

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND
LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM held in Lesser
Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on Tuesday, 20th
January, 2015 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors G Turnbull (Chairman), W McAteer, S Marshall, D Paterson,
R Smith, Community Councillors: Mr C Knox (Hawick),
Mr W Roberts (Denholm), Mr R Scott (Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage)

Apologies:- Councillor A Cranston, Mr M Grieve (Burnfoot Community Council), Mr C
Griffiths (Hobkirk) Mrs M Short (Hawick) Station Commander R Bell (Scottish
Fire and Rescue Service), Neighbourhood Area Manager (A Finnie) and
Inspector C Wood (Police Scotland)

In Attendance:- Mr D Richardson (Asset Manager), Mr A Young (Street Lighting Team
Leader), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull)

Members of the Public:- 3 in attendance

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 16 December 2014.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE**

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute, Councillor McAteer advised that he had contacted Mr J Raine, Chairman of NHS Borders, who had advised that he was unable to give any information on the proposed consultation at the present time. However, a Board meeting had been scheduled for 19 February to discuss the process and Councillors would be informed of the dates after that meeting. The Chairman advised that the date for the public consultation would be promoted. With reference to paragraph 13, a representative from Amey had been invited to attend the Forum and would provide an update at that time. The Forum reported that the Albert Bridge and Wilton Hill potholes required maintenance. Mr Richardson, Asset Manager, clarified that if Scottish Borders Council (SBC) carried out repairs to potholes; this work would have been coordinated through Amey and be recharged.

DECISION

NOTED.

3. **HAWICK CCTV**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Service Director Commercial Services outlining the existing Public Space CCTV camera provision options for the installation of additional Public Space CCTV cameras within the central area of the town. There were currently seven Public Space CCTV cameras located within central Hawick (Appendices A, B and C attached to the report referred). Members of Hawick and Hermitage Ward had expressed a desire for additional Public Space CCTV cameras to be located in the following areas – High Street/Sandbed; The Howegate; Drumlanrig Square; North Bridge Street, as shown in Appendices A, B and C attached to the report. Police Scotland had been consulted regarding the proposal and had supported additional cameras being

located as detailed. Longer term the Council was unlikely to be in a position to fund the installation and maintenance of public space CCTV systems, though in conjunction with the Police it would be supportive of communities that were willing to fund such CCTV systems themselves. The five Members in attendance unanimously supported the expansion of the CCTV system and thanked officers and the Police for their cooperation supporting the project. It was noted that by approving the project the Forum showed a commitment to the ongoing maintenance costs. The Chairman advised that the work would be completed by the end of the financial year. In respect of The Howegate, Mr Richardson, Asset Manager, advised that he would discuss with Mr Hastie, Estates Manager, the use of Council owned premises to host the recording equipment.

DECISION

- (a) **AGREED to £10,940 from the Pay & Display and Quality of Life Budgets to fund the installation and maintenance of additional public space cameras at the following locations:**
- (i) **Town Centre**
 - (ii) **North Bridge Street**
 - (iii) **Howegate**
 - (iv) **Drumlanrig Square**

The Quality of Life budget to be used first to fund the new camera installation and topped up using the Pay & Display budget; and

- (b) **NOTED that longer term, the Council was unlikely to be in a position to fund the installation and ongoing maintenance of public space CCTV systems. However, in conjunction with the Police the Council would be supportive of communities that wished to install and maintain such systems at their cost. Proceeding with the proposed new CCTV cameras would ultimately mean that the Hawick community would have to fund the future maintenance of these cameras (and the existing CCTV installations) if they wished to retain them.**

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

There had been circulated, at the meeting, copies of an updated spreadsheet prepared by the Service Director Neighbourhood Services updating the Forum on previously approved Neighbourhood and Quality of Life Schemes. Councillor Smith advised that the shelter at the Wellogate cemetery had developed a leak could this be investigated? It was noted that the remaining balance for Neighbourhood Small Schemes was £3,755.00 and the Quality of Life balance was £13,975.00

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the updates on previously approved Neighbourhood Small Schemes as detailed in Appendix A to the report; and**
- (b) **NOTED the updates on previously approved Neighbourhood Quality of Life Schemes as detailed in Appendix B to the report.**

5. POLICE SCOTLAND

There had been circulated, at the meeting, copies of a report from Inspector Wood, Police Scotland, which updated the Forum on the performance, activities and issues up to 31 December 2014. The report highlighted that reported crime was on a par as at this time last year. Whilst it was disappointing to see the drop in solvency rates, there had been a drop in the reports of serious and minor assaults and sexual crimes, coupled with an increase in the number of people being detected for the supply and production of drugs. There were currently 29 individuals at various stages of the anti social behaviour process. During December nine Anti Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty tickets had been issued. There had been a number of searches carried out, which had resulted in a number of recoveries of alcohol and one of drugs. On 9 December, a cattle lorry had been found

abandoned on the Bonchester to Hawick road, a quad bike was on the back. The vehicle and bike had been stolen from Kirkton and a positive line of enquiry was progressing. Three quad bikes had been stolen from a secure farm shed in the Newcastleton area, enquiries were continuing. Visits to itinerant scrap metal dealers continued. Over the next few months, an information leaflet, covering a range of issues relating to rural theft, would be delivered to every farm in the Scottish Borders. Police Scotland would also utilise the Scottish Border Council SB Alert scheme to disseminate information and appeals, and encouraged signing up to the scheme at www.sbalert.co.uk. Road checks had been carried out in both Ward areas during the period. One ticket had been issued for the use of a mobile phone and one driver was given a warning for the anti social use of a motor vehicle. In Burnfoot, two persons were charged with a number of road traffic offences and two mopeds were seized. A large fire occurred at Spital Tower, Denholm resulting in extensive damage and the total loss of property. Enquiries established the fire was not suspicious. A male had been searched on the High Street and found to be in possession of a large kitchen knife; the male had been arrested, charged and kept in custody to appear at court. Officers had attended an alarm activation at the Superdrug premises and discovered the shop had been forcibly entered and various items stolen. On the same evening, there had also been an attempt to enter Yeomans' Outdoor Leisure premises. Enquiries had led to the search of two residential properties under warrant and enquires were progressing. As part of Operation Archerfish, officers had stopped a vehicle close to the Carter Bar, which was believed to be heading for Hawick, a search of the vehicle recovered drugs with a street value of £9,000. There had been a delay in updating the Ward plans and these should appear on the Police Scotland website in the next few weeks.

Councillor Marshall stated that Hobkirk Community Council were concerned at the increase in rural crime. Councillor McAteer expressed concern at the 12% drop in solvency rates and the increase in drug offences. He acknowledged that it was not the fault of Officers but the reduction in policing numbers that was the cause.

DECISION

NOTED the Forum's concern to the drop in solvency rates.

6. **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.**

There had been circulated, at the meeting, a report from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service which updated the Forum on activity for the month of December 2014. There had been five house fire occurrences, two open fires, two special services and 10 unwanted fire signals. Initiatives being carried out in the area at the moment were: Young Drivers S6 Programme, aimed at educating new/potential drivers; Fire Safety Visits, all year round; Firesharp, face to face education within primary schools; Crucial Crew, a multi-agency event at Tweedbank for pupils; Fire Safety Audits; Fire Case Study and Adult & Child Protection policies ensuring multi agency involvement. The winter season thematic period was now active and focused on: Festive safety, safety at home, fire and alcohol and cooking safety. Councillor Marshall requested that in relation to unwanted fire signals, the Forum could be informed of the type of premises involved e.g. factory, business, shop. This information might assist in reducing the occurrences.

DECISION

NOTED.

7. **OPEN QUESTIONS.**

A member of the public asked why the Council were proceeding with the Great Tapestry of Scotland project. He requested that the Leader of the Council advise the public at the next meeting the reasons for the Council's decision. The Chairman responded that he had voted against as he had not considered the project to be commercially viable, he also felt that the estimate of visitor numbers was over optimistic. Councillor Smith confirmed that he had voted for the proposal and he considered that the business case would be a positive outcome and the project was more a matter of economic development rather than

culture. He advised that the building at Tweedbank would be owned by Scottish Borders Council and be leased to a new Trust which would operate the Tapestry attraction. The venue should also be marketed for events and occasions such as weddings. The cost was approximately half between SBC and the Scottish Government. Councillor McAteer had been concerned at the lack of debate to consider utilising suitable existing premises instead of a new build. Secondly, no consultation had taken place, for a significant capital spend of £275k over 30 years. The timing was not right of this project when there were cuts in services. Councillor Marshall agreed that it was not a priority for spending public money.

DECISION

AGREED that the Clerk request the Leader of the Council, advise the Forum the reasons for the Council's decision in relation to the Great Tapestry of Scotland project.

A member of the public stated that when the Robertson wind turbines were decommissioned, they would be too large to be transported back through Denholm and would be left on site.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

In answer to a question regarding securing cameras on rural, public roads to deter crime, Councillor McAteer advised that security cameras could only be installed as a traffic measure.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT.**

Mr Scott, Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Community Council advised the Hermitage Village Hall Committee had advised that the Community Council could use the hall notice board for a fee of £45 per annum. The Forum hoped that they Hall Committee would allow use of their Notice Board. However, if there was no progress consideration would be given to providing the Forum with their own notice board.

Mr Roberts from Denholm Community Council advised on the progress of the election; the closing date for nominations was 28 January 2015. Notices had been published and a press release issued.

Mr Knox from Hawick Community Council advised that resilient leaflets were being delivered in the town. The use of a mobile catering unit was being considered for Wilton Lodge Park. They were awaiting a meeting with Council Officers and Ward Members to progress the Wilton Cemetery Remembrance Garden project forward. Wind farm blades would be delivered in February.

**DECISION
NOTED the reports.**

9. **DATE OF NEXT TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM MEETINGS -**

Agreed that the next meeting be held on Tuesday, 17 February 2015 at 6.30 pm in the Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm