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Cheviot Area Partnership



MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT
AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Assembly
Hall, Kelso High School, Angraflat, Kelso on
Wednesday, 5 December 2018 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors S. Hamilton (Chairman), S. Mountford together with 7
Representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils and
Members of the Public.

Apologies:- Councillors J. Brown, E. Robson, S. Scott, T. Weatherston.

In attendance:- Chief Financial Officer, Communities and Partnership Manager,
Locality Development Co-ordinator, Democratic Services Officer (F.
Henderson)

1.0 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

1.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Cheviot Area Partnership and thanked the
Community Councils, Partners and local organisations for their attendance, and for
participating and putting forward ideas.

2.0 **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2018**

2.1 The minute of the Area Partnership had been circulated which included a summary of
the discussion output as an appendix. The Locality Development Co-ordinator referred
to the general concerns, issues, challenges and opportunities raised at that meeting.
The theme for the focus for debate for the remainder of the meeting was Council
Budget – Engagement with Communities 2019/20.

3.0 **THEME: COUNCIL BUDGET – ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES 2019/20**

3.1 The Chair presented the theme for the meeting – Council Budget – Engagement with
Communities 2019/20 – and introduced David Robertson, SBC Chief Financial Officer,
who was in attendance to give a presentation on the preparation of the Budget and to
answer questions. He firstly gave the context to the Budget, explaining that in the 5
year plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 permanent recurrent savings of over £35 million had
been delivered and a further in year savings of £8.8 million. Easy reductions had been
made and future savings would rely on greater use of technology to reduce costs and
redesign of services. The Council could not continue to deliver everything presently
provided in the same way and the scope and scale of delivery may need to be reduced.
Over the next 5 years it was estimated that the Council's projected spend would be
£1.3 billion. 2019/20 would be the 2nd year of the 5 year plan first agreed in 2018/19
which required savings of £32 million over 5 years to balance the books. The Council
had planned for reductions over the longer term, invested in transformation and
avoided the need for the levels of cuts seen in other authority areas. However there
were greater challenges ahead which required innovation and the delivery of an
ambitious change programme.

3.2 Mr Robertson went on to show slides to illustrate the source of Council Revenue
Funding, and to project estimated budget gap over the next 5 years. The current
incremental gap for 2019/20 was £2,557,000. Charts disclosing the allocation of
revenue by Department demonstrated that the highest proportion (43%) of spend was
on Children & Young People followed by Health and Social Care (18%). In the 10 year
capital spending plan the highest proportion (67%) was on Assets & Infrastructure.

There was less money available to fund public services and demand on services was growing – particularly in respect of care for older people. The presentation referred to ways for the Council to modernise and become more efficient. In terms of services, over the next 5 years it was planned to maximise the use of digital technology; drive out waste and inefficiency; and invest in assets and infrastructure in a planned and sustainable way. Also summarised, as part of the 5 year plan, were ways the Council proposed to promote independent achieving people; support a thriving economy with opportunities for everyone; and facilitate empowered vibrant communities.

- 3.3 The use of digital technology was welcomed, however concern was expressed that those not on-line were being forgotten. Co-location of Council Services was highlighted as beneficial, particularly for those with mobility issues. It was highlighted that Kelso High School would have 150 less pupils in 5 years, an illustration of the ageing population within the Borders and work with Young People was required to encourage them to remain in the Borders. The point was made about the importance of investment in roads and economic contributions from those using the roads heavily i.e. timber transportation. Mr Robertson emphasised that the budget was about choices and that this was why the views of the public about priorities for spending were important. He concluded by outlining the ways to provide feedback into the Budget process, either online to <https://scotborders.dialogue-app.com> by email to budgetteam@scotborders.gov.uk, on social media #bordersbudget or by post or telephone.
- 3.4 Colin Banks, Lead Officer for Localities explained that the meeting would now move into the discussion session. As previously, there were information packs available for each group and those present were invited to discuss the main issues relating to 'Council Budget – Engagement with Communities 2019/20'. Thirty minutes were allocated for group discussion and each table was asked to record emerging points on the feedback sheets provided. A summary of the output of the discussions was provided as an appendix to this minute.

4.0 LOCALITIES BID FUND ASSESSMENT PANEL

- 4.1 With the agreement of the Chairman, this item was withdrawn from the Agenda due to the fact that the meeting was inquorate. The matter would be considered at a future meeting.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

5.0 LOCALITIES BID FUND - UPDATE ON CURRENT FUNDING ROUND

- 5.1 Ms Smith gave an update on the Localities Bid Fund (LBF). She explained that in the first round the funding allocation for the Cheviot area was £35,000 and 3 projects to the value of £49,596 went forward to the public vote. The second round of LBF had been launched on 1 July 2018 with £50,568.20 available for Cheviot, with a funding cap of £5,000 for non-constituted groups and £15,000 for constituted Groups. However the Assessment Panel had agreed that there were not enough sustainable bids to go forward to the public vote in all five areas. It was therefore proposed to request that Council revise the criteria. If this was approved the LBF would be re-launched in January 2019 with public voting to be carried out in April 2019. All those groups who submitted applications for the second round would be notified about the revised criteria and offered support to re-apply.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 30 January 2019 in Jedburgh at 6.30 p.m. The theme of the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting closed at 8 p.m.

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Discussion Output: Scottish Borders Council Budget (5th December 2018)			
Question/Issue/Challenge	Proposed Solution (opportunities for area partnerships/communities?)	Consequence/Impact (positive and negative)	Priority rating
Efficiencies Can we do things in a more streamlined way?	Duplication of services, 3 lunch clubs in Jed and another being launched? Don't fill in pot holes then resurface road 3 weeks later. Poor communications. Digital is good but plenty of people not online and not to be forgotten about. Sharing space/co-location – a lot of planning required, early conversation, take the community with you. Co-working Sustainability		
Identifying priorities Are there services, which in your view, should be prioritised?	Infrastructure very important/digital infrastructure Families How to make it more attractive for people to live here. Actively reflecting need and demand before commissioning services.		
Different models of delivering services Are there services which we could deliver differently, or that communities could take responsibility for to maintain them in the long term?	Toilets could be serviced by communities in Jedburgh? Recycling - can we purchase less plastic + reduce waste. Jed leisure trust have put forward a proposed? Grass cutting for example How do we know what goes on in communities? Community log Working with the young people – lot of opportunities here/sharing best practice Importance of voluntary sector		
Increased charges to service users Should we be charging more for some services?	Clarity on who is providing what services. What do the council provide? What do live borders provide for instance? Economic contributions by firms dependant on use of infrastructure		
Other funding options What services in your area do you value most which could be retained, expanded or enhanced through the use of additional funds?	New Jed campus - can JLT be considered Festive lights - Alex Young (4 watts to 6 watts). Council tax? Important to future proof. Spend to save. Ageing population. School roles (150 less school role) Difficult looking at bigger picture – communication, messaging Spend – impact on jobs, keeping the money in the area.		

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