs; and continuing changes to the ways in which some services were consumed. In March 2023 Scottish Borders Council approved a joint strategic review with the aim of strengthening the partnership and service delivery arrangements to build a long-term sustainable offering for communities and service users. Key outputs from the joint strategic review were considered at the November meeting of Scottish Borders Council and a 12-month joint transformational change programme was approved to implement the consolidated set of recommendations, review existing governance arrangements, and create a new Service Provision Agreement and a new Performance Management Framework.
- 2.2 Ewan Jackson presented the report at Appendix 1 which detailed the service update for quarter 2 2023/24. Regarding Sports Facilities, Teviotdale Leisure Centre had closed on 7 September due to a boiler failure which was then deemed beyond economic repair. A temporary containerised boiler was installed and the Centre fully reopened on 23 September 2023. Kelso Leisure Centre had closed for 10 days due to boiler flue issues and reopened on 2 October 2023 following remedial works. Notwithstanding, participation figures across all sports for quarter 2 were 231,587 which had surpassed the target of 229,083. With reference to paragraph 2.2 of the Minute of 5 September 2023, work

continued at Eyemouth Leisure Centre to install a new energy efficient air handling unit, with a scheduled reopening of early February 2024. Active memberships were at 85% of quarter 2 target where marketing had successfully generated new members, however work was ongoing to retain members beyond the short-term. Membership of Learn2 (swimming) was also down at 74% of quarter 2 target. Immediate measures to address recommendations in the joint review were to be taken forward as follows: an additional eight swim teachers to be trained; junior membership launched which provided 12-17 year-olds with unlimited swim and gym usage for £9 per month (60 youth members to date); and a designated management lead for Sales & Retention. Regarding the Active Communities, quarter 2 had seen strong performance due to the rollout of the Summer Activity Programme with 2,559 participations covering 22 camps across the 9 high school cluster areas. 52% of places were accessed free of charge by targeted low-income families, supported by the SBC Cost of Living Crisis Fund and the CYPFP. Older adult participation increased with 192 health referrals against a target of 150 for the quarter. Library visits, in-person and digital, had increased with 1,162 unique digital users of Borrowbox and 345 unique users of Pressreader in September. A marketing campaign piloted a discounted swim at Peebles Pool (£2.50) for Peebles Library members. Library events continued to attract attendees of all ages online and in-person. Galashiels Library had extended its opening hours to include Saturday mornings and later on Monday evenings, while challenges around staff recruitment had delayed the opening of Hawick Library on Saturday mornings. Regarding Museums and Galleries, though visitor numbers were below target, recorded donations to the end of October 2023 were £8k higher than the calendar year 2022 at £68.5k. With reference to paragraph 2.2 of the Minute of 5 September 2023, it was reported that approximately 40,000 bookings had been made via the Live Borders app (excluding Tri-Fitness). A redesigned Live Borders website had gone live on 1 November 2023 with the aim to be more user friendly and mobile compatible. December and New Year sales campaigns were currently in development. Regarding the Great Tapestry of Scotland, continued media coverage highlighted the 5 star attraction to a wider audience. To maximise footfall and income a short life Focus Group had been established, the work of which was to progress alongside the transformational change programme. With reference to paragraph 2.6 of the Minute of 5 September 2023, it was reported that Tri-Fitness Gym had won the 2023 UK Active 'Best Regional Club/Centre of the Year' for Scotland award. A long-term rental had been secured for its consultation room, with a physiotherapist to run clinics every Saturday and the potential to add a second physiotherapist for weekday and evening appointments.

- 2.3 With reference to the Minute of 5 September 2023, a comparison of swimming pool opening hours for 2019/20 and 2022/23 was provided. 2022/23 had seen a combined total of 302.5 hours per week against 299.1 hours per week in 2019/20. A request for historical swimming pool footfall data split by wet and dry participation was to follow at the next meeting. It was confirmed that all sites operated by Live Borders, apart from Peebles Pool, offered wet and dry activities. Energy use data for both electricity and gas for 2022/23 was provided as requested. The Joint Review had recommended SBC-led actions to commission condition and structural surveys and energy audits of all Council owned buildings, leisure centres and pools managed and operated by Live Borders. A data table was shared with Members which detailed visitor figures by venue/activity for quarters 1 and 2, with a total of 240,729 visits recorded so far.
- 2.4 A summary of the Quarter 2 2023/24 KSI performance was provided with associated RAG status. KSI 2,3, 13,15, 22, 23 and 25 were coded red and KSI 9 was coded as amber. With reference to paragraph 2.6 of the minute of 5 September 2023, the RAG status at quarter 1 was provided alongside that of quarter 2. The KSI performance graphs and tables for Q2 2023/24 were provided for those KSIs that were measured quarterly.
- 2.5 Appendix 2 provided a summary of the 2023 UCI World Cycling Championship which saw events at Glentress Forest mountain biking cross country event and the Tweed Valley marathon event. Local competitors had been supported by initiatives such as Live Borders Sports Academy and Advanced Order Development Squad, ClubSport Borders

and the Athlete Support Programme. Several events and skills development schools had been facilitated by Live Borders and involved national and local partners such as Peebles Cycling Club and Borders Additional Needs Group and Scottish Cycling among others.

- 2.6 Members welcomed the report and there followed a brief discussion during which it was reported that Director Education & Lifelong Learning, as part of the Joint Review, was to consider the role that school leavers might play in staff recruitment. The role of volunteers in museums and galleries was suggested along with recruitment to paid posts. In reference to the UCI event, there had been only one negative comment around the performance skill level of young riders being well above the skill level offered at activities.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the Live Borders Performance Report; and**
- (b) **NOTED the ongoing joint transformational change programme; and the inclusion of a revised Service Provision Agreement and revised Performance Management Framework within the scope of the joint transformation a change programme.**

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the External Services/Providers Monitoring Group (Live Borders) was scheduled for 27 February 2024 at 2p.m.

The meeting concluded at 2.50pm

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the GALASHIELS
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE
conducted remotely by Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 7 December 2023 at 1.00 pm.

Present:- Councillors H. Steel (Chair), E. Jardine, N. Mackinnon, F. Sinclair and
Community Councillor R. Kenney.
In Attendance:- Estates Strategy Manager, Statutory Reporting and Treasury Business
Partner (K. Robertson), Solicitor (F. Rankine) and Democratic Services Team
Leader.

1. **MINUTE**

The Minute of the Meeting of the Galashiels Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 21 September 2023 had been circulated. It was agreed that references to 'Chairman' be amended to 'Chair' for future Minutes and Agendas for the Sub-Committee.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **MONITORING REPORT FOR 6 MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Director, Finance and Procurement which provided details of the income and expenditure for the Galashiels Common Good Fund for the six months to 30 September 2023, a full year projected out-turn for 2023/24, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2024. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected income and expenditure for 2023/24. That showed a projected surplus of £3,186 for the year, which was less than the previously reported surplus on 21 September 2023 as a result of an increase in the grant and contribution budget. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected balance sheet as at 31 March 2024 and showed a projected decrease in reserves of £71,489. Appendix 3a to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio and projected rental income and net return for 2023/24 and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 3b to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income and projected net return for 2023/24 and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 4 to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio detailing projected property valuations at 31 March 2024. Appendix 5 to the report showed the value of the Aegon Investment Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2023. The Statutory Reporting and Treasury Business Partner, Ms Kirsten Robertson, presented the report and highlighted that following the previous meeting, Aegon Investment had been asked to provide more details on the investments held on behalf of the Common Good. Ms Robertson confirmed that the investment was actively managed and was currently weighted towards bonds in order to provide guaranteed returns.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **note the actual income and expenditure for 2023/24 in Appendix 1 to the report and the revised budget for 2023/24;**
- (b) **note the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2 to the report;**

(c) note the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report; and

(d) note the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 to the report.

3. **CHARITABLE DE-REGISTRATION OF SBC COMMON GOOD FUNDS**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the then Acting Chief Financial Officer which had been presented to Scottish Borders Council at its meeting on 30 March 2023. At that meeting Elected Members had agreed with a notification from the Office of Scottish Charity Regulators to remove the Scottish Borders Council Common Good Funds, charity number SCO31538, from the Register and not to challenge their OSCR's decision. Members agreed to note the report.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

4. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

5. **MINUTE**

The Sub-Committee approved the private section of the Minute of the meeting held on 21 September 2023.

6. **PROPERTY**

The Sub-Committee received an update from the Estates Strategy Manager on private business relating to Common Good owned property.

The meeting concluded at 13.10 pm.