

**Please find attached the Appendix in respect Item on
the agenda for the above meeting**

6.	<p>Committee Minutes (Pages 3 - 62)</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: 75%;">Community Planning Strategic Board</td><td style="width: 20%;">16 November 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(b)</td><td>Hawick Common Good</td><td>22 November 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(c)</td><td>Chambers Institution Trust</td><td>29 November 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(d)</td><td>Scrutiny and Petitions Committee</td><td>7 December 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(e)</td><td>Pension Board</td><td>12 December 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(f)</td><td>Pension Fund</td><td>12 December 2023</td></tr> <tr><td>(g)</td><td>Pension Fund</td><td>17 January 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(h)</td><td>Chambers Institution Trust</td><td>24 January 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(i)</td><td>Eildon Area Partnership</td><td>25 January 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(j)</td><td>Cheviot Area Partnership</td><td>31 January 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(k)</td><td>Tweeddale Area Partnership</td><td>6 February 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(l)</td><td>Executive Committee</td><td>13 February 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(m)</td><td>Chambers Institution Trust</td><td>28 February 2024</td></tr> <tr><td>(n)</td><td>Peebles Common Good Fund</td><td>28 February 2024</td></tr> </table> <p>(Please see separate Supplement containing the public Committee Minutes.)</p>	(a)	Community Planning Strategic Board	16 November 2023	(b)	Hawick Common Good	22 November 2023	(c)	Chambers Institution Trust	29 November 2023	(d)	Scrutiny and Petitions Committee	7 December 2023	(e)	Pension Board	12 December 2023	(f)	Pension Fund	12 December 2023	(g)	Pension Fund	17 January 2024	(h)	Chambers Institution Trust	24 January 2024	(i)	Eildon Area Partnership	25 January 2024	(j)	Cheviot Area Partnership	31 January 2024	(k)	Tweeddale Area Partnership	6 February 2024	(l)	Executive Committee	13 February 2024	(m)	Chambers Institution Trust	28 February 2024	(n)	Peebles Common Good Fund	28 February 2024	5 mins
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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY
PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD**

Date:	16 November 2023, 2.00 pm.
Location:	Via Microsoft Teams
Attendees:	Cllr C. Cochrane (Chair), Councillors J. Greenwell, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine and E. Thornton-Nicol, Ms K. Hamilton (NHS Borders), S. Fletcher (Police Scotland), H. Sangster (Scottish Fire & Rescue), C. Easton (BCA), C. McGrath (SBCCN)
Apologies:	Prof. R. Griggs (SOSE), C. Fancie (Eildon HA)
Also in attendance:	Chief Executive, Director Resilient Communities, Participation Officer, Community Co Ordinator (G. Jardine), CLD Team Leader (N. Tait), Employability Lead (A. Scott), Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden), (all SBC), J. Amaral (BCA), K. Jackson (SOSE), S. Mitchell (SDS), R. Roberts (NHS), G. Roberts (SDS), M. Meldrum (BHA)

MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS

1. **WELCOME & APOLOGIES**
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received and noted accordingly.
2. **MINUTE & ACTION TRACKER**
 - 2.1 Copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 7 September 2023 had been circulated.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.

 - 2.2 Copies of an updated Action Tracker had also been circulated. Clare Malster, Participation Officer provided an update to the Action Tracker.

DECISION
NOTED the update.
3. **REGIONAL SKILLS ASSESSMENTS**
Greig Robson, Skills Development Scotland gave a presentation, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the Regional Skills Assessments Regional Report – Borders. The report had been published online on 24 October and could be located at <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/12hm3u2e/rsa-regional-report-borders.pdf> . The report provided medium (2023-26) and long term (2026-33) estimates

on the future workforce demand in both industry and occupation. A summary of key points was provided as follows:

- Health, retail and manufacturing were the largest employers with no significant change.
- Health was forecast to grow in jobs numbers, medium and long-term.
- Manufacturing was forecast to decline in medium and long-term.
- Sectors which decline or stay the same can have a large replacement demand and would need skilled workers.
- Replacement demand means opportunities exist across a wide range of sectors.
- Sectors may appear stable but beneath the surface of the figures, the skills needs can change quickly e.g. health workers will need more digital skills.
- RSAs provided high level indications around the direction of travel but were only one part of the evidence jigsaw.
- RSAs need to be supplemented with other evidence e.g. directly from local employers about future skills needs.
- Forecasts are subject to change.

There followed a brief discussion during which the impact of migrant workers, home working patterns and retired people was acknowledged. The absence of the third sector from the report was also highlighted, with an admission that though related data had been captured, it was still to be drawn together. Members were reminded that the report was to be viewed as trends and statistics, and was policy neutral.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

4. LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Alasdair Scott delivered a presentation to attendees, the purpose of which was to provide the background to the Local Employability Partnership (LEP), its vision, membership and terms of reference. The LEP comprised five themed sub-groups: 1. 'Transitions' led by SDS; 2. 'Barriers' led by DWP; 3. 'Skills' led by Borders College; 4. 'Employer Engagement' led by SOSE and DYW; and 5. 'Leadership'. The employability landscape had changed over the past few years. 2019-2022 had seen an increase in the number of funding sources due to Covid -19 support while 2023 had seen funding sources condensed into fewer pots. This had resulted in more focussed and cross collaborative work. A list of current employability funding was provided along with a summary of how SBC Employability was delivered; from the initial stage of reaching out to support people into regular activity and connecting with others through to the final stage of in-work support. An overview of client numbers and their outcomes from 2022-23 and current levels was provided. Looking forward, several challenges and opportunities were highlighted: the next phase of No One Left Behind; LEP Membership and Communication; Third sector and private sector engagement; Scottish Government annual funding levels which impacted staff retention and delayed the delivery of interventions; and alignment of Employability Services in the future. It was confirmed that Armed Forces had been included in the literature and marketing, and the website and subsequent communications were to be updated to reflect this. The importance of marketing the service and support available was noted, as was the need to tie in with Locality officers to enhance outreach to villages and towns and to go beyond reliance on thoughts of current service users alone. A brief explanation of 'No One Left Behind' was shared with confirmation that specific branding for the policy was to be forthcoming.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

5. ANNUAL PARTICIPATION MEASURE

- 5.1 Shona Mitchell (Skills Development Scotland) presented an overview of the Annual Participation Measure (APM) Report for the Scottish Borders which detailed the education, training and employment activity of 16–19-year-olds, including those at school.

This report marked the ninth release of data on the participation of that cohort at both a National and Local Authority level. The Borders APM for 2023 was 95/6%, the highest ever APM and an increase of over 1% on 2022. SBC was 8th top, with the 10th biggest increase out of 32 Local Authorities. In contrast, Scotland's APM for 2023 was 94.3%, a 1.9% increase on 2022. The Borders also reported its lowest ever 'Unconfirmed' status of 1.4% while Scotland's 'Unconfirmed' status was 2.1%. In terms of Borders, 'Not Participating' had a figure of 3%, an increase of 0.3% on 2022. This compared to a figure of 3.6% across Scotland and a decrease of 0.4%. The Borders APM gap between SIMD Quintile 5 and SIMD Quintile 1 had narrowed by 0.7% on 2022 to 11.1% and needed to be considered as a local priority. Scotland's APM Gap sat at 8.3%, narrowed by 1% on 2022. The progress made demonstrated the effectiveness of improved collaboration and partnership working. It was confirmed that SDS had now moved into DWP New Reiver House and further partnership activity was anticipated.

- 5.2 A summary of partnership activity was provided: SDS had a weekly Careers Advisor based at the Burnfoot Hub; the targeting of 'unknowns' had been a focus, aided by HMRC uploads; and targeted provision by geography and a flexibility of approach e.g. NOLB2 delivery in Eyemouth school leavers. SDS footfall data highlighted the benefit of the outreach programme in taking the service out to those who need it. In relation to the progress made at Burnfoot Hub with their pop-up employability events and careers advisor, it was confirmed that a short life working group had met to develop ideas around poverty, debt and employability.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

6. **THEME 2 - ACCESS TO WORK, LEARNING & TRAINING PROGRESS REPORT**

There had been circulated copies of Theme 2 progress report.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

7. **COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2021-24: UPDATE**

Gillian Jardine and Norrie Tait presented the CLD Partnership Plan 2021-24 update. The aim of the CLD Partnership was to improve outcomes for learners and communities through the provision of coordinated, collaborative and targeted interventions. A brief overview of the three objectives and six improvement priorities was shared. It was reported that a single agency approach had been taken rather than a collaborative and cohesive approach. There had been changes in key leadership positions along with secondments and long-term absence, all of which had significantly affected partnership working. Data was currently being collated to assess progress against the plan's Improvement Priorities and to inform the improvement planning process – 13 actions had been highlighted to continue into a new plan. Across the six priority areas, partnership activity had supported a range of activities: Employability Hubs; Eyemouth Whole Systems Approach; Digital Learning; Holiday Program planning; and local assessment panels. Going forward there was to be an update to the Terms of Reference and the development of concise and shared actions within the new plan. There was to be a focus on the delivery of outcomes that were partnership focussed and which supported and empowered the community through joint programmes and learning opportunities. Partners were NHS, Police Fire & Rescue, Borders College, Skills Development Scotland, Borders Community Action, Youth Borders and Department of Work and Pensions.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

8. **CPP IMPROVEMENT PLAN: FUTURE GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

Director Resilient Communities reported that a further workshop was to be held in January 2024. An update and proposals were to be brought to the next meeting on 7 March 2024.

9. **WORK PLAN PROGRESS REPORTS (FOR NOTING)**

There had been circulated copies of work plan progress reports which related to Themes 1, 3 and 4.

DECISION

NOTED the reports.

10. **WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH UPDATE**

There had been circulated copies of a cover paper and a summary report on the Eyemouth Whole Systems Approach (WSA). Fiona Doig and Penny Oliver presented. Scottish Borders had been invited to participate as a pilot area for the Whole Systems Approach through its involvement in the East of Scotland Partnership for the Prevention and Remission of Type 2 diabetes and was one of eight early adopter areas. The Community Planning Partnership had approved a proposal to take forward this work in Eyemouth, with a focus on child healthy weight and inequalities. The Covid-19 pandemic had stalled initial progress and the report outlined work undertaken between March 2021 and March 2023. Implementation had been supported by a £60k grant which had funded staffing costs in Third sector agencies, training and resources/logistics. The report outlined the considerable achievements in delivering the key actions for each of the priority themes: Communication; Participation and Learning; and Outdoor Activities. Achievements included a 'big cook, little cook' programme to support healthier family cooking on a budget; completion of a 'Visual Map'; installation of new cycling racks; and junior parkrun had celebrated its first anniversary. A stakeholder event had taken place in May 2023 and highlighted important factors in taking forward a Whole Systems Approach: identification of key stakeholders at an early stage; adequate time and resources/funding; governance structures; mapping of community resources; effective engagement to support the development of projects; and working with a defined community of appropriate size. The report detailed next steps to share the report with key stakeholders and to build on the success of the Eyemouth WSA. The report recognised that in Eyemouth it had been shown that it was possible to make a difference to some levels in the system. However a bigger scale, sustainable change was likely to need higher level influence, possibly legislation to create the conditions for health and wellbeing. Members expressed their gratitude for the work undertaken. In response to a question about lessons learned to be taken forward, Ms Doig stated that it was important that dedicated time and staff were allocated to any future rollout, as was a clear governance structure to allow for appropriate and timely support and connections.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

11. **THEME FOR NEXT MEETING**

The theme for the next meeting was noted as Theme 4: A good place to grow up, live in and enjoy a full life.

12. **FORWARD PLANNER FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

There had been circulated copies of the Forward Planner which Members noted.

13. **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The next meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Board was scheduled for 7 March 2024, 2pm.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of Meeting of the HAWICK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 22
November 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors C. Ramage (Chair), J. Cox, N. Richards, and A. Smart.

Apologies:- Councillor S. Marshall and W. McAteer.

In Attendance:- Director of Corporate Governance, Chief Officer Financial and Procurement Services (L. Turner), Estates Strategy Manager (J. Stewart), Estates Surveyor (T. Hill), Property Officer (S. Drummond), Ecology Officer (M. Ginns) and Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 16 August 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.

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 the details of the income and expenditure for the Hawick 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 of the report provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2023-24 which showed a projected deficit of £1,799 for the year, which was less than the previously reported surplus on 15th August 2023, due to the amendment of Pilmuir servitude income, which had paid in full the increase in the repairs and maintenance budget. Appendix 2 of the report provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 which showed a projected decrease in reserves of £82,177. Appendix 3a of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected rental income and projected net return for 2023-24 and actual property income to 30 September 2023. Appendix 3b of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected property expenditure for 2023-24 and actual property expenditure to 30 September 2023. Appendix 4 of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected property valuations at 31 March 2024. Appendix 5 of the report showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2023. The Chief Officer Financial and Procurement Services summarised the report and answered members questions.

DECISION

NOTED:

- (a) **the actual income and expenditure for 2023-24 in Appendix 1 of the report and the revised budget for 2023-24;**

- (b) **the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2 of the report;**
- (c) **the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4 of the report; and**
- (d) **the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 of the report.**

3. **APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**
3.1 **BORDERS GREEN TEAM ENTERPRISES**

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Borders Green Team Enterprises in the sum of £20,000 to fund core running costs which included investment in their workplace, buying new machinery and equipment, improving professional development for staff and promoting learning and innovation to ensure the Green Team was a safe place for service users. Mr George Sprott of Borders Green Team presented the application to Members and explained that although the costs were not broken down in the paper, was able to provide a verbal explanation of what funding would be used for. A break-in at the Borders Green Team premises resulted in insurers insisting on upgrades to security and entrance doors. The theft of a van resulted in a claim of £5,800 being awarded from insurers, however the cost of a van up to £10,000 resulted in a £4,200 loss. Two new mowers had been purchased, but were stolen and the insurance award was not enough to cover the cost of adequate replacements which added a loss of £10,850. The remainder of the application was to cover running costs and wages. After discussion, Members agreed to award a grant of £15,000 to cover the cost of the replacement van and mowers, however they advised that a breakdown of costs should be provided if a further application was made to cover core costs of the organisation.

DECISION
AGREED:

- (a) **to award Borders Green Team a grant of £15,000 to address the costs associated with a replacement van and mowers; and**
- (b) **to advise the applicant that a further application for funding to support core organisation expenses would require to include a breakdown of costs.**

3.2 **HAWICK REIVERS ASSOCIATION**

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Hawick Reivers Association for £4,000 to fund running costs of the Hawick Reivers Festival. Catherine Elliot-Walker of Hawick Reivers Association presented the report and advised that the festival aimed to ensure events were free to access and that insurance costs were approximately £800.

DECISION
AGREED to award Hawick Reivers Association a grant of £4,000.

4. **APPLICATION FOR USE OF COMMON HAUGH**

There had been circulated copies of an application from Kenny Stuart Family Fun Fair for use of the Common Haugh for a funfair from 17 March – 31 March 2024. Members discussed the application and noted that there had been questions about the space used by the funfair and the impact on campervan parking. It was also noted that the funfair would have an impact on car parking and that the event would coincide with the Hawick Reivers festival and with the Easter weekend. Members were supportive of the application and further requested that the Property Officer liaise with the applicant to make him aware of the

campervan space and car parking availability and to enquire whether the funfair required Easter Sunday for packing up.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to defer the application pending more information on the space and number of days that the funfair required at the Common Haugh;
- (b) the application be considered by the Sub-Committee after the Property Officer had liaised with the applicant.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

5. **SILVERBUTHALL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 22 November 2022, the Chair invited Andy Maybury of Silverbuthall Community Development Trust to present an update on progress of their project. Mr Maybury advised that the grant award was a significant step in delivering a community poll into use of the former Wilton South and St Margaret's Church site. The organisation needed to resolve charitable status registration and the establishment of a bank account before receiving the grant award. The feedback from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) were challenging for the trust and lengthy conversations were taking place. Health issues with trust officers were causing a delay to a bank account being established. Furthermore, as the organisation was a community development trust, only those that lived in the community could be full members which restricted board membership. The Chair thanked Mr Maybury for the update.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

MEMBER

Councillor Smart rejoined the meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

6. **HAWICK ROTARY CLUB – PLANT A TREE**

There had been circulated copies of a proposal from Hawick Rotary Club for tree planting to take place on the Hawick Moor. The Chair invited Ron Smith of Hawick Rotary Club to present the proposal. The proposal included the planting of 150-200 trees in Hawick Moor at no cost to the Common Good. Hawick Rotary Club sought agreement in principle for the project. The Estates Surveyor advised that the land where tree planting was proposed was leased and that the tenant farmer would need to be consulted. The Ecology Officer advised that the ground may need assessment to ensure it wasn't groundwater dependent as that would restrict planting. Members agreed that a site visit be arranged to assess the proposal.

DECISION

AGREED to defer the application in order that a site visit be arranged.

MEMBER

Councillor Cox rejoined the meeting.

7. **PROPERTY UPDATE – MOTORHOME PARKING**

There had been circulated copies of a briefing note from the Estates Surveyor that advised members on issues related to motorhome parking bookings. Following previous bookings of the campervan parking site, the Estates Surveyor advised that complaints had been received about other vehicles moving barriers, parking too close to the campervan site, overflowing bins and Officers not being available to discuss issues with campervan parking users. For effective barriers to be in place, Heras fencing would require to be used which would cost an estimated £250. Officers considered that managing exclusive bookings of the motorhome area of the Common Haugh was not feasible and it was recommended that exclusive bookings should not be allowed for the motorhome area within the Common Haugh.

DECISION

AGREED that exclusive booking of the motorhome parking area would not be accommodated.

8. **EVALUATION OF COMMON GOOD FUND GRANT AWARDS**

With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 16 August 2023, there had been circulated copies of a proposed evaluation form for organisations that had received grant funding from the Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee. In providing feedback on the form, Members requested that it be made explicit that the form was for evaluation of projects that funding had been received for and that the evaluation form should reflect the application form including on anticipated benefits to the community, how money was used, and what money had not been used over the course of a project.

DECISION

AGREED that a further draft of the evaluation form be submitted to the Sub-Committee for approval.

9. **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 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

10. **MINUTE**

Members considered the Private Section of the Minute of the Meeting held on 16 August 2023.

11. **PILMUIR FARM**

Members considered the update from the Estates Surveyor.

12. **PROPERTY UPDATE**

Members considered an update on Common good property from the Estates Surveyor.

The meeting concluded at 12.37 pm.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held via MICROSOFT
TEAMS on Wednesday, 29th November,
2023 at 5.00 pm

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

Apologies:- G. Smith, K. Harrow, F. Colton

In Attendance:- Director Corporate Governance, S. Coe (Beneficiaries Group), J. Dyer, Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meetings held on 27 September 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minutes for signature by the Chair.

2. **BENEFICIARIES GROUP UPDATE**

- 2.1 The Chair shared the main points from the meeting of the Beneficiaries Group on 28 November 2023. An award of £4.1m from the Levelling up Fund had been made, with a tight deadline for a proposal to be presented to the UK Government. It was proposed that the Chair, Councillor Pirone and Sam Coe, as a Project Group, take this proposal forward and Members agreed. Jason Dyer was then introduced to Members. Mr Dyer had previously worked with the Trimontium Trust, Abbotsford House restoration, Thirlestane Castle and Melrose RFC. A biography of his work was to be circulated. The Chair proposed that Mr Dyer be engaged by Trustees to bring together a business plan, information from the feasibility study and consultations for the Chambers Institution Trust over an anticipated 10 day period. Members agreed to the appointment of Mr Dyer subject to the standard procedures. Crick Carleton was to provide materials on the Place Making process that related to Peebles. In relation to the Burgh Hall, it was reported that the stage curtains were to be fitted next week. The acoustics consultant had made a site visit and reported that the addition of stage and window curtains was to improve the acoustics and that panels would be required. The Beneficiaries Group had no objections to costs of no more £8,500 for panel installation. Members agreed to the cost of the supply and installation of acoustic panels. Sanne Roberts, Heritage Officer was to be consulted also. Sam Coe reported the support of Peebles Civic Society and Peebles and District Community Council for the proposed acoustic improvement works. The Chair sought approval for the costs of the supply and installation of window curtains and the required scaffolding and associated joinery work, at a cost of up to £16.5k. Members agreed to approve the costs. There was to be an additional cost in the region of £2k following repairs to the roof leak in the hallway. No decision was made on this by Members. Gareth Smith Property Officer was to coordinate the remaining works and liaise with the artist Susan Mitchell on the installation of her artwork in the hallway. There had been a request from the Trimontium Trust for several Roman artefacts in the possession of the Chambers Institution Trust to be loaned for display. Director Corporate Governance agreed to establish ownership of the artefacts in consultation with Live Borders for the next meeting of the Trustees. Councillor Pirone reported that the progress on the business plan so far was to be shared with Council officers and Mr Dyer.

- 2.2 Sam Coe presented an update of the building condition survey. There were no accurate scale plans of the buildings at present. A condition survey and a dimensional survey were required and options for their procurement were under consideration. It was confirmed that a full procurement exercise was to be undertaken.
- 2.3 The Chair reported that the John Buchan Museum had formally written to Trustees to request that consideration be given to improvements to the exterior of the museum building. The Chair proposed that the matter be taken up with Planning in the first instance, to which Members agreed. Further discussion was to be had at the next meeting. A copy of the letter was to be appended to this minute.
- 2.4 The Chair reported that Bonnie Peebles had requested permission to install plants in the sites where the Remembrance sculptures were installed annually, once commemorations were complete. Members agreed to this.
- 2.5 The Chair confirmed that he was to liaise with the tenants of the Chambers Institution Trust buildings to apprise them of all developments going forward. Members shared their appreciation for the collegiate approach being taken with the ongoing project.

DECISION

NOTED the update and;

AGREED TO:

- (a) **the appointment of the Chair, Councillor Pirone and Sam Coe to the Project Group;**
- (b) **the appointment of Jason Dyer to the role of coordinator of the proposal to the Levelling Up Fund, subject to the proper procedure;**
- (c) **the cost of supply and installation of acoustic panels;**
- (d) **the cost of supply and installation of window curtains;**
- (e) **Director Corporate Governance establishing ownership of Roman artefacts in the museum**
- (f) **Bonnie Peebles installation of plants in place of Remembrance sculptures once commemorations were complete.**

3. 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.

4. PRIVATE MINUTE

Members considered the Private Minutes of 27 September 2023.

5. DAYLIGHT PROJECTOR

Members considered a quotation for the supply and installation of a daylight projector. The matter was to be further discussed at the next meeting.

6. BURGH HALL CURTAINS

Members considered quotations and agreed the costs for the supply and installation of window curtains and the supply and installation of scaffolding.

7. PAGE\PARK

Members discussed the conclusion of business arrangements related to Page\Park Architects.

8. BURGH HALL ACOUSTICS REPORT

Members considered a quotation and agreed the costs for the supply and installation of acoustic panels.

The meeting concluded at 6.05pm.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCRUTINY &
PETITIONS COMMITTEE held via Microsoft
Teams on Thursday, 7 December 2023 at
10.30 am

- Present:- Councillor E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), J. Anderson, J. Cox, M. Douglas, J. PatonDay, N. Richards, E. Robson and F. Sinclair
- Apologies:- Councillor S. Scott
- In Attendance:- Director Infrastructure & Environment, G. Lennox, D. Bogdanovic, J. Higgins, G. Knox, and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

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.

2. **MINUTE**

Copies of the Minute of Meeting held on 19 October 2023 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chair.

3. **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING GRANTS AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report from the Head of Adult Social Care Gwyneth Lennox which outlined the origins and processes around the Scheme of Assistance (SoA), introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to provide support with repairing, improving or adapting a home. The Act separated disabled people's applications for assistance from those with repairs and included a general duty to provide assistance in making a house suitable for a disabled person. The SoA provided information and advice to help private homeowners and private tenants to keep their homes in good condition and suitable to meet their needs. The Scheme was operated by SBC in conjunction with Community Care and the Health and Social Care Joint Integration Board, to which major adaptations had been delegated. Mr Knox gave a presentation to inform Members of the processes associated with major adaptations of clients' homes. A single shared assessment process was followed to ensure a coordinated approach and to maximise services available to clients. An assessment of need was conducted and recommendations made for adaptations, additional equipment or support and indicated the urgency of the recommendations. A grant was available to fund adaptations for which homeowners, tenants and part owners were eligible. A grant was awarded if an adaptation was essential to a disabled person and covered 80-100% of the approved expense. SBC had commissioned a Care & Repair Service through Eildon Housing Association with the aim to assist older and disabled residents in the private sector in the repair, improvement or adaptation of their homes in accordance with Scottish National Care and Repair standards. A table of performance data 2017-2023 was shared with Members that detailed the number of major adaptations (social and private) and handyperson jobs carried out. The spend for the same period totalled £2.334m for major adaptations by RSLs (social), and £1.257m under the Scheme of Assistance (private). A

summary of next steps and future reviews was provided and included the streamlining of pathways for provision of equipment and adaptations; effective adoption of new models of health and social care; effective interface with relevant partners and an ongoing review and monitoring of the LHS.

- 3.2 In response to a question about the role of the Health & Social Care IJB, it was confirmed that while the IJB carried out the assessment of need, SBC maintained oversight of the work and delivered the wider assessments by Occupational Therapy and subsequent adaptive work under the Scheme of Assistance. In response to a question about the funding of RSLs, it was confirmed that their funding came directly from Scottish Government. Funding sources for adaptations to households was dependant on who owned the property. The issue of adaptations to shared access to communal areas was raised; permission from other occupants was necessary with legislation to prevent them from refusing permission unreasonably. In relation to the handyman provision delivered through the Care & Repair service, it was confirmed that any profits were to be directed back into the service with the estimate that any income generated from its provision was not sufficient to meet the cost of doing so. Mr Knox agreed to obtain these figures for Members and distribute via email. The importance of Occupational Therapists (OT) communicating effectively with clients was highlighted to avoid incorrect or non-use of equipment. Also highlighted was the impact on other household members/carers in coping with their situation and the role of OTs in recognising and supporting where necessary. The holistic approach of OTs was discussed along with the framework for identifying additional training needs. The importance of open communication between OTs, managers and clients was also highlighted. Ms Lennox reported that the service was keen to promote a self-evaluation process across adult social work and occupational therapy services during 2024. There was also to be a review of allied health professionals starting in Spring 2024. Furthermore, a report was to be brought to the Health & Social Care IJB in 2024 following a review of the approach to adaptations in response to the latest Scottish Government guidance.
- 3.3 The Chair thanked the team for today's presentation and the wider work of the department in their delivery of services and response to referrals.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation and AGREED that Mr Knox obtain figures on income and costs associated with the handyman service for Members and distribute via email.

4. PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a presentation by John Curry, Director Infrastructure & Environment, the purpose of which was to inform Members of the assessment of public toilet provision in the Scottish Borders, and results from the consultation exercise. There were currently 27 public toilets open for use and 14 which had remained closed following the pandemic and were not to reopen. A summary of key principles was provided and included: a need to enhance the condition of the operational facilities for which surveys and capital investment was required; a phased approach to upgrading payment operated locking facilities and contactless payment facilities; maintained access for RADAR users; an appropriate cleaning and inspection regime; and SBC to maintain the operational estate and provide one facility per each major existing settlement. The results of a mapping exercise was shared with Members which showed those facilities open, closed, disabled provision and areas where provision was needed. Stow was highlighted as lacking provision. A summary table of facility condition and suitability was provided with grading as follows: A (good); B (satisfactory); C (poor) and D (bad). A condition survey in November 2023 of all SBC facilities resulted in 3 graded as A, 22 graded as B and 1 graded as C.
- 4.2 On the matter of payment operating locking facilities, SBC charged for access to 17 of the 27 sites. Any income generated was offset by the increasing burden of repairs and operating

costs and several considerations were highlighted: frequent breakdown of coin collection units; delayed opening times; expensive repairs to locking mechanism and to doors vandalised to gain entry (6 this year to date at £2k per call out); and multiple instances of locks failing while toilet was occupied. There had been a trial of removing charges from six sites in Melrose, Coldingham, Kelso (Shedden Park & Horsemarket), Innerleithen and Duns. There had been no direct increase in vandalism levels or complaints. Two options were presented to Members: Option 1 – to invest in estate wide contactless collection; and Option 2 – to remove charging from most facilities. It was highlighted that 50% of the revenue from toilets was spent on collecting that income. Once the trial had concluded, its findings were to be brought back to Council in May 2024. In terms of identifying opportunities, gaps and key priorities for the service, SBC officers were developing in-house mapping and were to engage in early 2024 with Community Planning Partners, Live Borders and Third and private sector partners. Officers had also worked with community groups interested in community-led operations and a summary of these was shared with Members. A further framework model – the Comfort Scheme – was being explored by which a grant was to be awarded to meet operational costs incurred by an organisation or company interested in participation. Highland Council already had a comprehensive Comfort Scheme in place. A summary of cleaning standards, presentation and complaints (of which there were 3 in 2023) was provided. Regarding disposals, the lease on St Mary's Loch facilities was in the process of termination, a community asset transfer process had begun on School Brae, Peebles and several other enquiries had been received for facilities in Galashiels and Hawick.

- 4.3 There followed a discussion on matters arising from the presentation. With regards to provision in Burnmouth, a containerised solution was under consideration, at a cost of around £35k for two toilets, for which there was no provision in the current capital and revenue allocations. Alternative funding sources were to be investigated. Regarding the lack of provision in Stow, a comfort scheme was the preferred route with enquiries to begin in early 2024 along with the use of the football pavilion and the railway station. There was acknowledgement that consistency was required with regards to the opening of disabled facilities that had been earmarked for closure. There was a suggestion that signage be installed in toilets with an SBC contact number in the event of a person being locked in, with the caveat that someone would be available to answer the call. Incorrect signage in Newtown St Boswells was highlighted, along with a request that members of the public be redirected to HQ toilet facilities.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee was due to be held on 21 March 2024 at 10 am.

The meeting concluded at 12:00pm

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PENSION BOARD

MINUTE of Meeting of the PENSION BOARD
held Via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 12
December 2023 at 12.30 p.m.

Present:- Mr D Bell (Chair), Councillor J. Pirone, Mr. A. Daye, Mr. M. Drysdale, Mr. M
Everett, and Ms K Robb
Apologies:- Ms K M Hughes.
In Attendance:- Director – Finance and Procurement, HR Shared Services Manager,
Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 September 2023.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chair.

2. **JOINT MEETING OF PENSION COMMITTEE AND PENSION BOARD**

The Chair invited members of the Board to raise any issues which had arisen from the Joint meeting of the Pension Fund and Board. In response to a question regarding Pension Board representation at the Pension Investment and Performance Sub-Committee it was clarified that Ms Kirsty Robb and Ms KayMarie Hughes both attended those meetings. It was hoped that once an independent advisor was appointed that the Members of the Pension Board could have more insight into the Sub-Committee. Attendees discussed the setting of the contribution rate, and it was clarified that the Pension Fund Committee, not the Pension Board, had the power to set the rate. It was stressed that any communications regarding the contribution rate needed to be carefully managed and that from the joint meeting of the Pension Fund Committee and Board that all decisions regarding the rate were being taken with long-term financial stability in mind.

DECISION

AGREED that there were no issues to raise.

The meeting concluded at 12.35 p.m.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PENSION FUND COMMITTEE AND PENSION BOARD

MINUTES of Meeting of the PENSION
FUND COMMITTEE AND PENSION
BOARD held via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 10.00am.

- Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Chairman), L. Douglas, D. Moffat, S. Mountford
(Pension Fund Committee Members)
- Councillor J. Pirone, Mr A. Daye, Ms K Robb (Pension Board – Scheme
Employer Representatives), Mr D. Bell, Mr M Drysdale, Mr M. Everett and Ms
K M Hughes (Pension Board – Scheme Member Representatives)
- Apologies:- Councillors C. Hamilton and S. Scott
- In Attendance: Director – Finance and Procurement, Chief Officer – Audit and Risk, HR
Shared Services Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader.
- Also in Attendance: Mr C Pringle (Isio), Mr A Ross (Isio), Mr A Singh, (Isio), Mr J Boyd and Ms S
Harold (Audit Scotland)

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.

2. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 8 August and 22 September 2023.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

3. **PENSION FUND INVESTMENT AND PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Investment and Performance Sub-Committee held on 25 August 2023

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

4. **PROGRESS ON DELIVERY OF INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2023/24 FOR THE SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PENSION FUND**

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting held on 21 March 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Officer – Audit and Risk which provided an update on progress with the delivery of the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2023/24 for the Scottish Borders Council Pension Fund. Internal Audit was an independent appraisal function established for the review of the governance arrangements and internal control system of the SBC Pension Fund to provide the statutory Internal Audit annual assurance and opinion. The Internal Audit Annual Plan 2023/24 for the SBC Pension Fund, approved by the Pension Fund Committee and Pension Fund Board on 9 March 2023, allocated 20 days to support the delivery of the Plan, which included sufficient work to enable the Chief Audit Executive (CAE) to

prepare the statutory independent and objective audit opinion to the year ending 31 March 2024. Appendix 1 to the report provided details of the half yearly progress by Internal Audit with its work activity to deliver the approved Internal Audit Annual Plan 2023/24 for the SBC Pension Fund. The Internal Audit service to the SBC Pension Fund was provided by Scottish Borders Council's Internal Audit team. The continuous audit approach which was applied to Internal Audit work for the SBC Pension Fund enabled Internal Audit to provide added value advice on internal controls and governance and 'critical friend' consultancy services. The Chief Officer- Audit and Risk, Ms Jill Stacey, presented the report and outlined that the report had arisen from the recommendations of the Annual Plan for the Pension Fund. Members expressed their thanks for the report and highlighted that it was useful to see progress on individual items, in particular the frequency on which they were checked.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) note the progress made in the first six months of the year to deliver the approved Internal Audit Annual Plan 2023/24 for the Scottish Borders Council Pension Fund; and**
- (b) note that there were no proposed changes to the Plan that required approval, though 20 days allocation had been utilised and a further 5 days was proposed for completion of Internal Audit work for the SBC Pension Fund to March 2024.**

5. PENSION FUND RISK REGISTER UPDATE

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 September 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Officer – Audit and Risk which provided an update on the review of the refreshed Pension Fund Risk Register, and an outline of next steps. Effective Risk Management was one of the foundations of effective governance of the Pension Fund. It required a coherent approach to the management of risks that it faced every day through the identification, analysis, evaluation, control and monitoring of risks linked to the business plans and activities of the Pension Fund. The “Managing Risk in the Local Government Pension Scheme” published by CIPFA provided helpful guidance on the process. At the Joint meetings of the Pension Fund Committee and Pension Fund Board during 2023, the following risk management items were agreed: (a) 21 March 2023 - proposal to refresh the Pension Fund Risk Register and the associated approach and timetable; and (b) 22 September 2023 - the refreshed Pension Fund Risk Register arising from the proposals to amalgamate and re-categorise the risks on a more manageable scale. The report set out progress on the review of the refreshed Pension Fund Risk Register and outlined the next steps. The Chief Officer – Audit and Risk presented the report, confirming that significant work regarding the amalgamation of risks had been undertaken. Engagement with officers and risk specialists had been positive. Considerable lessons had been learned from the process of amalgamating and categorising of the risks which had previously been included on the register. Steps to develop a suitable Risk Management Policy for the Pension Fund were ongoing and would be progressed as part of the cycle of risk review activity. The Chief Officer confirmed that it was proposed that a smaller number or relevant range of risks would be presented at each quarterly meeting, with a standalone presentation of the full register planned for the March 2024 meeting. Members welcomed the proposed schedule of risk register presentations and commented that the schedule would be helpful in facilitating meaningful consideration and feedback on the risks. In response to a question regarding whether risks which had been categorised as high should be brought to all quarterly meetings, Ms Stacey indicated that she was happy to investigate whether it would be possible to incorporate regular discussions on such risks following discussions with the risk owners and to

adjust the policy accordingly. Ms Stacey undertook to investigate incorporating the request that movements to risks would merit quarterly presentation within the policy principles.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **acknowledge that the formal full review of the risks in the refreshed Pension Fund Risk Register was approximately 80% complete and would continue;**
- (b) **note that quarterly risk register updates would be presented to the Committee and Board; and**
- (c) **note that a separate Risk Management policy and strategy for the Pension Fund would be developed for approval by the Committee and Board in March 2024.**

6. GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND STEWARDSHIP CODE ACTION PLAN

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting held on 13 December 2022, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which reviewed and sought approve the Pension Fund’s Governance Review & Stewardship Code Action Plan. The Action Plan encompassed recommendations from the independently produced Governance Review report and the Fund’s Stewardship Code report. It provided a high-level plan for how those would be progressed and implemented. It was accompanied by an annotated schedule for all the Governance Review recommendations. That outlined proposals for the Committee’s consideration on which were agreed/actioned and those that should not (and why). It was proposed the work be delivered through a project management approach and the work had been structured into four workstreams. That would help provide additional focus and momentum, as well as regular project monitoring and reporting. However, a number of actions and timescales were dependent on the successful appointment to the Pension, Investment & Accounting Manager role. The Director – Finance and Procurement presented the report and introduced Pat Tomlin, who had undertaken work on behalf of the Pension Fund to review the Governance of the Fund and the Stewardship Code Action Plan. In response to a question regarding the recommendation to consider appointment of a single officer responsible for managing all pension functions, the Director outlined that the proposed Pensions, Investment and Accounting Manager’s work would be dedicated to working on the Fund. Administration of the Fund would continue to be the responsibility of the HR Shared Services Manager. Regarding the appointment of a independent advisor, the Director confirmed that there whilst there was a desire to appoint an advisor resource had not been put in place at the current time. Work to progress through the Action Plan would continue, and it was hoped that the relevant team would be fully staffed for the start of the new financial year. In response to a question regarding how the schedule and the Action Plan should be interpreted, Ms Tomlin explained that the key documents was the Action Plan. The purpose of the schedule was to provide an audit trail for all of the recommendations made following the review. The Action Plan contained the work which had been restructured into work packages, with the schedule in place to back those up. Regarding the monitoring of the ‘infrastructure/other real assets’ mandate through Lothian Pension Fund, which was currently considered by the Pension Fund Committee rather than the Pension Fund Investment and Performance Sub-Committee, Ms Tomlin explained that the recommendation in the report was to place the responsibility for the monitoring of that mandate, like the other mandates, with the Sub-Committee.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) approve the proposals in the ‘Governance Recommendations – Agreement to Proceed?’ schedule contained in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) approve the Governance Review & Stewardship Code Action Plan contained in Appendix 2 to the report; and**
- (c) note and recognise the potential impact on plan timelines if the recruitment of the Pension, Investment and Accounting Manager was delayed further.**

7. BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 June 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which provided an update on delivery of the actions within the approved Business Plan. The 2023/24 – 2025/26 Business Plan for the Pension Fund was approved by the Committee on 22 June 2023. Included within the plan were key objectives and actions with target dates. A summary of the progress on the actions were included in Appendix 1 to the report. As part of the risk register update approved at Committee on 22 September 2023 it was agreed that a mid-year progress report on the business plan actions would be presented to Members at the December 2023 meeting and a further progress report and update at the June 2024 meeting. There were 16 non-recurring tasks due for completion during 2023/24. As detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, all actions were progressing or were complete with exceptions and delays in delivery outlined in the report. The HR Shared Services Manager, Mr Ian Angus, presented the report and highlighted the five actions which had been categorised as delayed or exceptions. Mr Angus outlined that since the publication of the report that the software standard functionality item had been processed without additional costs. In response to a question regarding custodian recruitment, the Director confirmed that the contract with the current custodian was being extended, with all of the details in the process of being finalised.

**DECISION
AGREED:**

- (a) to note the progress of the 2023/24 actions within the business plan; and**
- (b) the revised target dates for the actions outlined in the report.**

8. PENSION FUND BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 September 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which provided an update position of the Pension Fund budget to 30 September 2023 including projections to 31 March 2024. The Local Government Pension Scheme (Scotland) Regulation 2014 required Administering Authorities to ensure strong governance arrangements and set out the standards they were to be measured against. To ensure the Fund met the standards a budget was approved on 22 June 2023 following the recommendations within the CIPFA accounting guidelines headings. The report was the second quarterly monitoring report of the approved budgets. The total expenditure to 30 September 2023 was £3.161m, with a projected total expenditure of £6.967m which was line with approved budget. In response to a question regarding fluctuations to investment income in quarter 1 2023/24, the Director undertook to investigate but advised that the fluctuations likely formed part of normal market variations.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to note the actual expenditure to 30 September 2023; and**
- (b) the projected out-turn as the revised budget.**
- (c) that the Director – Finance and Procurement investigate fluctuations to investment income in Quarter 1 2023/24.**

9. RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT METRICS AND TARGETS REPORT

9.1 With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting held on 22 September 2023 there had been circulated copies of a responsible investment metrics and targets report by Isio. The Chairman welcomed Mr Andrew Singh, Mr Alex Ross and Mr Charles Pringle of Isio to the meeting. Mr Singh confirmed that the metrics in the report had been selected with Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) regulations in mind. Mr Singh confirmed that whilst TCFD regulations had not yet been imposed on the Fund, it was expected that they would be in the future. The report documented each investment manager's ability to report on the agreed metrics and the current portfolio position as at 30 June 2024 compared to the position as at 30 June 2022. Mr Pringle, Isio's in-house analysts for climate, provided a summary of the key terms related to responsible investment and confirmed that the Fund had agreed to adopt a target of relative improvement, as opposed to absolute or fixed targets. An overview of the data was outlined with the majority of managers showing a reduction in absolute emissions and on a carbon footprint basis. Mr Pringle highlighted that the UK-aligned managers tended to be biased towards higher emitting companies, and it was not beyond expectation that the numbers involved could continue to rise over time. It was pointed out that LGT Crown Multi Alternatives coverage level had decreased, and Mr Pringle explained that was as a result of a change in asset class allocation and the treatment of insurance linked securities within the methodology approach. There had been a shift in the approach to how those securities were considered, with the picture presented now more accurate as a result. Overall coverage within the portfolio had improved, as there had been significant progress in the numbers being reported and the quality of the estimated data which had been provided. The numbers of climate-related engagements had varied from the previous year, and Mr Pringle outlined that whilst some managers had increased the number of engagements, others had not sustained the same levels or had undertaken a lower number.

9.2 The total greenhouse gas emissions of the portfolio was 54,463 metric tons, an increase of 39,755 metric tons from the 2022 analysis. That was largely a result of the increased coverage and data reporting across the portfolio. Weighted average carbon footprint of the portfolio was 99.6 metric tonnes per £1m investment. That had increased from the 2022 analysis of 29.8 metric tonnes per £1m. Implied temperature rise figures provided by the managers ranged from alignment to a 1.5°C to 2.7°C temperature rise by the end of the century, compared to 1.8°C to 3.2°C in 2022. The portfolio level figure calculated for 2023 was 2.1°C. The Implied Temperature Rise at portfolio level as at June 2023 reduced by 0.5°C, from 2.6°C which was reported in 2022. There were 409 individual Climate-related Engagements with companies within the portfolio, where managers were able to report. That was an increase of 119 from the 2022 figure of 290 climate engagements. In response to a question regarding increasing coverage in the bonds market, Mr Pringle explained that coverage levels were improving as more fund managers were able to report on the metrics. It was not possible for some managers to report on sovereign elements, which had resulted in coverage being low. Mr Singh outlined that coverage varied considerably between different asset classes, however it was anticipated that coverage would increase over

time. Members discussed whether or not it would be prudent to publish a Task Force for Climate Related Financial Disclosures compliance report, given that it was not required under the regulations. The Director – Finance and Procurement, confirmed that whilst there would be a cost associated with the production of the report, based on Isio's advice it was not expected to be unreasonably high. Members agreed to instruct Isio to undertake the work to prepare and publish a TCFD compliance report.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the report; and**
- (b) to instruct Isio to use the information within the report to prepare and publish a Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) compliance report.**

10. SCOTTISH BORDERS PENSION FUND 2023 ACTUARIAL VALUATION

There had been circulated copies of a presentation by Hymans Robertson LLP with the agenda. The Chairman invited Ms Julie West and Mr Jamie Baxter of Hymans Robertson to provide a presentation. Mr Baxter explained that triennial valuation was a key risk management exercise for the Fund which was carried out to calculate employer contribution rates; comply with legislation; analyse actual experience compared to assumptions; review the Funding Strategy Statement; and to undertake a continual check on Fund solvency. Since the previous valuation in 2020 there had been significant asset returns due to bounce-back from the Covid-19 associated market fall in February-March 2020, and a material fall in liability values in the second half of the inter-valuation period due to rising interest rates. Future investment return assumptions had a considerable bearing when calculating liabilities. Those returns were used to project forward asset values in modelling, and the same approach for the 2020 valuation had been used for 2023. There were higher return expectations in 2023 when compared to 2020 as a result of increases in global interest rates. That had a positive impact on the 2023 valuation results. Mr Baxter explained that Local Government Pension Scheme benefits increase with CPI inflation, which was used to project forward benefits and contributions in modelling. Ongoing uncertainty around high inflation had formed part of the risk-based approach, which had negatively impacted upon the 2023 valuation results. Mr Baxter provided a summary of longevity in the Scottish Borders, and explained that the assumptions had been tailored specially to Scottish Borders Council Pension Fund members. The key valuation assumptions at 2023 were presented, with a discount rate of 5.2% pa, benefit increases/CARE revaluation at 2.3% pa and salary increases at 3% pa. Those assumptions were robust and evidenced based. Ms West provided a summary of the whole fund funding level at 31 March 2023 compared to 31 March 2020. Liabilities had decreased from £650m to 649m, whilst assets had increased from £713m to £866m. The Funding Level had increased from 110% in 2020 to 134% in 2023. Ms West highlighted that the reported funding level did not directly drive employers' contribution rates. The funding position of the fund was stronger at 2023 than 2020, in particular due to the increase in future investment returns as a factor. Ms West provided an overview of the 3 steps to setting the funding strategy, which included the funding target, the time horizon, and the likelihood of success. Those circumstances allowed the Fund to manage risk. The Fund operated a Contribution Rate Stability Mechanism (CSM) for the Scottish Borders Council pool group of employers. Annual changes to rates were restricted to +/- 0.5% of pay. Ms West outlined that stabilisation took a long-term approach to setting contribution rates which cut through short-term funding "noise". The mechanism was an explicit one, documented in the FSS. The CSM was designed to keep contribution rates stable through the peaks and troughs of market cycles. Surpluses could be managed by

reducing the employer contribution rate, changing the investment strategy, increasing prudent levels or retaining the surplus. The funding level excluded the cost of future service benefits. Ms West outlined the key factors which had been considered at the 2023 valuation, in particular the need to avoid a knee-jerk reaction to the significant increase in surplus. It was highlighted that almost all of the increase in surplus was due to changes in liability assumptions rather than actual investment performance. The cost of funding future service benefits must be met, with contribution rates reflecting fairness of costs between generations. Market conditions and economic variables, such as interest rates and inflation, were currently volatile. It was confirmed that the Fund prepares, maintains and consults on the Funding Strategy Statement in line with CIPFA guidance. The final decision on the Funding Strategy would be presented to the Committee for approval. In response to a question regarding an extra 0.5% provision in relation to the McCloud judgement, Ms West outlined that there was now less of a chance of benefit increases occurring as a result of the cost cap, and that the ramification of the McCloud case had been built into the overall liabilities. The Chief Officer – Audit and Risk confirmed that there the Audit team had engaged with Hymans Robertson regarding aspects of risk management and the range of assumptions.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

11. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**
AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the business contained in the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 and 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

12. **SCOTTISH BORDERS PENSION FUND 2023 ACTUARIAL VALUATION**
The Committee noted a presentation by Hymans Robertson LLP regarding the 2023 actuarial valuation.
13. **MINUTE**
The Committee considered the Private Minutes of the Meetings held on 8 August and 22 September 2023.
14. **PENSION FUND INVESTMENT AND PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE**
The Committee considered the Private Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Investment and Performance Sub-Committee held on 25 August 2023.
15. **INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE QUARTER TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**
The Committee noted the Quarter 2 Investment Performance report by Isio.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PENSION FUND COMMITTEE AND PENSION BOARD

MINUTES of Meeting of the PENSION
FUND COMMITTEE AND PENSION
BOARD held via Microsoft Teams on
Wednesday, 17 January 2024 at 11.30am.

- Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Chairman), D. Moffat, S. Mountford, and S. Scott
(Pension Fund Committee Members)
- Councillor J. Pirone, Mr A. Daye, Ms K Robb (Pension Board – Scheme
Employer Representatives), Mr D. Bell, Mr M. Everett and Ms K M Hughes
(Pension Board – Scheme Member Representatives)
- Apologies:- Councillors L. Douglas and C. Hamilton
- In Attendance: Chief Executive, Director – Finance and Procurement, Chief Officer – Audit
and Risk, HR Shared Services Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader.
- Also in Attendance: Mr A Ross (Isio), Mr A Singh, (Isio), Ms E Carrigan (Audit Scotland)

1. **PENSION FUND EMPLOYERS (SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL) CONTRIBUTION RATE**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which provides the details of a proposal for setting the Scottish Borders Council employers contribution rate from 2024/25 onwards. The report would be referred on to Scottish Borders Council to be considered as part of the 2024/25 financial planning process. As part of the key risk management activities of the Pension Fund, a triennial actuarial revaluation exercise was undertaken. That exercise ensured that the Fund complied with legislation, analysed actual experiences versus assumptions over the previous 3 year period, reviewed the funding strategy statement, was part of the continual health check on the solvency of the Fund and was used to calculate the employer contribution rates. The last triennial revaluation was undertaken by Hymans Robertson based on the position at 31st March 2020 when the fund was assessed as being 110% funded. On commencing the revaluation process for 2023, an assessment had been made on asset and liability movements since 2020 up to 31st March 2023. The Fund had experienced significant asset returns in the first half of the inter-valuation period, due to the bounce-back from the Covid-19 market fall in February/March 2020. That positive picture had been compounded by a material fall in liability values in the second half of the inter-valuation period due to rising interest rates. The most recent revaluation assessed the fund to be 134% funded. A range of scenarios considering contribution rates had been undertaken and based on those it was recommended that, in order to recognise the positive results from the triennial revaluation but to maintain an appropriate level of prudence, that the Scottish Borders Council contribution rate moved to 17% from 2024/25 through to 2027/28. That position would be kept under review annually. Members of the Pension Fund Committee welcomed the report and highlighted that the Fund had been well-managed through the valuation period. In response to a question regarding whether the recommendation in the report referred to all employers within the pool rate or solely SBC, the HR Shared Services Manager confirmed that all employers in the SBC pool would be covered by the change to 17%. In response to a question regarding what the capital saved from the lower contribution rate would be utilised for, the Director Finance and Procurement explained that the

saving would be used to assist the council in its budget setting for 2024/25. It was stressed that the decision of the Committee had to be focused on the best interests of the Fund, and that the financial situation of SBC should not have a bearing on the setting of the contribution rate. The Chief Officer – Audit and Risk outlined that Hymans Robertson had taken into account a significant range of risk factors as part of their scenario modelling and that work would be reflected in the risk register accordingly.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the revaluation process undertaken by Hymans Robertson;**
- (b) to note the contribution rate scenarios modelled; and**
- (c) that the requested level of contribution from the Scottish Borders Council pool rate from 2024/25 was 17%**

The meeting concluded at 11.45 a.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held via MICROSOFT
TEAMS on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at
5.00 pm

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

Apologies:- Director Corporate Governance, G. Smith

In Attendance:- S. Coe (Beneficiaries Group), J. Dyer, Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meetings held on 29 November 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minutes for signature by the Chair.

2. **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair had introduced two late papers that were to be considered as a matter of urgency. The papers had not been available for circulation before late afternoon of 24 January 2024. There had been circulated copies of a consultation report from Jason Dyer, the purpose of which was to provide Members with a summary report on all work and consultations undertaken in relation to the Burgh Hall and recommendations for next steps. The report was to contribute to the Levelling Up Fund bid to be submitted by 9 February 2024. Copies of the minute of the Beneficiaries Group held on 23 January 2024 were also circulated.

3. **BENFICIARIES GROUP UPDATE**

The Chair shared the main points from the meeting of the Beneficiaries Group on 23 January 2024, the Minute of which has been circulated in the late supplement. Apologies for that meeting had been received from Councillor Thomson and Begg. The Levelling Up bid was discussed; officers were currently preparing a response to the UK Government's request for information on costs and specification for the proposed work. An update was expected in time for the next meeting on 28 February. Jason Dyer had provided an update on his work to date, a copy of which had been circulated to Members and the Council website. Mr Dyer highlighted the key priorities which included accessibility issues, social prescribing, creation of learning spaces and room hire, locations of the museum and library and public use of heritage space. Any feedback on the document was to be sent to Mr Dyer as soon as possible. The Chair informed attendees of the project vision workshop to take place on Friday 9 February between SBC officers, Live Borders staff, Mr Dyer and Trustees. A vision document was to be produced following the workshop to provide to the Levelling Up bid and all stakeholders, following comments/amendments. Members agreed to the workshop. The Chair sought approval to convene a working group to examine the governance of the Beneficiaries Group going forward. The membership was agreed as follows: the Chair, Peter Maudsley (Peebles Community Council), Sam Coe (Beneficiaries Group), Fiona Colton (Live Borders), Crick Carleton (Peebles Place Making Working Group). It was highlighted that the Trust was the body with the decision-making power, into which the Beneficiaries Group reported and made recommendations. An update on works to the Burgh Hall was provided. The

entrance foyer had been decorated following roof repairs. Work had begun on curtain installation and once completed, the acoustics engineer was to return to install acoustic panels. Enquiries continued in relation to heating and draft issues at the Minstrel's Gallery. The artwork by Susan Mitchell was discussed and how best to display them. Gareth Smith was to provide costings for cabinetry at the next meeting in February. A contract was to be drawn up between the artist and the Trust with input from SBC Legal department. An update of action from the Beneficiaries Group meeting of 28 November was provided verbally. A correction to the minute of 29 November 2024 had been highlighted: Mr Dyer had not been engaged as a co-ordinator, but as a funding consultant.

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.

5. **PRIVATE MINUTE**

Members considered the Private Minute of 29 November 2023.

6. **DAYLIGHT PROJECTOR**

Members agreed to discuss the matter at a later date.

The meeting concluded at 5:45 pm.

MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 25 January 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), C. Cochrane, E. Jardine, J. PatonDay, F. Sinclair and H. Steel together with 5 representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors L. Douglas, J. Linehan, N. Mackinnon, and D. Parker.

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 17 NOVEMBER 2023**

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 17 November 2023 had been circulated and was noted.

3. **EILDON DAY SERVICES UPDATE**

The Chair welcomed Elke Fabry, Project Manager with Scottish Borders Council to the meeting to provide an update on Day Services in Eildon. Ms Fabry explained that a project had been undertaken in conjunction with the Integrated Joint Board to examine how Day Services were delivered in the Eildon Locality, with a view to provide alternative, community based, services rather than the traditional day centre model. A number of day centres had been decommissioned following a review in 2019, one of which was the Teviot Day Centre, the closure of which had subsequently been declared unlawful. A needs assessment had been undertaken by the IJB in early 2022 which had received 245 responses. 28% of those responses were from the Eildon Locality. A task force, involving the NHS, third sector partners, SBC, and unpaid carer representatives, had been set up to drive progress. A survey had gone live on 2 October 2023, with the closing day extended due to the low volume of responses received. Ms Fabry explained that the focus of that exercise was to reach individuals and groups that were hard to reach. The pyramid of need was presented, and it was highlighted that in day centres once an individual had personal care needs such as assistance with medication, they were not typically able to continue to attend the service. Some other groups were active in the region for people with dementia, however, once personal care was required it was usually not possible for people to continue to attend those services. Further engagement, research and information gathering exercises were underway, with drop-in sessions planned to understand the issues faced by service users across the Locality. Ms Fabry highlighted that within Eildon there were a number of services available in Galashiels, and that it would be important that future service provision did not become too focused on that town alone. The Chair highlighted that the geographic spread of Eildon was considerable, and that being too Galashiels focused was problematic. It was suggested that Ms Fabry consider contacting various groups such as the Alzheimer's Borders and St John's Dementia Group in Selkirk for insight into the issues faced by people across Eildon. The importance of ensuring that effective transport links were in place was highlighted.

Anyone could provide their views through the consultation which was hosted at [Daytime opportunities for older adults with advanced care needs based in Eildon -2024 - Scottish Borders Council - Citizen Space](#).

4. **SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT (SYP) UPDATE**

The Community Engagement Officer, Mr Erin Coltman, provided a summary of the recent Scottish Youth Parliament elections. The elections had been planned for November 2023, however, due to technical difficulties with the voting platform, had taken place in December. The candidates had been recruited in May 2023, and had undergone training and subsequently undertaken campaigning. Scottish Borders Council's Youth Engagement Officer, Ms Pam Rigby, had reported that the candidates had been patient and resilient throughout the process. The Scottish Youth Parliament was a non-political platform focused on legal and social justice issues. Three new Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP) had been elected to represent their peers at a national level. Mr Coltman introduced Alex, one of the newly elected MSYPs to the meeting. Alex explained that she had campaigned on three issues that tended to be overlooked in the Scottish Borders, transport, youthwork, and health and wellbeing. Effective public transport was particularly important to young people given the rural nature of the region. Alex highlighted that youth work had the potential to provide many benefits, particularly related to the mental health of young people. Regarding health and wellbeing, Alex stressed that more should be available to people of all backgrounds. Attendees thanked Alex for attending the meeting, expressed their congratulations on being elected, and suggested that more needed to be done to ensure that the voices of young people were heard at Council meetings. Members encouraged Alex to get in touch with any of the Elected Members if she had an issue to raise.

5. **EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY – SCOTTISH BORDERS INTERVIEWS**

The Community Co-ordinator, Mr Kenny Harrow, highlighted that Heriot Watt University were undertaking a survey on speed limits across the Scottish Borders. The conversations would take approximately 40 minutes and were focused on the 20mph speed limit introduced across the region. Mr Harrow encouraged any interested party to reach out and undertake the survey.

6. **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BUDGET 2023/24**

It was highlighted that a consultation on Scottish Borders Council's 2023/24 budget was live. The budget was due to be set at a meeting of full Council on 29 February 2024. Attendees were encouraged to complete the survey. It was highlighted that some attendees could find the format of the survey problematic, and that it was difficult to suggest how a problem could be addressed without knowing its full extent. Members highlighted that the survey went beyond seeking ideas for savings and asked the residents of the region to provide their feedback on what was most important to them. A further consultation was also ongoing to determine the priorities of young people.

7. **EILDON FUNDING TABLE 2023/24**

There had been circulated copies of the Eildon Funding Table for 2023/24.

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

8.1 There had been circulated copies of the recommendations of the Eildon Assessment Panel with the agenda. Mr Coltman provided a summary of the three applications.

8.2 **Recovery Coaching Scotland**

The application from Recovery Coaching Scotland was for £4,255 to create a breakfast club as a pilot project. The club would support individuals and families affected by substance abuse, social isolation, poor mental health, and poverty in the Eildon Locality. The Group was already providing weekday support, however there was no support available at weekends. The Assessment Panel had recommended to approve the project in full. Mr Rod Anderson of the Group was present to answer questions. In response to a question regarding links between Street Soccer and LiveBorders, Mr Anderson explained

that discussions had been held and it was hoped that 2 coaches could be supported to acquire the appropriate qualifications and lead sessions in the area. The Chair clarified that whilst Recovery Coaching Scotland was a national charity, Borders in Recovery was entirely based in the Scottish Borders. It was unanimously agreed to approve the application in full.

8.3 **Melrose Imagination Library**

Mr Coltman explained that Melrose Imagination Library was a brand new, local organisation, keen to utilise the Dolly Parton's "Dollywood Foundation" Imagination Library which gifted a book to every child in a designated area (Melrose and District), every month from birth until their fifth birthday. Funding was sought from the Eildon Neighbourhood Support Fund to cover the first year of expenses, namely the purchases of books, with funding in future years to come from local fundraising events and other funders. Gabrielle Deehan of the Group was present and responded to questions. Regarding the financial sustainability of the project, Ms Deehan explained that the project was based on a five-year pilot with decreasing reliance on grants. It was led by local parents, and it was hoped that local fundraising efforts would ensure that the project remained viable. It was confirmed that the group was in communication with Borders Community Action. The application for funding was unanimously approved.

8.4 **Borders Chamber Choir**

The application from Borders Chambers Choir was for £4,820 to help Borders Chamber deliver a performance of Bach's St. John Passion on Easter Saturday, 30 March 2024 in Melrose Parish Church. The performance would bring together 55 performers alongside the Borders Chamber Orchestra. The application to the Eildon Neighbourhood Support Fund was primarily for solo performers, travel costs and marketing/publicity. Mr Coltman clarified that the Borders Chambers Choir was a new organisation which had been created following the success of the previously held Waverly concert. Members discussed the application and expressed concerns regarding the legacy element of the project and the wider benefit to the people of Eildon. Councillor Jardine, seconded by Councillor Sinclair, proposed that the application be refused. The motion was unanimously approved and the application for funding was rejected.

9. **NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Area Partnership be held via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting concluded at 7.45 p.m.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHIEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the
CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP
held on Wednesday, 31 January
2024 in Jedforest Rugby Football
Club Rooms, Riverside, Jedburgh at
6.30 pm.

Present: - Councillors S. Hamilton, 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
Alison Grainger – Police Scotland
Katy Jackson – SOSE
Louise Rawlins – CLDS Worker
Beth Landon
Fiona Benton – The Bridge
Susan Oliver – Headteacher, Jedburgh Campus

Apologies: - Councillor E. Robson
Councillor S. Mountford
Dean Weatherston - Chair of Cheviot Assessment Panel
Jill Lothian – Kelso High School
Yvonne O'Hara – SBHA
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
J. Steele - Jedburgh Community Trust
Andrew Findlay - Interest Link Borders
Annette Patterson – Newtown St Boswells

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

1.0 VICE CHAIR

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

DECISION NOTED.

2.0 WELCOME

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

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.

3.0 FEEDBACK FROM THE MEETING ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023

3.1 At the November meeting there had been inputs from NHS, Police Scotland and the Wise Group but there were no actions to take forward from this meeting.

4.0 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 parking continued to be an issue and parking tickets were being issued. Community Officers, wearing plain clothes had patrolled on 2 separate nights in January working with the school link officer, Social Landlords, the Council and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit detecting and reducing vandalism and anti-social behaviour within the area. Work being undertaken in terms of Feedback from the St Boswells Fair, Vulnerable Children meeting, road safety and hate crimes. Police had been involved in the Carers Fairs and had a presence at Senior School Socials. The Police were working with organising committees for event planning and would provide advice and resources where possible. Sergeant Grainger was keen to get Police Officers back onto push bikes for patrolling local areas.

DECISION NOTED.

SECTION 1: SERVICE & PARTNER UPDATE AND CONSULTATIONS

5.0 A Place in Childhood

There had been circulated information on the Children and Teenagers Neighbourhood Plan for Jedburgh which explained that A Place in Children (APiC) had received match funding from Paths for All to engage with children and teenagers in the development of 20 Minute Neighbourhood Strategies for five places across Scotland. The 20-minute neighbourhood concept sought to better align spatial planning with transport planning (transport infrastructure) and community planning, to make it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport to meet their day-to-day needs. However, as a group, children and teenagers typically face the most significant barriers to making sustainable travel choices. Therefore, bespoke engagement with children and teenagers to create their interpretation of their 20-minute neighbourhood would allow decision-makers to understand the critical barriers to movement and prioritise key actions to support opportunities for active and sustainable travel in the long term.

5.1 APiC specialised in children and teenager engagement, working frequently with schools across Scotland. APiC was working closely with the Scottish Borders Council to engage with children and teenagers living in Jedburgh to create a Children and Teenagers Neighbourhood Plan of Jedburgh. The engagement would be two-phase, seeking to achieve the following three outcomes: 1. Facilitate high-quality discussion and trustful dialogue around their local neighbourhood, drawing out gender and age-specific needs and experiences as well as those shared by all. 2. Discuss with participants the best ways to involve their cohort in future stages of design and development of local plans and proposals. 3. Co-facilitate with Local Authority colleagues, to provide on-the-ground mentorship and guidance on meaningful involvement of young people in placemaking. The project would primarily involve creating a children and teenager's map of the local area from their perspectives (experiential mapping) and working with them to identify local opportunities for improvement. Following this, APiC would work with the participants to co-design an engagement and delivery strategy for the long-term ambitions for local improvements. The next stage would involve organising a stakeholder engagement event where some of the children and teenagers involved in creating the plan would present their ideas to the Local Authority and would work together to identify potential opportunities to make their priorities for action happen. The experiential mapping stage of

the project would take place over two days on the 26-27th September, and the stakeholder engagement would take place in December. Additionally, APiC would be consolidating the outputs from all 5 projects into a “How to engage with Children and Teenagers on 20-minute neighbourhoods’ strategy which shall inform the development of a broader 20-minute neighbourhood engagement both within the local place and also for use nationwide.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6.0 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker for SBC regularly attended the Area Partnership meetings to give updates but was unable to attend the meeting and it was agreed that the item be carried forward to the next meeting.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7.0 MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker for SBC was to introduce the newly elected Members for the Scottish Youth Parliament to the Cheviot Area Partnership, however as she was unable to attend the meeting, it was agreed that the item be carried forward to the next meeting.

**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 £14,037.88 leaving a balance of £47,418.48 and applications assessed and awaiting decision totalled £8,316.03.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

Neighbourhood Support Fund

8.2 There had been further discussion on the recruitment of Members to the Panel and Panel Members had sought clarification on who was eligible to sit on the assessment panel. Officers confirmed there were eight member places as follows:

1. Jedburgh Community Councillor
2. Jedburgh District Community Councillor – Vacant
3. Kelso Community Councillor
4. Kelso District Community Councillor – Vacant
5. Jedburgh & District Public Member – Vacant
6. Jedburgh and District Public Member – Vacant

7. Kelso and District Public Member – Position becoming vacant at end of fiscal year.
8. Kelso and District Public Member
- 8.3 It was highlighted the public members can be anyone over the age of 16 who live within the Cheviot Area and could be Community Councillors if their community council place was already filled. The panel discussed how best to promote the opportunity to attract new members and encourage Community Councils to nominate a panel member.
- 8.4 Jedburgh District could nominate one member from either of the following Community Councils: Ancrum; Crailing, Eckford & Nisbet; Jed Valley; Lanton; Maxton & Mertoun; Oxnam Water; St Boswell's.
- 8.5 Kelso District could nominate one member from either of the following Community Councils: Ednam, Stichill & Berry Moss; Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn and Smailholm; Heiton and Roxburgh; Kalewater; Sprouston; Yetholm.
- 8.6 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: -
- 8.7 **Springwood Retirement Village**
An application in the sum of £1,339.03 had been submitted from the Springwood Retirement Village to support with costs of hosting monthly coffee mornings. The group wished to source items such as crockery as well as raffle prizes and resources for advertising the events. The group were very active in the community and had over 90 attendees. Due to these numbers, they had not advertised outside the retirement community however anyone who would like to come along would be welcome. It was noted that many residents were unable to drive so having access to a social activity within walking distance was vital. The panel agreed to recommend the project for funding however it was felt that the element of the £100 for raffle prizes should not be awarded. The recommended total for awarding would therefore be **£1,239.03**.
- 8.8 **Lothian Hall, Crailing**
An application in the sum of £5,877 had been submitted by the Lothian Hall Committee to support the refurbishment of Lothian Hall as well as a re-launch event. The group hoped to refresh the Hall by repainting to create a more welcoming space for community members to use. The Committee would like to offer the space to host weddings and parties and by hosting a re-launch, hoped to attract more bookings. The funding would also be used for the purchase of wine glasses and table runners and for the hire a ceilidh band for the re-launch. The refurbishment and paint works could not be supported as they were already completed and the NSF did not fund retrospect projects, so this element was not eligible for consideration. Therefore, the panel concluded that they would recommend supporting the costs of the relaunch event but not the refurbishment, totalling **£420**.
- 8.9 **Borders Youth Theatre**
An application in the sum of £1,100 had been submitted by the Borders Youth Theatre to support with the cost of running a performance piece in Jedburgh entitled 'Who is Lavinia Derwent'. Lavinia Derwent was born in Jedburgh and was the author of children's stories. Workshops in the local primary school and community would also be delivered as part of the project. The funding would support the hire of writers for the production as well as rent costs and support with admin. As the Cheviot NSF did support staffing costs within its criteria, BYT were contacted to provide clarity on the staffing element and had confirmed that they were subcontracting their writers. The panel agreed this was a

worthwhile project that brought many benefits and opportunities to its young people therefore it was agreed to fund the application for the full amount of **£1,100**.

**DECISION
AGREED**

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

- Springwood Retirement Village - £1,239.03
- Lothian Hall, Crailing - £420
- Borders Youth Theatre - £1,100

(b) the timetable for future meetings as follows: -

Application Deadline	Assessment Panel	Area Partnership
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>

Community Council Updates

9.1 Jedburgh Community Council

- Gutter Cleaning in Town Centre
- Plans being developed to run Town Hall and Library
- Generating power from two caulds
- Old Bakery with Courtyard back in use.
- Building Work to be undertaken to extend the Hydro Pool
- Flooding at Bongate – Jedburgh on list for flood risk assessment and should be undertaken soon.

9.2 Kelso Community Council

- Working on Christmas Lights for 2024
- Rivet Tweed Museum re-opening
- Hosting Air Cadet Parade and Church Service to raise awareness.
- Town Hall had suffered a leak.

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 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

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

Wednesday, 29 May 2024 at 6.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 18 September 2024 at 6.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 20 November 2024 at 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 29 January 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 26 March 2025 at 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 28 May 2025 at 6.30 p.m.

The next meeting would be held face to face on **Wednesday, 27 March 2024** in Kelso Town Hall at 6.30 p.m.

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 7.50 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held VIA
MICROSOFT TEAMS on Tuesday, 6
February 2024 at 7.00 pm

- Present:- Councillors M. Douglas (Chair), D. Begg, J. Pirone, E. Small, R. Tatler, V. Thomson
- Apologies:- Councillor V. Thomson, Colin Kerr
- In Attendance:- Community Engagement Officers (H. Lacon, K. Harrow), P. Rigby, A. Waterston-Law (MSYP) Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)
- Also In Attendance:- C. Lewin (Tweeddale Assessment Panel), P. Maudsley (Chair, Peebles Community Council), Crick Carleton (Chair, Tweeddale Area Partnership Place Making Working Group), J. Jepson, C. Whitmore (Clovenfords & District Community Council), L. Denholm, J. Dobbing, M. Scott, D. Hodson (TYA), F. Drummond, I. Gibson, C. Swan, L. Lovell-Henderson

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership and outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

2. **MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 31 October 2023.

DECISION

NOTED and AGREED the Minute of 31 October 2023 and Action Tracker.

3. **FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Kenny Harrow provided a recap of the last meeting, attended by Chief Executive NHS Borders Ralph Roberts. Further conversations had since taken place as a contribution to Place Making. There were to be opportunities for future discussions as required within the Area Partnership and Community Engagement Officers were available to help facilitate these. Peter Maudsley (Peebles Community Council Chair) informed attendees of his role on the working group regarding the a review of the four community hospitals in the Borders and information was to be brought back to the Area Partnership where appropriate in line with the confidentiality agreement. The working group had been established in response to issues that had arisen in Kelso and Duns regarding an impending lack of Doctor cover previously provided through GPs.

DECISION

NOTED

4. **INTRODUCTION TO MSYP**

Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Officer SBC introduced Alex Waterston-Law who had recently been elected to the Scottish Youth Parliament. Ms Waterston-Law summarised her priorities for attendees: transport and the limitation it places on young people; access to sport; and youth work, particularly in relation to the mental and physical health and

wellbeing of young people. Members and attendees congratulated Ms Waterston-Law on her appointment and Councillor Pirone advised her of a new youth work task group that was to begin in Tweeddale. Any correspondence was to be directed to Pam Rigby until such time as all MSYPs had been allocated an email account; Pam Rigby was also to be copied in to all emails sent to MSYPs. The MSYPs' email addresses were to be circulated to Members by Pam Rigby once set up.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. PEEBLES TOWN TEAM UPDATE

Crick Carleton provided a summary of progress to date on Place Making in Peebles. The team had produced a working draft of an updated town action plan that was available to view and download from SBC website ([Peebles \(arcgis.com\)](http://Peebles(arcgis.com))). Consultants had been recruited via the SBC Place Making Support Framework to support the finalisation of the place plan and town action plan. At the appropriate time, consultants could be recruited by Place Planning/ Town Teams for two purposes: (1) to support communities in the development of their Place Plan and (2) to develop investment proposals for items identified in Place Plans. Funding was in place to be drawn down from the Shared Prosperity Fund where appropriate. A summary of the consultant's remit was shared with attendees and was expected to be finalised for Peebles in May 2024; the result being an accessible, public facing Town Action Plan to sit alongside the Peebles Place Plan. Attendees were advised that any application for funding had to demonstrate that the objectives were deliverable, fundable and were likely to have the support of Planning partners. A short history of the Peebles Place Making Team and its contributors, including SBC, was provided and the processes of applying for consultancy funding and engaging a consultant was explained. It was suggested that communities required more help to develop capacity within to enable them to take the Place Planning process forward. Borders Community Action was engaged in a pilot project in Berwickshire for a Development Officer whose remit was to build capacity. There was a request for Tweeddale to have a similar role. Hannah Lacon was the SBC point of contact at Hannah.lacon@scotborders.gov.uk.

DECISION

NOTED the update

6. FLOOD MANAGEMENT IN TWEEDDALE

Due to the absence of Colin Kerr, it was agreed to continue discussion on the matter until the next meeting of the Area Partnership. A meeting of the Flood Group was to be held on 15 February and it was requested that the minute of that meeting be circulated to Members.

7. FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW

There had been circulated copies of the Tweeddale Funding Table which showed available funds in the Tweeddale area. Kenny Harrow reported that there was an opening balance of £60,138.77 at 1 April 2023. Were all applications under consideration to be successful, there would be £2,774.53 left.

DECISION

NOTED

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND

- 8.1 Chris Lewin of the Tweeddale Assessment panel provided an overview of each of the applications. The Assessment Panel had carefully considered each application and any conflicts of interest were declared during the Panel's deliberations.

Innerleithen Pipe Band had requested £4,000 towards the purchase of new drums. The balance was to be paid from various local fundraising events.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £4,000

Home Basics Co Ltd had requested £1,3200 towards the costs of purchasing tablets and sim cards to update their delivery system which was currently on paper. It was suggested that they contact SBC's IT delivery partner CGI directly as an alternative.

DECISION
AGREED NOT TO FUND

Innerleithen Community Council applied for £4,200 to support with the costs to run an arts event, funding for 2025 and a website.

DECISION
AGREED NOT TO FUND

Clovenfords Community Council applied for £3,600 to finance a flood risk assessment to prepare for a larger project to construct a new bridge to replace the existing one which is inadequate. Jennfer Jepson and Chris Whitmore from Clovenfords Community Council provided further information on the need for the risk assessment to be done in order to obtain funding for the bridge construction.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £3,600

Tweeddale Youth Action applied for £2,237 towards the one-off £2,596 cost of setting up a pizza shop on Peebles High Street.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £2,237

St Ronan's Silver Band applied for £3,000 towards the cost of replacement uniforms. Members agreed that fundraising should be undertaken by the band for half of the cost.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £1,500

Greener Peebles applied for £6,000 towards the cost of a new and improved poly tunnel (polycrub) to replace one damaged in a recent storm. As there was no evidence of other funding sought, the funding award was capped at £5,000.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £5,000

Innerleithen Community Trust applied for £5,000 towards the £7,810 cost of repainting the Memorial Hall's entrances.

DECISION
AGREED TO FUND £5,000

Oor Space Youthy applied for £7,014 towards the £9,570 cost of staff salaries for the two leaders and hall rent for the first half of 2024. Clare Swan (Oor Space Youthy) spoke to the additional information, circulated to the Assessment Panel and Members. Iain Gibson (Peebles Youth Voice) also spoke in favour of the application. There followed a discussion on the amount to award the organization as there was no evidence of funding sought elsewhere. Members unanimously supported an award of £7,014 as they considered this to be a unique case. Regarding the ongoing sustainability of Oor Space Youthy, Members were informed of their plans to liaise closely with Peebles Youth Voice and Peebles Youth Trust to develop a fundraising strategy going forward.

DECISION

AGREED TO FUND £7,014

Newlands and District Playgroup applied for £3,888 towards the £4,276 cost to employ a part-time teacher in their gardening activity.

DECISION

AGREED TO FUND £3,888

Tweed Togs applied for £7,500 towards the total project cost of £8,055 to rent storage units. Tweed Togs supplies good quality, donated clothing to local families in need. As there was no evidence of other funding sought, the funding award was capped at £5,000.

DECISION

AGREED TO FUND £5,000

Peebles Scout Group applied for £3,000 towards the £3,500 cost of renovating its outdoor meeting area.

DECISION

AGREED TO FUND £3,000

Following the agreed awards, Hannah Lacon informed Members that there was now £12,953 remaining in the Neighbourhood Support Fund. There were two applications for consideration at the meeting on 19 March, with an expectation that there would be several more. If the Fund was oversubscribed for 2023/24, groups were to be encouraged to apply 2024/25.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Kenny Harrow advised attendees that members of staff of Edinburgh Napier University were to be conducting interviews with adults who live in villages or towns across the Scottish Borders. They were to ask a broad range of questions about aspects of quality of life, traffic and travel and whether speed limit changes made any differences to people's lives and, if so, how and why. It was the intention to speak to people who had lived in towns and villages in the Scottish Borders since at least 2018. The interviews were to last no longer than 60 minutes and were to be conducted on-line, where possible. Face-to-face interviews were to be conducted in Council hub buildings accessible by the interviewees. The interviews were to be recorded, and required consent for the interviews from the potential interviewees. Interested persons were to contact the University directly; S.Tully@napier.ac.uk or A.Davis@napier.ac.uk .

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership was noted as 19 March 2024 which was to be at Drill Hall, Walkershaugh, Peebles, EH45 8AU.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Blended Meeting of the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in Council
Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown
St Boswells and via Microsoft Teams on
Tuesday, 13 February 2024 at 10.00 am

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

Also Present: Councillor W. McAteer.

Apologies:- Councillors C. Cochrane, L. Douglas, J. Linehan, J. Pirone and E. Thornton-
Nicol.

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

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 5 December 2023.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of the Education Sub-
Committee held on 24 October 2023.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

3. **MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24**

3.1 there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement
which provided an update on the progress of the delivery of the 2023/24 Capital Financial
Plan and sought approval for the virements and reallocation of funds required following
the review of funding and forecasts as at the December Month end. The monitoring
tables were contained in Appendix 1 to the report on actual expenditure to 31 December
2023 and the key issues and highlights identified in those numbers were summarised.
The December month end position reflected a projected outturn of £96.9m against a
budget of £116.6m, giving a net budget variance of £19.7m. That budget variance
included net timing movements from 2023/24 into future years of £22m offset by funding
increases of £2.4m from external funding for the Borders Innovation Park (£0.836m),
insurance receipt for Peebles Swimming Pool (£0.481m), additional budget for Plant &
Vehicle from the Fund (£0.720m) and increased capital receipts which partially offset the
Planned Programme Adjustments (£0.465m). Further timing movements from 2023/24
may occur at year end as the construction materials supply chain continued to experience
disruption causing delays in sourcing essential materials and impacting on project
timelines.

3.2 A number of macro-economic factors continued to affect the Capital Plan in 2023/24.
Recent levels of inflation along with disruption in the construction materials supply chain
continued to impact on the wider economy and consequently the Council. A surge in
demand coupled with constraints on supply had led to price increases, material shortages
and longer lead times. The impact on tender prices for major projects and the wider
Capital Plan continued to be assessed and built into forecasted costs as they were

identified. Current legally committed projects had a smaller risk of impact and block programmes of work could operate within a cash constrained budget and were considered lower risk; although it was likely to impact on the scale of project delivery within the blocks. The financial implications from those unfavourable market conditions would continue to be reported through the regular budget monitoring cycle with the longer-term impacts reflected in the financial planning process. During the 2023/24 budget setting process a Planned Programming Adjustment budget line was added to the Financial Plan, that was offset where unspent project budgets became available through the year. The remaining balance to be addressed in 2023/24 was £0.368m following some small underspends in projects and the application of capital receipts. Appendix 2 to the report contained a list of the block funding allocations approved for this year as well as the approved projects, actual spend to the end of September and the movement requiring virements within the blocks. Appendix 3 to the report contained a list of estimated whole project capital costs for projects which in the main would not be completed in the current financial year. As detailed within the approved 2023/24 Financial Plan there was a requirement for the Council to borrow to fund the Capital Programme and that would be actioned during the final quarter of the year, in line with the Treasury Strategy and advice from our external advisors. The latest version of the CIPFA Prudential Code, published in December 2021, required from financial year 2023/24 onwards that quarterly monitoring of prudential indicators should be reported by Councils. To meet that, quarters 2 and 4 of each financial year would continue to be reported through existing treasury management reports. Quarters 1 and 3, which were not previously reported, were included in the report and Appendix 4 to the report provided an updated position on key treasury indicators as at the 31 December 2023 quarter end. The information provided was a snapshot at the end of quarter 3. There were no concerns to highlight. The Director – Finance and Procurement, Mrs Suzy Douglas, presented the report and responded to questions. In response to a question regarding the proposed level of borrowing, Mrs Douglas explained that plans were in place for £30m of borrowing, however further borrowing in 2024/25 was expected. Regarding the anticipated expenditure on Borderlands projects, Mrs Douglas undertook to discuss matters and provide an explanation following the meeting. Members commended Mrs Douglas for her work in difficult circumstances and expressed their hope that capital could be deployed to fund the provision of utilities and services to industrial sites in the future.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) the projected outturn in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget and approved the virements required;**
- (b) to note the list of block allocations in Appendix 2 to the report and approved the required virements;**
- (c) to note the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3 to the report;**
- (d) to note the requirement to borrow funding during Q4 of 2023/24 to fund capital expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (e) to note the update on key Treasury indicators at the 31 December 2023 as contained in Appendix 4 to the report.**

4. MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which provided budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 31 December 2023 along with explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn and the current approved budget. Services were currently forecasting an unfunded overspend of £3.0m at the end of the financial

year. That was £1.7m more than the unfunded position reported to in November. Service pressures continued to be experienced across the Council. Budget overspends remained within out of area placements for young people (£1.8m) and new overspends in ASN and School transport had been identified of £0.9m due to increased contract pricing. A further £0.2m overspend in IT and £0.1m less Council Tax income were also reported. Several actions were agreed on 14th November in order to reduce the level of overspend facing the Council. The freeze on discretionary spend had not created a material underspend across the Council but was likely to have positively impacted on the individual service positions. The impact of the freeze on discretionary expenditure would continue to be tracked. A significant element of expenditure was traditionally incurred in the last quarter of the year and the freeze enacted should be expected to impact during the last 3 months of the financial year. Further instruction had been issued to managers across the Council reiterating the need to reduce expenditure. The 6-week delay on recruitment of vacant posts created savings of £0.3m which have been used to partially offset corporate financial plan savings. Under the Council's financial regulations, no earmarking, outwith specific Council policy, could take place unless the Council had a balanced outturn position. Within the overall Q3 position reported, £0.8m of funding which was carried forward from 2022/23 had not been spent and was therefore supporting the Council's overall position. Within Resilient Communities £0.5m had not been utilised, mainly relating to No one left behind (£0.375m) and within Properties and Facilities £0.3m set aside to support the delivery of sustainability and carbon reduction had not been used for the original purpose. The overall overspend of £3.0m posed a significant risk to the Council's ability to balance the 2023/24 budget, one off measures would be required at the year end to ensure the Council did not overspend this financial year. Financial plan savings of £11.505m were planned to be delivered in 2023/24. An analysis of delivery of savings as at the end of quarter 3 was provided in Appendix 3 to the report. That analysis showed that following the December month end £6.348m (55%) savings had been delivered permanently, and £5.157m (45%) had been delivered on a temporary basis through alternative means, that included corporate savings held within Finance and Corporate Governance amounting to £1.994m relating to a new commissioning strategy (£0.250m) and digital transformation (£1.744m). Members thanked Mrs Douglas for the report and highlighted that the Council was facing one of its most challenging financial situations in its history. Difficult decisions regarding the long-term financial security of the Council needed to be made, and it was stressed that the Budget Working Group should be convened earlier in the financial year to begin its work on the budget setting process.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) note the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 31 December 2023, the remaining pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of that position and the identified areas of financial risk as contained in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) a pause on all non-statutory spend until 31 March 2024 to mitigate some of £3.0m overspend detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (c) note the need to agree robust delivery plans for 2024/25 savings before the start of the next financial year;**
- (d) notes the Recovery Fund resources detailed in Appendix 2;**
- (e) notes the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 3; and**
- (f) approve the virements attached in Appendices 4 and 5 to the report.**

4. BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2024

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 August 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which provided an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2023 and advised of the projected balances at 31 March 2024. The Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £9.980m at 31 March 2023. The General Fund useable reserve was projected to be around £7.0m at 31 March 2024, that followed a £1m transfer of funding to Live Borders as approved at Council on 14th December 2023 and a planned drawdown of £1.2m towards the 2023/24 pay award (£0.37m of which would be returned by Scottish Government next year). The total of all useable balances, excluding development contributions, at 31 March 2024 was projected to be £57.15m. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £9.284m (including development contributions) as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, would be affected by any further capital receipts, development contributions, interest received, and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year. Members acknowledged that whilst it was not ideal to deploy reserves, it was prudent to do so where services needed to be protected. In response to a question regarding developer contributions for the Waverly Railway, the Chief Executive outlined that the obligation to provide developer contributions to Transport Scotland had been bought out by the Council in 2017. Regarding the potential uses for education developer contributions, Mrs Douglas explained that there was a direct relationship between the capital plan and contributions. Certain contributions needed to be used for specific purposes. Members expressed their hope that there would be greater flexibility to allow developer contributions to be used for a larger range of projects. The Director – Infrastructure and Environment, Mr John Curry, confirmed that work was ongoing to assess how developer contributions could be used more effectively.

**DECISION
NOTED:-**

- (a) the audited 2022/23 revenue balances as at 31 March 2023;**
- (b) the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2024 as contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report; and**
- (c) the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.**

6. DEBT RECOVERY POLICY

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Finance and Procurement which presented the updated Debt Recovery Policy. The Debt Recovery Policy set out a framework for providing a fair, consistent and transparent approach to collecting sundry debt ensuring that the Council continued to maximise collection performance. Appendix 1 to the report contained the Council's Debt Recovery Policy, which had been amended to reflect changes to Council structure, roles and responsibilities, working practices, and an update of Performance Indicators and Targets. Members thanked Mrs Douglas for the report and highlighted that the Policy was well balanced and had sufficient safeguards in place to protect vulnerable people.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the amendments to the Debt Recovery Policy.

7. PEEBLES POOL FIRE – LESSONS LEARNED

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting held on 13 June 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director – Infrastructure and Environment which outlined the lessons learned review that took place with the relevant Council Officers, the Council's Insurers, Loss Adjustors and Contractors following the Fire at Peebles Swimming Pool on 19 June 2022. The review had made findings on a range of

points. A review was to be undertaken across the operational and leased estate on how bins were managed and stored to prevent this type of scenario occurring again elsewhere within the Borders. That should focus initially on 'high risk' buildings such as schools, followed by those where external organisations occupied and managed Council owned buildings. The Council and those that managed its buildings needed to regularly audit assets to reduce risks. Leases and Service Level Agreements should be redrafted clearly explaining responsibilities of all parties. A claims protocol should be developed to clearly outline the process and responsibilities of landlord, tenant, and other relevant parties during and following an incident to ensure clarity and timely nature of response. A project team (led by the Council) should be established and begin working immediately post incident to respond and support the reinstatement whilst also engaging with key parties and stakeholders. A communications plan would be determined with the project reinstatement group at the outset. Input from the Loss Adjustor along with the appointment of relevant specialists was required immediately post incident to ensure accurate information was captured at the outset of a claim. Members welcomed the report and encouraged Mr Curry to ensure that the key lessons highlighted in the report were acted upon and robust processes put in place. Mr Curry undertook to ensure that timescales were provided where possible in the protocols which were to be put in place. It was highlighted that whilst the Pool had been closed for longer than expected due to the extra works which had been undertaken it was now in a much better condition due to those works.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to acknowledge and endorse the lessons learned outcomes outlined within the report;**
- (b) that further reports were brought to the Executive Committee for consideration as they were developed during 2024/25.**

The meeting concluded at 10.50 pm

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held via MICROSOFT
TEAMS on Wednesday, 28 February 2024 at
4.00 pm

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

In Attendance:- Director Corporate Governane (from 16:30), S. Coe (Beneficiaries Group), J. Dyer, Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

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. Item 6 was to be taken in Private due to commercially sensitive information.

2. BENEFICIARIES GROUP UPDATE

2.1 The Chair shared the main points from the meeting of the Beneficiaries Group on 27 February 2024, the Note of which was to be appended to this Minute, along with the draft project vision document and the consultation report. The application to the Levelling Up Fund had been submitted to Scottish Government on 9 February and a response was expected in the next two weeks. If the bid was successful a project team was to be established. There had been a discussion on the wider Chambers Institution Trust vision, led by Jason Dyer, and Mr Dyer summarised the draft vision for attendees. The draft vision document had brought together the work previously undertaken with Members and stakeholders and defined what was to be incorporated into Levelling Up Funding envelope and the elements that required funding beyond. Potential income generation and the charitable community aspects were also considered. A summary of each **proposed** floor plan was provided as follows:

- the ground floor was to incorporate a new reception and information space, the children's library and associated activities, access to the Burgh Hall and Registrar maintained and a small informal café space with landscaping to the courtyard area;
- the first floor was to incorporate a state-of-the-art modern museum space, adult library and public access computers;
- the second floor was to incorporate a GIS compliant art gallery with thought to be given to how to make the balcony area health and safety compliant; and
- the third floor was to provide general storage and exhibition packing areas.

Consideration was to be given to the siting of the lift type and access. There was potential to develop a mezzanine level in the Burgh Hall for both income generation and museum collection storage. Feedback on the draft vision document was to be provided and a drop-in event was to be held on 18 March in the Burgh Hall.

2.2 The governance framework for the Chambers Institution Trust was to be developed. A new Chair was needed for the Beneficiaries Group who was not also a Trustee and it was hoped that someone would be identified soon. Trustees were to hold a meeting to discuss wider governance issues in relation to the organisation and the project to be undertaken through the Levelling Up Fund award.

- 2.3 An update on the Burgh Hall renovations had been shared by Gareth Smith (SBC), the details of which were provided in the Beneficiaries Group Note attached to this Minute.
- 2.4 With regards to the installation of acoustic panels, there was to be further discussion and a decision to be taken on colour matching the panels to the walls and appropriate consultation with the Heritage Officer.
- 2.5 The art work was to be temporarily displayed in the foyer for the drop-in meeting at the Burgh Hall on 18 March to gather feedback on its situation in the building. Discussions were to continue regarding a legal agreement between the Trust and the artist and costs to be incurred for a display cabinet.
- 2.6 There had been an enquiry made about the vacant shop and discussions were to continue on any plan to advertise the unit for rental.
- 2.7 Crick Carleton, Chair of the Peebles Place Making Working Group, had drawn attention to the need for the Trust project to contribute to the overall town plan.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

3. JOHN BUCHAN MUSEUM

- 3.1 The Chair had no further update to provide on possible measures to improve the frontage and signage of the museum. There was a request that an update be brought to the next meeting and the Chair agreed to liaise with Gareth Smith to that end. Further dialogue was to be had with Planning officers.
- 3.2 Sam Coe reported back on the status of the flat; the tenant had rented from the Trust since before 2014, and from SBC since 2014.

DECISION

AGREED that an update be obtained from Gareth Smith for the next meeting.

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.

5. P.H.D. FUNdamentals Pop-Up Shop

Members considered a request to use the vacant unit for a fundraising pop-up shop.

6. BURGH HALL FOYER CABINET

Members considered a quotation for the supply and installation of a wood and glazed display cabinet.

7. GOVERNANCE OF CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

Members discussed key priorities for the governance structure of the Chambers Institution Trust.

The meeting concluded at 4.55pm.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday,
28 February 2024 at 5.00 pm

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

Apologies:- Councillor E. Small, Estates Surveyor (T. Hill)

In Attendance:- Director Corporate Governance, Statutory Reporting and Treasury Business
Partner (K. Robertson), 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.

2. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 22 November 2023.

DECISION

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

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

- 3.1 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 nine months to 31 December 2023, a full year projected out-turn for 2023/24, projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2024 and proposed budget for 2024/25. Finance Officer Kirsten Robertson presented the report. Appendix 1 showed the projected income and expenditure for 2023/24, with a projected deficit of £27,804 for the year. Appendix 2 detailed a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 with at projected decrease in reserves of £208,312. 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 31 December 2023. Appendix 3b provided a breakdown of the property portfolio with projected property expenditure for 2023/24 and actual property expenditure to 31 December 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 31 December 2023.
- 3.2 The Chair asked for the income from Greenside Car Park to be transferred to the Parking Fund. It was acknowledged that staffing pressures had prevented this from being actioned before now. In response to a question about rental income from Common Good Land at the Gytes, Director Corporate Governance reported that most of the land at that site was not owned by Peebles Common Good and agreed to investigate the matter further.
- 3.3 There was a brief discussion on an increase to the amount of grant funding allocated to 2024/25; £14k had been proposed in the Financial Report. An amount of £20k was proposed by The Chair and this was seconded by Councillor Pirone. Members agreed to allocate £20k to grant funding for 2024/25.

DECISION
AGREED to:

- (a) the projected income and expenditure for 2023/24 in Appendix 1 as the revised budget for 2023/24;
- (b) the proposed budget for 2024/25 be set at £20,000;
- (c) note the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2024 in Appendix 2;
- (d) note the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4;
- (e) note the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5; and
- (f) bring a report on net income received on Greenside Car Park and Lease of the Gytes Pitch to Peebles Rugby Club.

4. HAYLODGE PARK TREE PLANTING

In the absence of Malcolm Ginns, Ecology Officer, Members discussed the proposal to plant six fruit trees in Haylodge Park, some of which were to replace fruit trees lost in the past year. Members agreed to the planting and also requested a planting plan for the parks owned by the Common Good.

DECISION
AGREED to

- (a) the planting of replacement fruit trees in Haylodge Park.
- (b) a planting plan be brought to the next meeting.

5. CLUSTER PRIMARY SCHOOL BIKE EVENT

There had been circulated a request from Caroline Wallace, Inspire teacher for UCI World Cycling Championship, for the use of Victoria Park for a Primary 7 Peeblesshire cluster schools event on 30 May 2024. It was requested that Communications promote the event to the public.

DECISION

AGREED to the use of Victoria Park for the cluster schools event on 30 May 2024.

6. ROYAL COMPANY OF ARCHERS EVENT – HAYLODGE PARK

There had been circulated copies of a request for the Royal Company of Archers 'Peebles Arrow' competition to be held at Haylodge Park on 19 July 2024. Mr Charlie Wallace, Secretary to the Royal Company of Archers, provided a background summary to the event, last held in Peebles in 2016. The event was to begin from the Tontine Hotel, High Street and parade to Haylodge Park. The 350 year old competition was to be held over a 180 yard distance using long bows. A member of the public had made a representation to Members over concern that women were not permitted to take part. Mr Wallace confirmed that female archers were to be included from 2025, and female membership of the Royal Company of Archers was possible currently. It was acknowledged that the organisation was in a period of transition to become more inclusive. Mr Wallace agreed to return to the Sub-Committee to provide a report on public feedback gathered on the day of the event. Mr Wallace expressed an interest in the involvement of the Ex-Services Pipe Band in the parade from the High Street to Haylodge Park. There followed a brief discussion during which Members expressed a divergence of opinion; consequently, a vote was held.

VOTE

Councillor Pirone, seconded by Councillor Tatler moved a motion that the Royal Company of Archers Event be held at Haylodge Park.

Councillor Thomson, seconded by Councillor Douglas moved an amendment that the Royal Company of Archers Event not be held at Haylodge Park.

As the meeting was conducted by Microsoft Teams Members were unable to vote by the normal show of hands and gave a verbal response as to how they wished to vote, the result of which was as follows:-

Motion – 3 votes

Amendment – 2 votes

The Motion was accordingly carried.

DECISION

AGREED to hold the Royal Company of Archers ‘Peebles Arrow’ competition in Haylodge Park on 19 July 2024.

7. TREE WORKS: TWEED GREEN

There had been circulated details of pollarding required on Tweed Green on health and safety grounds.

DECISION

AGREED to proposed pollarding of trees on Tweed Green.

8. PEEBLES GOLF CLUB

There had been circulated a presentation from Peebles Golf Club, the purpose of which was to inform Members of the irrigation challenges at the club and measures taken to find solutions. Stuart Pender, Secretary/Manager of Peebles Golf Club, asked that Members consider some financial support to the Club to help meet the costs incurred thus far. Mr Pender was advised to submit a funding application for consideration by the Sub-Committee in time for the next meeting.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

9. FUNDING APPLICATION: COMMON GOOD EXHIBITION

There had been circulated copies of a funding application from Peebles Community Trust for £1,100 to produce an exhibition on the Peebles Common Good Fund. It was noted that a Facebook forum had been created by interested individuals to promote the Common Good to the public.

DECISION

AGREED to award £1,100 to Peebles Community Trust to produce a Peebles Common Good Fund exhibition.

10. PARKING IN HAYLODGE PARK

The Chair reported that he had been made aware of rugby players parking in Haylodge Park directly outside the Club training gym. Members agreed to the Chair’s proposal that he contact the Rugby Club directly to advise players to park outwith Haylodge Park.

DECISION

AGREED to the Chair contacting Peebles Rugby Club.

11. ASTRONOMY ON THE GREEN: FEEDBACK

There had been circulated copies of the feedback given by Tweeddale Astronomical Society on their public star gazing sessions on Tweed Green.

DECISION

NOTED.

12. ANY OTHER ITEMS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: PROPERTY UPDATE

Director Corporate Governance provided an update on ongoing work to address the process and charges for public use of Common Good land across the Scottish Borders. An officer group had been formed and had examined other local authority practice; the

conclusion was that SBC had a blank canvas to design their own approach. The Events team were in the process of compiling a process for public use of Common Good land and associated charges. A report was to be produced in due course.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

13. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

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.

14. **PRIVATE MINUTE**

Members considered the Private Minutes of 11 October 2023.

15. **VICTORIA PARK LIGHTING**

Members considered options and costs for the supply and installation of lights in Victoria Park.

16. **PROPERTY UPDATE**

Members considered a property update from Estates Surveyor, Tricia Hill.

The meeting concluded at 6.20 pm

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