

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BERWICKSHIRE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of Meeting of the BERWICKSHIRE  
AREA FORUM held in the Council Chamber,  
Newtown Street, Duns on Thursday, 2 March  
2017 at 6.30 pm

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- Present:- Councillors M. J. Cook (Chairman), J. A. Fullarton, J. Greenwell, D. Moffat (from para 5), F. Renton.  
Community Councils:- Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston – David Morrison; Ayton – John Slater; Cockburnspath and Cove – Pauline Hood; Coldstream and District – Martin Brims; Duns – Ann Afleck; Edrom, Allanton & Whitsome – Trixie Collin; Foulden, Mordington and Lamberton – Howard Doherty; Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth – Keith Dickinson; Gordon and Westruther – Trevor Jones; Reston and Auchencrow – David Torr; Swinton and Ladykirk – James Brown.
- Apologies:- Councillor J. Campbell  
Coldingham Community Council.
- In Attendance:- Station Manager M. Acton, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Charles Johnston, Principal Officer Plans & Research; Elaine Torrance, Interim Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Integration, Trish. Wintrup, Health and Social Care Integration Coordinator; Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).
- Press:- 1  
Public:- 3

## 1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.**

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

## 2. **MINUTE.**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 1 December 2016. A minor amendment in paragraph 11.1 was brought to the attention of the Chairman. Ms Wintrup advised that the reference to Development Sessions relating to the NHS Borders Locality Plan should include Health and Social Care Integration, rather than specifically to Joint Integration Service for Older People.

## **DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman subject to the above minor amendment.**

## 3. **BERWICKSHIRE FLAG.**

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 1 December 2016 the Chairman gave an update on the Berwickshire Flags issue, based on email correspondence with Transport Scotland, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Included in the Chairman's email to Transport Scotland of 17 February 2017 was an extract from the Minute of a meeting of Northumberland County Council's North Area Committee meeting of 14 November 2016 in which it was resolved that the authority support Scottish Borders Council's request for the flying of the Union Flag, Saltire and a Berwickshire Flag on the north side of the border point. Despite seeking Transport Scotland's 'in principle' response before a detailed flag design was formalised for further consultation, it appeared that Transport Scotland were awaiting details of the proposed flags before taking this matter further. In the light of this response and after further discussion members of the Area

Forum concurred with the Chairman's proposal to write again to Transport Scotland pointing out that an agreement in principle had been requested, before work was carried out on the design.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED that the Chairman write again to Transport Scotland pointing out that agreement 'in principle' was being requested, to the flying of a Berwickshire Flag alongside the Saltire and Union Flag on the North side of the Scotland/England border.**

#### **4. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION.**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Elaine Torrance to the meeting to give a presentation on the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership. Mrs Torrance explained that she had recently taken over the joint post of Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Integration, on an interim basis. She explained the background to the integration of health and social care services, the framework for which was provided by the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. She explained the need to seamlessly deliver health and social care services with greater focus on prevention, early intervention, resilient communities and a locality based approach. The strategic plan in the Scottish Borders contained nine local objectives with 18 projects funded via the Integrated Care Fund. Diagrams within the presentation showed a tiered model of partnership projects and new person-centred models of configuration of services. Mrs Torrance drew attention to two principle initiatives. Community led support would be about putting what mattered first to the people of the Borders; making health and social care more visible in communities; building on people's skills and community assets; providing early intervention and prevention; and would better target the time of professionals. The two test sites of Burnfoot Community Hub and Ettrick Valley had been identified for this initiative and staff representatives, service users and members of the public would be part of the planning groups to take this forward. The second initiative, known as Buurtzorg, was based on a nursing model of care which originated in the Netherlands. There would be close collaboration with GPs and health and social care professionals with a focus on prevention. Test sites were still to be agreed for this project. Within the locality approach three Locality Co-ordinators would be responsible for developing five Locality Plans for health and social care services in the Scottish Borders. There were staff, service user and carer and public representation on all the Locality Working Groups which had been operating since September 2016. The Performance Monitoring Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, published in December 2016, focused action around three key areas, namely: reducing inappropriate use of hospital services; shifting resources to primary and community care; and supporting capacity of community care. Mrs Torrance advised that the next steps would be to carry out further communication and engagement and to develop involvement with communities. She encouraged members of the Forum to take part in the consultation on the locality plans which would take place during the summer. As part of the discussion and questions following the presentation, reference was made to the significant challenges around transport in rural communities and its link to social care and health issues. Mrs Torrance confirmed that some of the fund for integration would be used to develop a Transport Hub to facilitate more organised and flexible provision of transport to health and care centres. With regard to the challenge around recruitment and retention of homecare staff, Mrs Torrance explained that rates of pay were being increased and work was being carried out to raise the profile of the occupation with the aim of making this a positive career choice for young people. The Chairman thanked Mrs Torrance for her presentation and it was noted that copies of all the presentations given to the Area Forum would be circulated by email to members following the meeting.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation.**

#### **MEMBER**

Councillor Moffat joined the meeting during the presentation below.

## 5. **SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY.**

5.1 The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr Charles Johnston, Principal Officer Plans and Research, to give a presentation on the Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy. Mr Johnston gave the background to the preparation of the Supplementary Guidance. One of the recommendations of the Local Development Plan, adopted on 12 May 2016, was to prepare, within one year, a Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy. Mr Johnston confirmed that a draft had been approved by Scottish Borders Council on 22 December 2016 and that there followed a 12 week public consultation period which would end on 17 April 2017. He explained how responses to the Supplementary Guidance could be made. In line with national support for the promotion of sustainable development and renewable energy the Council would continue to be supportive of renewable energy within appropriate locations. Shown within the presentation were maps of the Scottish Borders indicating all wind development applications of over 5 MW and under 5 MW, colour coded to show the status of each and the height to blade tip. Looking at the policy context of the guidance, Scottish Planning Policy reaffirmed support for renewable energy and the need to attain national energy targets. This was to achieve 100% of electricity from renewable energy by 2020. However a balance must be sought; emphasising the right development in the right place and not to allow development at any cost. The planning system should facilitate positive change while maintaining and enhancing distinctive landscape character. There was general support of renewable energy within the Local Development Plan. However if there were judged to be unacceptable significant adverse impacts, or effects which could not be satisfactorily mitigated, consent would only be granted if it was considered that the wider economic, environmental and other benefits outweighed any potential damage. The Guidance confirmed that the Council was also positive in its support of other renewable energy types; those referenced included micro renewables, field scale solar photovoltaics, biomass, energy from waste, anaerobic digestion, hydropower and ground source heat pumps.

5.2 Mr Johnston referred to the Wind Energy Spatial Framework within the draft Guidance and maps of the Scottish Borders were shown indicating: national scenic areas where wind farms would not be acceptable; areas of significant protection where wind farms may be appropriate in some circumstances; and areas with potential for wind farm development. Scottish Planning Policy also made reference to the need to consider Landscape Capacity and Cumulative Impact studies. As a strategic study and starting point, an updated Landscape Capacity and Cumulative Impact Study had been produced by consultants. Extracts from the study were shown in the presentation, including maps showing landscape capacity in areas of the Borders for turbines of different height ranges. A summary map of opportunities and constraints was also shown. Mr Johnston concluded the presentation by listing the development management considerations within the Supplementary Guidance, including those not previously mentioned such as impacts on communities, built heritage and archaeology, tourism and recreation, natural heritage, opportunities for energy storage and contribution towards renewable energy targets. He advised that, following the consultation period an update of findings and conclusions would be referred back to elected Members in summer 2017. The Supplementary Guidance would ultimately be referred to Scottish Ministers to become part of the Development Plan. In the ensuing discussion the Chairman believed that the planning team deserved huge credit for their approach to the preparation of the Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy. He thanked Mr Johnston and encouraged members of the Area Forum to look at the guidance and to respond as part of the consultation.

### **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation.**

## 6. **PREPARATION OF THE NEW LOCAL PLAN.**

Mr Johnston's second presentation related to the preparation of a new Local Development Plan (LDP). He confirmed that, as part of a 5 year cycle, work on a new

Plan was just commencing. He summarised the timeline for the production of the Plan and highlighted that the first stage, the Main Issues Report (MIR), would be prepared by December 2017. The MIR was a front runner to the LDP which in essence sought to identify a range of issues which the LDP should address. The MIR, which would be sent out for public consultation, identified preferred sites for houses as well as alternatives. It also proposed where planning policies could be updated, removed or merged. The MIR sought public opinion on a range of matters such as the main aims of the LDP, proposals for allocation of employment sites, housing policy, retail policy, regeneration issues, green space protection and climate change issues. Community engagement would be carried out through a series of exhibitions and workshops with community groups throughout the summer of 2017. Mr Johnston was thanked for his attendance.

## **DECISION NOTED.**

### **7. POLICE SCOTLAND.**

- 7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Community Sergeant Jacqi McGuigan updating the Area Forum on Police Scotland performance, activities and issues across wards for the period up to 28 February 2017 and to look at events linking in with the ward priorities in the coming months. The report drew attention to the recent increase in fixed penalty levels for road traffic offences involving the use of mobile phone and handheld devices. This change in legislation meant that the endorsable offence would increase from £100 and 3 penalty points to £200 and 6 penalty points. With regard to rural crime, following the success of Rural Crime Prevention day in Harbro, Duns, a similar event would be held at Harbro in Earlston on Friday 21 April between 9 am and 4 pm. The report also referred to the launch, on 13 February, of a national campaign highlighting the responsibility dog owners and dog walkers had when taking their dogs into the countryside. A number of partners had come together on this campaign which aimed to raise awareness about the devastating effects of livestock worrying. The report concluded with a reminder for communities to contribute to the Police Scotland Your View Counts consultation. The online consultation was open all year, the link to the survey being <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8LMB9WX> .
- 7.2 The issue of police attendance at the Area Forum and Community Council meetings was discussed, with disappointment being expressed at the infrequency of attendance. The view was expressed that face to face contact enabled useful engagement and two-way share of information. It also transpired that some police reports were not received in time for meetings and there was a question mark as to how to convey localised information to Community Councils in addition to a more generic area report. There was a division of opinion however as to whether attending Community Council meetings was the best use of police time, the pressure on police resources being recognised. In general members of the Area Forum wanted more interaction with the police about local issues and it was suggested that Police Scotland be contacted to discuss how this could be taken forward.

## **DECISION**

- (a) **NOTED the report.**
- (b) **AGREED that the Chairman raise with Police Scotland the issue of attendance at Area Forum and Community Council meetings and discuss a way forward to enable more interaction with police.**
8. **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.**
- There had been circulated copies of a report to inform the Area Forum on Scottish Fire and Rescue Service activity in the area since the last Area Forum meeting. Station Manager Matt Acton was in attendance to highlight the main points. He drew attention to the Living Safely in the Home (LSITH) initiative in the Berwickshire area, which was a collaborative approach with community partners and SFRS staff fulfilling a generic role

capable of assessing all aspects of risk within the home including fire, slips, trips and falls and fuel poverty. There had been a number of referrals made by the SFRS to community partners and an evaluation trial was now underway. After this evaluation it was the aim to rollout this work to another locality area with the aspiration to have it eventually mainstreamed throughout the Scottish Borders. In response to a question, Mr Acton confirmed that SFRS also worked with Registered Social Landlords in respect of safety in the home. With regard to Farm Fire Safety, work had taken place in partnership with Police Scotland, NFU, NFU Mutual and the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs to identify a number of positive engagement opportunities. As part of this initiative, Reston Young Farmers would attend Duns Fire Station on 22 March for a tour of the fire station and to take part in presentations from firefighters and colleagues from Police Scotland. An evaluation would take place following this event with a view to rolling this out to other Young Farmers Clubs across the Borders.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the report.**

**9. OPEN QUESTIONS.**

**9.1 Black Bull Street, Duns**

A question was asked as to when Black Bull Street, Duns would be re-opened. The street had been closed since last July, following a fire which left a building alongside the street in an unsafe condition. The closure of the street was causing congestion in the vicinity and traffic problems elsewhere in Duns. Councillor Renton confirmed that the Council were aware of the problem and that she believed the work was currently out to tender. She offered to pursue this to ascertain the current position.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the concern.**

**9.2 Condition of Roads**

A question was raised about the poor condition of roads and the point was made that many were not fit for present day vehicles. It was recognised that this was a country-wide problem despite Britain being one of the world's richest countries. The Chairman agreed that there was a general decline in road condition in Scotland and drew attention to the different causal elements, the main issues being massive pressure on limited resources and increase in size and weight of vehicles. However the issue had gained importance nationally on the political agenda and locally Scottish Borders Council had changed its approach with respect to roads expenditure and had increased revenue spend on roads.

**DECISION**

**NOTED the concerns.**

**9.3 Crumledge Bridge**

A request was made that the temporary lights on Crumledge Bridge be installed permanently in the interest of road safety.

**DECISION**

**AGREED to pass on the request for permanent lights at Crumledge Bridge to the relevant section of the Council.**

**9.4 Road markings at junctions to A1**

Attention was drawn to the danger presented by faded white line markings at the junctions with the A1 of the roads to Auchencrow and Reston, both in the centre of the A1 and on the side road. These were indistinct and needed re-painting to improve safety at the junctions. It was pointed out that Amey was responsible for line marking on the A1 and Scottish Borders Council responsible for the side roads. It was agreed to follow up this issue.

**DECISION**

**AGREED** to follow up with the relevant section of the Council the request for the white line markings to be re-painted at the junctions with the A1 of the roads to Auchencrow and Reston.

10. **COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT.**  
There were no issues raised.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

11. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.**  
The following agenda items were suggested for future meetings:-

- (a) Discussion on relationship and link between health/social care and transport difficulties;
- (b) Digital connectivity in Berwickshire; and
- (c) Update on the Council's LED street lighting programme.

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

12. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.**  
Future meetings of the Berwickshire Area Forum were scheduled for:-

15 June 2017.  
7 September 2017

**DECISION  
NOTED.**

*The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm*