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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 19 APRIL, 2016

A MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS, TD6 0SA on TUESDAY, 19 APRIL 2016 at 10.00 am

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,

12 April 2016

BUSINESS		
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Order of Business	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minute (Pages 1 - 6) Minute of Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 22 March 2016 to be approved and signed by the Chairman. (Copy attached.)	2 mins
5.	Bellwin 2 (Pages 7 - 20) Consider report by Depute Chief Executive Place providing an update on the extent of damage caused by recent winter storms and the measures being taken and required to rectify this damage in a timely fashion that fits with the Government's Bellwin Scheme. (Copy attached.)	25 mins
6.	Borders Railway Blueprint (Pages 21 - 46) Consider report by Corporate Transformation and Services Director providing an update on the delivery of the Borders Railway Blueprint and the Council's current financial contribution to key projects. (Copy attached.)	15 mins
7.	Any Other Items Previously Circulated	
8.	Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent	
9.	Private Business Before proceeding with the private business, the following motion should be approved:- "That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on	

	the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act.”	
10.	Minute (Pages 47 - 48) Private Minute of Meeting of 22 March 2016 to be approved and signed by the Chairman. (Copy attached.)	1 mins
11.	Borders Railway Blueprint (Pages 49 - 50) Consider Private Appendix. (Copy attached.)	5 mins

NOTES

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

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

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 22nd March, 2016 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors J. G. Mitchell, S. Aitchison, S. Bell, C. Bhatia, J. Brown, M. J. Cook, V. M. Davidson, G. Edgar, J. G. Mitchell, D. Paterson, F. Renton and R. Smith.

Also Present:- Councillor I. Gillespie.

Apologies:- Councillors D. Parker and D. Moffat

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (People), Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Transformation and Services Director, Chief Legal Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor Parker the meeting was chaired by Councillor Mitchell.

1. 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 the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

2. INTEGRATED SPORT AND CULTURE TRUST - MEMBER TRUSTEE LIAISON GROUP

Members considered a report by the Corporate Transformation and Services Director.

The meeting moved into Public Business to consider the following items.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

3. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of the Executive Committee of 8 March 2016.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

4. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION - PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a Minute extract from the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 22 March 2016. This related to a request submitted to the Scrutiny Committee by Councillor Bhatia as follows – *"Protection of Private Water Supplies – in relation to Planning e.g. when a planning application is granted which requires an additional private supply or taking water from an existing private supply, how do existing householders ensure that their supply is protected? This may be purely a civil matter or the Council may have a role. This is further exacerbated with large forestry/windfarm applications."* Councillor Bhatia provided some background to the request. She explained that members of the public had raised concerns with her regarding protection of Private Water Supplies within their communities and that she had therefore asked for Scrutiny Committee to

consider the matter. Councillor Bhatia advised that the information provided by Mr Carson and Mr Barker to the Scrutiny Committee had been extensive and very informative. Members noted that there were measures and conditions which would be applied in specific situations, as detailed in the Minute extract, and that the discussion at Scrutiny Committee had further raised the profile of Private Water Supplies and the areas of concern on this issue.

- 4.2 Discussion followed in relation to the impact of tree removal on surrounding land and water levels and Members' concerns were noted. Councillor Smith, as Chairman of Planning and Building Standards Committee, agreed that this matter also be discussed at the meeting of that Committee on 25 April 2016.

DECISION

AGREED to endorse the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee that:-

- (a) **Officers from Regulatory Services work with the Council's Communications Team to progress a public awareness campaign –**
- (i) **giving information about grants/conditions available for the improvement of private water supplies;**
 - (i) **encouraging people with private water supplies not on the Private Water Supplies Register to send in their details to allow a more complete mapping of properties/source locations not currently on the Register;**
 - (iii) **placing information on the Council's website;**
 - (iv) **attending Area Fora meetings; and**
 - (v) **involving Community Councils asking for their assistance by providing a map of known properties/sources within their area and requesting them to populate these maps further using local knowledge.**
- (b) **the Director of Regulatory Services continue to ensure sufficient staff resources were available to meet the Council's statutory needs for private water supplies.**

5. FINAL REVENUE VIREMENTS AND EARMARKED BALANCES 2015/16

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 16 February 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for final budget virements and earmarked balances for 2015/16 which had been identified during the monitoring process of the General Fund Revenue Budget at the end of January 2016. Mr Robertson explained that routine virements were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and they supplemented the virements approved by the Executive Committee during the financial year. They reflected a range of virements to address projected pressures within Services from budget available from other Services; devolved budget from the Centre to DSM school budgets; future year budget adjustments required to finalised the Social Care budget to be delegated to the Integrated Joint Board; and technical accounting adjustments. Appendix 2 contained the earmarked balances and identified that budget would be required to be carried forward to support work scheduled for 2016/17. These earmarked balances supplemented those already approved by the Executive Committee during the financial year to date. The report explained when earmarking was required, namely where projects or initiatives were scheduled for completion during 2016/17; for schools DSM budget as per the approved DSM Scheme; to support the achievement of Financial Plan savings during 2016/17; and to support Corporate Transformation, including ICT, in 2016/17. Officers provided clarification, as requested by Members, in relation to a number of virements. With regard to the Advanced Young Drivers' course offered via Safer Communities, the Depute Chief Executive People advised that there had been a less than anticipated take-up of this opportunity and confirmed that additional ways in which to promote the course and engage with the target audience were being investigated.

**DECISION
APPROVED:-**

- (a) the virements detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (b) the earmarked balances detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

6. **SCOTLAND ROUTE STUDY FOR THE RAIL NETWORK**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services providing information to Members on the current consultation exercise being undertaken by Network Rail on potential future infrastructure provision on the Scottish Rail Network between 2019 and 2029 and outlined the proposed response from Scottish Borders Council to this consultation. This response had been separated into three key elements, namely Borders Rail; Borders Rail extension; and New Rail Stations. The report provided details under each heading and highlighted aspects of potential development with particular interest to the Scottish Borders. The publication of the final Scotland Route Study document was expected in July 2016. Discussion followed and Members raised a number of questions. Toilet availability at unmanned stations was mentioned and Mr Johnstone, Lead Officer for Access and Transport advised that this was a decision for the operator to make but confirmed that officers continued to discuss this matter with a view to improving the facilities. With reference to the extension of the line and in particular the blueprint and scoping study, Members were advised that officers were working on this as an area of priority. In response to a question about the frequency of trains which stopped at Stow Station, Mr Johnstone advised that this was an operational matter for Network Rail and could be influenced by demand. Members congratulated officers on the report and hoped that what had been achieved so far would be the basis for further success.

**DECISION
APPROVED the consultation response from Scottish Borders Council in relation to the Scotland Route Study produced by Network Rail.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10.55am and reconvened at 11.15am

8. **EDUCATION BUSINESS**

Present:- Mrs J Aitchison, Ms A Ferahi, Mr G Jarvie, Mr D Moore, Mr J Walsh.
Apologies:- Mr G Donald.

CHAIRMAN

Councillor Aitchison chaired the meeting for consideration of the Education Business. He welcomed Mrs Aitchison, Ms Ferahi, Mr Jarvie, Mr Moore and Mr Walsh to this section of the Executive meeting

7. **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.

MEMBER

Councillor Edgar left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business

8. **DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE - IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT 2015 - 2016**

8.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr Campbell Wilson, Head Teacher at Peebles High School who was in attendance to make a presentation on how the school was working towards

the Developing the Young Workforce agenda. Mr Wilson provided some statistics as background to his presentation, advising that in 2014, 427 young people had actively sought Jobseekers Allowance. In 2015, that figure had dropped to 198 young people. Mr Wilson went on to explain that, since 2010, Peebles High School had been one of the highest attaining schools in the country with a number of its pupils attaining 5 Highers or more however, this was not matched by the number of positive destinations for those pupils. He explained that not all young people wished to go on to university or other further education immediately after leaving school. The challenge for the school and the Council was to increase the number of positive destinations, identifying other Work Based Learning routes available to pupils to achieve their goals and finding workplaces which could provide positive experiences for around 250 young people each year. Included in Mr Wilson's presentation were interviews with young people who had opted not to go to university straight from school. One pupil had joined a local legal firm which could eventually lead to a position as a Paralegal, professional Cashier or a Law Society Solicitor. Another pupil had undertaken a work placement in a local charity shop and was currently developing skills in all aspects of retail business.

- 8.2 Mr Wilson explained that the school and the pupils worked together to identify the best route for achieving a positive destination for each individual then discussions were scheduled with partners to put in place the Work Based Learning opportunities. The Service Director Children and Young People advised Members that a further report and Business Plan would be presented to the Executive Committee in due course. She went on to emphasise the importance of information exchanges between local communities and schools and asked that Members help by sharing the information about Work Based Learning within their local areas and passing any messages from the community back to the school/department. Ms Manson also advised that further information on the Work Based Learning opportunities available in each area would be collated and circulated to Members. Courses such as Accessing Housing were made available to pupils during their senior stage at school and discussion followed in relation to developing and utilising partnerships nationally/outwith the area. Funding from the Scottish Government had made provision for the creation of a Developing the Young Workforce officer post. This position had now been filled for over two months and a range of work was in progress, including identifying and sharing Best Practice. Mr Wilson advised that the number of pupils taking a gap year before deciding on their future destination had increased. He acknowledged that further work was now required to help young people make it a valuable experience as part of planning for their futures after the gap year. The Chairman thanked Mr Wilson for an extremely interesting and informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

MEMBERS

Councillor Brown left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business and Councillor Bell left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

9. INTEGRATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2015 - 2018

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Children and Young People which presented the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2018. The Plan set out the strategic priorities for integrating Children and Young People's Services across partner agencies in the Scottish Borders. These partner agencies included the Council, NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporter Administrator and the Third Sector. The Plan summarised the progress made during the period of the previous Plan and highlighted the priorities and key actions going forward in the next three years. A wide consultation had been undertaken which included key stakeholders, young people and their families and the wider public. The Plan set out a vision that all children and young people in the Scottish Borders would achieve their unique potential, and identified the main key priorities arising from this exercise were:

keeping children and young people safe; improving health and reducing health inequalities; improving the wellbeing and life challenges for the most vulnerable children and young people; raising attainment and achievement for all learners; and increasing participation and engagement. A high level action plan was linked to each key priority as set out in the Plan. Ms Manson advised Members that a version of the Plan would be made available in a simplified format for ease of reference. In referring to Early Years Centres and their locations, Ms Manson advised Members that a report would be presented to the Education Executive Committee and that this would provide details of the strategic direction of the Council in respect of the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan. Ms Manson explained that it was important for the success of the Plan to ensure that all stakeholders participated in the consultation process and ongoing work to implement the Plan. With regard to the statistics used in the Plan to demonstrate Areas of Deprivation, Ms Manson clarified that the figures were those for 2012 and that any significant changes would be monitored.

DECISION

NOTED the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2018.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm

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BELLWIN 2

Report by Depute Chief Executive - Place

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

19 April 2016

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides the Executive Committee with an update on the extent of damage caused by recent winter storms and the measures being taken and required to rectify this damage in a timely fashion that fits with the Governments Bellwin Scheme.**
- 1.2 This report is a follow-up to the report taken to Executive Committee on 16 February 2016 following the major flooding events caused by storms Desmond, Frank and other flooding in 2015/16.
- 1.3 The report outlines the work that has been done to date in responding to the initial aftermath of storm damage and actions taken to date.
- 1.4 Critically, the report also outlines the extent of remedial works that still need to be undertaken and the measures that will be required to support completion of these works within the Bellwin timeframe.
- 1.5 The report also provides a technical opinion on the merits of localised river gravel removal and dredging as measures to alleviate flooding risks.
- 1.6 It is also important to note that under the Bellwin Scheme the Local Authority (LA) has to meet the first portion of costs equivalent to 0.2% of the LA's total net revenue budget. In the case of Scottish Borders Council (SBC), this equates to £508k that will have to be met from reserves with the Bellwin Scheme picking up all eligible costs beyond this level.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive Committee:-**
 - (a) **Notes the extent and costs of works undertaken to date in response to the three major flooding weather events;**
 - (b) **Notes the scale and extent of works that remain to be done to re-instate a wide range of damaged Borders infrastructure;**
 - (c) **Notes the progress made to date on remedial works under the Bellwin Scheme;**
 - (d) **Notes the recommendations made with regard to river gravel removal and dredging;**

- (e) Agrees to advance £150k of capital from the Hawick Flood Relief project into 2016/17 to deal with repairs to the Hawick Post Office boundary wall repairs;**
- (f) Notes the list of Short Term measures recommended for implementation in Hawick.**

3 SBC STORM RESPONSE

- 3.1 Each of the storms, Desmond (6 December 2015), Frank (31 December 2015), flooding on 27 January 2016 (following an unnamed storm) and Gertrude (29 January 2016) created very visible high profile flooding emergencies in towns such as Hawick, Peebles and Jedburgh which required a high level co-ordinated response led by the Council's Emergency Planning teams. Considerable damage was done in each of these towns and the surrounding area which will require extensive repair efforts and costs.
- 3.2 These storms have also caused widespread but less publicised damage to the infrastructure of the Scottish Borders which also requires to be addressed, including damage to:
- Buildings
 - Bridges
 - Embankments
 - roads including potholes and edge damage
 - drainage channels
 - culverts
 - signs
- 3.3 Work has been ongoing since storm Desmond in December 2015 to address these repairs on a prioritised basis using the resources of Infrastructure and Asset Management, Neighbourhood Roads and SBc Contracts. Having now undertaken most of these inspections, it is clear the scale of the damage is extensive.
- 3.4 On this basis and due to the fact that the Council is dealing with multiple extreme weather events in quick succession, Officers have determined that the works cannot reasonably be completed in the stipulated 2 month post-event period. A key factor in delaying some of these works is that environmental partners Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and in some cases Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) will only allow major river works on the Tweed system to take place between May and September. Accordingly, Officers have asked the Scottish Government for a further extension of the works completion date and helpfully the Scottish Government has agreed to extend this to 30 June 2016 for general road and infrastructure repairs and until 30 September for work on river embankments and bridges.
- 3.5 A special schedule of works has been prepared in which Neighbourhood Services Roads and SBc Contracts are very engaged. Where appropriate, some use will also be made of sub-contractors and plant hires to support the timely completion of works. Officers are, however, seeking to have as much of this work as possible done in-house by the Council's own staff.
- 3.6 **Progress with Bellwin Works:** In order to meet the Bellwin timescales, the majority of Asset and Neighbourhood staff are currently working on this activity, supported by external consultants and contractors in this sphere of work.

As the Bellwin works continues to remain the priority, Elected Members may have noticed that requests and responses are being delayed as a result of what Officers are trying to deal with. The ongoing support and understanding of Elected Members is essential as Officers continue to concentrate efforts on Bellwin works. This may have an adverse impact on the timescales for responding to non Bellwin related works.

To date some 300+ individually identified remedial works have now been designed, prioritised and programmed to be completed by the end of June deadline. The exception to this remains bridge and major embankment repair works which due to their potential impact on aquatic ecology are required to be completed between May and the end of September deadline.

The type of work repairs are:

- Permanent patching & overlay screeds
- Stabilisation works to embankments
- Road edge repairs
- Blocked and damaged culverts
- Clearing offlets, and
- Structures inc. walls, bridges flood bank

As at 21 March, approximately 45% of the programme has been completed, with costs currently of £1.6M. The programme is weather dependant and will be updated on a regular basis.

- 3.7 **Localised Gravel Removal:** Removal of gravel in localised areas can in some instances be used to manage flood risk but evidence indicates that localised gravel removal has very little impact on reducing flood levels.

Localised gravel removal can be used to manage the effects a river has on erosion of river banking and river banking structures. This could be the case when essential infrastructure could potentially be damaged or fail due to erosion. Gravel removal could be considered as part of a combination of measures to resolve such issues.

Changing river dynamics after large and even small flood events change how and where gravel has been deposited and removed.

It should be noted that without sufficient evidence or investigation the removal of gravel at one location could have an adverse effect at another location.

Dredging is not a cost that could be claimed within the Bellwin Scheme.

- 3.8 **Dredging of Gravel from Watercourses:** Enquiries have been received from a number of areas on the dredging of watercourses and the following explains the Council's position in relation to this. The Council has computerised models and previous experience to draw on in forming a view as to the likely effectiveness of water course dredging.

While dredging appears a straight forward solution to flooding, evidence indicates that it does not work on large rivers moving at pace, such as many of the Borders rivers.

During a flood event when a river is fast flowing, the water will move material downstream and deposit in any deeper dredged sections, filling the section back to its original level very quickly.

Water storage capacity created by the dredged river channel is thereby very quickly lost. Officers by way of example modelled removal of around 200,000 tonnes of gravel – the equivalent of 10,000 lorry loads – from a section of river. It is calculated that the river bed level may return to its original level within two years. The cost of this work would be around £1.5 million. This is modelled on the River Teviot through Hawick.

The Council is fortunate that we have one of the most advanced hydraulic models in Scotland built for Hawick. This allows us to look in detail at the best options available to manage flood risk. In this instance, analysis shows that dredging or localised removal of gravel in Hawick does not substantially reduce flood risk.

Unfortunately, we do not have this level of technical data available for our other Border Towns and cannot do the same level of analysis as done for Hawick. However, over time through the strategic approach to managing flood risk, will see our data sets increase allowing decision making on our flood risk management functions to be fully informed.

It is important to note that any individuals, communities, or organisations minded to undertake dredging or localised gravel removal will be required to follow the same regulatory legislation as local authorities. SEPA are the environmental regulatory body for any engineering works to be carried out on watercourses and would require sufficient evidence to support any such applications for dredging.

- 3.9 **Case Studies :(1)** The Bowmont Water was dredged approximately 1m below natural bed levels. After one bank full flood event (that occurred one month after the dredging operations) enough sediment was transported to raise the bed level by approximately one metre back to natural bed levels. The bank full flood event is expected to occur approximately once a year (see Figures 26-28).



Figure 26: Bowmont Water channel dredged 05 August 2009 approx 1m below natural bed level.



Figure 27: Bowmont Water 04 September 2009 bank full flow.



Figure 28: Bowmont Water 14 September 2009 after one bank full flow event bed level has risen (approx 1m) and returned to natural bed levels.

(2) Modelling on the Liddle Water at Newcastleton (*Halcrow 2005 technical note Newcastleton flood study commissioned by Scottish Borders Council*) showed that removing gravel did not have a significant effect in high flow events that were likely to result in flooding of built property (water level would reduce by less than 1cm in a one in 200 year event).

Modelling on the River Slitrig and the River Teviot (*Halcrow 2005 technical note Hawick flood study commissioned by Scottish Borders Council*) showed that removing gravel had a greater effect in lower return periods on the River Teviot and that removing half of the existing sediment deposit may reduce water levels by 18cm during a one in five year flood event. However, on the River Slitrig it was shown that during the one in 200 year flood event removing gravel did not have a significant effect on water levels (see Figures 29-30).



Fig 29



Fig 30

3.10 Officers are therefore of the view that removal of gravel and dredging of watercourses is not sustainable unless there is clear evidence that removal of the gravel will deliver long term benefits and reduce the impact of flooding upon adjacent properties. In terms of requests to remove gravel and dredge rivers, the position is clear in that localised gravel removal and dredging of large, fast flowing rivers - in an attempt to reduce flood risk - **is ineffective, uneconomic and unsustainable.**

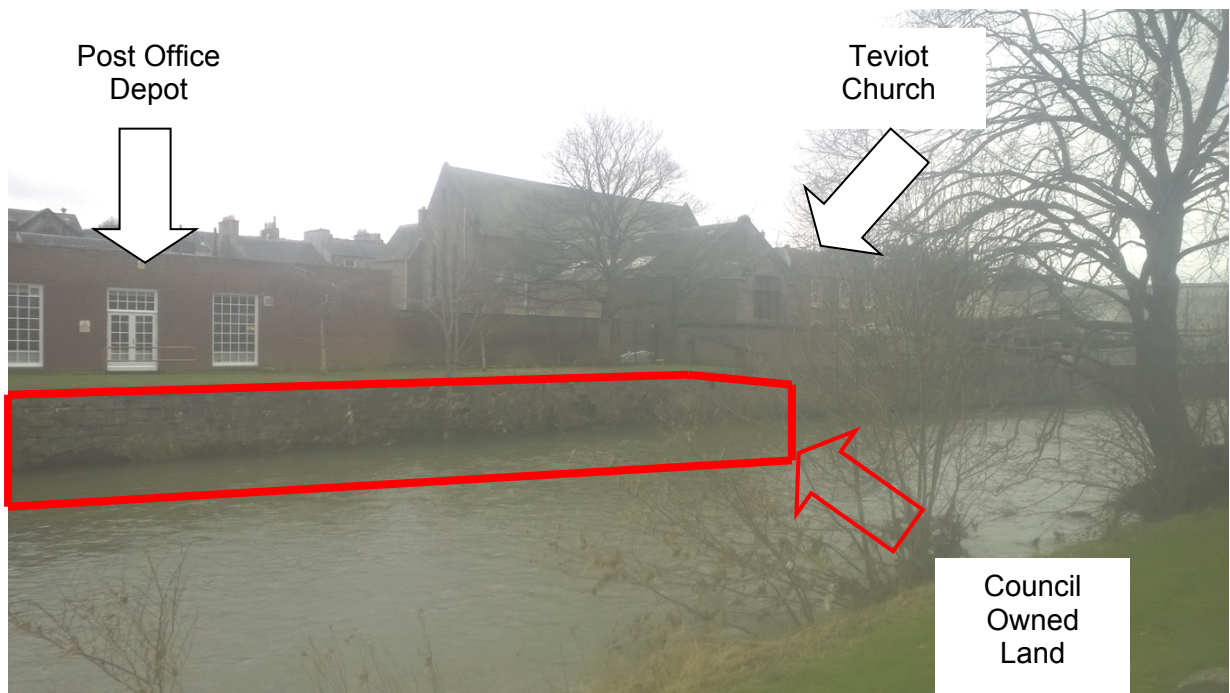
4 SHORT TERM MEASURES FOR HAWICK

- 4.1 Hawick Flood Protection Project is part of a three phase strategy for the protection of the community and assets in Hawick. The three phases are:
1. Short term measures to increase the level of protection to 1 in 10 year.
 2. Hawick Flood Protection Project to deliver direct 1 in 75 year defences within the town.
 3. Long term upstream storage to increase the level of protection created by the phase two direct defences.
- 4.2 As the Hawick Flood Protection project is still in the early stages of development prior to obtaining Scottish Government funding, the 1 in 75 year protection of the town is not programmed to be complete until 2022.
- 4.3 With the recent events in Hawick at the end of 2015 and start of 2016 it highlighted that the town is exposed for the next seven years and there is public pressure to provide some improvements in the town prior to the main flood protection being hopefully delivered by 2022.
- 4.4 Officers have reviewed the original list of phase one short term measures that had been previously commenced in the town. This list was updated with feedback from the community, involved in community support during and after the events, who were able to identify how the flood water breached the banks and identify weak points in the existing 1 in 10 defences. All of this information was analysed to identify any additional areas that could be improved to protect business and residential areas and provide a benefit to cost analysis.
- 4.5 The community have been putting pressure on Elected Members, MSP's and SEPA to have the water course through the town dredged to provide greater capacity in the water channels. The analysis in Section 4 of this report provides evidence of why dredging or gravel removal is not a solution for the issues in Hawick. However, if gravel removal was deemed to be an acceptable way forward for the Council then Officers have identified some key areas to be targeted.
- 4.6 This analysis has resulted in the table provided in Annex 1 showing the priority list for the short term measures in Hawick. This has been split into four categories:
1. Works that fall within Bellwin
 2. Priority 1- Based on Benefit Analysis
 3. Community Priority 1
 4. Priority Emergency works - that should to be undertaken
- 4.7 There are other works identified on the spreadsheet but due to the either the cost of the works and the levels of properties protected they do not provide a sufficient level of Benefit to Cost ratio to be included in the Priority 1 works.

4.8 In summary, the spreadsheet proposes the following actions:

1. Six items identified by this analysis will be added to the Bellwin works (we can only include repair and re-instatement works in Bellwin not enhancement).
2. Based on a benefit analysis of current level of protection, cost for implementing improvements and number of properties protected the Priority 1 items should be considered for Capital funding (£77,535.98).

4.9 The item identified as Priority Emergency Works is highlighting the area of land owned by the Council to the rear of the Post Office depot accessed from St George's Lane.



Views from Common Haugh Car Park



- 4.10 As shown in the above photo, the grassed area between the River Teviot and the Post Office depot wall is owned and maintained by the Council. Unfortunately, the retaining wall supporting this area and the surrounding properties, including buildings associated with Teviot Church and the Post Office, is in a poor state of repair.
- 4.11 As part of the Hawick Flood Protection Project the structural integrity of this wall has been assessed and it is on the limits of collapse and it will be gaining additional support from the tree routes in the grassed area.
- 4.12 The deterioration of this wall cannot be attributed to any of the recent flood events, as the wall was in a poor state prior to December 2015 and the recent events have just made the matter worse. Therefore, there is no substantiation for including the repair of this wall in the Bellwin Claim.
- 4.13 If this wall was to collapse then there is a risk to the Post Office depot buildings, although they are set back by a couple of metres from the wall. However, the buildings associated with the Teviot Church closely abut the wall and any collapse would likely undermine the foundations of the building.
- 4.14 The proposed cost for repairing this wall, looking to incorporate the repair into the future Hawick Flood Protection Project would be £150k. If a collapse was to happen it may well be covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance, with an excess of £75k to be paid by the Authority (it may not be covered without an appropriate inspection and remediation scheme being in place), but allowing that to happen would have the following consequences:
- Any claim of a potential magnitude of more than £100k would affect future premiums on the Council's insurance;
 - There will be significant negative public relations generated by a Council owned wall failure, in a community already frustrated by a perceived lack of action by this Authority. This could affect the progress of the Order process of the Hawick Flood Protection Project;
 - This is a risk that a wall failure affecting either of the buildings highlighted above could put at risk public safety.
- 4.15 The Project Team did look at other measures to repair the wall, but due to the structural analysis identifying that the wall needs a full replacement there is no other cost effective option. It is recommended that the required repairs be funded by advancing £150k of capital from the Hawick Flood Protection Project from 2018/19 into 2016/17 to deal promptly with these repairs.
- 4.16 Finally, there is strong public opinion that the removal of gravel will benefit the flood risk in the town. However, there is no evidence to support a long term benefit from gravel removal in the Teviot. If work is to be undertaken by a third party, in a controlled manner, the Community priority 1 estimate that the cost of this work will be in the region of £165k. This cost has been built up on a worst case scenario and there is an opportunity to half these costs if a contractor can find a use for the gravel rather than the assumption of sending to tip. Gravel extraction can be undertaken by third parties with permission from SEPA and other regulatory bodies.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

Scottish Borders Council will be liable for the first £508k of works undertaken in relation to these works which will have to be met from existing reserves.

£150k of capital to be advanced from the Hawick Flood Protection Project from 2018/19 to 2016/17 for the Hawick Post Office boundary wall repairs.

The Hawick Flood Protection Project has not yet secured the significant Scottish Government funding required to progress the project to construction phase. There is a risk that if this funding cannot be secured or that it does not include previously secured costs that the Council has to fully fund the £150k capital works.

The Capital & Revenue Plans were approved in February, there is no allocation for short term measures identified and therefore at this point there is no funding available to take these works forward.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The Bellwin Scheme has specific guidelines and definitions of what constitutes eligible and ineligible expenditure. Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that only eligible expenditure is included within the Council's claim the final decision on cost eligibility will rest with the Council's External Auditors and the Scottish Government.

5.3 Equalities

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

Many of the measures and remedial works proposed are designed to rectify and avoid environmental damage within the Scottish Borders and remedial measures will be undertaken in cooperation with SEPA & SNH.

5.5 Carbon Management

No effect on carbon emissions are anticipated from the recommendations of this report.

5.6 Rural Proofing

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation is required as a result of this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received been incorporated into the final report.

- 6.2 The Depute Chief Executives, Service Directors and their relevant staff have been involved in and agreed the compilation of the budgetary control statements appended.

Approved by

Philip Barr

Depute Chief Executive – Place

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Donald Macdonald	Financial Business Partner

Background Papers: Nil

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Treasury & Capital Team can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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Priority List Description	Total Cost of Priority
Possible Bellwin Claim Item	£ -
Priority 1 - based on Benefit analysis	£ 228,560.24
Priority 2 - based on Benefit analysis	£ 932,424.26
Public Priority 1 - based on recent community concern	£ 165,562.85
Public Priority 2 - based on recent community concern	£ 217,688.68

Hawick Short Term Measures		February 2016		Benefit Analysis	
ID No.	Location	Proposed Works	Actions	Additional Comments	Approx Cost
1	Entire extent of banks along the Teviot within Hawick	Removal of vegetation (inc trees (not stumps))		Already an order in to undertake these works	£ -
2	Wilton Lodge Park Erosion - Opposite Parkdale	Monitor			£ -
3	Wilton Lodge Park Erosion - Opposite Langheugh	Localised temp path reroute & reinforce bank			£ 24,567.84
4	Banking erosion next to cricket ground	Localised temp path reroute & reinforce bank			£ 92,808.94
5	Upstream of coble cauld to park gates - erosion	Reinforce bank			£ -
6	Low point at the grassed area of the coble cauld	Approx 100m of kerbs installed along the boundary of the grassed area		Allows the water into the grassed area, escapes into Victoria Road, worsens flooding on Commercial Road	£ 21,104.94
7	Cobble cauld	Removal of gravel downstream of the cobble cauld			£ 138,555.05
8	Lawson Footbridge - erosion of the banking	Reinforce the bank			£ -
9	Under the 3rd arch of the Albert Bridge	Removal of material			£ 57,499.20
10	St Demers Lane	Gate seal to be checked			£ -
11	Post office building and Drook Hall gaps	To be filled (brick/breeze block/kerb)		Simple blockwork protection a three key areas in the vicinity of the Post Office depot would provide additional protection to the adjacent properties/businesses, but also the 20 or so buildings and businesses in the sandbed area. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. Even in an event greater than 1 in 10 the additional defences and the improvements to public communication provide valuable additional time to take action to protect key assets further or evacuate properties. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 1,345.82
12A	Post office Quay wall requires stabilisation	Minimal works to reface		Section 108(1)(b) of the Water Resources Act 1989 requires the Council to maintain a section of land between the post office sorting depot (Buccleugh St) and the river Teviot. The land is separated from the river by a historic retaining wall, constructed from random rubble and sandstone. Prior to the flood events in December 2015 and January 2016 CH2MHill structurally assessed this wall and determined that it fell below industry standard levels of safety and was being supported by the tree root systems that it supported. Since the recent floods the wall has suffered from further deterioration and stone loss. This 45m long retaining wall supports adjacent commercial and residential properties and if it was to fail the implication could be severe for the properties and turn a 190k improvement of an existing wall into a major repair or replacement of adjoining buildings. Even if this wall failure was covered by the Council's insurance, the excess the Authority would have to pay is in the region of £200k. Therefore it is recommended that this historic issues that has been made worse by the recent events is dealt with as a matter of urgency to avoid increased costs to the Council's operations.	£ 15,243.83
12B	Post office Quay wall requires stabilisation	Rip Rap			£ 52,444.07
12C	Post office Quay wall requires stabilisation	Gap to be filled			£ 19,248.00
13	Downstream of Albert Bridge	Gravel removal			£ 16,515.00
14	Siting downstream of Drumlanrig bridge	Gravel removal			£ 27,997.20
15	Back of the shops/buildings on the Sandbed	Increase height of Siting/Sandbed wall		Simple blockwork protection at this key area would provide additional protection to the adjacent properties/businesses, but also the 20 or so buildings and businesses in the sandbed area. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. Even in an event greater than 1 in 10 the additional defences and the improvements to public communication provide valuable additional time to take action to protect key assets further or evacuate properties. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 23,006.28
16	Teviot Road/Crescent	Localised repairs to plug holes in the walls			£ -
17	Victoria Laundry buildings on Commercial Road	Gap to be filled			£ -
18	Commercial Road Wall	Amey to fix gaps in the wall and the flap valves			£ -
19	Lanlaw Terrace	Approx 100m of kerb to be installed at the low point		Kerb protection at this key area would provide additional protection to the adjacent 10 residential properties. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. Even in an event greater than 1 in 10 the additional defences and the improvements to public communication provide valuable additional time to take action to protect key assets further or evacuate properties. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 13,226.75
20	Mansfield Road - from leisure centre end	Extend kerb line at the upstream end of Mansfield Rd (150m)		Kerb protection at this key area would provide additional protection to the adjacent high number of ground floor residential and business properties. From recent events it has been observed that at periods of high flow the water breaks the bank at this point, in advance of the previously installed 1 in 10 protection and causes issues over the length of Mansfield Rd. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 14,880.10
21	Mansfield Road - existing kerbs to roundabout	Extend kerb line		The extension to the existing 1 in 10 kerb protection would increase the protection to a significant number of ground floor residential properties, local textile business and the Scottish Water treatment works. The environmental and human health issues caused by the Scottish Water site being inundated by flood water can be positively reduced by the completion of this section of kerbing. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. Even in an event greater than 1 in 10 the additional defences and the improvements to public communication provide valuable additional time to take action to protect key assets further or evacuate properties. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 84,981.88
22	Mansfield Road - H/F/C roundabout to CNC	Extend kerb line (combined with above approx 900m)			£ 95,067.28
23	Duke Street/Mansfield Road river channel	Gravel removal and embankment protection			£ -
24A	Glebe Mill	Extend kerb line (100m)		The previously installed 1 in 10 protection kerb line does not connect into high land or a building frontage, so the water can breach this section of footway at the Pringle factory and run back towards the high density residential properties on Glebe Mill Street and Duke Street. The 1 in 10 protection would provide benefit as the majority of the high water events have been below that level since records began in 1961. Even in an event greater than 1 in 10 the additional defences and the improvements to public communication provide valuable additional time to take action to protect key assets further or evacuate properties. If defences are removed at a later date then they may not be applicable for Capital funding.	£ 11,573.41
24B	Glebe Mill	Form berm in footpath			£ 1,240.01
25	Scottish Water to consider protection measures				£ -
26	Weensland	Removal of demolition material and return to flood plain		Allow for 10,000m3 of fill removed to landfill, as per Option Appraisal	£ 683,020.80
27	Mansfield Road	Mill Ledge repair			£ -
28	Duke St/Glebe Mill	Temporary sandbags required until Scottish water works are finished			£ -
29	Scottish Water Treatment works	Gravel removal			£ 48,787.20
30	Entire length	Bungs to be given to Flood Group - DM			£ -
31	Mansfield Road	Install N/R valves on drainage gullies			£ 2,732.28
32	Generally	Install N/R valves on drainage gullies/pipes exiting through river wall			£ 47,044.80
					£ 1,544,236.02

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BORDERS RAILWAY BLUEPRINT – DELIVERY OF ACTION PLAN

Report by Corporate Transformation & Services Director

Executive Committee

19 April 2016

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides an update on the delivery of the Borders Railway Blueprint and the Council's current financial contribution to key projects.**
- 1.2 'Borders Railway Maximising the Impact: A Blueprint for the Future' was launched in November 2014 by the First Minister. It aims to maximise the economic benefits of the new Borders Railway connection by helping to stimulate business growth, generate employment and boost visitor numbers. The Borders Railway provides a once in a generation opportunity to support economic growth and development in the region, making the Scottish Borders a more accessible and more attractive place to do business, to visit, to live and to work.
- 1.3 The development of the Blueprint was led by Scottish Enterprise in partnership with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, VisitScotland, Abellio ScoRail, and the City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils. The project is an exemplar of partnership working across the public sector in the city-region area and at a national level.
- 1.4 Since the launch, work has focused on developing the Action Plan to deliver the key investments and commitments made by partners in the Blueprint. The Action Plan (Annex 1) outlines project delivery across three strategic themes: *Great Places for Working and Investing, Great Communities for Living and Learning, and Great Destinations to Visit*. The Financial Summary (Annex 2a PRIVATE) outlines the project costs and partner budget contributions across the Programme.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive:-**
 - (a) **Notes the significant progress made in developing the Borders Railway Blueprint Action Plan.**
 - (b) **Agrees that further reports on implementation of the Borders Railway Blueprint Action Plan will form part of the Executive Committee's regular quarterly monitoring of the Council's Corporate Transformation Plan.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Borders Railway opened in September 2015. The £294 million investment delivered the longest new UK domestic railway for more than 100 years. It provides a modern, sustainable transport connection between Edinburgh, Midlothian and the Scottish Borders, offering a unique economic development opportunity for Scotland. In the first five months of operation, over 500,000 passengers used the Borders Railway, significantly exceeding initial targets.
- 3.2 'Borders Railway Maximising the Impact: A Blueprint for the Future' was launched in November 2014 by the First Minister. The Blueprint recognises the potential of the Borders Railway to provide a once in a generation opportunity to support economic growth and development in the region. It aims to maximise the economic benefits of the new Borders Railway connection, capitalising on the transformational impact of the new line in creating new places to 'live, work, visit, learn, play and grow'.
- 3.3 The development of the Blueprint was led by Scottish Enterprise in partnership with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, VisitScotland, Abellio ScotRail and City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils. Since the launch, work has focused on developing an Action Plan to deliver the key investments and commitments made by partners in the Blueprint. The Blueprint outlines key investments across three strategic themes: *Great Places for Working and Investing*, *Great Communities for Living and Learning*, and *Great Destinations to Visit*.
- 3.4 The investment proposals published in the Blueprint together form a national plan for collaborating on delivery. They secure a commitment from partners to jointly plan, prioritise and agree resources to deliver these priorities. The proposals build on work already done by the Council and other partners, and challenge the partners to 'raise the bar' in maximising the impact of the Railway.
- 3.5 The Programme is managed by a Leadership Group made up of senior representatives of the partner organisations, and is supported by a Champions Group who support day to day operational delivery of activities. The project is an exemplar of partnership working across the public sector in the city-region area and at a national level.
- 3.6 The Borders Railway Blueprint can be downloaded at: www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/8379/borders_railway-a_blueprint_for_the_future

4 DELIVERY OF THE ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 The Blueprint sets out a number of investments across the three themes of *Great Places for Working and Investing*, *Great Communities for Living and Learning*, and *Great Destinations to Visit*. Within each theme the key projects are detailed in the Action Plan (Annex 1).

Programme highlights delivered in 2015/16 are outlined below:

4.2 **Great Places for Working and Investing**

- Launch of new inward investment website and interactive map of 100 development sites in the railway corridor by the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities in December 2016 – www.bordersrailwayprospectus.com
- Recruitment of an Inward Investment Project Manager starting in April 2016.
- Commitment from partners to deliver Simplified Planning Zones and Business Improvement Districts in the Borders Railway Corridor.
- Commitment from Scottish Enterprise to fund the design plan in 2016 for Phase 1 of the Central Borders Business Park at Tweedbank, delivering 1000 square meters of prime business space and 1.9 hectares of serviced land.
- Recruitment of a Borders Railway Development Executive by ScotRail starting in March 2016.

4.3 **Great Places for Living and Learning**

- Investment by Scottish Borders Council in improved bus connections to and from stations in September 2015.
- Improvements in path/ cycle connections and signage to stations at Galashiels, Tweedbank and Stow.
- Commitment from Skills Development Scotland to carry out a Borders Railway future skills needs assessment in 2016.
- Agreement with Transport Scotland to deliver scoping work on the feasibility of the extension of Borders Railway towards Hawick and Carlisle.

4.4 **Great Destinations to Visit**

- Launch of Train Wrap promoting Borders Railway between seven Scottish cities in 2015.
- Completion of Tourism Destination Audit and Tourism Train Market Assessment.
- Recruitment of Borders Railway Tourism Business Adviser by Business Gateway, and launch of Business Opportunities Guide in August 2015.
- Launch of VisitScotland 3 year International and UK Marketing Campaign in August 2015 (see Annex 3) www.visitscotland.com/blog/scotland/borders-railway/
- Development of pilot 'Hop on Hop off' tourist bus services in Scottish Borders and Midlothian.
- Development of ScotRail 'Beautiful Borders' visitor experience pilot.
- Borders Railway presence at VisitScotland EXPO in 2016 to develop new travel trade market opportunities.
- Delivery of Steam Train Experience in 2015 bringing 5,500 visitors to Scottish Borders. Agreement to deliver 2016 experience.

- 4.5 A Blueprint partnership Communications Group has been set up to oversee a new communications plan for 2016, which includes the re-development of www.bordersrailway.co.uk with 'Invest', 'Live & Work', and 'Visit' themes. Similarly, a Blueprint Monitoring & Evaluation Group has been established to develop a framework for monitoring and reporting programme outputs regularly to the Leadership Group and other stakeholders.

5 THE FINANCIAL DEAL

- 5.1 A commitment has been made by the partners to jointly deliver this programme of projects and develop a corresponding 'Financial Deal' that sets out the funding commitments to each project.
- 5.2 The principle of the Blueprint is that the Action Plan investments are funded across the partners using other funding sources where appropriate (e.g. Skills Development Scotland, Abellio as Train Operator and/ or other private sector sources). The amount of £10 million has been committed in principle from the Scottish Government to fund the financial gap in the delivery of the Action Plan projects. The Leadership Group are working closely with Scottish Government to manage the phasing of projects and to allocate the funds appropriately.
- 5.3 The current costs of Blueprint projects are outlined in Annex 2a, totalling £17,115,800 (this Annex is PRIVATE due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of external partners). The Council has committed £7,007,600 of capital and revenue budget towards these project costs (Annex 2b).

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Costs associated with these proposals are being met from existing capital and revenue budgets reflected in the 2015/16 – 2019/20 Financial Plan, including resources identified from an earmarked balance approved at the 24th February 2015 Executive meeting, which ring-fenced resources to 'support Economic Development activity and infrastructure, the Borders Railway blueprint and associated action plan and the development of locality planning during 2015/16'.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

The Borders Railway Blueprint was launched in November 2014, and contained a promise by the partners to jointly plan, prioritise and agree resources across our organisations to deliver the ambition to maximise the economic benefits of the Borders Railway. Scottish Borders Council's commitment to the delivery of the Blueprint programme was approved by Council in April 2015. Without this commitment, there is a risk that the Blueprint ambition and the associated economic and community benefits will not be realised.

6.3 Equalities




An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and it is anticipated that the Blueprint will assist the Council to meet the Equality Duty. The Blueprint investments are expected to deliver a number of positive impacts for equalities groups, particularly as a result of enhanced connectivity to and from stations, and from new employment, skills training and business opportunities. We will continue the impact assessment process as we progress this work.

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Borders Railway Blueprint – Overview of Projects – March 2016

Purpose - To provide an overview on the current status of Blueprint projects, highlighting a traffic light system for risk.

Key for Action Plan 'Status' update:

		
Good progress	More to do/limited progress	No progress

Theme 1. Great Places for Working & Investing

Project Title	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Central Borders Business Park - Phase 1 (Tweedside Park)		- SE - SBC - Inward investors	- Scottish Government - Land owners - Developers - Planning authority	- Development of key site at Railway terminus. - New link road, plot servicing; and initial business space.	- 1.9 Ha net serviced land - 1000 sqm net business space	- Increased business space - Increased business base - Greater job opportunities	SE	31/10/2018
Central Borders Business Park - Phase 2 (Tweedbank Industrial Estate)		- SBC - SE - Owners - Tenants	- Scottish Government - Land/ property owners	- Design vision and Development Framework/ SPG (linked to above). - Redevelopment of Tweedbank Industrial Estate (potential for joint venture).	- 2.5 Ha additional serviced development land - Up to 24,000 sqm new/ refurbished business space	- Increased private sector leverage - Increased inward investment - Greater job opportunities	SBC	2025
Borders Railway Inward Investment Prospectus		- SBC, MLC and CEC - Developers	- CEC (Inward Investment Unit) - Housing Developers - Commercial Developers - Leisure Developers	- Creation of Borders Railway Inward Investment Prospectus.	- Prospectus (interactive) map produced. - Promotional website, film, marketing material.	- Improved image of Midlothian/ Scottish Borders as a business location	SBC	30/08/2015

Annex 1




Project Title	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Borders Railway Inward Investment Response		- SE/ SDI - SBC, MLC	- CEC (Inward Investment Unit) - SDI - Scot Gov Relocations	- Joint inward investment response (Marketing/ Developer Days/ Sales Visits/ Site pipeline)	- Enquiries/ businesses assisted	- Increased inward investment	MLC	30/04/2017
Borders Railway Programme Executive		ScotRail SBC, MLC	- CEC (Inward Investment Unit) - SDI - Scot Gov Relocations	- Rail Service Borders Development Plan	- Enquiries/ businesses assisted	- New products/ services delivered - Increased inward investment	ScotRail	28/02/2018
Borders Railway Investment Fund		- Business Gateway - SBC, MLC, CEC - Local businesses/ attractions	- SE - Business Loans Scotland	- Borders Railway Investment Fund set up.	- £1 million loan fund to support business development opportunities	- New products/ services launched	TBC	01/04/2016

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Theme 2. Living & Learning



Activity	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Housing Land/ Development		- SBC, MLC	- Scottish Government - SESPlan - Land owners - Developers	- Development constraints identified	- # Additional housing units created	- Increased population with a focus on working age	TBC	TBC
Integrated transport at Station Hubs	 	- SBC, MLC - Users	- Scottish Government - ScotRail	- Integrated transport hubs created, including improved signage, information and transport connections	- Improved linkages between the railway stations and housing, work, tourism attractions	- Greater Job Opportunities - Increased workforce - Increased visitor numbers	SBC	31/12/2016

Annex 1






Activity	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Develop walk/ cycle paths into wider network		- SBC/ MLC - Residents/ Communities	- Scottish Government (Healthy Choices) - ScotRail	- Network of cycle/ walking paths created	- Improved linkages between the railway stations and housing, work, tourism attractions	- Increased workforce - Increased visitor numbers	SBC/ MLC	31/12/2016
Modern Apprenticeships - Tourism, Leisure & Hospitality/ STEM/ Construction		- SDS - Young People - Business	- FE Edinburgh, Midlothian and Borders employers	- Enhanced Modern Apprenticeship Scheme - 'Borders Railway Welcomes' hospitality training	- Increased training opportunities	- Increased workforce - Increased visitor numbers	SDS	TBC
Scope out potential feasibility work for extending the line		- SBC - TS, Network Rail - Land interests	- Transport Scotland - Scottish Government - Midlothian, CEC - Transport Planning	- Railway extension scoping work undertaken	- Intelligence on potential future options for extension of the railway		SBC	31/06/2016

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Theme 3. Great Destinations to Visit

Activity	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank (Pre-opening)		- SBC	- GTS Trustees - CEC, MLC, SBC - Network Rail - Visitor Attractions	- Temporary exhibitions/ showcases in key locations in Railway Corridor	- Greater promotion of tourism offering	- Greater awareness of tourism offering	SBC	31/03/16
Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank (Permanent Home)		- SBC - Tourism sector	- Land owners - Developers - GTS Trustees - ETAG, Marketing Edinburgh	- Design and construction of new visitor attraction	- New visitor attraction opened	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend	SBC	TBC

Annex 1

Activity	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Steam Train Experience		- TS	- ScotRail Abellio - Visitor Attractions/ Tour operators	- 6 week 2015 pilot of Steam Train Experience: Yr 1 - 8 week 2016 pilot Steam Train Experience: Yr 2	- 17 + 16 Steam Train Journeys and add-on tours	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend -Intelligence on future options	TS	31/10/2016
Tourism Train Market Assessment Study		- SE - TS	- VisitScotland - Abellio	- Market Assessment study for tourism train related experience	- Market Assessment study completed	- Greater awareness of gaps/ opportunities in tourism market	SE	31/03/2015
Borders Railway Tourism Development Programme		- Business Gateway - Tourism Businesses	- SE - ATP - SBC/ MLC - VisitScotland - ETAG, Marketing Edinburgh/ CEC	- Direct company support provided by Tourism Business Advisor (0.5 FTE) and Business Opportunities Guide - 4 Interactive events	- 50 companies provided with direct support	- New products/ services launched -New enterprises set up -Increased turnover of existing businesses -Increased business networking opportunities - Leverage of additional private sector investment	BG	31/10/2016
Tourism Destination Audit		- SBC - MLC - Attractions/ Business	- Attractions/ Businesses; Borders Food Network - SE, VS - Tour Reps - Inward investment (cf W&I link)	- Commissioned research into tourism destination offering	- Tourism Destination audit complete	- Greater awareness of gaps/ opportunities in tourism market	SBC	30/05/2015
Hop on/ hop off bus services (delivered in Borders under L&L ref 2)		- SBC, MLC	- Visitor Attractions	- Wider Tour operator provision around Scottish Borders and Midlothian	- New tour operators set up	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend	MLC	30/10/2016

Annex 1

Activity	Status	Stakeholders Impacted	Enablers Required	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Lead	By When
Tour operator pilots		- ScotRail - SBC, MLC - Tour operator	- Visitor Attractions	- Wider Tour operator provision around Scottish Borders and Midlothian	- New tour operators set up - Mini tour offering launched (linking stations with local attractions)	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend	ScotRail	30/04/2016
Ambassadors		- ScotRail - SBC, MLC	- Visitor Attractions	- Full season service for 2 years	- Ambassadors welcome scheme 2 year pilot delivered	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend	SBC	31/10/2017
Marketing Programme		- VS - SBC, MLC - Attractions/ Business - Abellio ScotRail	- Marketing Edinburgh - Midlothian/ Borders ATP - Attractions/ Business - Abellio ScotRail	- VisitScotland Marketing Programme running a series of campaigns: - UK - International - Travel Trade - Corporate and consumer PR	- Greater promotion of tourism offering in Midlothian and Scottish Borders through: - Content created - # marketing campaigns - # website hits - # offers/incentives ran	- Increased visitor numbers - Increased visitor spend	VS	2016/17
Train Wrap		- TS - VisitScotland - Creative Agency	- SBC, CEC, MLC - Artist - Abellio ScotRail	- Train Wrap 1 Year promotional campaign with decorated train carriages	- 3 train carriages decorated with promotional material for use throughout Scotland	- Greater awareness of tourism offering	TS	17/03/2015
Borders Railway Exposition		- SBC, MLC, CEC - Local Business - Media	- VS - Key sector groups - Transport Scotland (Stark Events)	- Extended programme of events linked to Borders Railway opening, including Media Day, Waverley Showcase, EXPO 2016	- Greater promotion of tourism offering	- Greater awareness of tourism offering	SBC	31/04/2016

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Annex 2b: Borders Railway Blueprint –SBC Financial Contributions

Ref	Work Package	SBC £'000
Working & Investing Theme		
1	Central Borders Business Park - Phase 1 (New link road and plot servicing; and initial business space provision)	0.0
2	Central Borders Business Park - Phase 2 (Industrial Estate Upgrade)	3,000.0
3	Borders Railway Prospectus	18.5
4	Borders Railway Inward Investment Response	60.0
5	Borders Railway Programme Executive	12.5
6	Borders Railway Investment Fund	0.0
Sub Total		3,091.0
Living & Working Theme		
1	Housing Land/ Development (link to W&I ref3)	50.0
2	Integrated transport at Station Hubs (PT & Signage)	62.3
3	Develop walk/ cycle paths into wider network	25.0
4	Modern Apprenticeships - Tourism, Leisure & Hospitality	0.0
5	Modern Apprenticeships - STEM	0.0
6	Modern Apprenticeships -Construction	0.0
7	Scope out potential feasibility work for extending the line	30.0
Sub Total		167.3
Great Destinations to Visit Theme		
1	Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank (Pre opening work & link to Ref 2 below)	25.0
2	Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank (Permanent Home, cf Ref 1d.)	3,500.0
3	Steam Train Experience	39.6
4	Tourism Train Market Assessment	0.0
5	Borders Railway Tourism Development Programme	6.3
6	Tourism Destination Audit	15.0
7	Hop on/ hop off bus services & tour operator service	0.0
8	Tour operator pilots	0.0
9	Ambassadors	33.5
10	Marketing Programme	100.0
11	Train Wrap	25.0
12	Borders Railway Exposition	5.0
Sub Total		3,749.3
TOTAL		7,007.6

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VisitScotland Borders Railway update Marketing, PR and Industry Engagement

(21 January 2016)



Scotland's National Tourism Organisation

Buidheann Turasachd Nàiseanta na h-Alba

Marketing

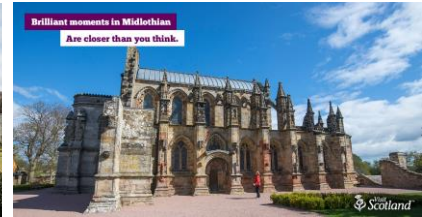
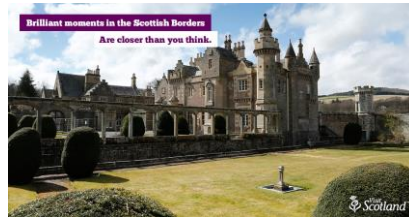
VisitScotland is investing £367,000 in a unique three-year international marketing campaign to put the new Borders Railway on the map. The funding, provided by the Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council and Midlothian Council, will be used to promote the Borders Railway to national and international markets.

UK Marketing

Phase one of the campaign launched w/c 17 August 2015 and included outdoor, radio, and digital advertising:

- Radio Advertising of Borders Railway on HEART Scotland FM featuring the voice of Neil Oliver. 30 second trails ran over 3 weeks reaching over 3.9 million listeners.
- Outdoor promotion included large floor graphics at Glasgow Queen Street and Buchanan St Bus Station with a total reach of over 3.5 million people.
- Digital campaign work across a number of channels including paid for opportunities on Facebook, Display banners and Targeted Email, delivering over 6 million opportunities to see. A win message provided a strong call to action with a primary focus on data capture and generating business referrals.

Phase one of the campaign media schedule was shared with industry via regional industry groups and included in the [Borders Railway industry toolkit](#) to allow tourism businesses to piggyback on this regional promotion.



Facebook digital ads

International Marketing

The international Borders Railway marketing campaign launched at the beginning of September 2015, with a fantastic competition promoted in three markets: Italy, US and Germany. The competition will run for 2 years and the winner will travel to Scotland in June 2017. The fantastic six day prize involves 12 different partners in Edinburgh, Midlothian and the Borders; Dalhousie Castle Hotel, Melville Castle Hotel, Kingsmuir House B&B, Glasshouse Hotel, Cocoa Black, Stewart Brewing, Abbotsford House, Traquair House, Borders Journey, Johnston of Elgin, Scotrail, Europcar.

Online paid activity will run in the USA and Germany over a period of two years:

USA

Year 1 activities of the campaign ran for four weeks from 12 October 2015. This was an online paid media campaign with a mix of awareness and data acquisitions, via New York times, New York Magazine, Facebook and Conversant.

The campaign used email, banners and video content, and featured Stevie, the Scottish Borders 'Scot' from the Meet the Scots creative. These activities delivered a total reach of over 2.8 million people, generating over 29,000 unique landings on a dedicated page on [visitscotland.com](#) and received over 17,000 prize draw entrants.

Germany

Year 1 digital activities of the campaign will run throughout March.

Italy - Expo Milano

Expo Milano 2015 is the Universal Exhibition that Milan, Italy, hosted from May 1 to October 31, 2015. Over this six-month period, Milan became a global showcase with more than 140 participating countries and welcoming over 20 million visitors.

From 10 – 13 September 2015 VisitScotland had a presence in the UK Pavilion, which welcomed over 20,000 consumers each day. The Borders Railway consumer competition was a central part of the Milan Expo promotional activity and as well as being promoted by the staff directly, it featured on the main stand with a QR code beside images of Melrose Abbey and the Tapestry.

Landing page

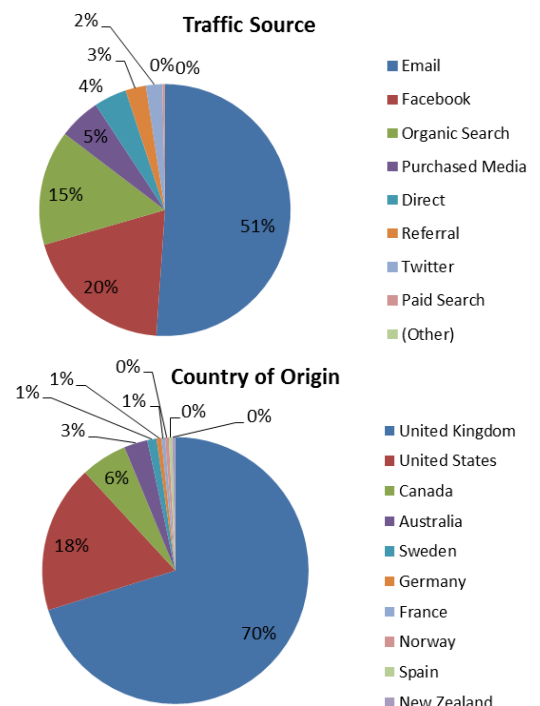
A blog page at visitscotland.com/bordersrailway is highlighting attractions along the route and directing visitors to the destination web pages and to buy tickets.

This blog was also linked as a main feature on the homepage carousel around the launch.



Analytics of the blog page around the launch:

- Between its launch in June to end September 2015, this page experienced just under 20k (19,551) of visits.
- Over half the traffic (51%) arrived from Email, 20% from Facebook and 15% from organic search.
- 2/3 of visits originated from the UK. The US & Canada were also keen audiences.
- The majority of the audience was over the age of 55.
 - 27% over 65
 - 29% 55-65
 - 20% 45-54
 - 12% 35-44
 - 9% 25-34
 - 3% 18-24
- Just under half the audience was returning, 49%. Showed the article had a good pull.
- A small number booked directly from the page (16), however, there were over 200 referrals to businesses within the borders region from vs.com in the period. These were mostly links through to providers websites.



Targetted digital promotion

- March 2015 – ‘Fascinating railways’ feature in international ezines to 1.1 million people highlighted the enchanting rail route opening in September amongst other iconic Scottish rail routes.
- June 2015 – A Borders Railway food and drink experience and itinerary was sent to all national and international ezine subscribers, totalling 1.1 million people.
- July 2015 – The Borders Railway opening and local events were promoted to UK subscribers totalling 800,000 people, with a particular focus in the Edinburgh regional ezine to 70,000 people.
- September 2015 - Dedicated Borders Railway email went out 1st week of September to Edinburgh and Glasgow databases: approx. 170,000 people.



Consumer Social Media

Borders Railway content is regularly featured on VisitScotland’s Facebook and Twitter pages, including our international social media pages.



VisitScotland's Facebook page has over 615,000 followers, and over 162,000 follow the @VisitScotland twitter account.

PR activities

'Hot for 2015' PR promotion

The Consumer PR team highlighted the Borders Railway opening as one of the top stories of 2015 to national and international press contacts, generating fantastic coverage in:

- The Financial Times Weekend as one of the 'Next Big Things'
- The Independent's 2015 Travel Special within the Holiday Hit Parade
- The Sunday Times Travel section
- The Press & Journal 'Your Weekend'
- Daily Star on Sunday within 'What's Hot for 2015'
- The Mirror's 'News'

The story was also covered in the New York Times Sunday edition, circulated to more than 2 million global readers. This edition's "How to Travel in 2015" feature is a trendsetter in travel journalism so invites increasing media interest in the Borders Railway project for 2015.



Scotlanders Bloggers

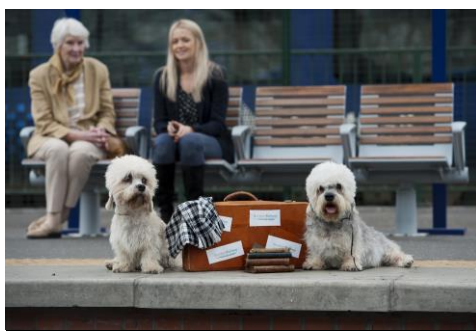
The Scotlanders blogger group press trip took place 11-14 June across Midlothian and the Scottish Borders. Extensive itineraries for six bloggers incorporated a wide range of attractions and activities, including Borders Book Festival, and generated engaging content across blogs and social media. The Scotlanders combined social media following is over 40,000 people in over one hundred countries.

PR Forum

VisitScotland hosts regular PR Communicators' Forums which are open to PR practitioners working in tourism, leisure or related industries to network and discuss upcoming opportunities. The 6 September 2015 PR Forum event welcomed 45 attendees from across Scotland and was themed around Borders Railway, featuring presentations from VisitScotland Regional Director Paula McDonald and Borders Railway Blueprint Project Manager Sam Smith.

Sir Walter Scott's birthday

In addition to regular media promotion of the tourism potential of the Borders Railway, the Corporate PR team held a photocall on the anniversary of Sir Walter Scott's birthday in August to promote the imminent arrival of the Borders Railway, also featuring Dandie Dinmont Terriers, the dog breed famously named and owned by Sir Walter Scott.



Media launch day

Our corporate and consumer PR teams maximised the media engagement and coverage around the Borders Railway opening celebrations with a dedicated media day on Friday 4 September, taking 93 influential media contacts on an exclusive trip to Tweedbank and back.

With 85% of media attending from Scotland and the UK, this was a fantastic opportunity to promote the regions to these priority markets, as well as further afield with key global press agencies and journalists from as far across the world as the US, Canada, France, Germany and Ireland in attendance

While enjoying the picturesque setting of this Great Scenic Rail Journey, the journalists, broadcasters, bloggers and Instagrammers were given information about each region, held interviews with VisitScotland's Chairman Mike Cantlay and other Borders Railway project partners, and enjoyed tasty samples from the regions with picnic hampers and goodybags. Even Sir Walter Scott joined the trip to share his own local insights.

Imaginative press releases and photo calls also captured the attention of national and international media, highlighting the rich heritage, attractions and events of each region along the route. From supermodel Anna Freemantle dressed in Pringle, to Midlothian schoolchildren decked in boiler suits and hard hats outside the National Mining Museum, finally guests were welcomed by riders and horses from Gala and Melrose Common Ridings at Tweedbank.

This dedicated media day resulted in over 270 pieces of coverage, including across broadcast stations, with a total reach of over 51 million readers, viewers and listeners.

[Watch some highlights from the day on our YouTube channel.](#)

The hashtag #mybordersrailway was trending on Twitter reaching a potential audience of 29.2 million people.

Following the 'Golden Ticket' Day on 5 September, public services began on 6 September welcoming more than 2,500 passengers on the first day.

VisitScotland was ready to welcome them with a stand throughout the first three weekends of September at Edinburgh Waverley, to enhance the experience for both visitors and locals alike.

The line was officially opened to grand fanfare by Her Majesty The Queen on 9 September, the day that she became Britain's longest serving Monarch. The Union of South Africa was used to haul the Royal steam train and will now be used for additional steam train journeys which will run every Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday until 18 October.





Launch weekend – PR group trip

A global group press trip was created and delivered with 6 key travel journalists from Departures (Canada), the Globe and Mail (USA), Prisma (Germany), La Vie du RAIL (France, The Independent (UK) and Irish Daily Mail (Ireland).

Media spent two days in Edinburgh exploring the cities' cultural highlights, before travelling on a special preview train journey and spending a further two day days in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders discovering the heritage, literature and food and drink offering.

Resulting coverage from this trip will pepper throughout the next 6 months allowing the excitement of the new railway line to continue to grave travel pages as international marketing campaign is activated.

One highlight is that as a result of the group press trip and media day, the Independent on Sunday featured Borders Railway on the front page of its Travel section, along with a double page spread celebrating the Borders' regional identity and "a more authentic Scotland".

"For many this was not just a railway, but also a symbol of the greatness, passion and romance of the Border Country, with its massive castles, grand estates, and romantic ruined abbeys, and a world-famous wool and textile industry."



Instameet

On Saturday 24th October 2015 VisitScotland arranged an Instameet, bringing 15 Instagram users together to take photographs together, which typically generates a considerable volume of social media content and engagement around the location in which they take place. 15 Scottish Instagrammers from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk, and Stirling attended the Instameet, including 4 of the 6 most popular Instagram accounts in Scotland in terms of number of followers. They were accompanied by two VisitScotland staff.



The 15 Instagrammers split into two smaller groups to cover as much of the line as possible. After leaving Edinburgh, one group travelled to Midlothian and the other to the Borders to ensure that both regions received coverage. Their itinerary was flexible to enable them to visit a wide range of attractions in each region.

Content generated by the Instameet had a reach of over half a million people and generated a substantial amount of engagement on social media, surpassing the objectives for the activity.

- o 76 photos of Midlothian and Scottish Borders published on Instagram
- o Audience Reach of 534,250 people
- o Total impressions / Opportunities To See (OTS) of 2,113,552
- o 38,520 total likes on posts
- o 742 total comments on posts

It's Friday

VisitScotland works in partnership with the Daily Mail (Scotland) on a regular 'It's Friday! What's On' double-page feature to showcase things to see and do in Scotland's regions, particularly highlighting things to do over the upcoming weekend. Borders Railway featured in the 'It's Friday' feature on 12 June 2015 and 4 September 2015, increasing exposure to the Daily Mail's weekly circulation of 89,526.

Saks 5th Avenue

Our consumer PR team worked with Saks 5th Avenue to create Scottish content for a new customer 'magalog' (high-end magazine meets catalogue) in September, going to 500k of Saks top customers (customers who have spent \$1m in the last year) – profiling suggests 80% of whom love to travel internationally. In addition to fashion shoots in the Lothians, this included a page of editorial on Scotland, and Borders Railway featured as the top story.

Customer Experience – Launch Weekend

VisitScotland had a Customer Experience team on the ground around the Borders Railway opening, responsible for enhancing the experience for both visitors and locals alike.

Edinburgh Waverley

- Saturday 5 - Sunday 6 September
- Friday 11 - Sunday 13 September
- Friday 18 - Sunday 20 September

Galashiels, pop-up gazebo at Stirling Street (outside Transport Interchange)

- Sunday 6 September



Industry Engagement - meetings and events

Public workshops and industry meetings targeted to maximise the tourism potential of the Borders Railway have been taking place in the Scottish Borders and Midlothian since May 2013. Recent activities included:

23 January 2015 and 6 March 2015 - Borders Business Forum events

The Borders Business Forum held two meetings, titled "What do Borders businesses need to profit from the railway?" hosted by the Forum at Scottish Borders Council's headquarters, on Friday 23 January and Friday 6 March. The events included guest speakers Michael Moore MP, Councillor Stuart Bell and Sam Smith, Programme Manager of the Borders Rail Blueprint. VisitScotland staff attended the March event and were available to speak to businesses with specific enquiries following the meeting.

20 May 2015 – Edinburgh Tourism Showcase

The Edinburgh Tourism Showcase was organised by the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG). VisitScotland was able to secure space for representation of the Borders and Midlothian as well as Abellio/Scotrail.

28 May 2015 - Midlothian Tourism Forum event including SBTP attendance

A half day workshop hosted by Midlothian Tourism Forum, Midlothian Council and Scottish Borders Council surrounded tourism opportunities and issues around the new Borders Railway. Scottish Borders businesses were also invited to attend this event via the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership and local Business Gateway. Speakers included Sam Smith, Programme Manager for the Borders Rail Blueprint, Tourism and Leisure Solutions (TALS) presenting findings of the Tourism Destination Audit, Abellio Scotrail's James Ledgerwood and Keith Campbell, Regional Brand Manager for VisitScotland. This event officially launched the Borders Railway industry toolkit.

3 June 2015 – Audit presentation to Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership (SBTP)

At the quarterly meeting of the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership on 3 June, attended by VisitScotland and Scottish Borders Council and private sector representatives, the findings of the Tourism Destination Audit were presented by Sue Crossman on behalf of TALS.

17 June 2015 - Borders Railway Tourism meeting with ScotRail

This business event was held by ScotRail in partnership with Scottish Borders and Midlothian Councils. ScotRail provided updates on scheduled Borders Railway programmes and opportunities around Marketing, Ticketing and Integrated travel. VisitScotland's Regional Brand Manager for the Scottish Borders, Keith Campbell, also outlined opportunities for businesses to get involved with VisitScotland Borders Railway marketing, including the industry toolkit.

Industry engagement - additional support and communications

Borders Railway industry toolkit

VisitScotland launched a Borders Railway industry toolkit on 28 May 2015:

http://www.visitscotland.org/business_support/advice_materials/toolkits/borders_railway_toolkit.aspx

This toolkit includes free to use marketing tools for businesses, such as promotional wording, banners, images, and the Borders Railway logo, as well as providing information to businesses about other resources and support, including ways to link in to VisitScotland and Scotrail's marketing activities and consumer promotions. The toolkit also includes a link to the Borders Railway tourism destination audit.



Borders Railway promotional banners available for businesses to download from the toolkit.

Corporate communication channels – events and news

VisitScotland [eUpdate](#) industry newsletter - Borders Railway updates and news stories have been regularly included in this monthly newsletter, such as marketing promotions and opportunities for businesses to register an interest in participating in VisitScotland familiarisation trips for press or travel trade.

The VisitScotland corporate twitter [@visitscotnews](#) has been used to promote Borders Railway news and events.

The VisitScotland corporate website visitscotland.org has listed publicly available workshops and events.

Press trips and consumer promotions

VisitScotland will be organising familiarisation trips for international travel trade and consumer journalists throughout the Borders Railway marketing campaign.

If you would like to register an interest in working in partnership with us to deliver accommodation, attractions or food and beverage, please outline how you would like to get involved, specifying “Borders Railway” within the comment box on this page of visitscotland.org:

http://www.visitscotland.org/business_support/marketing_opportunities/consumer_promotions.aspx

Our teams will work with local partners as relevant but not all businesses may be contacted.

Visitscotland.com listings

Our Borders Railway marketing activity signposts consumers to the landing page at visitscotland.com/bordersrailway which highlights attractions along the route and directs visitors to the destination web pages, including accommodation, food and drink and attractions business listings.

VisitScotland is providing digital platforms for every business, large or small, to take their message across the world. These business listings are a free opportunity to be seen by the 20 million visitors to our website each year.

Find out more about setting up a listing, or improving an existing listing, on visitscotland.org:

http://www.visitscotland.org/business_support/promote_your_business/our_national_tourism_website.aspx

Or contact your Industry Relationship Manager in the Scottish Borders, H el ene Sinclair:

Helene.Sinclair@visitscotland.com

Business Gateway

Fergus Watson has been appointed to Business Gateway as part of a partnership between Scottish Enterprise, Midlothian Council and Scottish Borders Council. His role will be to work with individual tourism businesses, business groups and collaborations looking to take advantage of the railway, encouraging and assisting businesses to take up opportunities open to them and identified in the recent Tourism Destination Audit and new Business Opportunities Guide, which utilises VisitScotland industry resources including the Borders Railway industry toolkit.

Industry-led Partnerships

Edinburgh Tourism Action Group

VisitScotland has raised the opportunities around the Borders Railway at meetings of the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) and meetings with the Economic Development team of CEC.

Midlothian Tourism Forum

The Midlothian Tourism Forum is the destination organisation for the area and regularly discusses the opportunities available to businesses. Meetings of the Midlothian Tourism Forum and/or its sub-groups are attended by VisitScotland.

Midlothian Council has also held workshops for general businesses in Midlothian.

Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership

The Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership (SBTP) incorporates private sector representatives from across the Scottish Borders tourism industry and public sector members including Scottish Borders Council and numerous VisitScotland representatives. A representative from Campaign for Borders Rail has also previously sat on the SBTP for numerous years.

The Borders Railway is a regular agenda item on the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership agenda and features in the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy, which the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership directs.

The SBTP also provides a channel of information to the wider Scottish Borders tourism community, via sector representatives and the SBTP Facebook page via which Borders Railway events and opportunities are promoted.

Industry Initiatives

Many Borders and Midlothian businesses are incorporating Borders Railway into their tourism packages, such as:

ScotRail offers businesses the chance to piggyback on their 2for1 and Kids Go Free promotions in order to reach consumers through their channels, and this has been taken up by **Abbotsford House**. They are launching a new series of consumer promotions in spring 2016 dedicated to the Borders Railway line – VisitScotland is providing support in communicating these opportunities to industry.

The **County Hotel in Selkirk** is capitalising on their heritage as a historic coaching inn to launch an innovative service for Borders Railway passengers.

The hotel used to provide a horse drawn carriage service to visitors in the late 1800s, which shuttled guests from the railway station. The Flower of Yarrow' was the name of the coach and the big wheels from the coach can still be seen in the Brasserie of the hotel today. The Hotel is now working with tour company Borders Journey to provide a new package tour option for passengers. Pre-arranged tours will now be available for guests checking in at the hotel, who will be given the choice of guided tours of the region, followed by dinner and an overnight stay at the County Hotel.

The County House is also going to be employing a Sir Walter Scott impersonator to greet passengers aboard the steam train experiences from Tweedbank and bringing visitors into Selkirk to experience 'The Scott Re-enactments' before their return journeys.

Burts and Townhouse Hotels in Melrose are located just a mile and a half from Tweedbank Station. The hoteliers have developed seven all inclusive packages, from food and drink to shopping, walking and cycling, gardens, rugby and Sir Walter Scott.

With the seven packages incorporating collection from the railway, Burts and Townhouse Hotels hope to appeal to different customers throughout the year. They even plan to offer steam train passengers a dedicated lunch over the six week period.

Born in the Borders, award winning food and drink experience and visitor centre with its own brewery near Jedburgh, will now be operating a new café at Galashiels Transport Interchange.

Rosslyn Chapel are now working with Aerial ABW Cabs, the largest taxi and private hire company in Midlothian, to meet passengers from the railway. Dedicated taxis will meet trains at the new Eskbank station and provide a shuttle service to Rosslyn Chapel.

Traquair House is welcoming the coming of the Borders Railway with some special offers in September and October this year. Visitors who have used the Borders Railway to visit Traquair will be offered a 50% discount on normal admission prices. In addition, guests who would like to take the opportunity of staying at Traquair in one of our three luxurious bedrooms will be collected and returned free of charge from regular bus services in Innerleithen that connect to Galashiels.

The Borders Weaver bus is a hop-on hop-off bus service linking the Borders Railway with Borders communities and visitor attractions. Provided by Scottish Borders Council and branded with the Borders Railway train wrap imagery, the bus route links Newtown, Bowden, Melrose, Darrick and Gattonside with stations at Tweedbank and Galashiels and visitor attractions Abbotsford House, Melrose Abbey and Scott's View.

Scottish Borders Food Network has developed a fantastic food and drink trail of the Borders' best eateries and suppliers, accessible from the railway.

Businesses who are not offering specific packages around Borders Railway are still meeting visitors' expectations by offering directions from the Railway to their Borders business on their website and social media.

Travel by public transport

Train services direct from Edinburgh Waverley to Tweedbank, just over a mile from Abbotsford, take just under an hour and run 7 days a week. Tweedbank Station, and the earlier stop at Galashiels Interchange, is served by a scheduled 'Border Weaver' bus service to Abbotsford taking only minutes and dropping off outside our Visitor Centre. Please check the schedule to ensure your train is met by a bus, alternative bus services stop at the Tweedbank roundabout, a short stroll from Abbotsford and may be more convenient.

Border Weaver Bus timetable 2015-16

Alternatively there is a dedicated Shuttle service between Tweedbank Station and Abbotsford for £1.50 per person out-with bus times with **Bordoors2Door shared Shuttle Service**, for more information call 0748 6626 484.

Borders Railway Ambassadors

Scottish Borders Council is funding the provision of Borders Railway Ambassadors, giving rail visitors to the Borders a cheery welcome at Stow, Tweedbank and Galashiels.

Clad in bright red and seeking out visitors, the ambassadors are able to handle accommodation queries, advise on things to see and do as well as provide information on local events and are promoting the wonderful local food and the wide variety of places to eat out.



Business has been brisk so far, with the ambassadors all on duty for the first day of public services on Sunday and extra shifts added on Monday, Tuesday and of course the Royal Opening Day. They will be on hand every Friday to Sunday until November and will also be in attendance on each day the steam train service operates during this time.

Scottish Borders Council receive regular updates from the ambassadors and whilst the first couple of weeks were mainly transport enquiries, more tourism enquiries are now being received. One couple came from Texas just to travel on the new Borders Railway and stayed for 3 weeks travelling around Scotland!

	Tourism	Rail	Bus	Other	<p>Galashiels Enquiries on Sunday were from people who had travelled from Germany (our new fluent German speaking Ambassador came in handy), America, Australia, Duns, Dumfries, Moffat, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Dunbar, N Berwick, Musselburgh, Glasgow, Blackpool, Rochester, Manchester, Newcastle, Carlisle & Cumbria.</p> <p>Tweedbank enquiries were from Australia, Kent, Newcastle, Swindon, Bournemouth, Dunbar, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Nottingham (star trek themed stag do coming to the rugby), Shropshire (rover p6 meeting up north, stopped by to see rail), Lancashire.</p>
Gala Wed (Steam)	47	65	11	5	
Gala Thu (Steam)	18	56	6	8	
Gala Fri	44	7	2	8	
Gala Sat	97	5	4	17	
Gala Sun (Steam)	47	17	4	9	
Tweedbank Wed (Steam)	48	32	13	35	
Tweedbank Thu (Steam)	43	29	13	11	
Tweedbank Fri	13	2	2	9	
Tweedbank Sat	151	14	19	31	
Tweedbank Sun (Steam)	106	39	31	13	
Stow Sat	6	14	0	3	
Stow Sun	10	6	0	12	

Some additional information from ambassadors about Gala town centre:

- 4 of 5 shops approached by our lead ambassador reported doubling in takings and one café is taking on more staff and a clothes retailer now opening on Sundays.
- Some eating establishments were struggling to cope with demand in the first few weeks although this may have settled to a more manageable but still increased level.
- A social enterprise bakery at Tweedbank is now open for teas and coffees as a trial.
- Abbotsford extremely pleased with increased visitor figures
- The Gala museum now opens on a Sunday solely due to the railway and its visitor figures are up.

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