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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Eddleston
Village Hall on Wednesday, 5 September
2018 at 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), H. Anderson, K. Chapman and E. Small
together with 22 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community
Councils and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors S. Bell and S. Haslam

In Attendance:- Communities and Partnership Manager, Democratic Services Team Leader
and Colin Banks

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the forth meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership. He advised that he was changing the agenda order and that the item on Small Schemes and Quality of Life Funding would be taken first.

2. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEME AND QUALITY OF LIFE PROJECTS**

There had been circulated copies of a paper by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure seeking approval for the proposals detailed in the Appendix to the report and that delegated powers be given to officers to approve future applications when a decision was required between meetings of the Area Partnership, subject to certain qualifying criteria. The Councillors present approved the list of Schemes and the proposed delegated approval process.

3. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr. Graham Tulloch, Chairman of West Linton Community Council raised the issues of the new bus timetable which had come into effect on 19 August and the fact that the last bus from Edinburgh was now at 7.35 p.m. This was impacting those who worked in Edinburgh and he felt that similar small communities in the Scottish Borders received later services. In response to a suggestion that a service could be funded from Quality of Life Funding it was noted that this could not be used for service substitution. Councillor Anderson advised that she was working with officers to explore all options.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 23 MAY 2018**

The Minute of the meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership held on 23 May 2018 had been circulated along with a summary of the discussion attached as an appendix to the Minute. The Chairman outlined what was being done with the outputs from the various meetings. Over the next few months these would be analysed to ascertain what actions had already been implemented and which were currently planned. The remaining outstanding actions would then need to be prioritised and a draft Locality Plan would be available early 2019. The main points raised at the last meeting were highlighted.

5. **THEME: PLACE**

5.1 The Chairman welcomed Charles Johnston, Senior Planning Officer, who talked about the Main Issues Report (MIR) which had recently been approved by Council for a 12 week public consultation period. The preparation of the MIR was intended to encourage engagement with the local community, sought opinion on a number of key issues and set out the Council's proposed and alternative approaches to a range of matters. The consultation would involve officers holding sessions in various locations around the Borders with local people. The format would include afternoon drop-in sessions and more formal

evening workshops to give feedback. These would commence in mid-October and suggestions for venues would be welcomed. The MIR asked a series of questions on matters such as site suggestions and policy changes. Mr Johnston gave some examples of things on which comment was sought on a wide range of issues including housing sites, industrial sites, housing in the countryside and climate change. An electronic link to the consultation would be issued to all community organisations.

- 5.2 Donna Bogdanovic, the Council's Senior Housing Strategy Officer commented on the production of the Local Housing Strategy which was prepared in partnership with the main Registered Social Landlords and covered the period 2017- 2022. The purpose of the document was to identify and resolve the key housing issues. The key areas included increasing housing supply, housing quality, energy efficiency, fuel poverty, the private rented sector, preventing homelessness and assisting independent living. The Strategy set the housing supply target which had been arrived at following a comprehensive assessment of need. She commented on the plans for affordable housing in the Tweeddale Area and the current condition of housing stock with a lot of work needed on older properties. With regard to energy efficiency Change Works in Peebles were managing an energy efficiency project which provided a hub to allow people to discuss energy efficiency. Extra funding was being sought to expand this project to cover the whole of Tweeddale.
- 5.3 Henry Coyle, Director of Assets and Property Services, Scottish Borders Housing Association advised that the 4 social landlords in the Scottish Borders formed the Borders Housing Network and worked in partnership. With regard to the provision of social housing he outlined the appraisal process which included a number of considerations including site location, inclusion in the SHIP, government funding, need and value for money. There was a design guide for new housing to maintain the standard of the homes covering areas such as energy efficiency and high quality communal spaces. The Scottish Government objectives were key with a requirement to deliver 674 new homes in the next 4 years. With regard to projects in Tweeddale there were plans for both Eildon and SBHA to build new homes in Cardrona, Broughton, Innerleithen and Peebles at a total cost of £4.7m. SBHA currently managed 5600 homes across the Scottish Borders and were spending £1m per month upgrading those including the provision of new doors and windows and improved energy efficiency.
- 5.4 Colin Banks explained to those present the new method of recording the views of those present and that sheets to capture these were included on each table. At the conclusion of the discussion he highlighted some of the main points raised which included:-
- Town Centre regeneration – covering public transport, effective CCTV and good lighting, shop vacancy rates, business rates and parking
 - Affordable housing in the countryside
 - Employment for younger people
 - Need for industrial land
 - Impact of new housing on services such as health
 - Aging population
 - Use of derelict property
 - Infrastructure including better roads

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- 6.1 Ms. Shona Smith, SBC Communities and Partnership Manager, reminded everyone that the Locality Bid Fund was now open for applications up until the end of September 2018. Application forms were available on the Council's website and she encouraged people to call any member of her team for advice and guidance.
- 6.2 Andy Tharme, the Council's Ecology Officer, explained that the Local Biodiversity Action Plan had just been launched this week for consultation for a 12 week period. The Plan had not been updated since 2001 so it was time for a review. The consultation covered a

number of areas including the restoration of eco-systems. The cost of the loss of such systems included flood damage and crop failure. The consultation would be open until 30 November 2018 and could be accessed through the Citizen Space online system.

6.3 Community Councils were reminded to respond to the survey reviewing how area partnerships worked. The survey was open until 30 September 2018.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership was scheduled for Wednesday, 7 November 2018. The venue would be in Peebles and it was likely that the theme would be the Council's budget 2019/20. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting concluded at 8.55 pm

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Discussion Output: Place (5th September 2018)

Issues / Challenges	Solution / Commentary	Priority Rating
Infrastructure / Services (MIR)	<p>Infrastructure can prevent developments Live in Walkerburn can get late buses back from Peebles but last one from Gala 9.30 mon-sat. Want to use Gala cinema facilities. Electric charging points – require a strategy. Encourage landowners to facilitate. Planning requirements should be relaxed for farm steadings in order that they can be sympathetically developed for business purposes in the countryside. There should be a priority system for pothole repairs in order to encourage businesses to certain locations. Infrastructure: Internet, gas, lack of a link, lack of a bus service Better roads - maintenance & creation of roads to create better network. Just be bold enough to stay ‘Stop’ no more development, don’t have the infrastructure / no scope to provide it</p>	12
Housing / Affordable Housing (MIR)	<p>Issues re. affordable housing in countryside Register Social Landlord (RSL) wish to have schemes where there are services, buses, facilities There is a lack of vacant, available rented properties in rural Tweeddale RSL can refurbish old properties Ensuring sufficiently affordable Peebles needs more affordable housing as wages in the town are severally poor Social Work perspective – Tweeddale is quite well off at the moment with extra care in Dovecot and Innerleithen. Younger people (16-25 yrs) with additional needs/ alcohol and drug related issues – there isn’t enough support in Tweeddale. There is a perception that family units and accommodation for the elderly is lacking. Encouraging that development will take place at Tweed Bridge Court. Affordable housing in the countryside is lacking. For mainstream housing, should developer contributions still be charged? Building south of river in Peebles – issues with bridge. Connectivity between communities – must have access to public transport. Accessibility. More smaller units for older people that want to downsize Manage expectation – young people should start small</p>	8

Independent Living (LHS)	<p>Other comments (aside from detail in template):</p> <p>“Links to Health – community allotments etc.”</p> <p>“25% delayed because of no care (in place), others could just go home but no property to go too.”</p> <p>“Care homes”</p> <p>“Road surfaces for accessibility”</p> <p>“Long term plan beyond 10 years”</p> <p>“Residential for dementia units”</p>	8
Business and Industrial Land (MIR)	<p>Extend Cavalry Park in Peebles</p> <p>West Linton – nothing currently available. Existing site currently on market. Need to keep youngsters in the area.</p> <p>Criteria should require superfast broadband in the area.</p> <p>Small workshops should be provided with small offices where superfast broadband is made available.</p> <p>Start-up units should be encouraged. Should allow for future growth, however infrastructure must be available.</p> <p>Consider green field sites – farming not as productive as it was, land that is fallow could be used</p> <p>Consider development of existing buildings, e.g. old mills</p> <p>Create another Cavalry Park</p> <p>Attract businesses to generate need for buildings</p> <p>Local ‘Dragon’s Den’ supported by local successful businesses</p> <p>Social enterprise hubs</p>	7
Town Centre Regeneration (MIR)	<p>Must ensure there are enough members of the public using public transport.</p> <p>In school holidays there is a 6-hour gap in public transport between Broughton and Peebles.</p> <p>Theatre in Peebles – lack of public transport in the evening.</p> <p>Police Officer highlighted that we need to have a safe place. Effective CCTV required. Design of our areas vital to ensure appropriate lighting.</p> <p>‘Big named’ companies such as M&S, Costa, Fat Face in Peebles is positive. Double edged sword however, as may impact local businesses.</p> <p>Should have no boarded up shops. Vacant shops should not be allowed to be boarded up for too long.</p> <p>Town centres must be attractive.</p> <p>Impact of business rates highlighted.</p> <p>Increase car parking in town centres to encourage more people.</p> <p>There is parking available, however people not willing to walk.</p> <p>Charging for parking – question if this has an impact. Not currently enforced.</p> <p>Parking permit ‘clocks’ are an option, as used in Berwick-Upon-Tweed, however enforcement is an issue.</p>	5

	<p>Mixture of shops on high streets – less charity, coffee, hairdressers. Is it a change? Pop up shops. Scrap business rates – compulsory purchase of empty properties. Need to encourage small, local shops / businesses Support community buy outs</p>	
Housing in the Countryside (MIR)	<p>Can support school roles, support village shops – positives, Newlands etc. quite supportive Portacabins are put up to accommodate farm workers as there are no other options for mainstream housing Community funding could help housing development in rural areas Development in Westruther has been clever, creative people – opportunities for community purchasing i.e. village pub Other means of creating developments which are infrastructure lead If this happens should be a new town e.g. Cardrona. Then can add school, GP, village green. Mix density housing – open up to different age markets Need a new town – developed with required infrastructure rather than tinkering round the edges of what we already have. Yes - selective</p>	5
Housing Supply meets Community Need (LHS)	<p>Other comments “Community Empowerment Vs Profit” “Peebles Town Action Plan” “Private Rented Housing”</p>	4
Condition and Quality of Homes (LHS)		4
Homelessness (LHS)		3
Climate Change (MIR)	<p>Could ‘Changeworks’ visit village halls in peebles and give info. Wind Farms Solar Farms Hydro electric Energy efficiency</p>	2
Community Trusts	<p>Voluntary Feels like duties have been passed on by Government, but no funding Need dedicated staff but frustrated as to lack of progress</p>	2
Vacant Land / Derelict Sites (MIR)	<p>Walkerburn mill site (has got asbestos) Top end of mill site Innerleithen off Traquair road. Registered Social Landlord opportunities As previous – not commercially viable farm land</p>	1

Note of templates used for discussion: MIR = Main Issues Report template; LHS = Local Housing Strategy template; Other = Blank template
Priority Rating indicates number of stickers (set against issue/challenge)

	Redundant Historical / Old Buildings	
Reducing Fuel Bills and Carbon Emissions (LHS)	Other comment “Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing” will improve quality in affordable housing, but not in the private sector.”	1
Creating jobs for younger people	Major issue in Scottish Borders. Young People tend to move on and leave	1
Vacant properties	Some under pension schemes How do you get them back into use Halmyre & vacant steading an example Community Right to Buy – court case	
Bus services	Major concerns re. withdrawal of bus services in Tweeddale. This is a common theme of concern.	
Extra Care Housing (Other)		
Shared Ownership Housing (Other)		