

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA FORUM held in Council Offices,
Rosetta Road, Peebles on Wednesday, 4th
March, 2015 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald (Chairman), S. Bell, C. Bhatia, K. Cockburn,
G. Logan.
Community Councillors P. Faris, G. Hughes, C. Lewin, W. Raine, A. Stewart,
J. Taylor.

Apologies:- Councillor G. H. T. Garvie; Community Councillors R. Howard, G. Tulloch.

In Attendance:- SBC Neighbourhood Manager (Tweeddale) (J. Hedley), Team Leader, Road
Safety and Traffic Management (J. McQuillin), Democratic Services Officer
(K. Mason), Inspector A. Hodges (Police Scotland), Mr J. Douce (Scottish
Fire and Rescue).

Members of the Public:- 5

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. MINUTES.

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 3 December 2014 and 18 December 2014.

DECISION NOTED.

- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 3 December 2014, the Democratic Services Officer advised that although she had asked for an update on 62 Bus Service terminating at Waterloo Place, Edinburgh there had been no response from Mr McNaught, Business Manager, First Scotland East Limited.

DECISION AGREED that the Democratic Services Officer would again contact First Scotland East Limited to request an update on the situation.

3. OPEN QUESTIONS.

Mr Donald Wallace, Eshiels resident asked for support in implementing a reduction in the speed limit on the A72 as it passed Eshiels. He advised that when walking on the pavement cars and buses, travelling at 60 mph passed your shoulder within a metre and a half. He also referred to the recent cycling accident. It was noted that a reduction in the speed limit had been explored before but had received no support from Council Officers. A suggestion was made that it might be worth looking at setting up speed surveys to examine the speed of vehicles. The Team Leader, Road Safety and Traffic Management, advised that this request would be added to the initial review.

DECISION AGREED that a request for a reduction in the speed limit on the A72 as it passed Eshiels be added to the initial review.

4. **POLICE SCOTLAND.**

- 4.1 Inspector Hodges advised that the transfer of the Community Sergeant role from Galashiels to Peebles had boosted the Community Team based in Tweeddale. T/Sergeant Ali Bruce had taken up a post at Peebles last month and would have line management for the Community Officers and an overview of matters in Tweeddale. He had started attending Community Council meetings in the area to get to know the Councillors and get a feel for the local issues. PC Mark Halliday who was the Community Officer for Tweeddale West left at the start of February to take up a new role at the Area Control Room in Bilston. His post had been filled by PC Niki Craig who started last week. Following a Public consultation survey carried out at the end of last year, Inspector Hodges advised that he had now completed revised MMW Plans for both Tweeddale East and Tweeddale West. These outlined the priorities for both MMWs for the coming year. Both wards saw inconsiderate Driver Behaviour and Dishonesty as the main areas of concern with Drug Dealing and Misuse along with Bogus Workers and Callers featuring high on the agenda. Once the plans had been approved he would ensure that elected Members and Community Council chairs were copied into them, as soon they were ready for publication. Elected members present at last month's Scrutiny Board would have noted that whilst the Scottish Borders had welcomed a continued decrease in crime this year to date, detection rates had seen an unwelcomed drop. Tweeddale saw a decrease YTD of just under 13% in recorded crime. In particular in respect of Common Assaults, which had decreased by nearly one third, detection rate for these crimes was a very credible 77%. Anti-Social Behaviour calls were also showing a slight decrease YTD from 542 to 497. Community Officers worked closely with the Council's ASBU and Registered Social Landlords in one of the strongest aspects of current partnership working in the area. Of concern, was the current level of acquisition crimes including, housebreaking domestic and business, thefts from property and rural crime such as sheep rustling and thefts of quad bikes from farms. As Tweeddale bordered with Dumfries and Galloway, Strathclyde and Midlothian, travelling criminals were often responsible for this type of crime in the area. Police Officers in Tweeddale worked closely with other Divisions/Departments in Police Scotland when making enquiries into these crimes but often given the complexity of such enquiries, positive results took time and were often part of larger criminal networks. In the interim the Police were working closely with the NFU, Scottish Borders Council and local media to ensure good advice and guidance was relayed into the community in respect of crime prevention and notable crime trends. SB Alert had proven to be a useful tool and CBO's would be encouraging individual Community Councils to sign up to allow for local Crime updates to be provided regularly to Members as opposed to waiting for monthly Community Council Meetings. Parking issues continued to be raised at Community Councils and Police Scotland would continue to respond to calls regarding dangerous and inconsiderate parking. Police Scotland position in retrospective of Traffic Wardens was a financial one and Inspector Hodges was aware that elected Members and Council Officials were working towards potential decriminalisation of parking in the coming years. Local Police Officers would continue, other duties permitting, to carry out proactive parking patrols issuing both warning notices and fixed penalty notices as appropriate.
- 4.2 Community Councillor Raine advised that a police speed van had been in Carlops measuring speeds and advised that the Police Officers on duty were unaware that the Community Council had been working on speeding issues with PC Halliday. Community Councillor Raine and Inspector Hodges would liaise to ensure those Officers working in speed vans were kept informed on matters which the Community Police Officer(s) had been involved in.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. **SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

There had been circulated copies of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Multi Ward Operating Plan for Tweeddale 2014 – 2015. Mr J. Douce reported on the operational

activity of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) within the Tweeddale Area during the period from 14 November 2014 to 28 February 2015. There were four calls to dwelling fires; no fire casualties were reported; there had been 6 road traffic collisions over the period; and SFRS had attended two secondary fires, there had been nine chimney fires. In reporting incidents of interest, Mr Douce advised that there had been a major house fire in Peebles during high winds and heavy rain on 9 January 2015 which had involved eight pumping appliances, two height appliances, command unit and support appliances. Over 60 firefighters were on the scene at the height of the blaze. The residents had been alerted to the fire by a smoke alarm and were able to make their way to safety and no one had been injured. On 11 February 2015 a three pump fire had attended at the Court House Bar and Restaurant, Peebles. This had been a case of criminal activity and wilful fire-raising and Police Scotland had made an arrest at the scene. Scottish Ambulance had requested assistance to gain entry together with a further two requests to attend suspected cardiac arrests with defibrillator to increase speed of response. Mr Douce answered questions in relation to emergency vehicles locating countryside properties, false alarms and the Fire & Rescue Services use of defibrillators.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

6. **PRESENTATION - HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE - ENGAGEMENT - NHS BORDERS.** Mrs Evelyn Rodger, Director of Nursing and Midwifery and Interim Director of Acute Services, NHS Borders was in attendance to give a presentation on Health and Social Care – Engagement – NHS Borders. She advised that there would be a health and social care partnership for every area in Scotland. The Borders had selected the body corporate model where both the Council and the NHS delegated responsibilities to a health and social care partnership through an integrated joint board to provide joined up health and social care and community health services. NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council would go live with their Partnership in April 2015. Initially this was in the form of an Interim Integrated Board which would be set up from 1 April 2015 and get some powers devolved in May. A transition plan would be taken forward for all powers from 1 April 2016. The focus now was on finalising the ‘Scheme of Integration’ which outlined how the agencies would work together. This was currently out for consultation and could be viewed on the NHS Borders and SBC website. The consultation would close on 13 March 2015 and the document would be submitted to Scottish Government at the end of March. A series of five public interactive events had been held across the Borders during the past fortnight for people to give their views on the future shape of adult Health and Social Care Services in the area. The Tweeddale event took place on 19 February and according to feedback some people felt that the events were not well enough publicised. In response to that feedback it was recognized that perhaps the events had not been given advance publicity and this was owing to the short timescale, however the events were publicised using existing communication channels available including advertising on Radio Borders. These events were the first in a series of events in the development of the integration arrangements. Going forward at the commencement of the consultation on the Strategic Plan, many more events would be arranged and opportunities for the public to engage. Feedback from the round of events would be used to refine future publicity. The other major piece of work was the development of the ‘Strategic Commissioning Plan’ which was a ten year plan outlining where NHS Borders wanted to go with integration in the Borders and how they would get there. Included in this plan would be an objective to strengthen the links between primary care, community health services and acute services. In response to questions raised Mrs Rodger undertook to present details of the responses at the next meeting of the Forum.

DECISION

- (a) **AGREED that Mrs Rodger would present details of the responses at the next meeting of the Forum;**
- (b) **NOTED and thanked Mrs Rodger for her presentation.**

7. **PRESENTATION - OUT OF HOURS SERVICE - NHS BORDERS.**

Dr Craig Wheelans, Association Medical Director Clinical Governance and Quality, Clinical Lead Unscheduled Primary Care was in attendance to give a presentation on NHS Borders Out-of-Hours Service. The providers of the service comprised of: - NHS 24, Accident and Emergency Departments, Emergency Dental Services, Minor Injuries Unit and Emergency Ambulance Service. He advised that the service operated from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. Monday to Friday and from 6.00 p.m. on Friday to 8.00 a.m. on Monday and during public holidays 24 hours. The service was co-ordinated from the Hub at Borders General Hospital. West Linton patients historically were dealt with by Lothian Unscheduled Care Service for GP Care but nursing care was provided by NHS Borders. Dr Wheelans also gave information in relation to evening and out of hour's nurses, statistics relating to workloads, Health Improvement Scotland Quality Indicators and patient satisfaction.

DECISION

NOTED and thanked Dr Wheelans for his presentation.

8. **TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM - SURVEY**

There had been circulated copies of a report relating to a survey which had been distributed among those attending the last meeting of the Forum on 3 December 2014 which sought to gather opinion on the Area Forum and whether it should continue in the current format. There were 17 attendees at the meeting which included members of the public, Community Councillors, Scottish Borders Councillors and Council Officers. Nine surveys had been completed and all respondents thought that the Area Forum had a role to play and should continue. The results of the survey were largely positive although there were areas which could be improved upon. Members discussed the recommendations contained in the report.

DECISION

AGREED that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Forum discuss the recommendations in the report and advise Members at the next meeting of the Forum which recommendations they wished to take action on.

9. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT.**

- 9.1 Community Councillor Lewin advised he was unhappy with the proposed permanent traffic lights on the A72 at Neidpath Corner and considered that the Council should undertake sufficient works to alleviate the need for traffic lights. This was supported by Community Councillor Hughes. The Neighbourhood Manager advised that a section of the roadside retaining/parapet wall had developed a significant lean to the vertical. There was also visible cracking to the carriageway adjacent to the wall although there was no visible sign that the road was deformed across its profile. The initial visual assessment of the wall indicated that it was not retaining the road as much as the section which collapsed in 2011 and therefore would not be as significant a matter to resolve. However, officers of Asset Management concluded that the wall was in imminent danger of collapse and this would have an impact on the adjacent carriageway, which although minimal, required the westbound lane of the A72 to be closed off on the grounds of safety. Temporary traffic lights had therefore been erected at the locus and these would remain in position until the wall had been repaired. During February a structural engineer from the Council carried out a more detailed assessment of the location where the section of wall was leaning. During this assessment no instability of the slope below the wall was observed and the appearance of the wall lean indicated that it was a structural wall failure as opposed to a slope failure. This observation was further supported in the report prepared by Consultant AECOM which was carried out for the Council in February 2011. As a result of there being no slope instability, officers were therefore proceeding to design a relatively simple mass concrete block retaining wall which would be faced with masonry to match in with the existing. It was hoped that the majority of the facing stone could be recovered from the existing wall when it was taken down. With the design in its early

stages, and a need for the repair to be fully costed to allow the identification of budget, it was difficult to confirm timescales. However, it was anticipated that a design and projected cost should be available by the middle of March. With current traffic flows on the A72 being under temporary traffic light control, officers had taken this opportunity to visually assess the remainder of the wall and had identified three isolated sections which would be taken down and rebuilt at the same time as the repair to the leaning section. The Council had allocated funding within its Capital Plan 2015/16 – 2024/25 for the installation of permanent traffic lights on the A72 at Neidpath corner. This work was currently programmed for the initial design assessment to be completed during 2015/16, with the final installation carried out during the following year. Officers of the Council's Design Services section were therefore taking the opportunity when temporary traffic lights were in position, to consider options for the location of the permanent traffic lights. The main consideration would be the location of the permanent lights, in relation to existing road widths and forward visibility, so that traffic waiting times were kept to a minimum. The opportunity was also being taken to speak to Scottish Power regarding the permanent power supply to the traffic lights. Due to the nature of the site and location of existing Scottish Power apparatus it was likely that this would be a significant cost to the project. Consideration was also being given to any part of the permanent works which could be carried out during the period when the wall repair works were being completed. Community Councillor Lewin requested that a cost estimate be produced for the next meeting in relation to works which needed to be done to alleviate the requirement for traffic lights but he was advised that the costs of such a survey could not be afforded. Councillor Bhatia indicated it would be helpful for the entire route of the A72 to be mapped showing where issues were and also it would be useful for Council roads officials to be present at a future meeting to discuss problem areas. The setting up of an A72 Action Group had been discussed at a previous meeting of the Forum but a mechanism for this had not been found. Councillor Lewin indicated he wished to reserve the right to come back to discuss the position at Neidpath Corner if the traffic lights failed to improve the situation.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- 9.2 Community Councillor Stewart referred to discussions at the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council in relation to illegal parking, second bridge over the River Tweed, complaints relating to the 62 bus service terminating at Galashiels, no longer running directly to the Borders General Hospital. In regard to the future of Hay Lodge Hospital, Community Councillor Stewart and Councillor Bell had a meeting with Doctors today and a report would be issued on the discussions.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- 9.3 The Neighbourhood Manager presented an update on the A72 Wester Happrow – Lyne River Bank Erosion and advised that the Council had had to erect temporary traffic lights on the A72 near to Wester Happrow due a section of the Lyne Water river embankment which had eroded recently and required the Council to take action to make it safe. Approximately 2m of road verge was remaining from road edge to the top of the erosion at present; however, with the height of the riverbank being approximately 3.5m, the structural stability of the road was being compromised. The length of the eroded section requiring repair was approximately 25m. To allow the Council to carry out reinforcement works to the riverbank, officers were required to gain permission from SEPA. Although currently out with the normal window for working within water courses, SEPA had agreed, in this case, to allow the Council to proceed with the repair under an accelerated determination under Regulation 18 of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011. The repair would be in the form of placing armour stone to complete a greybank reinforcement repair. Suitably sized stone had now been sourced to allow the repair works to proceed and it was anticipated that the repair works would

commence at this location during week commencing Monday 9 March and would take approximately one week to complete. It should also be noted that the timing of any works will be dependent on the level of the Lyne Water. The Council had erected temporary traffic lights on the A701 near to Cloverhill due a section of the Broughton Burn embankment which had eroded recently and required the Council to take action to make it safe. Although the repair was much smaller than the embankment at Wester Haprew, permission had now been received from SEPA and repair works at this location would follow on after the repair works at Wester Haprew had been completed.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- 9.4 Community Councillor Taylor gave information relating safe to access across the A703 in Eddleston for pedestrians. A meeting had been held last week and a survey was to be made of pedestrian traffic movement which would hopefully justify a pedestrian crossing in the area.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

- 9.5 Councillor Bhatia referred to subsidence of the river course at Horsburgh Straight south east of the Cardrona Junction advising that part of the banking had been pegged off. The Neighbourhood Manager advised that he would contact Councillor Bhatia to give her an update on the position.

**DECISION
AGREED that the Neighbourhood Manager would update Councillor Bhatia on the position regarding the area of banking which had been pegged off south east of the Cardrona Junction.**

10. **PRESENTATION - BORDER SPORT AND LEISURE TRUST.**
Chief Executive of BSLT, Ewan Jackson, was in attendance to give a presentation on the activities of BSLT in the Tweeddale Area. Mr Jackson explained that the Trust was launched as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status in 2003. The purpose of the Trust was to inspire everyone in the Borders to enjoy more active lifestyles, sporting excellence and healthier futures. The organisation grew significantly in 2011 with the transfer from Scottish Borders Council of Sports Development, Active Schools and the Queens Leisure Centre. Further development included the 3G Arena at Netherdale and in 2014 the Tweedbank Bowling Club and Peebles High School Sport Centre. In total there had been £450,011 investment in the Tweeddale area since 2003. The wide range of services delivered within the Tweeddale community each year included 1,500 pre-school play visits, 22,000 swim lessons, 76,000 general swim sessions, 46,000 Active Schools visits, 64,000 gym and/or class visits, and 21 sports clubs supported. The presentation went on to look at the business side of the Trust, at the income, management and an illustration of where the investment was used. The challenges were to achieve a balance between what was sustainable and what was worthwhile. Also to be taken into account were the changing habits of customers, ageing facilities, public sector cuts and energy costs. The strengths of the organisation were the skilled and friendly staff; a diversity of programmes to reach all ages; the geographical reach of facilities and services; excellent relations with partners; and a knowledgeable, voluntary Board of Trustees. The Chairman thanked Mr Jackson for his attendance and interesting presentation.

**DECISION
NOTED the presentation.**

11. **PARKING PLACES IN PEEBLES - (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) (PEEBLES) ORDER 2002 - AMENDMENT TO CHARGES, OPERATIONAL AS FROM 12 MAY 2014.** There had been circulated copies of briefing paper by the Team Leader, Road Safety and Traffic Management on information relating to Peebles parking following the introduction of amended pay and display charging structure on 12 May 2014. It was noted that the new charging structure was to be undertaken for a trial period of one year. It had been agreed at the meeting of the Forum held on 27 November 2013 that a one year operational trial period was to be undertaken and combined with a consultation survey carried out by the Environment & Infrastructure, Network Section (now Commercial Services, Network Section). The report recommended that the Tweeddale Area Forum Parking Sub-Group be reformed and meet as soon as possible to agree the way forward. This would enable the framework for surveys/consultation to be discussed and agreed and subsequent preparation of a report to the next Tweeddale Area Forum on 27 May 2015 which was only two weeks over the full year of operations of the new charging structure. Members agreed that Councillor Bell would continue to Chair the Sub-Group and that Councillor Cockburn would replace Councillor Buckingham.

**DECISION
AGREED that**

- (i) **Councillor Bell would continue to Chair the Tweeddale Area Forum Parking Sub-Group;**
 - (ii) **Councillor Cockburn would replace Councillor Buckingham on the Tweeddale Area Forum Parking Sub-Group; and**
 - (iii) **the Chairman of the Tweeddale Area Forum Parking Sub-Group, Councillor Bell, would convene a meeting of the Sub-Group and a report on the way forward for parking in Peebles would be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum.**
12. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEME WORKS/QUALITY OF LIFE.**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director – Neighbourhood Services seeking approval to deliver projects throughout the Tweeddale Area using Neighbourhood Small Schemes and Quality of Life budgets. The following Neighbourhood schemes had been requested for the consideration of the Tweeddale members from the Small Schemes budget:- Contribution of £10,000 towards improvements to the play area at Clovenfords, utilising the carried forward balance of £5,562 from 2014-15 and supplementing that with a contribution of £4,438 from 2015-16; and installation of a traffic island at A72 Peebles junction with Young Street, complete with dropped kerb accesses, road lining and demountable bollards, £4,209.65. In discussing the traffic island near Kingsland School a request was made that final drawings of proposals be sent to the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council as well as local Members. In relation to flooding issues near Kingsland School, the SBC Neighbourhood Manager advised that exploratory digs were taking place to ascertain the source of the problem.

DECISION

APPROVED funding for the following Quality of Life schemes:-

- (i) contribution of £10,000 towards improvements to the play area at Clovenfords, utilising the carried forward balance of £5,562 from 2014-15 and supplementing that with a contribution of £4,438 from 2015-16; and**
- (ii) installation of a pedestrian refuge complete with road markings, dropped kerb accesses and demountable Bollards, A72 Peebles junction with Young Street, £4,209.65 from 2015-16 budget**

The meeting concluded at 8.45 pm