

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA FORUM held in Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Rosetta Road, Peebles on
Wednesday, 2nd March, 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald (Chairman), K. Cockburn, S. Bell, G. H. T. Garvie,
G. Logan.

Apology:- Councillor C. Bhatia.

In Attendance:- Infrastructure Manager (C. Ovens) for para 4, Flood and Coastal
Management Team Leader (D. Morrison) for para 4, Strategic Community
Engagement Officer (C. Malster) for para 8, Team Leader Road Safety and
Traffic Management (J. McQuillin) for para 9, Inspector Mike Bennett (Police
Scotland) for para 12, Keith Langley (Fire and Rescue Service) for para 5,
Democratic Services Officer (K. Mason).

1. **ORDER OF BUSINESS.**

The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

2. **EASTGATE THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE**

The Chairman invited Captain Sir David Younger KCVO to present information on the Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre, Peebles. Sir David explained that Education Scotland in partnership with Creative Scotland undertook three reviews of Creative Place Award winners in late 2015. In Peebles, HM Inspectors found that the Creative Place Award was a catalyst for extending the arts and culture and that the Eastgate Theatre provided strong and effective leadership as a creative hub for the Community. He advised this was a remarkable achievement for a relatively small community and took the opportunity to thank Scottish Borders Council for the arts grants made to the Theatre over the last 10 years. He was disappointed to be losing a direct relationship with the Council because of the transfer to Scottish Border Sport and Leisure Trust. He was confident that the good working relationships between the Council, the Trust and the Eastgate Board would continue. He paid tribute to Caroline Adam and her staff at the Eastgate Theatre and asked that Community Councillors “bang the drum” on behalf of the Theatre and encourage people to attend events there.

3. **MINUTE.**

3.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 2 December 2015.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

3.2 With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute, Councillor Cockburn advised that the name of the Community Councillor representing Manor, Stobo and Lyne Community Council on the Tweeddale Area Forum Sub-Committee – A72 Action Group had still to be confirmed. It was anticipated that the first meeting of the Sub-Committee would be convened within the next few weeks.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

4. **SCOTTISH WATER RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT AND CATCHMENT INFORMATION.**

Mr Bill Elliot, Regional Community Team Manager, South of Scotland and Mr Dougie Scott, Reservoir Engineer were present to give a presentation on the operation of Scottish Water Resources in the Tweed Catchment Upstream of Peebles. Ms Angela Foss, Unit Manager, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) was also present. Mr Elliot explained that Talla Reservoir (along with Megget) provided the main supply for the Edinburgh region with up to 70MI/d being abstracted from Talla Reservoir, Approximately 100MI/d was supplied from Megget Reservoir to provide the total required volume. The water from Talla was now used to supply the new Glencorse Water Treatment Works. Talla Reservoir was located in a remote upland catchment, dominated by forestry and open moorland in the headwaters of the River Tweed. The outflow from Talla Reservoir, Talla Water, met the River Tweed at Tweedsmuir, approximately 2km downstream. Talla Reservoir was operated in conjunction with Fruid Reservoir which provided additional supply and also compensation flows to the Tweed. The outflow from Fruid Reservoir, Fruid Water, discharged to the Tweed 2km upstream of Talla Water, Fruid provided a compensation flow both for itself and also for Talla by means of the supply aqueduct which could discharge into Talla Reservoir and also to the base of the Talla impoundment. There were two other Scottish Water reservoirs in the catchments above Peebles, namely West Water and Baddinsgill. Scottish Water held licences under the Controlled Activities Regulations for all 4 reservoirs and these stipulated a release of water, a compensation flow, which must be released every day. This was to ensure that water remained in the rivers when the reservoirs were not spilling. These were also supplemented by requests by SEPA for additional releases at various points in the year, often when needed by fisheries. All 6 Tweeddale Councillors had visited Talla Reservoir when the operation of the same had been explained to them, and now considered that Talla Reservoir did not cause the flooding in Peebles and elsewhere on 30 December 2016. Mr Scott answered questions in relation to the differences in the operation between Talla Reservoir and St Mary's Loch. It was noted during the discussion which took place that Scottish Water's website gave a clear indication of which body was responsible for drains, gullies etc. Community Councillor Tulloch suggested that so as to reach out to the community that Scottish Water could have open days to show members of the public how flooding was mitigated by Scottish Water. Mr Graham Lumb flood victim suggested that those affected by the flood might have the same opportunity as SBC Councillors to visit the Reservoir and that this could be facilitated through Mr John Swanson, Peebles Resilience Group. Mr Elliot indicated visits would not be possible owing to strict health and safety issues. He explained a dedicated model was available on the website showing how reservoirs operated. Councillor Archibald suggested that Scottish Water invite the Chairs of Community Councils to Talla Reservoir. Angela Foss, SEPA explained that SEPA did not undertake work in rivers but provided advice and guidance; she advised that she was happy to meet with local landowners to discuss gravel extraction from river beds. In referring to flood risks Mr Morrison advised that the local authority had a duty to assess all bodies of water with the aim of reducing flood risks. He referred to the development of a risk management plan first published on 22 June 2015 and of a study taking place over the next 6 years to 2022. There was no data on gravel removal but this could be taken up when the study was being carried out as part of the management plan. Peebles, Innerleithen and Walkerburn were ranked number one for a national study. Community Councillor Hughes expressed various concerns and hoped there would be a higher level of co-operation between the Council and Scottish Water in future studies.

DECISION

NOTED and thanked Messrs Elliot and Scott for their informative presentation and thanked Ms Foss for her attendance.

5. SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Mr Keith Langley, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service presented information on response and resilience activities since the last meeting on 2 December 2015. He also updated Members with information relation to Storms Desmond and Frank. He advised that all stations were participating in the British Heart Foundation Initiative – Call Push Rescue.

This was launched on 16 October 2015 – European Heart Start Day – and over 150 people in the Scottish Borders received training that day. Stations were providing free CPR training to the public on a monthly basis to build resilience in the community and to drive down the numbers of people who died from cardiac arrest. Members commended the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for their participation in CPR training and the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest project.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6. URGENT ITEM

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

7. CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

Una Richards, Director and Audrey Dakin, Project Officer, Scottish Historic Buildings Trust (SHBT) were present. Una Richards advised that the consultation process in respect of the Chambers Institution, Peebles had been concluded. A paper had been previously circulated advising that 208 questionnaire responses had been submitted, a further 173 additional people attended the stakeholder workshops, giving an overall total of 381 people involved in the consultation. Una Richards went on to advise that the Community consultation results had fed into a proposed updated Vision for the building in the following terms: “local people wanted the Chambers Institution to maintain and enhance its role as the cultural heart of the Community and for it to be attractive, welcoming, well-cared for, accessible and affordable. The key uses of the building were identified as: library, museum, art gallery and meeting spaces, and the quiet contemplative courtyard setting for the War Memorial.” She recommended that the updated Vision for the building be adopted as it summarised the Community’s aspirations for the building and identified the uses that the community had highlighted as critical to be housed in the building. It was further recommended that a re-ordering exercise was undertaken for the Chambers Institution. This should include the appointment of a design team to prepare a number of sketch schemes to explore the architectural feasibility of delivering the ideas for the building put forward by the Community. The sketch schemes should be the subject of a further Community consultation to determine a final scheme. The final scheme should be costed and a viability appraisal prepared for it. This would provide a realistic roadmap to deliver a 21st century vision for the building.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. HOUSEHOLD SURVEY REPORT 2015

The Chairman introduced Clare Malster, the Council’s Strategic Community Engagement Officer, to give a presentation on the results of the recent Household Survey. Ms Malster explained that the biennial survey had been undertaken in 2015 in partnership with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Borders Sport and Leisure Trust, four Registered Social Landlords and Transport Scotland. There had been 2,445 paper surveys returned and 261 responses completed on-line. This was regarded as a good level of response. Ms Malster summarised the results of the survey and compared the findings from the Tweeddale Area with the results from other Area Forum areas, results also being analysed by Ward where appropriate. Comparative figures from the 2013 Household Survey were included. She also referred to relevant projects within the Council’s Transformation Programme which were addressing some of the issues identified in the Survey. Overall the vast majority of respondents from the Tweeddale area said they would rate Scottish Borders Council ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ (66%). With regard to waste and recycling services 77% in the Tweeddale area were satisfied overall with kerbside waste and recycling collection services, 66% satisfied with the service offered at Community

Recycling Centres and 55% satisfied with the council communications/information on waste and recycling services. With regard to roads only 18% were satisfied with the speed of repair to local roads. The top five neighbourhood problems identified in the Tweeddale area were the same as those identified in other areas namely: parking problems (47%); rubbish and litter (31%); anti-social driving including speeding (42%); unwanted callers at the door (23%); and people using or dealing drugs (17%). However 95% rated their neighbourhood as a good place to live. Copies of the full Household Survey report were available at the meeting and Ms Malster advised that the report could also be viewed on the Scottish Borders Council website. Community Councillor Howard asked for clarification on the cost of the food waste collection service. Community Councillor Lewin asked whether it was possible to produce the statistical information sub-divided into Community Councillor areas. Ms Malster advised she would investigate the queries and respond directly to the Community Councillors.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED and thanked Ms Malster for her informative presentation.**
- (b) AGREED that Ms Malster would respond to Community Councillors in relation to questions raised regarding (a) clarification on the cost of the Food Waste collection service; and (b) the possibility of producing the statistical information provided sub-divided into Community Council areas.**

9. SPEED LIMIT REVIEW 2015/16

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Commercial Services proposing to extend existing speed limits in Peebles and to introduce a 50 mps speed limit from Peebles to Glentress to take account of a recent region-wide Speed Limit Review. The report explained that in 2015 a Speed Limit review was carried out throughout the Scottish Borders Region by Officers from the Council and the Police. The review was carried out in accordance with Government guidance and the resulting recommendations reduced speed limits on parts of the network which were currently covered by the National Speed limit. A total of 11 lengths of road were agreed to be recommended to be subject to adjusted statutory speed limit. Three of these sites were in the Tweeddale area, from Peebles to Glentress, and at Bonnington Road and Kingsmeadows Road within Peebles. All the sections of the road in question were currently subject to the National Speed Limit.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the amendment to The Scottish Borders Council (The Borders Regional Council) (Restricted Roads) Order 1985 and the creation of The Scottish Borders Council (Various Roads) (50 mph Speed Limit) Order to allow:-

- (a) the introduction of a 50 mph speed limit on the A72 from Peebles to Glentress;**
- (b) the extension of the existing 30 mph speed limit on the D66/1 Bonnington Road in Peebles; and**
- (c) the extension of the existing 30 mph speed limit on the B7062 Kingsmeadows Road in Peebles.**

10. OPEN QUESTIONS.

Mr Betts, Peebles Resident raised questions about road pot holes and drainage issues relating to Hay Lodge Park. The Neighbourhood Area Manager (Tweeddale) advised the Council had increased its capacity by 50% in relation to draining machines and this would ensure that the water was flowing better. Jet patching on roads was carried out in a timeous way commensurate with available resources.

DECISION

NOTED.

11. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT.**

Community Councillors Tulloch and Hughes referred to the poor condition of the Shiplaw Road and Stobo Straight respectively and the Neighbourhood Area Manager (Tweeddale) advised that repairs were scheduled to be carried out before the end of April 2016.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

12. **POLICE SCOTLAND.**

Inspector Bennett, Police Scotland advised that between 17 December 2015 and 12 January 2016 - 24 sheep were stolen from Thripland Farm. Officers were being tasked to carry out patrols to engage with dog walkers, providing advice and guidance as appropriate paying particular attention to local areas including Cademuir where an initiative was run by Police and landowner previously. SelectaDNA, was still currently being rolled out to not just Farmers but also any establishment in possession of vehicles or machinery, such as Glendinning groundwork's in Walkerburn were they garaged such equipment. He had discussed complaints about "boy racers" in Peebles with Inspector Latto from traffic as the numbers/activity seemed to have increased recently. Arrangements would be made for an initiative to be carried out in the coming weeks, utilising both speed detection equipment and marked and unmarked vehicles. PC Shona Furness, the School Link Officer had been completing 'Conviction' presentations to the S6 at Peebles High School raising awareness of violent extremism and the issues police and partner agencies have tackling it. She continued to deliver Internet Safety with the Primary Schools and the High School and with parents to encourage safe and responsible use of the Internet. Inspector Bennett referred to thefts of money in Innerleithen and break-ins in the West Linton Area. 43 Parking tickets had been issued. Police Scotland had participated in a number of SAGs, which had been co-ordinated by Scottish Borders Council and involved event organisers. The meetings had provided a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at the events aimed at helping organisers with the planning, and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies. Inspector Bennett advised that four Police Officers covered both Tweeddale Wards which meant occasionally it was not possible for Police Officers to attend Community Council meetings. He should be contacted if Community Councils had any complaints or other issues he would pass these to the appropriate Officers for them to action. The Chairman advised that Community Councils appreciated the Newsletter which was issued by Inspector Bennett.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

The meeting concluded at 8.35 pm