

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE held in Council Chamber,
Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells,
TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 24 March, 2015 at
10.00 am

Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Chairman), S. Aitchison, S. Bell, J. Brown,
V. M. Davidson, G. Edgar, J. G. Mitchell, D. Moffat, D. Paterson, F. Renton
and R. Smith.

Apologies:- Councillor M. J. Cook.

Absent:- Councillor C. Bhatia.

Also Present:- Councillors I Gillespie, S Scott, R Stewart, G Turnbull.

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive People, Chief Financial Officer,
Service Director Regulatory Services, Chief Executive, Service Director
Children & Young People, Depute Chief Executive People and Chief Financial
Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (F.
Henderson)

EDUCATION BUSINESS

Present:- Mr. G. Donald, Mr. J. Walsh, Mr. G. Jarvie.

1. CHAIRMAN

Councillor Aitchison chaired the meeting for that part which considered education business.

2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Ms Donna Manson, Service Director Children and Young People's Services to her first Executive Committee Meeting and wished her well in her role.

DECISION NOTED.

3. 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.

4. ASPIRATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Service Director - Children & Young People's Services gave a presentation on 'Aspiring for excellence – A Vision for Education in the Scottish Borders'. It was explained that there were a number of areas which required to be considered and these included the need to:-

- discuss the core purpose;
- consider how parents/carers could contribute to the "aspiring for excellence" strategy;
- reflect on how parents could influence the factors that contributed to the cultures in their school communities that supported and/or hindered continuous quality improvement; core purpose, leadership, climate, collegiality.
- consider ways in which schools could continue to engage with parents to fully involve them in improvement planning for school session 2015-2016;
- share Council performance in key measures; and
- build trust and respect as a key leadership group

The presentation went on to detail the Education and Learning outcomes, the GIRFEC outcomes, how Scottish Borders Council was performing against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework, the outcomes from school inspections and SQA attainment. The report explained that actions would be identified to improve outcomes in literacy and numeracy, achievement of skills for learning, life and work and to improve inspection results. The Service Director answered Members questions on various aspects of her presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

5. **EARLY YEARS CENTRE**

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 20 January 2015, Mrs Anne Scott, Early Years Programme Manager was present at the meeting and gave a presentation on the establishment and progress of Early Years Centres in the Scottish Borders. She explained the background to the project which would result in the opening of four Early Years Centres within four primary Schools providing support and opportunities to improve wellbeing and learning potential. The Early Years Change Fund would provide start-up costs for two years until April 2016. The Langlee Early Years Centre opened for business in August 2013 and was set up as a pilot to see what worked in terms of staffing, supporting activities, liaison with other agencies, measuring outcomes etc. The Centre at Philiphaugh would be the next one to open followed by Burnfoot and Eyemouth planned to open in May 2015.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

6. **UPDATE ON ELECTING PUPIL REPRESENTATIVES**

With reference to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Minute of 20 January 2015, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director, Children and Young People's Services which provided the Executive Committee with an update on the discussions that had taken place with Pupil Councils in the 9 High Schools in Scottish Borders to develop a mechanism to elect representatives for the Education themed Executive Committee. It was explained that following discussion the process outlined in the report had been developed and would be overseen by the Senior Policy, Planning and Performance Officer and would be completed with the elected pupils attending their first meeting in May 2015. All those nominated would attend a meeting prior to the Executive Committee so that views from all pupils could be brought together and represented at the Executive by those elected to attend. Any resources required to complete the process of appointing pupil representatives would be met within the People Department and there would be some costs provided to pupils travelling to the Education themed Executive meetings.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the discussions which had taken place with the Pupil Councils within the 9 Secondary Schools.**

(b) **AGREED to proceed to the election of 2 pupil representatives with the 9 Pupil Councils being asked to nominate a representative and the 9 Pupil Councils voting on statements prepared by the nominees.**

*(c) **AGREED TO RECOMMEND to Council that the Scheme of Administration be amended to include 2 pupil representatives as non-voting members of the Education Committee for Education themed meetings.**

7. **ONLINE PAYMENTS FOR SCHOOLS**

With reference to paragraph 11 Of the Minute of 25 November 2014, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Depute Chief Executive – People which updated the Executive Committee on the key issues of the Online Payment pilot in Schools including the results of the initial evaluation and proposed an implementation plan towards full roll out across all Scottish Borders schools. The report explained that a 6 month pilot of a ParentPay's online payment system began in October 2014 in Philiphaugh Community School and Knowepark Primary School,

Selkirk and Selkirk High School. This was ahead of the Improvement Service's approval of ParentPay as the nominated Scotland-wide supplier and was the first pilot of ParentPay's system in Scotland. The report detailed the results of the initial evaluation which had shown that the pilot had been successful and that an implementation of the system across further schools should be commenced. The roll-out would take a phased approach, with evaluation at the end of each phase and resolution of any identified issues within each phase and a wider implementation would enable more data to be analysed. The Headteacher of Knowepark was present at the meeting and advised that there had been an uptake of 79% at Knowepark, very positive parental feedback and less money being held within the School. In response to Members questions it was noted that parents could still use traditional payment methods and the system was very simple for staff to operate.

DECISION

NOTED:-

- (a) **the progress made by the 3 pilot schools in Selkirk.**
- (b) **the proposed implementation plan for wider roll out of online payments across other schools.**

The Education Business concluded at 11.15 a.m. and there followed a short adjournment.

OTHER BUSINESS

8. CHAIRMAN

On the resumption of the meeting, Councillor Parker took the Chair for the remaining business.

9. MINUTE

The Minute of meeting of the Executive Committee of 10 March 2015 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 - BLOCK ALLOCATIONS

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer which sought approval for the proposed individual projects and programmes within the various block allocations in the 2015/16 Capital Financial Plan. The Appendices attached to the report contained proposals for the various projects and programmes to be allocated resources from the block allocations within the 2015/16 Capital Financial Plan. It was further explained that not all projects had been fully identified and when the information was available it would be brought to the Executive Committee for consideration.

DECISION

APPROVED the Block Allocation breakdowns contained in Appendices A – X to the report.

11. LOCALITIES IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS - A CO-ORDINATED APPROACH FOR LOCAL IMPROVEMENT

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive which sought approval to develop and pilot a local, co-ordinated approach to planning and delivering services, providing support, optimising investment and involving communities for maximum economic, environmental and social benefit. The report explained that SBC and partners delivered a huge range of services and projects, and made considerable capital investment across the region. Different areas of the region were distinctive and unique, with their own strengths and weaknesses and would require different levels of support, to ensure economic and social prosperity. In order to ensure that service delivery, investment, property decisions, projects and actions were better co-ordinated, involved local stakeholders and were sustainable into the future, the Council proposed a coordinated, intelligence-led, problem solving approach to delivering services and investment appropriately in local areas, involving communities and community planning partners. The proposal was to develop a Locality Framework to ensure that each of the current five area forum

localities were profiled in terms of key data, town information, Council service delivery, investment, project work, community capacity and physical/environmental assets. The Framework would also highlight where there were opportunities and weaknesses to be addressed, and could be added to, including partner services, projects etc. A senior lead officer would be appointed to co-ordinate and facilitate this Localities approach and would report Local Action Plan progress to the Corporate Management Team and relevant Area Forums. By working in this way, the Council would ensure that an increased focus on localities supported the new phase of corporate transformation, provided a platform for the implementation of the Community Empowerment Bill, and would ensure that the Council continued to address the priorities articulated in the Corporate Plan 2013, and within the new Ambitious for the Borders programme. Members indicated their strong support for the proposals.

DECISION

(a) AGREED:-

- (i) to the development of the Locality Framework;**
- (ii) to pilot the Localities Approach in the Cheviot area over the next 12 months, to then evaluate the pilot and take lessons learnt into the roll-out to the other four localities; and**
- (iii) the utilisation of £20k from the Capital Projects Feasibility Fund for work in the Cheviot area, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.**

(b) NOTED that the Depute Chief Executive, People, would lead the work, supported by a senior lead officer, to be appointed immediately; and

(c) ENDORSED the approach to using and evolving Area Forums for the purpose of local engagement and the monitoring of locality action plans.

12. REQUEST FOR REPATRIATION OF AN ITEM FROM THE COUNCIL'S COLLECTION OF MUSEUM ITEMS

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Corporate Transformation and Services Director which proposed that Scottish Borders Council consider a request from Wairoa Museum, Hawkes Bay, North Island, New Zealand for the repatriation to New Zealand of a Maori War Flag held in Hawick Museum as part of the Council's collection of museum objects. The report explained that in 1921 the artist Tom Scott RSA donated a Maori War Flag to Hawick Museum. The flag was not in particularly good condition and would require conservation treatment prior to being considered for any significant period of display. It had no local connection and had never been on regular public display. The report detailed the background of the war flag and proposed that the request for repatriation be approved.

DECISION

AGREED:-

(a) to the request from Mike Spedding, Director of the Wairoa Museum, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand that the Maori War Flag connected to the battle of Omaruhakeke, 1865, be transferred from the ownership of Scottish Borders Council to Wairoa Museum; and

(b) that authority be delegated to the Senior Museums Curator to make the necessary arrangements with the Wairoa Museum to ensure the safe return of the Flag.

13. REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A LANE IN THE COUNCIL'S LIST OF PUBLIC ROADS

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services which sought approval for the lane serving St Dunstan's Car Park, Melrose to be added to the Council's List of Public Road. The report explained that the lane was stopped-up by Borders Regional

Council via The Borders Regional Council (St. Dunstan's Lane, Melrose) Stopping-Up Order 1980 with a pedestrian right of access retained along its length. In 1994, Borders Regional Council upgraded the car park served off the lane but negated to amend the public right of passage along the lane to include vehicles, although they did remove the bollard at the southern end of the lane. Bollards were erected which prevent vehicles from accessing the part of the lane between the High Street and the access to the car park and these shall remain in place.

DECISION

AGREED to the inclusion of the lane detailed in the report on to the Council's List of Public Roads with a vehicular and pedestrian right of passage over the section between St. Dunstan's Park and the car park entrance, as shown between the points A-B on the plan attached to the report, and a pedestrian only right of passage over the section between the car park and Melrose High Street between the points B-C.

14. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME - GENERIC BUDGET

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Strategy and Policy which recommended an application for funding from the Community Grant Scheme (CGS) Generic Budget. The application was from Interest Link Borders which was an organisation based in Duns but which offered a befriending service for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities across the Scottish Borders. The request was for a project grant to contribute towards a pilot project to enable 3 service users, 4 peer support workers, one sessional worker and one member of staff to undertake an overnight trip to Edinburgh in April 2015. There was £2,621 available in the CGS Generic Budget and the grant request was for £816. It was requested that the Group be asked to provide a report on the trip for members in due course.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the grant to the value of £816 to Interest Link Borders.

15. EDINBURGH - BERWICK-UPON-TWEED LOCAL RAIL SERVICE

With reference to paragraph 5 of the private appendix to the Minute of 1 April 2014, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services which provided an update on progress made towards the potential introduction of a local rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-Upon-Tweed, which included the re-opening of stations at East Linton in East Lothian and Reston in the Scottish Borders. The report explained that Scottish Borders and East Lothian Councils made a joint bid to the Rail Station Fund in May 2014, proposing a joint contribution of £2.84 million in relation to an estimated cost of £7.1m to provide two new stations on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) (£3.2m for a new station at Reston and £3.9m for East Linton). The bid was reviewed by the Route Investment Review Group (RIRG) who administered the Rail Station Fund and they concluded that further detailed design and costing work were required before they could fully endorse the joint bid. Following negotiations between a number of parties including the Local Authorities, SEStran and Transport Scotland, it was likely that Network Rail would be contracted to undertake the detailed design work associated with the provision of the two station facilities. Once the detailed design work had been completed, the bid would be resubmitted to RIRG for approval. Network Rail had indicated that the detailed design work could take up to 12 months to complete and the Transport Minister had confirmed the Government's commitment to the proposal for the project, and the intention to deliver a service within the time frame of the franchise by December 2018. Members welcomed the progress to date.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the contents of the report

(b) APPROVED the re-phasing of the Capital Programme as detailed in paragraph 7.1 of the report.

16. PEEBLES TRANSPORT STUDY

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee of 8 November 2012, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services

which updated Members on the current position in terms of the Peebles Transport Study and detailed the results of a consultation exercise that was held in the town in January 2014. The Peebles Transport Study had considered a range of options to help address the traffic issues which were likely to arise in Peebles as the town continued to grow in the future. The results of the appraisal process suggested that three bridge options (B3, B7 and B8) provided the best balance in terms of meeting the objectives of the study and it had been agreed at the Environment and Infrastructure Committee that these options would form the basis for future analysis and that a further consultation exercise be undertaken in the local community. A plan showing the three proposed bridge options was provided in Appendix A to the report. The consultation exercise had been undertaken in two parts. Firstly, a workshop was organised in Peebles with various public bodies and community groups in October 2013 and secondly, a three month public consultation exercise in the form of a questionnaire was held between November 2013 and January 2014. The results of the consultation exercise indicated that there was a wide selection of views held within the local community with respect to the development of the town and in relation to the potential provision of a new road bridge. Approximately 49% of respondents indicated that they were not in favour of a new road bridge and approximately 42% of respondents were in favour of a new bridge being promoted in Peebles. The most popular bridge option was Option B7 (Cavalry Park East) with approximately 22% of the vote. The least popular bridge option was Option B8 (Cavalry Park West) with approximately 13% of the vote. From respondents that expressed an interest over 51% preferred a bridge that would blend into the existing area, with approximately 13% of respondents preferring a modern bridge. A local Access and Transport Strategy for the Scottish Borders was currently being developed by officers, with a view to producing a completed document in 2015/16.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the results of the consultation exercise.

(b) AGREED that this information should be used to inform the consultative draft Scottish Borders Council Local Access and Transport Strategy.

17. URGENT BUSINESS

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to keep Members informed.

JEDBURGH TOWN HALL

In response to a question on the future of Jedburgh Town Hall it was reported that work was underway with regard to whether or not it should transfer to a Community Trust. It was hoped that a report would be submitted to the Executive Committee in late April. Members were assured that the future of the Town Hall was assured and that it was merely how it would be managed in future that required to be decided. Capital works on the building were proposed.

DECISION

NOTED the position.

18. 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 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

19. Eyemouth Harbour Trust - Extension of Funding Support

The Committee approved a report on continued support of Eyemouth Harbour Trust.

The meeting concluded at 12.35 pm