

**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, 19th  
April, 2016 at 6.30 pm

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Present:- Councillors G Turnbull (Chairman), A Cranston, W McAteer, S Marshall,  
R Smith. Community Councillors: Mr M Grieve (Burnfoot), Mr C Knox  
(Hawick), Mr C Griffiths (Hobkirk).

Apologies:- Councillor D Paterson, Mr W Roberts (Denholm Community Council), Mrs M  
Short (Hawick Community Council), Mr T Stevenson (Upper Teviotdale &  
Bothwick Water),

In Attendance:- Inspector Carol Wood (Police Scotland), Station Commander Russell Bell  
(Scottish Fire & Rescue Service), Neighbourhood Area Manager (Mr F  
Dunlop), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

Members of the Public:- 4 in attendance.

**1. PRESENTATION**

- 1.1 Scottish Borders Council (SBC) officers: Colin Ovens, Infrastructure Manager, Ewan Doyle, Project Management Team Leader, Duncan Morrison, Flood and Coastal Management Team Leader and David Richardson, Asset Manager were in attendance at the meeting to give a presentation on the Bellwin Scheme, particularly in relation to Hawick. Ruth Ellis and Angela Floss, representing the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), were also present to answer questions.
- 1.2 Mr Ovens began the presentation by referring to the recent storms: Desmond, Frank and the flooding in 2015/16 which had been widespread across the Scottish Borders and had caused extensive damage to buildings, bridges, road, drainage channels and embankments, particularly in Hawick, Jedburgh and Peebles. Responding to the initial aftermath of storm damage, SBC had implemented a programme of repairs to infrastructure. Mr Ovens explained that damage which could be claimed from the Bellwin scheme was prescriptive and related to recovery and emergency works following immediate storms. Within the Bellwin timeframe, repairs to roads were required to be completed by 30 June 2016 and to bridges and river banks by 30 September 2016. Mr Ovens went on to explain that officers met weekly to discuss the programme of works which was in excess of 300 plus projects, 50% of which had been completed at a cost of £2m. The final spend was anticipated to be in excess of £4m.
- 1.3 Mr Doyle continued that the Hawick Flood Protection Strategy was a three phased strategy: the short term strategy was measures to increase the level of protection to 1 in 10 year. The medium term strategy was the Hawick Flood Protection project to deliver direct 1 in 75 year defences within the town. The longer term strategy was upstream management to increase the level of protection created by the medium term, phase two, direct defences. Mr Doyle further advised that the Executive Committee had that day, agreed to deliver stability improvements to the wall at the Post Office Sorting Office as a priority. The Executive Committee had also recommended that the Chief Financial Officer consider accelerating funding from 2017/18 to 2016/17 to deliver the remainder of the Priority 1 works including, 1 in 10 protection to the Common Haugh Car Park; increase the length of 1 in 10 kerb protection at Mansfield Road; 1 in 10 protection in Laidlaw Terrace and formation of a 1 in 10 ramp footpath at Glebe Mill.

- 1.4 Members expressed their concern over the level of gravel on riverbeds and the possibility of localised gravel removal as a measure to alleviate flooding risks. Mr Doyle advised that this was not a practical solution. The Council had carried out analysis of gravel removal and also historical mapping of Hawick had indicated that dredging the riverbed had little impact on reducing flood risk, particularly on large rivers moving at pace, which could move and deposit materials downstream. Any dredged sections being filled to their original levels very quickly. Analysis had also been carried out on a model which showed that removal of 1 metre of gravel over a 3.5 km length of the Teviot through Hawick would result in only an 11cm difference in flood level. Mr Doyle also presented a number of historical photographs and maps, from 1824 to 2005, to highlight that there had always been gravel deposits at key areas through the centre of the town. There had also been suggestion that the removal of gravel had stopped flood risk historically, so photographs of the 1903, 1924, 1928 and 1955 floods were shown to the Forum to help demonstrate that the removal of gravel does not directly reduce flood risk. Mr Doyle concluded that removal of gravel had its place when it was directly linked with scouring of adjacent embankments or infrastructure.
- 1.5 The Chairman advised that at a recent site meeting, the Chairman of SEPA had indicated that he would look favourably on gravel removal. Ms Ellis and Ms Foss advised that it was clear from the discussion that flood risk management of gravel removal had not been proven and that any work undertaken would not deliver flood risk management benefits. However, if other bodies put forward proposals SEPA would consider.
- 1.6 In answer to a question enquiring if the fish ladder at the Cauld could be cleared, Mr Doyle advised that other bodies such as the River Tweed Commission, could remove gravel if they acquired the relevant permissions from SEPA. Regarding the vegetated large islands near the Lawson Bridge and Burgh Cottages which were affecting the dynamics of the river, Mr Ovens advised that if this was deemed to cause a risk of flooding then SBC would promote works. However, in respect of removal of vegetation on river embankments it was considered that this would make little difference to flood risk.
- 1.7 In respect of works to Duke Street, Mr Richardson advised that this was to replace a damaged sewer syphon which transferred sewage under the river. Scottish Water had undertaken an intrusive investigation of the damaged syphon and declared it unusable and were redesigning a new piece of infrastructure which was almost completed. Work to interface with the new flood protection scheme still required to be undertaken. The Mansfield Road works, to repair the old mill lade, was an intricate piece of work which they had not envisaged would be so difficult. However, the works were due to be completed by end of May 2016. Mr Richardson intimated that he would be happy to discuss with Members, outwith the meeting, any areas of concern that they felt should be added to the list of projects. He would also circulate to Members a list of projects under the Bellwin scheme. The Chairman thanked all officers for their attendance and the presentation.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to request that the Asset Manager circulate a list of Bellwin scheme projects.**

#### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Smith declared an interest in the above discussion relating to the Post Office boundary wall and did not take part in that part of the debate.

## **2. MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 15 March 2016.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to approve the Minute.**

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE**

- 3.1 With reference to paragraph 5.2 of the Minute of 15 March 2016, it was noted that Police Scotland provided crime statistics to SBC. The Clerk was asked to find out if these could be circulated to the Area Forum.
- 3.2 With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of 15 March 2016, the Chairman advised that as the Roads Service was not specific to geographical areas. Until the business case had been developed, there was no other information that could be shared with Members than what had already been briefed to all political groups prior to the Executive on the 8 March 2016.
- 3.3 With reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of 15 March, Councillors Smith and Turnbull would raise at a meeting on 20 May and report back to the Forum.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

4. **STREET CLEANING MACHINE**

The Chairman advised that 4earch Solutions Ltd had demonstrated their gumstopper machine on the pavement at Stampers, North Road. The machine was extremely effective at removing chewing gum. It was suggested that specific jobs be priced and be brought back to the Area Forum for consideration of funding from the Quality of Life budget.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

5. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

With reference to the paragraph 3 of the Minute of 18 April, there had been circulated a spreadsheet by Service Director Neighbourhood Services showing the progress of the Neighbourhood Small Schemes and Quality of Life Schemes. Mr Dunlop was in attendance at the meeting and advised that the electronic signs for The Hub, Burnfoot had been delivered and would be installed as soon as possible. The remaining budget in the Quality of Life schemes budget was £3,019 (Hawick and Hermitage) and £190 (Hawick and Denholm). Remaining in the Neighbourhood Small Schemes budget was £5,032 (Hawick and Hermitage) £4,676 (Hawick and Denholm).

**DECISION  
NOTED:-**

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

6. **POLICE SCOTLAND**

- 6.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Inspector Carol Wood, Police Scotland. The report highlighted that with regard to the Drug Dealing and Misuse priority, a number of properties had been searched in Hawick, as a result of these searches five people were charged with drug offences. The Road Safety priority showed that six road checks had been carried out in March. One conditional offer was issued for speeding and a warning was administered for the anti-social use of a vehicle. Four different drivers were charged with driving without insurance and one driver arrested and charged with drink driving. With regard to the Violent Crime priority, following an incident within a property in Millport, a male had been charged with assault and robbery. Inspector Wood further advised that following a disturbance in Elm Court a male had been arrested for possession of an offensive weapon and breach of the peace. Police had also attended an altercation in the

High Street and a female was charged with serious assault. Police Scotland continued to monitor closely all anti-social behaviour incidents and a number of individuals were at various stages of the process. Police Scotland worked in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and Registered Social Landlords in dealing with those people who cause a nuisance for their neighbours and in the wider community. During March one fixed penalty ticket was issued and four recorded police warnings were administered.

- 6.2 Inspector Wood further advised that following an incident, two 14 year old youths had been charged with reckless discharge of a firearm. A report on the circumstances had been sent to the Children's Reporter. The Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2015 came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 at which time the public would begin to apply for licences. Enforcement for this act would commence on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. This legislation would tighten up on processes and be similar to current firearms legislation. These new procedures should assist in reckless incidents, reducing and introducing stricter controls for the possession of air weapons and dealing with offences that occurred.
- 6.3 Inspector Wood concluded her report by advising that a public survey entitled 'Your View Counts' was launched on 7 April. Information on this could be found on the Police Scotland website. The survey would take about 15 minutes to complete and she encouraged all members of the public to participate as it would help inform policing priorities throughout the country for the year ahead. The web address was [www.scotland.police.uk/yourviewcounts](http://www.scotland.police.uk/yourviewcounts). The Chairman thanked Inspector Wood for her informative report.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

7. **SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

There had been circulated, copies of a report from Mr Russell Bell, Station Manager, Hawick Fire Station, updating the Forum on Scottish Fire and Rescue activity for the month of March. The report detailed that there had been one house fire, three open fires, two special service incidents and seven unwanted fire signals. Mr Bell advised that the Chief Officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Mr Alasdair Bell had visited Hawick Station along with Mr Paul Wheelhouse MSP. The purpose of the visit was to thank Hawick crews for their endeavours during the recent floods. Also in attendance was Mr Wight, the 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest' trial being pivotal in saving Mr Wight's life following his cardiac arrest in January. The Chairman thanked for Mr Bell for his informative presentation.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

8. **OPEN QUESTIONS**

There were no open questions.

9. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT**

- 9.1 Mr Grieve, Burnfoot Community Council, advised that work was still ongoing with the Garden of Remembrance. The Carnival Committee met regularly and had raised over £200 at Sainsbury's. Mr Grieve further advised that the Community Council had arranged a litter pick the previous weekend. On the 12 May 2016 they would be taking part in the Coronet's night.
- 9.2 Mr Griffiths, Hobkirk Community Council stated that defibrillator was now in place, four volunteers would be delivering training. Potholes were still an issue and becoming more apparent. The Community Council would be meeting about the abundance of wind farm applications in the area.

- 9.3 Mr Knox, Hawick Community Council, advised that there had been an enthusiastic band of volunteers for their annual spring clean. The Community Council would again be taking part in the Flora Gateway Competition. Mr Knox continued that they were hosting a hustings session on the 25 April for the Scottish Parliamentary election. Mr Knox further advised that an energy sub group had been established to investigate the possibility of harnessing water from the River Teviot
- 9.4 Mr Griffiths, Hobkirk Community Council, advised that they were developing a community website. They were carrying out an enquiry into the flooding incident.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the reports.**

10. **DATE OF NEXT TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM MEETING**

The next meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Forum would be held on Tuesday, 17 May 2016 at 6.30 pm in Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick.

***The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.***