

# Public Document Pack



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2020

A MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS, TD6 0SA on TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2020 at 10.00 am

J. J. WILKINSON,  
Clerk to the Council,

11 March 2020

BUSINESS		
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
2.	<b>Order of Business</b>	
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
4.	<b>Minute</b> (Pages 3 - 10)  Minute of meeting held on 11 February 2020 to be approved and signed by the Chairman (copy attached).	2 mins
5.	<b>Final Revenue Virements and Earmarked Balances 2019/20</b> (Pages 11 - 26)  Consider report by Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory (copy attached).	10 mins
6.	<b>Fit For 2024 Programme Update</b>  Presentation by Service Director HR & Communications.	20 mins
7.	<b>Approval of final draft of Partnership with Parents Framework</b> (Pages 27 - 58)  Consider report by Interim Service Director Children & Young People (copy attached).	10 mins
8.	<b>Consultation - Draft Food Growing Strategy</b> (Pages 59 - 102)  Consider report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure (copy attached).	5 mins
9.	<b>Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal - Destination Tweed</b> (Pages 103 - 108)  Consider report by Executive Director on the Destination Tweed Project (copy attached).	10 mins

10.	<b>Any Other Items Previously Circulated</b>	
11.	<b>Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent</b>	
12.	<p><b>Private Business</b></p> <p>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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act.”</p>	
13.	<p><b>Minute</b> (Pages 109 - 110)</p> <p>Private Minute of meeting held on 11 February 2020 to be approved and signed by the Chairman.</p>	2 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 S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice-Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, E. Jardine, T. Miers, M. Rowley, R. Tatler, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

---

Please direct any enquiries to Fiona Walling      Tel:- 01835 826504  
 Email:- [fwalling@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:fwalling@scotborders.gov.uk)

---

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 11 February 2020 at 10.00 am

-----

Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, E. Jardine, T. Miers, M. Rowley, R. Tatler, G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston

Also present:- Councillors H. Anderson, S. Bell, S. Mountford, D. Parker, N. Richards  
In Attendance:- Executive Director (R. Dickson), Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Service Director Customer & Communities, Democratic Services Team Leader, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

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. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of 21 January 2020.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.**

3. **MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20**

3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance and Regulatory providing the budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 31 December 2019 and providing explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn expenditure/income and the current approved budget. The report explained that after the third quarter of 2019/20, the Council was projecting a balanced position with significant budget pressures, primarily from delays in delivery of financial plan savings, being addressed from one-off underspends elsewhere in the Council. In total, budget pressures of £1.8m were being offset from a successful Non Domestic Rates appeal generating a one-off benefit of £0.670m, an underspend in Loans Charges as a result of tactical borrowing decisions of £0.844m and a range of service underspends across the Council as a result of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) instruction to implement a freeze on discretionary spend. Total budget pressures within Health & Social Care (H&SC) which had required support from other areas of the Council and additional support from the Integration Joint Board (IJB). In total, the H&SC budget had required additional support of £3.1m beyond the approved budget. The Executive Director Finance and Regulatory, Mr Robertson reminded Members that the Integration Joint Board overspent their budget by a similar figure in 2018/19 which was addressed through the financial planning process for 2019/20 and the level of expenditure being incurred by H&SC was unsustainable. Finance staff had continued to support managers in their forecasting responsibilities with month-end forecasting tools being automatically emailed out to all budget managers directly from Business World. Whilst further progress had been made in engaging and training of managers over the last quarter, there were still a number of areas where further work was still required to ensure universal ownership of the budget by managers, their full engagement in the monitoring process and the robustness and accuracy of projections.

- 3.2 The report also explained that savings had been made as shown in Appendix 4 to the report. As at 31 December 2019, 69% (£9.116m) of the savings required by the approved budget had been delivered permanently within the current year. A further 2% (£0.289m) was profiled to be delivered during the remainder of 2019/20, with the remaining 29% (£3.858m) having temporary in-year mitigations to deliver alternative savings. Emphasis during the remainder of 2019/20 needed to be placed on ensuring those savings were delivered permanently in 2020/21. This was particularly important due to the requirement to deliver ambitious savings plans in future financial years within the Financial Plan. Mr Robertson explained that full details of the pressures, risks and challenges and the significant majority of areas of the Council's operation where budget plans remained on track were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 3.3 After the third quarter of 2019/20 the projected balanced position with significant budget pressures, primarily from delayed delivery of financial plan savings, were being addressed from one-off underspends elsewhere in the Council. The failure to control expenditure within the approved budget levels during 2019/20 within H&SC had destabilised the financial position of the Council, reducing resources to be spent on other key service areas hampered the ability to invest in key services developments which would modernise Council services. The continued overspend in the H&SC budget delegated from the IJB was not sustainable. Mr Robertson explained that consideration of the permanent effects of both increases in service delivery of the current scale within H&SC and non-delivery of savings across the Council must be considered as part of the 2020/21 financial planning process to ensure the budget was as robust as possible. Permanent delivery of savings remained the key financial challenge facing the Council and a key requirement to ensure the Council could operate a sustainable budget. Full details of the pressures, risks and challenges and the significant majority of areas of the Council's operation where budget plans remained on track were detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.4 Mr Robertson responded to Members' questions relating to the successful non domestic rate appeal, concerns regarding the Planning Service forecast of a £400k pressure within the planning fee income due to a drop in application numbers and better future planning for the funding of health and social care. In response to a comment regarding the lack of savings from recycling it was suggested that this could be considered by the Sustainable Development Committee. The virements contained in Appendices 2 and 3 were discussed and Mr Robertson emphasised that every effort would continue to be made by Service Directors to contain projected spend in the remainder of the year and identified savings were delivered permanently to ensure affordability and budget sustainability. Members noted the position.

## **DECISION**

### **(a) AGREED:-**

- (i) the virements as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report; and**
- (ii) to continue to actively promote a culture of sound financial management across the Council, and that budget affordability be fully considered in service delivery decisions in order to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.**

### **(b) NOTED:-**

- (i) the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 31 December 2019, the pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of this position and the identified areas of financial risk as reflected in Appendix 1; and**
- (ii) the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 4.**

#### 4. **MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance and Regulatory providing an update on the progress of the 2019/20 Capital Financial Plan and seeking approval for virements and the reallocation of funds. The monitoring tables in Appendix 1 to the report detailed actual expenditure to 31 December 2019. Key issues identified in the tables were summarised within the main report. The tables identified a projected net budget variance of £13.138m, which was made up of timing movements £13.883m to future years. The most significant of which were movements into 2020/21 for Early Learning and Childcare £4.053m, Extra Care Housing £1.45m, Borders Innovation Park £2.424m and Energy Efficiency works £0.9m. Appendix 2 contained a list of the block allocations approved for this year and the various approved and proposed projects to be allocated from them within the 2019/20 Capital Plan. Appendix 3 contained a list of estimated whole project capital costs for single projects which would not be completed in the current financial year. The Executive Director Finance and Regulatory, Mr Robertson advised that a review of the Capital Programme was being undertaken as part of the 2020/21 Financial Planning process and the Capital Plan had subsequently been updated to reflect budget adjustments, associated timing movements and other approvals. This would allow the Council to better profile spend within the blocks, which in turn would optimise available funding for specific projects within the Capital Financial Plan. He further advised that the emergency and unplanned schemes projected balance was now zero with an analysis of the financial summary, block allocations, slippage and proposed actions outlined in the Appendices to the report. In response to a question Mr Robertson advised that details of capital receipts could be provided and these were not ringfenced for particular projects. Members welcomed the review to improve the accuracy of the Capital Planning process.

#### **DECISION**

(a) **AGREED the projected outturns in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget and approved the virements required.**

(b) **NOTED:-**

(i) **the budget virements previously approved by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory and the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure detailed in Appendix 2 under delegated authority;**

(ii) **the list of block allocations detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and**

(iii) **the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3 of the report**

#### 5. **BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2020**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance and Regulatory providing an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2019 and details of the projected balances at 31 March 2020. The report explained that the unaudited Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £6.315m at 31 March 2019. The projected General Fund useable reserve was projected to remain at £6.315m at the 31 March 2020 in line with the Council's Financial Strategy. The total of all useable balances, excluding developer contributions, at 31 March 2020 was projected to be £27.266m, compared to £27.799m at 31 March 2019. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £8.150m would be affected by any further capital receipts, developer contributions, interest credited and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year. In response to a question, Mr Robertson confirmed that the risk profile was reviewed on a regular basis.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED:-**

- (a) the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2020 as contained in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report; and
- (b) the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

6. **LIVE BORDERS PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2019/20 (BI-ANNUAL SUMMARY AND DATA FOR QUARTERS 1 & 2 2019/20)**

- 6.1 With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 20 August 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director providing a high level summary of Live Borders' performance during Quarters 1 and 2 2019/20, with details contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. On 1 April 2016, a new Integrated Culture and Sport Trust, Live Borders, was established. As part of the Service Provision Agreement (the contract), SBC developed a Performance Management Framework to ensure effective oversight of the work of the Integrated Trust, ensuring that six key outcomes were being addressed. A set of performance indicators were developed at this time and had been used to report performance to Executive Committee. During 2018, Live Borders developed and agreed a new Strategic Plan, with a vision and 6 strategic goals. Underpinning this was a revised set of performance indicators. As a result, a new format for performance reporting had been established and was presented at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. Section 4 summarised the key successes and challenges during Quarters 1 and 2 2019/20 and the work being carried out to either maintain or improve performance. Section 5 summarised financial performance. The information contained within the appendices would be made available on [SBC's website](#), ensuring that the duty to report publicly and demonstrate Best Value was met.
- 6.2 Members considered the performance information presented for Live Borders and the key successes during the two quarters which included active membership and to communicate charitable objectives. The key challenges were the 'learn to swim' programme, staff absences and other sports participation. The table contained in the report showed how the Strategic Plan goals would assist Live Borders in working towards the 6 outcomes in the contract with Scottish Borders Council. A range of Key Strategic Indicators (KSI) had been developed under the 6 strategic goals, along with a range of financial measures presented in Appendix 1 to the report. The case studies to showcase the work being done across Live Borders and the impact that it was having on people's health and wellbeing in the Scottish Borders was presented in Appendix 2 to the report. The Director of Business Services for Live Borders, Ms Linda Ross was present to answer Members questions and highlighted the key successes along with a number of key questions and challenges.

**DECISION**

**NOTED Live Borders' performance and the action being taken to maintain or improve performance.**

7. **OUR PLAN AND YOUR PART IN IT: SBC'S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT QUARTER 3 2019/20**

- 7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities which presented a high level summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 3 2019/20 performance information with more detail contained within Appendices 1, 2a and 3 attached to the report. The report included reporting on the progress of change and improvement projects across Scottish Borders Council (SBC) under the Fit for 2024 programme. The report explained that in order to monitor progress against the four themes, a review of performance and context information would be undertaken quarterly and presented to Executive Committee as well as an annual summary in June each year. During Quarter 3 2019/20, SBC had continued to press ahead with a range of important initiatives and innovation which included:-

- (a) Achieving the Living Wage accreditation;

- (b) Continuing to progress our innovative Inspire Learning programme, completing deployment of iPads to pupils in 4 secondary schools; and
  - (c) Launching AskSARA, a website tool developed to help people stay more independent in their own homes for longer, the first of its kind in Scotland
- 7.2 The information contained within the report and the appendices were also available on the SBC website and could be accessed at [www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance). The Appendices reflected a quarterly reporting format structured around the four corporate themes, and use a mixture of narratives, highlights, performance and context indicators. Appendix 1 to the report contained updates on Fit for 2024, change and improvement projects. These were monitored by Corporate Management Team (CMT) and through the SBC Financial Plan and associated monitoring. Appendix 2a to the report contained updates on specific performance and context indicators structured around the corporate themes. A schedule of indicators was provided at Appendix 2b to the report covering quarterly and annual reporting through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework provided for information. To reflect the significant investment made by SBC, an overview of the work and impact of the Police Scotland's Community Action Team was provided within Appendix 3 to the report.
- 7.3 The Service Director Customer & Communities advised that all projects were delivering the savings in the monitoring report and the performance indicators were back on track. Ms Craig further advised that overall the report continued to demonstrate the level of work ongoing to deliver financial savings as well as meeting the ongoing challenges. In response to a question on school absences compared to other areas, Ms Craig undertook to circulate this information. Members commented on the layout and some of the terminology used in the report and were assured that the presentation of the report would continue to be refined.

**DECISION  
NOTED:-**

- (a) **the progress update relating to Change and Improvement Projects, referenced in Section 4 and detailed further in Appendix 1;**
- (b) **the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 5 of the report; and**
- (c) **the performance summarised in Sections 6 and 7, and detailed within Appendices 1, 2a and 3 and the action that was being taken within services to improve or maintain performance.**

**8. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018/19**

- 8.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the Executive Committee held on 4 September 2018, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities which presented a summary of Scottish Borders Council's Complaints Annual Performance Report 2018-19 contained in Appendix 1 to the report. This set out how many complaints had been received, how effectively complaints had been dealt with, trends over time and how Scottish Borders Council (SBC) compared to other similar rural Local Authorities and the national average. It also provided a summary of the eight performance indicators that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) required all Local Authorities to report against each year. The Annual Report was a requirement of all Councils and allowed the SPSO to assess the effectiveness of Councils' Complaint Handling Procedures (CHP). It also ensured an ongoing focus on improving the way complaints were handled and ensured that Councils learned from the complaints received. Councils could also learn from best practice through a network of complaint handling practitioners, the Local Authority Complaints Handling Network (LACHN). The

report explained that during 2018/19, SBC received 826 complaints, of which 625 were defined as valid. Scottish Borders Council continued to perform well against the Scottish average and similar Scottish Local Authorities in relation to the 8 SPSO performance indicators. Resolving more complaints at the frontline would continue to remain a priority.

- 8.2 In presenting the report the Service Director Customer & Communities advised that complaints made to SBC about its services accounted for a very small proportion of all the customer interactions recorded in the Council's Relationship Management System in 2018/19 (0.5%, or 896 out of 173,133 interactions). There had been a 3.3% decrease in all complaints received (Valid or Invalid) compared to 2017/18 (927). The year 2018/19 again saw an increase in the number of complaints received online (429, compared to 411 in 2017/18) but between 2017/18 and 2018/19 there had been a 4.3% increase over the previous year (22% increase from 2016/17 to 2017/18). It was noted that fewer complaints were received in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18 and the number that were classified as 'valid' decreased; 625 valid compared to 670 in the previous year. The proportion of 'invalid' complaints for 2018/19 increased to 30% from 28% in 2017/18 which indicated that customers, in some instances, had unintentionally submitted complaints rather than requests for service. In 2018/19 the SPSO received 11 complaints about Scottish Borders Council and this was equal to 0.8% of all complaints received by the SPSO in relation to the Local Authority sector. Of the 24 SPSO closed complaints in 2018/19, only 1 was upheld or partially upheld compared to 5 in 2017/18, the details of which were presented within Appendix 1 to the report. Ms Craig confirmed that Live Borders had a Complaints Handling Procedure that aligned with Scottish Borders Council's procedure and a summary of their performance was included in Appendix 1 to the report as well as Live Borders learning process from complaints. Members were pleased to see the improvements within the report. It was noted that the reporting of complaints from Health and Social Care clients needed to be reviewed as they could be submitted to either SBC or the NHS.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) **note the performance of handling complaints for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019;**
- (b) **endorse the identified improvement actions presented at Section 4.9 of this report and within the "Next Steps" of the Appendix 1; and**
- (c) **approve the annual report at the Appendix 1, that would now be submitted to the SPSO and published on SBC's website.**

## **9. 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY VE CELEBRATION FUND**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities which presented a proposal for the creation of a Victory in Europe Day (VE) Celebration Fund to be launched on Monday 24 February 2020, to enable non-profit making community or voluntary groups, schools and churches to apply for funding to undertake special celebratory projects to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The Scottish Borders VE Celebration Fund would give community councils, schools, churches and community and voluntary organisations the chance to apply for grant funding that would enable them to hold special celebratory events or projects for the benefit of their local and wider communities. The report explained that a total of £60,000 had been set aside for the fund and typical grants were expected to be in the region of £1,000, but grants up to a maximum of £2,500 would be considered for larger projects or for projects that would create a lasting legacy of VE Day. Applicants would need to be able to demonstrate that they would use the fund to provide more opportunities for communities to come together. To enable applications to be processed quickly and efficiently on a fast track basis, it was proposed that decision-making would be agreed at Officer level, with final approval and sign off by the Service Director Customer and Communities. It was

proposed that each Area Partnership would contribute from their Community Fund on a per-head of population basis to enable a fund of £60,000 to be created. The VE Celebration Fund would close on 31 May 2020. Ms Craig advised that the early May Bank Holiday in 2020 had been moved from Monday 4 May to Friday 8 May to encourage communities to come together and commemorate this significant historical event. It was confirmed that an evaluation process on feedback would be carried out and a report prepared for Members.

#### **DECISION**

**(a) APPROVED:-**

- (i) the creation of a VE Celebration Fund of £60,000 which was funded on a per head of population basis from each Area Partnership's Community Fund: and**
- (ii) for decision-making for the Council's VE Celebration Fund to be agreed at Officer level, with final approval and sign-off by the Service Director Customer and Communities**

**(b) AGREED a report detailing the evaluation and outcomes of the VE Celebration Fund is brought back to Executive in late 2020.**

**10. 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 Appendix 4 to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 6, 8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.**

#### **SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS**

**11. SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FUNDING - UPDATE**

The private report by the Executive Director was approved.

***The meeting concluded at 11:43 a.m.***

This page is intentionally left blank

---

## **FINAL REVENUE VIREMENTS AND EARMARKED BALANCES 2019/20**

**Report by Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

---

**17 MARCH 2020**

---

### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report seeks approval for the final 2019/20 budget virements and approval to carry forward identified earmarked budgets to 2020/21.**
- 1.2 The monitoring of the General Fund Revenue Budget at the end of January has identified the final virements and earmarked balances for 2019/20. These include routine virements in Appendix 1 and earmarked balances in Appendix 2, where it has been identified that budget is required to be carried forward to support expenditure in 2020/21.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive Committee:**
  - (a) **approves the virements in Appendix 1, and**
  - (b) **approves the earmarked balances in Appendix 2.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 During 2019/20, and most recently at the meeting held on 11 February 2020, the Executive Committee approved a number of revenue budget virements. The original projections on which the February virements were based related to actual spend to 31 December 2019. Since then, further work on projected expenditure and income has identified the requirement to seek approval for final budgetary adjustments.

### **4 VIREMENTS REQUIRED**

4.1 These fall into two categories as follows:

(a) **2019/20 – Routine Virements (Appendix 1)**

This adjustment supplements the virements approved by the Executive Committee during the financial year, including those approved on 11 February 2020, and are detailed in Appendix 1. Final approvals are now sought to reflect:

- i. A reallocation of budgets between services to reflect latest spending plans;
- ii. Adjustments to Revenue Support Grant for 2019/20 following final confirmation from Scottish Government. This requires the income budgets to be “grossed up” to fund expenditure.

(b) **Earmarked Balances (Appendix 2)**

These also supplement the earmarked balances approved by the Executive Committee during 2019/20 to date. These virements are detailed in Appendix 2 and earmarking is required:

- i. where projects or initiatives will now be completed in 2020/21;
- ii. An increase to the previously approved DSM carry forward projections including Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) funding.

### **5 IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1 Financial**

There are no additional costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

#### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The main risk is that after the earmarked balances are carried forward into 2020/21, the Services do not come within budget at year-end, this is mitigated by year-end adjustments which will reduce earmarked balances in relevant services if required.

#### **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**

There are no economic, social or environmental effects.

## 5.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Directors and their staff where appropriate have been involved in and agreed the compilation of the final virements.
- 6.2 The Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), the Chief Officer Audit & Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments have been reflected in the report.

### Approved by

**David Robertson** Signature .....

**Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory**

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Suzy Douglas	Financial Services Manager

### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** - Executive Committee, 11 February 2020

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

Contact us at: Suzy Douglas, Financial Services Manager, Financial Services, Finance, IT & Procurement, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA.

Telephone – 01835 824000 X5881

e-mail – [sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

**Budget Virement Requirement**

**Customer & Communities**

**No. of Virements 2**

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Customer & Communities	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Customer Advice & Support Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(11,000)	0	0

**To**

Department	Customer & Communities	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Housing Benefits	£	£	£
Budget Head	Transfer Payments	11,000	0	0

**Because**

Projected higher net spend and reduction in overpayments recovered in Housing Benefit, to be offset by underspend through managed discretionary spend within CASS.

**2 Virement is required from**

Department	Customer & Communities	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Business Support	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(20,500)	0	0

**To**

Department	Customer & Communities	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Democratic Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	10,000	0	0
	Third Party Payments	4,000	0	0

Service  
Budget Head

Business Change & Programme Management	£	£	£
Employee Costs	5,000	0	0
Supplies & Services	1,500	0	0

<b>Total</b>	<b>20,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
--------------	---------------	----------	----------

**Because**

Additional staff turnover savings through managed recruitment in Business Support, to fund additional pressures emerging from Appeal and Children's Panel expenses (£14k) and small pressure in staffing and non-staffing costs within Business Change (£6.5k).

**Budget Virement Requirement**

**Regulatory Services**

**No. of Virements 1**

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Regulatory Services	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Planning Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(7,658)	(88,695)	(88,695)

**To**

Department	Finance, IT & Procurement	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Finance	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	5,545	22,832	22,832

Department	Human Resources	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Human Resources	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	2,113	8,577	8,577

Department	Corporate	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Fit for 2024	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	0	57,286	57,286

<b>Total</b>		<b>7,658</b>	<b>88,695</b>	<b>88,695</b>
--------------	--	--------------	---------------	---------------

**Because**

Transfer budget as appropriate following corporate restructure.
---

Executive 17 March 2020

Budget Virement Requirement

Financed by

No. of Virements 6

1 Virement is required from

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	(20,000)	0	0

To

Department	Regulatory Services	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Assessor & Electoral Registration Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	20,000	0	0

Because

Additional Revenue Support Grant to support Barclay implementation (£20k).

2 Virement is required from

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	7,000	0	0

To

Department	Health & Social Care	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Generic Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(7,000)	0	0

Because

Removal of funding through Revenue Support Grant redetermination for delivery of "See Hear" Strategy.

3 Virement is required from

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	1,000	0	0

To

Department	Children & Young People	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Central Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(1,000)	0	0

Because

Reduction of funding through Revenue Support Grant redetermination for mental health support.

**4 Virement is required from**

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	207,000	0	0

**To**

Department	Children & Young People	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Additional Support Needs	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(21,326)	0	0

Service	Central Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(2,242)	0	0

Service	Early Years	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(2,886)	0	0

Service	Education Psychology	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(1,768)	0	0

Service	Primary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(90,751)	0	0

Service	Secondary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(88,027)	0	0

Total		(207,000)	0	0
-------	--	-----------	---	---

**Because**

Reduction of funding for teachers pay award (£210k) and additional funding for teachers pension (£3k) through Revenue Support Grant redetermination.

**5 Virement is required from**

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	(11,000)	0	0

**To**

Department	Finance, IT & Procurement	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Finance	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	11,000	0	0

**Because**

Additional Revenue Support Grant through redetermination to be earmarked into 2020/21.

**6 Virement is required from**

Department	Financed by	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Council Tax	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	(26,000)	0	0

**To**

Department	Customer & Communities	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Housing Benefits	£	£	£
Budget Head	Transfer Payments	26,000	0	0

**Because**

Projected higher net spend and reduction in overpayments recovered in Housing Benefit, to be offset by improvement in Council Tax due to reduction in exemptions.

This page is intentionally left blank

Budget Virement Requirement

Assets & Infrastructure

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Assets & Infrastructure	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Network & Infrastructure Asset Management	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(40,000)		0

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	40,000	0	0

**Because**

Earmarked balance required due to delay in delivering Confirm training to completion.
---

Budget Virement Requirement

Health & Social Care

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Health & Social Care	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Safer Communities	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(21,000)	21,000	0

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	21,000	(21,000)	0

**Because**

Earmark Community Justice budget to part fund a temporary post supporting Criminal Justice Social Work in encouraging healthy living and accessing medical and wider ranging support. The post will also be part funded from NHS Borders.

Budget Virement Requirement

Children & Young People

No. of Virements 2

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Children & Young People	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Primary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(108,074)	108,074	0
Service	Secondary Schools			
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(94,131)	94,131	
<b>Total</b>		<b>(202,205)</b>	<b>202,205</b>	

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	202,205	(202,205)	0

**Because**

To earmark projected Devolved School Management (DSM) carry forwards including Continuous Professional Development (CPD) budget from 2019/20 into 2020/21 as per recent forecasting. This virement will bring the total DSM carry forward to £446k.

**2 Virement is required from**

Department	Children & Young People	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Secondary Schools			
Budget Head	Employee Costs	21,137	(21,137)	

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	(21,137)	21,137	0

**Because**

To reduce earmarked balance for Pupil Equity ring-fenced funding (PEF) from 2019/20 into 2020/21 in line with the Academic Year. This virement will bring the total PEF carry forward to £494k.

Budget Virement Requirement

Finance, IT & Procurement

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Finance, IT & Procurement	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Finance	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(11,000)	11,000	0

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	11,000	(11,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark unapplied Revenue Support Grant into 2020/21.

Budget Virement Requirement

Regulatory Services

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Regulatory Services	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service	Assessor & Electoral Registration Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(20,000)	20,000	0

**To**

Department		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	20,000	(20,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark additional Barclay funding (Revenue Support Grant redetermination) for implementation in 2020/21.
--

This page is intentionally left blank




---

## APPROVAL OF FINAL DRAFT OF PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS FRAMEWORK

Report by Interim Service Director Children & Young People

---

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

17 March 2020

---

#### 1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report proposes that the attached Partnership with Parents Framework reflects and aligns with the national guidance and legislation outlined in Learning together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home, to provide a clear strategic direction on collaborative practice with parents for all schools and in Scottish Border Council.**
- 1.2 The Partnership with Parents Framework (Appendix 1) sits within the “**Achieving Excellence in Learning** play #yourpart” alongside the Inclusion Strategy and the Inclusion Policy presented to Executive Committee in January 2020.
- 1.3 National Legislation and Guidance sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement from pre-birth to age 18. It takes account of a national and international evidence base and Scottish education system expertise. Aiming to provide a national vision, but allowing for local and community innovation and flexibility, it sets out clear expectations for all Scottish schools.
- 1.4 The guiding vision is that every parent and family should be supported to be involved and engaged in their child’s education throughout their learning journey. This national approach has been informed by The National Parent Forum’s Review of Scotland’s 2006 Parental Involvement Act (published May 2017).
- 1.5 There is an evolving set of national expectations and resources to further define and support this work with parents published by Scottish Government (Education Scotland) to provide further guidance to Local Authorities and their policy making and outline Scotland’s vision and underlying principles collaboration with parents:
  - 1) Review of Family Learning (Education Scotland) July 2019
  - 2) Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit (Education Scotland) October 2019
  - 3) Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: updated statutory guidance consultation January 2020 to April 2020

- 1.6 Scottish Borders Council has a clear vision and commitment to raise attainment and achievement for all our children and young people. The full participation of parents in learning and school improvement is an essential element in achieving this. The Partnership with Parents Framework has been designed to provide schools within Scottish Borders Council with a clear framework to support them in developing a collaborative improvement culture with parents.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-**

- (a) Agrees to approve the final drafts of the Partnership with Parents Framework (Appendix 1) and confirm this can be circulated to all learning establishments in Scottish Borders.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Two Scottish Government documents are central to the development of the Framework:

1) **Learning together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home** in August 2018. This guidance was developed in partnership with the National Parent Forum of Scotland, the members of the national Parental Engagement Steering Group, the Scottish Parental Involvement Officer Network (SPION), the Association of Directors of Education, head teachers, parents and third sector employees. The national plan is defined by three key principles:

1. That our priorities and our approach should be guided by the needs and interests of the child and their family.
2. That parents are the primary educators of children.
3. That it is only through positive relationships – relationships between families, and those working with children and young people, relationships based on trust, mutual respect and partnership - that we will achieve our aims.

It's aims are to: ensure that parents are supported to be fully involved in the life and work of their children's early learning and childcare setting or school; encourage and support collaborative partnerships between practitioners, parents and families; get the right support in place so that parents can engage in their child's learning; expand access to family learning opportunities which meet participants needs; improve the quality of all communication between practitioners, staff, parents and families, and improve the skills of leaders, front-line practitioners and support staff.

2) **Review of Scotland's 2006 Parental Involvement Act** in May 2017, recognised that a great deal had been achieved but there is more to be done. It formed recommendations to Scottish Government, national agencies, local authorities and schools. Key messages include: a desire to improve and update key aspects of the Act and accompanying guidance; a need to extend the legislation to cover the early years; a requirement for further partnership working between parents and practitioners; a need to protect and promote the role of the parent council whilst addressing equality and; and a desire to further implement the learning at home strand of the act.

These documents have informed the Partnership with Parents Framework and have assisted in aligning with national advice and policy.

3.2 The Partnership with Parents Framework sits within a suite of frameworks:

- a) Quality Improvement
- b) Learning Teaching & Assessment
- c) Inclusion
- d) Partnerships with Parents

3.2.1 Each of these frameworks form part of the Council's strategy to raise attainment for all – "**Achieving Excellence in Learning** play #**yourpart**". They are all informed by research and strategies known to be successful in pursuit of the overarching aim of raising attainment.

3.2.2 The Partnership with Parents Framework, and its associated appendices, detail the actions required by all concerned to ensure the ongoing development of collaborative practices with parents in all learning establishments within Scottish Borders Council. It has drawn on the evidence from our Parental Involvement and Engagement Census in June 2019 to baseline our regional picture on parental collaboration and define immediate priorities.

3.2.3 In doing this, the framework provides clarity for all and supports Scottish Borders Council's learning establishments in implementing the national legislation and expectations which currently sit within several Scottish Government (Education Scotland) documents. The framework also allows for flexibility within learning establishments to identify their local priorities as long as it is evidenced based and in collaboration with parents.

#### **4 CONSULTATION PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS**

4.1 At national level, the expectations of practice guiding principles and aims were co-produced with parents. The regional tailoring of Scottish Borders priorities has been heavily informed by the results of our Parental Involvement and Engagement Census, which had just under 2000 respondents. Further consultation has taken place through discussions with the Strategic Headteacher Group and all Headteachers have had the opportunity to engage with the draft framework and provide feedback at the latest Headteacher Engagement day in February 2020.

4.2 Work will continue with further parental focus groups in developing a wider parental engagement policy that will look beyond the learning establishments to regional and strategic engagement processes.

4.3 A Strategic Overview Group has been established to oversee the delivery and evaluation of the framework. The Group consists of a Headteacher representative from each high school cluster, an Early Years Team representative, Quality Improvement Officers and a member of the

Additional Support Needs Team.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The attached Framework (Appendix 1) has been developed based on the information gathered during consultation and national expectations.
- 5.2 The Partnership with Parents Framework clearly defines the expectations of each learning establishment regarding collaborative practice with parents. It clearly supports the work needed through a policy outline, research evidence and supportive tools to enable delivery and evaluation of impact.
- 5.3 The Council's approach will ensure that all parents living in Scottish Borders can experience a clear and consistent approach to their involvement in their school and their child's learning.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The Council has considered new national documentation and ensure that Council policy and guidance takes account of all national advice, guidance and statute. Officers have fully consulted with a range of partners before finalising documents, therefore mitigating any potential risks to practice.

### **6.3 Equalities**

- (a) An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.
- (b) It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

### **6.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **6.5 Carbon Management**

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **6.6 Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

### **6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

## 7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, the Monitoring & Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit & Risk, the Service Director HR & Communication and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Stuart C Easingwood**

**Signature .....**

**Interim Service Director Children & Young People**

### Author(s)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation and Contact Number</b>
Kevin McCall	Quality Improvement Officer, Education

### Background Papers:

Scottish Government papers:

Scottish Borders Improvement Framework: Quality Improvement in Education (2019)

Review of the Impact of the 2006 Parental involvement Act (2017)

"Learning together" Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home (2018)

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 (2006)

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: updated statutory guidance consultation (2020)

Review of Family Learning (2017)

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014),

National Improvement Framework (2016),

### 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. Information can be provided on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S  
ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN  
LEARNING

Play # yourpart

**PARTNERSHIP WITH  
PARENTS  
FRAMEWORK**

## **Contents**

- 1. Achieving Excellence in Learning**
- 2. Vision and Principles**
- 3. Aims and Objectives**
- 4. Legislation and Policy**
- 5. Current Picture and Improvement Priorities**
- 6. Implementation of the Framework**
- 7. Roles and Responsibilities**
- 8. How we will Evaluate Progress**

## **Appendices**

- I. Parental Involvement and Engagement Census Results**
- II. Research**
- III. Resources**
- IV. Guidelines on SIP Evaluative Statement**
- V. School Audit Tool**

## Achieving Excellence in Learning

Achieving Excellence in Learning #yourpart, the council strategy to Raise Attainment for All comprises five key frameworks:

Quality Improvement  
Learning, Teaching & Assessment  
Inclusion  
Leadership  
Partnership with Parents

Each of these frameworks is informed by research and strategies known to be successful in pursuit of the overarching aim of raising attainment and improving learning outcomes.

This Partnership with Parents Framework details the actions required by all to ensure the ongoing development of partnership practices in all learning establishments within Scottish Borders Council.

### Vision

Scottish Borders Council Directorate has a strong vision for all young people – *In Our Sight, In Our Minds, In Our Actions and Being Heard*.

This framework will provide clear guidance for each learning establishment or community to improve their work with parents to meet the needs of all our children and young people; whilst allowing flexibility to develop practice that is responsive to their own unique context.

There has been a significant national drive in developing the collective capacity to improve parental involvement in the life of the school and engagement in learning. In the Scottish Borders and we are committed to maximising these approaches to improve attainment, inclusion, achievement, and progress for all.

### Principles

Parental involvement and engagement are not ends in and of themselves. They serve a purpose, and that purpose is to support the learning and development of children and young people. This is based on three key principles:

1. That our priorities and our approach should be guided by the needs and interests of the child and their family.
2. That parents are the primary educators of children.
3. That it is only through positive relationships – relationships between families, and those working with children and young people, relationships based on trust, mutual respect and partnership - that we will achieve our aims.

## Aims and Objectives

Our aims are to:

1. Further develop parental representation and collaboration at all levels of our education structure and practice with a clear focus on improvement.
2. Ensure parents and families are fully supported to be involved in the life and work of their child's school or early learning and childcare setting.
3. Fully support parents and families to engage in and support their child's learning whilst expanding our family learning opportunities.
4. Work to ensure equitable approaches are implemented ensuring the removal of barriers to parental involvement.

Our objectives are to:

1. Promote positive partnership relationships and behaviours
2. Develop all parents and school staffs' awareness of the complementary roles they have in supporting learning
3. Ensure communications between home and school are effectively supporting learning.
4. Develop family learning opportunities and reduce barriers to involvement
5. Increase parental understanding of the education their child is receiving and how they can support it at home
6. Effectively engage Parent Councils in supporting good relationships with the wider parent body and the local community to support the work of the school and improve learning outcomes
7. Help schools and parents develop partnerships with other services and community groups to improve curricular opportunities and learning outcomes
8. Support the implementation of evidence based approaches by identifying core professional learning and development for staff.

## Legislation and Policy

**'This new self-evaluation framework highlights partnership and collaboration as significant features of a highly-effective school and a high-performing learning system.'**

**How Good Is Our School 4 p5**

Scottish Government and Education Scotland guidance presumes partnership working with parents as a pre-requisite, in any educational setting, to an inclusive and high performing learning community.

A range of national documents and guidance has been published which provides a strong legislative framework for promoting and growing partnership practices in Scottish Schools.

These policy and legislative drivers identify the vital role parents play in supporting the learning, achievements and wellbeing of children and young people. This recognises the importance of parents in our improvement journey and in delivering the objectives of the National Improvement Framework:

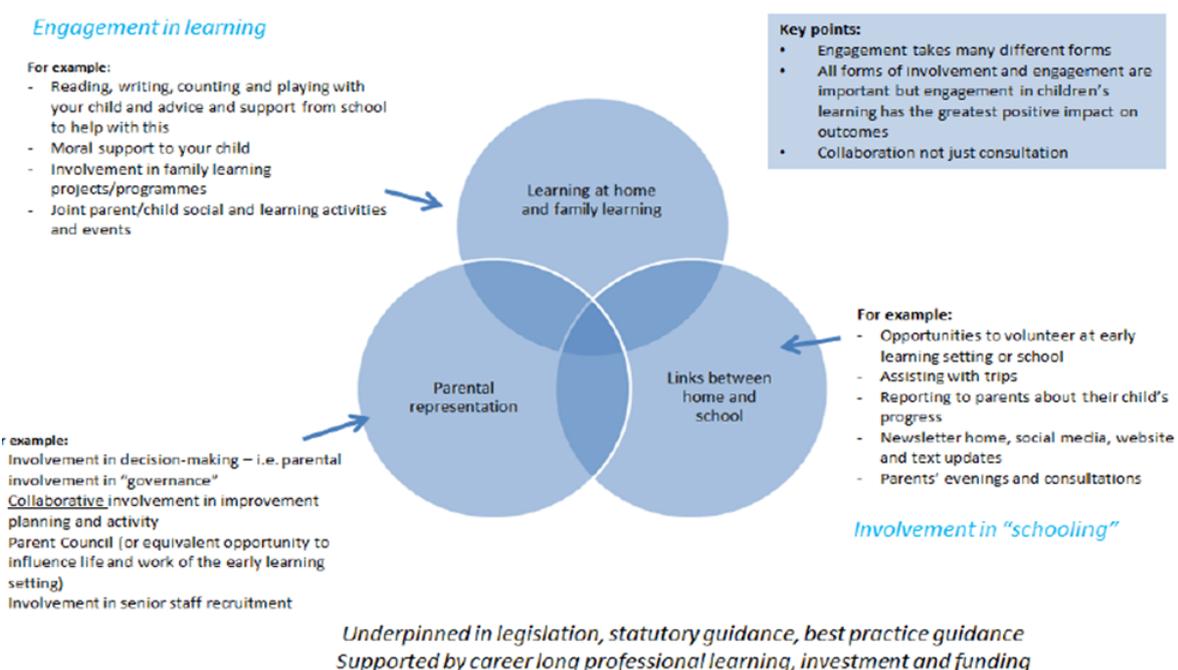
- Improving attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improving children and young people’s health and wellbeing
- Improving employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

National expectations are laid out in the following legislation and guidance. Foremost amongst these is:

[Learning Together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement family learning and learning at home.](#)

It sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement from pre-birth to age 18 and takes account of a national and international evidence base alongside Scottish education system expertise. Whilst providing a national vision it allows for local and community flexibility.

## Parental involvement and engagement The Scottish Approach 3-18



*'The aim of this plan is to take forward a further phase of reform. This next phase will **shift the emphasis from "involving" to "collaborating with" parents and families.** .....Parents who wish to undertake a more collaborative role in areas such as improvement activity and policy development should be supported to do so, shaping and influencing plans and strategies from the very beginning. Parent Councils will be supported to act as a partner in school improvement. A variety of opportunities should be provided, recognising that formal meetings are not going to work for everyone.'*

### [The Scottish Schools \(Parental Involvement Act\) 2006](#)

This lays down the legislative requirements and the framework for supporting parental involvement in the education of their children and the wider school community. As well as requiring the establishment of a Parent Council in each school it aims to ensure parents are:

- Involved with their child's education and learning (Learning at Home)
- Welcomed as active participants in the life of the school (Home/ School Partnership)
- Encouraged to express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with the school (Parental Representation)

### [SBC 2015 Parental Involvement in Schools Policy](#)

School communities (School staff, support staff, parent councils and parents) will be expected to work together towards delivering the key elements of this policy and should be able to provide evidence of the implementation of some of the suggested examples from each broad theme:

- Learning at Home
- Home/School partnership
- Parental Representation

### [HGIOS 4](#)

Designed to support effective self-evaluation and improvement processes to ensure educational outcomes for all learners are improving. One of its nine aims is to 'extend and deepen partnerships to improve outcomes for all learners' (p7)

Quality Indicator 2.5, Family Learning -This indicator focuses on increasing the positive impact of working with families to improve learning and achievement.

Quality Indicator 2.7, Partnerships – This indicator aims to capture the school's success in developing and maintaining strong partnerships approaches which improve outcomes for Learners and continued self-improvement for the school and community.

Almost all other Quality Indicators note parents and other partners as important factors in delivering improvements in learning outcomes.

### [Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education](#)

*'We also know that when parents are fully involved in their child's learning, and in the life and work of their local school, that we see better outcomes for children, parents and schools. That is why we will work to ensure that parents are supported to play an active role in their child's learning, and that parents and communities play a bigger role in the day-to-day lives of their schools. Parents and teachers in particular will become key decision makers. Research by the Children and Young People's Commissioner has also shown that the level of participation of children and young people within schools can have*

*a significant impact on attainment, so empowerment matters for them too.'*

#### PEF

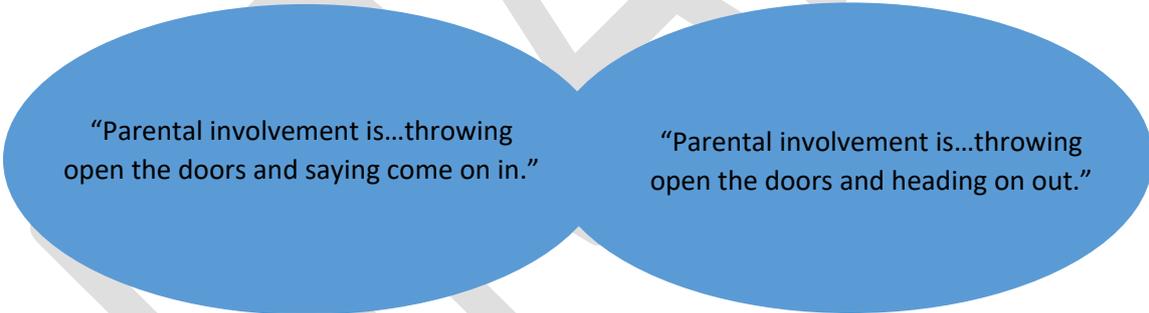
*'As with other aspects of the life and work of your child's school, parents and carers should be kept informed by their school and have the chance to share their thoughts and ideas on how the money could be spent as part of the school plans.*

*This could be through the Parent Council or it might be through other parent associations or discussion groups. Schools are being encouraged to be creative about the ways they work with families, carers, the third sectors and others around the ways they use the money.*

*(Pupil Equity Funding: information for parents and carers 2017)*

#### Curriculum for Excellence; Building the Curriculum 4

*"Working in partnership with others is a fundamental way for educational establishments and services to help practitioners act in ways that make positive differences for children, young people and adult learners. A coherent curriculum requires close collaboration across transitions. This means that educational providers must work with each other, with parents and with other services for children and adults to ease learners' transitions between stages and educational sectors. Such joint working ensures a continuous lifelong learning experience where barriers to learning are successfully identified and tackled."*



"Parental involvement is...throwing open the doors and saying come on in."

"Parental involvement is...throwing open the doors and heading on out."

#### **Current Picture and Improvement Priorities**

In June the SBC Parental Involvement and Engagement Census (PIE, appendix 1) revealed a positive picture regarding parents' views on; being able to contact their school, the approachability of staff and that their school keeps them informed of what their child is learning and their child's progress.

All of our schools have Parent Councils that represent the views of parents and actively support the work of their school. A positive picture emerged from the PIE regarding their representative role and their working relationship with their schools senior management.

It also illustrated areas where we need to improve within parental involvement and engagement.

Parental involvement covers models of parental representation and involvement in the life of the school. It can range from chairing a Parent Council through volunteering in the classroom to taking part in a session on school improvement.

Parental engagement however has a greater focus on learning. Parental understanding of the child’s learning, how to support that learning or participating in Family Learning opportunities.

Our PIE census has provided a range of evidence and baselines that will help to focus our improvement agenda. The results have been organised using the three themes from [Learning Together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement family learning and learning at home.](#)

## Implementation of the framework

### Schools

Theme 1 Parental representation and involvement:

(Expanded evaluative statements/questions on these actions can be found in the Audit tool, see appendix 5)

Action	Timescale
Review how their Parent Council seeks the views of the wider parent forum on identifying priorities for improvement, barriers to involvement and how best to help them support their child’s learning.	Before Summer 2020
Review and if necessary redesign the collaborative processes for parental involvement in the school evaluation and improvement process.	To be implemented session 2020/221
Ensure a paragraph is included in the next SIP and SIR on parental involvement and engagement. (appendix 4)	Session 2019/20

Theme 2 Parental engagement in learning:

Action	Timescale
Work with your Parent Council to evaluate the school’s communications to parents to increase the proportion of information or learning events aimed at support learning at home.	Session 2020/21
Work with your families, partners, school performance data and relevant stakeholders to assess the family learning needs within your school community.	Completed by February 2021 to inform improvement areas for 2021/22 SIP

Plan professional learning for your school setting/s to develop staff expertise in collaborative working with parents with an emphasis on engagement in learning.	PI opportunities to be included in session 2020/21 and 2021/22
Develop a parental engagement and involvement approach for Early Years and Childcare.	By end of 2021

### Theme 3 Links between home and school

Action	Timescale
Work with parents and staff to consider volunteering opportunities and what would remove barriers to participation and support the creation of new volunteering opportunities within the school.	2021/22 for planned improvements in 2022/23
Collaborate with parents to examine your school's communications and reporting mechanisms (school handbook, website, SIR, reports) Within this consider the use of information technology and social media.	From session 2020/21 through to end of 2021/22

### ***Parental Engagement Lead and the Strategic Overview Group***

The Parental Engagement Lead and the Strategic Overview Groups will provide the link to national parent organisations and relevant professional networks with the aim of disseminating research and effective practice. They will also be responsible for the following:

#### Theme 1 Parental representation and involvement:

- Support Parent Councils through training, sharing of practice and resources to communicate with their parent forums
- Work with Parent Councils Chairs on ways of improving communications with their wider parent forum and providing them with relevant support and advice on how to get involved
- Provide collaborative opportunities for parents to be involved in evaluation, planning and improvement at regional levels
- Further develop a professional learning opportunities for all staff and stakeholders
- Research and disseminate effective practice regarding the use of information technology in the involvement and engagement of parents.
- Undertake work at a strategic level on poverty proofing and the improved involvement of those under-represented groups of parents at a school improvement level and policy level.

## Theme 2 Parental engagement in learning

- Work with parents to develop new tools to improve our communications to parents on what children are learning and how they are progressing. This will include responsive feedback mechanisms on parents' views on learning.
- Develop our skills and capacity to provide information and support to parents to enable them to effectively support learning
- Grow our strategic support for schools to develop family learning opportunities appropriate to the needs of pupils and their community.

## Theme 3 Links between home and school

- Co-produce effective and appropriate communications tools and strategies to support parental involvement in our schools
- Develop and deliver resources and training for parents on understanding your school how to engage and get involved
- Provide resources and training on removing barriers and improving parental engagement and involvement for practitioners

## Roles and Responsibilities

Senior officers will provide:

An annual report on the SBC Partnership with Parents Framework to the Children and Young People Committee as part of the Children and Young People's Standards and Quality Report

Clear authority improvement priorities, targets and evidence of progress linked to the Children and Young People's improvement Plan

Support, challenge and professional learning to school leaders to develop their understanding, capacity and processes in involving parents in the life of the school and supporting learning.

The Children and Young People's Service will be responsive to issues raised by parents and will ensure that there is a regular mechanism to gather the priorities and issues that are important to parents.

Quality Improvement Officers and other central functions will support and challenge Head Teachers in translating this strategy into purposeful actions resulting in improved outcomes for our learners.

All School Leaders will:

Each Head Teacher will ensure that their school has in place consistent and accessible arrangements that support the engagement of their parents within the terms of this framework.

Include other services, agencies and community groups, e.g. Community Learning and Development, NHS and voluntary sector groups in working with parents and establishing improved home school links and family learning opportunities.

Engage in relevant professional learning to develop their knowledge and skills in this area

Establish this improvement priority within their school's evaluation and improvement strategies.

All School staff will:

Maintain a culture of mutual respect and understanding based on solution focused practice and the development of positive relationships.

Develop their learning in line with the practice outlined in this framework.

Contribute to a culture, ethos and values that are fundamental to promoting positive relationships and behaviour within their setting and particular role.

Promote and contribute to a collegiate climate of support, listening and understanding that will build strong working relationships between school and parents.

Demonstrate values and personal commitment to social justice, integrity, trust and respect in all partnership relationships

Actively seek the views of parents and seek to understand and value the expertise and perspective they bring.

Parents and Parent Councils will:

Work within the principles of practice outlined in this framework to work in a positive partnership with their child's school in a solution focused manner and support a positive climate for learning.

Support the work of the school and ensure there is appropriate and effective communication between the school, the parent body (Parent Forum) and the wider community guided by the purposes contained in the 2006 legislation.

Contribute to a culture, ethos and values that promotes positive relationships and behaviour within their setting and particular role.

Promote and contribute to a collegiate climate of support, listening and understanding that will build strong working relationships between school and parents.

## Evaluating Progress

This Partnership with Parents Framework reflects our commitment to work in partnership with parents to promote their involvement in supporting their child's learning and in the life of the school. The impact of improved parental partnership will ultimately be the difference that is made to children's achievements and academic attainment. An important measure is that children are having a happy and productive learning experience at school and they are achieving their full potential. Therefore this work will feed into data and evaluation carried out through other frameworks.

With this in mind we will evaluate this framework's effectiveness and impact in the following ways:

- We will survey our parents every two years using the PIE census
- Each school will evaluate the effectiveness of its partnership practice with parents using the Quality indicators in HGIOS4 within a three year cycle. This will be done in partnership with a representative group from the parent body or consultation with the wider Parent Forum.
- The evaluation of partnership practice will be built into our school review programme and collate the findings each year.
- School Inspections provide parental views on our schools' practice that will be used as evaluative evidence.
- Children and Young People's Services will evaluate the progress and impact of this strategy annually as part of their engagement event with Parent Councils.
- Each school will produce an evaluative statement on their partnership practice with parents covering engagement in learning, links between home and school and parental representation.

## APPENDICES

### 1. Parental Involvement and Engagement Census Results

PIE Census Results

The results have been given a red, amber or green status on the following criteria.

**Green** – over 75% of responses strongly agree or agree (continue current improvement activity)

**Amber** - 50 to 75% of responses strongly agree or agree (design new improvement methodologies)

**Red** – less than 50% of responses strongly agree or agree (prioritise areas for re-design and improved delivery)

<b>SBC 2019 Census, Theme 1: Parental Representation</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>% parents that agree or strongly agree</b>	<b>RAG</b>
Does your school have a parent council?	83	G
The views and suggestions of the Parent Council are taken into account by the school's senior management	78	G
The Parent Council represents the views of the parents	77	G
Does the parent council communicate at least once a term?	55	A
The Parent Council is involved in senior staff recruitment	52	A
The school seeks my views and opinions on school policies	39	R
Parents views help to decide priorities in the school improvement plan	26	R

<b>SBC 2019 Census; Theme 2: Links between home and school (involvement in the life of the school)</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>% parents that agree or strongly agree</b>	<b>RAG</b>
The school staff are approachable.	83	G
I can contact the School within school opening hours, to speak to staff.	76	G
Does the school get in touch with you to provide general information about the school at least once a term?	75	G
I am confident that if I need to contact my child's school, it will respond helpfully to my questions and comments.	63	A
There are opportunities for me to help with my child's school.	60	A
Overall, how satisfied are you with how the school engages with you?	51	A
Would you like to be a lot/or slightly more involved in the life of the school?	11/38	R
<b>Barriers to involvement:</b> The biggest barriers to further involvement in school life were; work commitments 68%, not made aware of opportunities 27%, other 23%, care of younger, children 21%, there are no opportunities 11%, lack of confidence 8%, cost 2%		

<b>SBC 2019 Census, Theme 3: Learning, Learning at Home and Family Learning</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>% parents that agree or strongly agree</b>	<b>RAG</b>
I know what my child is learning at school	67	A
School keeps me well informed about my child's progress in a way I can understand.	65	A
Does the school provide information on what your child is currently learning about at least once a term	60	A
Does the school provide information on how your child is progressing with their learning at least once a term	58	A
The school asks for my views about my child's learning and takes them into account.	44	R
The school gives me the information I need to support my child's learning.	40	R
Does the school get in touch with you to provide information on ways to help your child continue learning at home at least once a term?	36	R
My child's school offers a selection of Family Learning activities such as events and workshops.	37	R
The school is making me aware of the Family Learning opportunities.	33	R
I have taken part in Family Learning activities in the past school year.	23	R

## 2. Research

### How Can Schools Support Parents' Engagement in their Children's Learning? Evidence from Research and Practice (Dr Janet Goodall)

This significant study concludes that 'parental engagement in children's learning is associated with improved academic outcomes at all ages'. However on a cautionary note this positive association, and improved outcomes, is strongest when based upon the parent's aspirations and expectations for their child. The emphasis is therefore on listening and understanding the parent's views as the primary educator in order to gain most benefit from any supported intervention. The main findings are listed below.

*There are four areas of promise:*

- *supporting parents to help their children read via home and family literacy interventions;*
- *classroom and home-based summer reading interventions;*
- *school-home communication, including via text message; and*
- *structured, targeted interventions for parents aimed at improving children's social, emotional and behavioural outcomes, which could support learning.*

*By contrast, the following activities require caution:*

- *giving parents general information on child development or curriculum content linked to specific actions that they can take to support learning);*
- *home visiting (unless it is sufficiently intensive and includes active learning for parents);*
- *engaging parents directly with homework; and*
- *offering regular group sessions for parents, which can be helpful but requires concerted efforts to ensure adequate attendance.*

*Several interlocking features of a more effective approach to schools supporting parents' engagement in their children's learning have emerged from the evidence reviewed, the interviews, the wider literature and discussion within the project's expert advisory panel:*

- *adopting a more holistic and sustained model;*
- *providing the support, resources and time required for school staff to support parents;*
- *building positive and trusting relationships with parents;*
- *using more sustained and intensive approaches to support parental engagement for children who are struggling with early reading, from disadvantaged backgrounds or displaying behavioural difficulties;*
- *making concerted efforts to engage so-called 'hard-to-reach' parents;*
- *planning, monitoring and evaluating parental engagement activities;*
- *training teachers in how to engage with parents but also using other trained professionals.*

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/evidence-reviews/parental-engagement>

Engaging Parents

<https://learningfoundation.org.uk/5680-2/>

Top Ten Tips

<https://www.connect.scot/teacher-professional/resources/connect-consultant-dr-janet-goodall-shares-her-top-ten-tips-engaging-parents>

Lecture on Parental Engagement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DosjwFwCLQ>

### **Review of Family Learning**

The review completed in July 2019 considers the available evidence on family learning through research, case studies and consultation with practitioners.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/research/review-of-family-learning>

## **3. Resources**

### **Engaging parents and families - A toolkit for practitioners (Education Scotland)**

Education Scotland has developed the toolkit to provide all practitioners with practical resources and support to develop effective partnerships with parents and families that support all aspects of children and young people's learning.

Throughout the resources you will find support materials and guidance on:

- The benefits of involving and engaging parents in their children's learning
- Involving all parents
- Learning at home and family learning
- Home school partnerships and community connections
- Home school link workers
- School improvement planning
- Reporting to parents and children
- professional learning materials for use by individuals or in groups
- activities that can be used as a starting point and/or as a tool to measure and evaluate current practice in parental involvement
- activities that can be used in partnership with parent councils, committees or associations to ensure that all parents/carers and families are fairly represented examples of practice from ELC settings, Primary and Secondary schools, community settings and parental organisations.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/#>

## Family Learning Framework

Focusing on the four key areas of: programme development, evaluation, workforce development and research this framework supports practitioners to plan develop deliver and evaluate their family learning practice.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/Family%20Learning%20Framework>

SEIC resources: All the resources can be accessed via the SEIC website on:

<http://www.seicollab.co.uk/equity-improving-outcomes-for-children-living-in-poverty.html>

### 4. Guidelines regarding your evaluative statement on partnership with parents

Clear guidelines on self-evaluation processes can be found in [HGIOS 4 P7-11](#) and Appendix 1 on pages 56/57. Quality Indicators 1.1 Self-Evaluation, 2.5 Family Learning and 2.7 Partnerships and the related challenge questions are also helpful.

To ensure the evaluation and continued development of effective partnership working, Head Teachers should consider the following questions when writing their evaluative statement into their School Improvement Reports and Improvement Plans. These have been adapted from the expectations contained in *Learning Together: the national action plan on parental involvement*.

*Parental Involvement in Improvement:*

- When identifying future areas for improvement have we collaborated with parents and families in the development of improvement plans including the investment of Pupil Equity Funding and other key activities?
- Have we integrated parental involvement and engagement activities into our broader improvement plan activity?
- Do we have two-way communications with parents as part of the improvement planning process
- Have we involved parents in early learning and childcare improvement, and considered parental involvement in the life of the school and parental engagement in their children's learning as areas for improvement.
- How do we ensure that parental engagement in learning and family learning are considered as part of improvement planning processes?
- When we evaluate how we are doing do we do so in partnership with parents? Designing the evaluation process
- Do our parents get regular opportunities throughout the year to monitor progress by engaging with data and intelligence to analyse the results and impact of our work?

- Do we consider the quality of the involvement and the intelligence gathered as well as the numbers involved and data produced?
- Have we shared good practice in involving parents in school improvement planning across our learning community or further?

#### *Involvement in the life of the school*

- Are we recognising the contribution of parents to the life of the school and developing new opportunities?
- Are we giving parents the opportunity to suggest and shape those opportunities?

#### *Supporting Learning and Family Learning offer (universal and targeted /uptake/impact)*

- When do we talk with parents and families about the role that they play in supporting children's learning and develop strategies that help them to further develop their skills and confidence to support their child's learning.
- How have we made it everyone's role to support parental engagement?
- Have we considered parental engagement when considering our policies on homework?
- Do we invest the time to build the necessary trust and confidence amongst staff and parents?
- Have we regularly asked parents what works for their children and what might help them to engage with their children's learning?
- Are we aware of the factors causing child poverty and have an understanding of local demographics in order to consider the diverse needs of parents and families and tailor advice and learning to suit individual parents' needs?
- When did we work with families, partners and relevant stakeholders to identify needs within families and the community?
- Did we ask parents and families to identify if and when they need to access family learning programmes?
- How do we let families know what's available and what benefit they can derive from the learning programmes?
- Does our practice understand and build on the assets and potential of the individual, the family and the community?
- Do we work with partners and families to support their understanding of family learning outcomes and the positive impact this can have on the whole family?

## 5. Audit Tool

### Parental Representation and Involvement

Evaluative questions	What do we currently do?	RAG priority	What improvement is required?/timescale
<p><i>Representation (particularly in Early Years and Childcare settings), how do we:</i></p> <p>Make sure that all parents feel welcomed and supported to get involved in the life and work of the school, bearing in mind that some parents may not have had a positive experience of school?</p> <p>Identify approaches to support parents who might initially feel reluctant to be involved but may wish to do so with the right support and the right opportunities?</p> <p>Ensure that all parents can have their views represented and Identify and address any barriers which may prevent parents from being involved?</p> <p>Work with the Parent Council or equivalent group in early learning and childcare settings to seek views of the wider parent forum?</p>			
<p><i>Collaboration, How do we:</i></p> <p>Support parents to identify areas for improvement that matter and are relevant to them and not only ask questions on what we have decided is important for us?</p> <p>Widen the range of opportunities to obtain parents' views in flexible "parent friendly" ways?</p> <p>Identify the strengths and expertise amongst parents and families and build on those strengths?</p> <p>Support joint working with parent representative groups?</p> <p>Provide opportunities to think about how we are listening, who we are listening to and communicate what we are doing as a result?</p>			

<p>Ensure a culture and approach that is welcoming and supportive and challenge any behaviours likely to alienate or intimidate parents?</p>			
<p><i>Parental involvement in improvement planning and policies, how do we:</i>  Collaborate with parents and families in the development of improvement plans, the investment of Pupil Equity Funding and other key activities.  Evaluate how we are doing in partnership with parents, and ensure this is done with parents. (Consider the quality of involvement as well as numbers)  Ensure two-way communication as part of the improvement planning process.  Make sure that parents are involved in early learning and childcare and school improvement, and consider parental involvement and parental engagement in their children’s learning as areas for improvement.  Share good practice in involving parents in school improvement planning.</p>			
<p><i>Information technology do we:</i>  Seek meaningful and appropriate opportunities to use digital technology to enhance parental involvement and engagement?</p>			
<p><i>Equalities and Equity</i>  Relevant to your school’s context which parents are under-represented in your improvement planning and policy development?  Do you know what the barriers to involvement are for your school?  How does your approach to poverty proofing, PEF/SAC help parental involvement and engagement?  Do you work with the Parent Council or additional parental involvement groups to consider how to</p>			

<p>minimise the impact of cost on children’s experience of school? How have you considered the Cost of the School Day Toolkit and its relevance in the context of your school or early learning and childcare setting?</p>			
<p><i>Leadership and skills, how are you:</i> Developing practitioner skills to develop expertise in collaborative working with parents? Building the capacity of your parents? Considering training and support needs in relation to parental inclusion and the full range of equalities considerations?</p>			

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 6 (Parental Representation)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section6-mar19.pdf>

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 3 (Involving all Parents)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section3-mar19.pdf>

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 10 (School Improvement Planning)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section10-mar19.pdf>

### **Parental Engagement in Learning**

Evaluative question	What do we currently do?	RAG priority	What improvement is required?/timescale
<p><i>Learning at home, how do we:</i> Make it everyone’s role to support parental engagement. Ensure that parental engagement and family learning are considered as part of improvement planning processes. Consider parental engagement when considering our policies on homework and ask parents what works for</p>			

<p>their children and what might help them to engage with their children’s learning. Proactively ask parents and families what works for them in supporting their child’s learning and progress? Provide advice to parents to help talk to their child about their learning and next steps?</p> <p>Talk with parents and families about the role that they can play in supporting children’s learning. Talk with parents to create supports that help them to further develop their skills, confidence and levels of engagement with their child’s learning and development.</p>			
<p><i>Family learning, how do we:</i> Work with families, partners and relevant stakeholders to identify learning needs within families and community and ask parents and families to identify if and when they need to access family learning programmes Let families know what's available and what benefit they can derive from the programmes. Work with families to support their understanding of family learning outcomes and the positive impact this can have on the whole family. Understand and build on the assets and potential of the individual, the family and the community. Increase the opportunities for families to access evidence based family learning opportunities and programmes</p>			
<p><i>Information Technology, do we:</i> Make innovative use of social media and other forms of electronic communication – e.g. texts, online journals - to share what children are learning - whilst considering</p>			

alternative provision for parents who have no access to this form of communication?			
<p><i>Equalities and Equity, how do we:</i></p> <p>Consider the diverse needs of parents and families and tailor advice to suit individual parents' needs.</p> <p>Use our PEF/SAC funding to remove barriers for parents' involvement in supporting learning at home or family learning?</p> <p>Use our approach to poverty proofing to help engagement in learning.</p>			
<p><i>Leadership and skills, how do we:</i></p> <p>Developing practitioner skills in supporting learning at home and family learning?</p> <p>Take time to build the necessary trust and confidence amongst staff and parents?</p> <p>Build the capacity of our parents to support learning?</p>			

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 7 (Family Learning)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section7-mar19.pdf>

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 10 (School Improvement Planning)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section10-mar19.pdf>

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 7 (Family Learning)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section7-mar19.pdf>

**Links between Home and School**

Evaluative question	What do we currently do?	RAG priority	What improvement is required?/timescale
<p><i>Communication, do we:</i>                      Develop school handbooks or alternatives for early learning and childcare settings in consultation with parents. Ensuring that those handbooks are accessible in their language, meet their information needs and do we share the content in a range of ways?                      Support parents to share their questions, views and knowledge about their children and support parents to be active participants in the assessment and reporting process?                      Make communication and reporting to parents simple, quick and responsive to parents’ needs?                      Provide information on how the school is doing and seek parental feedback?</p> <p><i>Information Technology, do we:</i>                      Make innovative use of social media and other forms of electronic communication – e.g. texts, online journals - to share what children are learning - whilst considering alternative provision for parents who have no access to this form of communication?                      Have a simple, easy to navigate website?</p>			
<p><i>Volunteering, do we:</i>                      Work with parents in our community to identify the arrangements that would need to be in place to maximise the opportunities for parents and families to volunteer. This can include some very basic but important items such as bus tickets, crèche facilities, alternative timing of events? (The important thing is to</p>			

Page 56

<p>uncover and respond to any potential barriers to participation)          Ask parents and families what would work best for them and find out parents' and families' skills and strengths and follow up on offers of support?          Think about how PEF/SAC could help?          Think about our approach to poverty proofing and how this may help?</p>			
---	--	--	--

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 5 (Home/school partnerships) and Section 11 (Reporting/communicating with Parents)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section5-mar19.pdf>     <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section11-mar19.pdf>

Education Scotland -Engaging Parents and Families Toolkit – Section 3 (Involving all Parents)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/par2-section3-mar19.pdf>

DRAFT



---

## **CONSULTATION - DRAFT FOOD GROWING STRATEGY**

**Report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure**

---

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**17 March 2020**

---

#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Following the legislative requirements set out in Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, this report introduces Scottish Borders Council's first ever Food Growing Strategy – 'Cultivating Communities' and seeks approval for consultation on the draft. This report also sets out the process and next steps in delivering on the Strategy Action Plan, as well as associated changes to Allotment management as required by the legislation.**
- 1.2 The Food Growing Strategy supports the Locality Plans for the region and is itself supported with the proposed creation of new policy EP17 in the Local Development Plan.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:**
- a) Approves the Draft Strategy for Consultation.**
  - b) Approves the proposals for resourcing as set out in 8.1.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 updates and simplifies allotments legislation, bringing it together in a single instrument, introducing new duties on local authorities to increase transparency on the actions taken to provide allotments in their area and limit waiting times. Allotments are defined in Part 9 as land that is owned or leased by a local authority and used wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers and not for profit. A key requirement of the Legislation is for every local authority to develop a Food Growing Strategy under section 119 of the Act. Each authority must set out in its food-growing strategy how it will provide land to meet demand for food growing as allotments or other forms of cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers for community or individual growing.
- 3.2 While Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act came into effect in 2015, the detailed guidance on preparing the Food Growing Strategy was published in November 2018. Since then officers have been engaging with stakeholders and undertaking a review of Allotments and Community food growing in the Scottish Borders.

### **4 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Stakeholders such as Community Planning Partners, local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, Allotment Associations/Societies and Community growing project managers have been consulted with through a series of meetings, gaining insight into current growing activities and needs for future capacity building.
- 4.2 A 12 week public consultation was launched on 24 July, following the format of similar consultations undertaken by Greenspace Scotland in other local authorities. The aim of this was to gain insight into current and potential local food growing activity, to guide the development of the Strategy.
- 4.3 The consultation ran for 12 weeks from 24 July to 16 October 2019 and was promoted to all Community Councils, In Bloom groups, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, publicly via a press release (30 July) and via website and social media. It had a good response, with 300 respondents. A summary of the consultation is included as an appendix to the Strategy.

### **5 STRATEGY**

- 5.1 Following the above consultation, the Strategy has been developed based on the information gathered. The aim of this Strategy is to support and facilitate anyone who wants to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. The key objectives of the Food Growing Strategy are:
- To provide a central resource for community growing information
  - To raise awareness around community growing in the Scottish Borders
  - To show you how to get growing: where, how and who can help you/your community group
  - To help you get your community growing project off the ground
  - To help identify potential allotment sites and growing spaces

- 5.2 In developing a food growing strategy for the Scottish Borders the Council is committed to delivering the wider benefits associated with food growing including:
- Improving health and wellbeing outcomes
  - Promoting opportunities for social interaction
  - Environmental improvement including climate change and food waste
  - Skills development
  - Economic development and sustainability.

In delivering these benefits the Food Growing Strategy is supportive of the work of the Community Food Network, Locality Planning and Education & Lifelong Learning.

- 5.3 Survey responses identified a need for support to individuals and communities interested in food growing, broadly falling into three themes which form the structure of the strategy:

**Getting started: how can I get growing?**

Support for getting started - Skills and Advice; training, confidence and resources to get started.

**Where can I grow?**

Help to find space – existing sites and new growing spaces and getting the right permissions in place.

**Where can I get support for my growing project/growing activities?**

How to resource your project: Funding, networking and skills sharing.

- 5.4 The Strategy places emphasis on participation and self-mobilisation, supporting and facilitating the linking up of volunteers to projects, new growing aspirations to existing resources, and skills sharing across the Borders. Within the region there are a wealth of projects and growing groups who work collaboratively, sharing skills and volunteers. There are opportunities to work with local schools.
- 5.5 The Strategy also sets out new growing opportunities within the region, thinking creatively about how and where communities can get growing. The extensive network of amenity greenspace owned by Scottish Borders Council presents an opportunity for communities to ‘adopt’ areas for growing: former bedding plant areas and amenity grass areas may lend themselves to adoption for community food growing, and the strategy invites exploration of these opportunities within communities.
- 5.6 As part of the Strategy, information on all growing opportunities within the region – existing community growing sites, allotment sites and other growing sites - are listed and mapped to be made available online. If approved, it is proposed that the online mapping will be launched as a consultative draft at the same time as the Strategy.

**6 ACTION PLAN AND RESOURCING**

- 6.1 As well as supporting and facilitating self-deployment of individuals and community groups to get growing, the Strategy sets out the Council’s commitments through the Action Plan:

Action	
1. Develop Policy	1.1. Investigate and explore opportunities to develop further policies in support of food growing and

Framework	community growing with Community Planning Partners
	1.2. Adopt new planning policy - EP17 Food Growing and Community Growing spaces – as part of the Local Development Plan, safeguarding food growing spaces and enabling increased provision.
	1.3. Review of corporate policies and strategies to support Food Growing and Community Food Growing.
2. Review provision and Management of Allotments	2.1. Co-ordinate waiting list information with appropriate Allotments Associations to ensure data collection is handled accurately and appropriately
	2.2. Investigate new allotment sites in areas of demand, working with community groups and private landowners where possible
	2.3. Review and implement new Allotment Regulations
	2.4. Prepare an Annual Allotment Report
3. Support the Community Growing Network	3.1. Develop networking event(s) for community growers and volunteers
	3.2. Explore the creation of 'Growing Ambassadors', as part of the #yourpart Corporate Programme
	3.3. Consolidate resources for food growing through the development of the Volunteer Coordinator role

6.2 Scottish Borders Council in partnership with Live Borders, has operated a community volunteering project at Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick since 2010. This provides opportunities for a wide range of volunteers and voluntary groups to access and gain support for skills development in food growing, under a supervised programme offered by the Council. During the last 10 years, the project has made a huge difference in terms of supporting volunteers with specific needs to get involved in community food growing. Action 3.3 above highlights the need for maximising existing resources through the development of the existing Volunteer Co-ordinator role based at Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden. This post currently sits with LIVE Borders, having been transferred over in 2018. By bringing this resource back in house, the post can be aligned with the delivery of the Strategy outcomes, supporting volunteers and sharing skills across the region. To fully maximise the opportunity to support and promote Community growing and Education, replacement of the dilapidated Conservatory in the Walled Garden is also proposed (see section 8)

## 7 ALLOTMENTS

7.1 As outlined in Section 111 of the legislation, local authorities have a duty to maintain a waiting list. Scottish Borders Council currently

maintains a waiting list, but must make minor amendments to the way in which the data is held;

- Liaising with 3<sup>rd</sup> party allotment managers (such as Allotment Associations) of Council owned land, ensuring waiting list data is merged to ensure no 'double counting'.
- Collect data on allotment requirements: size/access requirements

- 7.2 Under the terms of section 112 of the legislation when certain trigger points of demand are reached, Local Authorities have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure: (1) that the number of people on their waiting list for an allotment does not exceed half the total number of allotments owned and leased by the authority; and (2) that a person on the list does not wait more than five years for an allotment. The Action Plan sets out the next steps in ensuring that adequate provision of local authority allotments is assured throughout the Borders.
- 7.3 Authorities also have a duty to produce an annual Allotments Report. This is to include data such as demand, uptake and waiting list details.
- 7.4 Local Authorities are also required to develop Allotment Regulations in accordance with Section 115 of the legislation. These are subject to a separate report and once approved will be subject to statutory consultation and advertisement.

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Financial**

- 8.1.1 The financial impact of transferring the Volunteer Co-ordinator post back from Live Borders to the Parks & Environment Service within Scottish Borders Council are set out below and will be met from the budget currently used to fund the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Live Borders and SBC - details of which are shown below;

<b>Grade 6 SCP 043</b>	
	<b>25 hrs/wk</b>
Gross	£17,141
NI	£1,514
Pension	£ 3,085
	<b>£21,740</b>

- 8.1.2 The capital expenditure to support the ongoing programme of volunteering and develop resources for Community Food Growing is focussed on the replacement of the existing conservatory within Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden, for which costs are estimated at £100k. This will be funded from the Community Benefit derived from the Hawick Flood scheme and the Community Outdoor Facilities Block.

### **8.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- 8.2.1 In order to meet the requirements of the legislation Scottish Borders Council has undertaken a consultation exercise and engaged with stakeholders, and their views have been taken into account in shaping the Strategy. The Action Plan aims to

ensure that the Strategy is implemented and mitigates potential risks to success.

8.2.2 The Action Plan requires resource to be implemented. There is a risk to delivery if insufficient resource is allocated to the Actions contained therein, e.g. supporting community growing, sourcing land and associated infrastructure for growing etc. There are various options available which will be explored further to mitigate against this this.

**8.3 Equalities**

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

**8.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no adverse direct economic, social or environmental issues identified within this report.

**8.5 Carbon Management**

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report; there may be net reduction in emissions related to reduced food miles and increased carbon capture.

**8.6 Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

**8.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

None.

**9 CONSULTATION**

9.1 The Monitoring and Chief Legal Officer, the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and Communications and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted port and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by:**

**Martin Joyce**

**Service Director Assets & Infrastructure Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jason Hedley	Chief Officer Roads. Ext 8037

**Background Papers:**

**Previous Minute Reference:**

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

Contact us at:

**Contact-** Jacqueline Whitelaw, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA, 01835-824000, ext. 5431.

**APPENDIX – DRAFT FOOD GROWING STRATEGY**



CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES

# SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY - CONSULTATION DRAFT



# CONTENTS

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES - SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY	5
3. COMMUNITY GROWING	7
3.1. ALLOTMENTS	7
3.2. ORCHARDS	8
3.3. COMMUNITY GARDENING AND FOOD GROWING IN PUBLIC SPACES	8
3.4. SCHOOLS	8
3.5. COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS	8
3.6. SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND BUSINESS	9
3.7. OTHER WAYS OF GROWING	9
4. GETTING STARTED: HOW CAN I GET GROWING?	11
4.1. SKILLS TRAINING, WORKSHOPS AND ADVICE	12
4.2. SETTING UP YOUR GROUP	14
4.3. JOINING A GROUP/GETTING AN ALLOTMENT	14
5. WHERE CAN I GET GROWING?	15
5.1. ALLOTMENT SITES	15
5.2. COMMUNITY GARDENS AND ORCHARDS	16
5.3. PUBLIC SPACES	20
5.4. SCHOOLS	21
5.5. GARDEN SHARE	21
5.6. MAKING SPACE FOR GROWING	21
5.7. WHAT ABOUT PLANNING?	24
6. WHERE CAN I GET SUPPORT FOR MY GROWING PROJECT/GROWING ACTIVITIES?	27
6.1. RESOURCING YOUR PROJECT	27
6.2. OTHER RESOURCES	29
7. ACTION PLAN	31
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX ONE - CONTAMINATED LAND PROCESS	32
APPENDIX TWO - CONSULTATION FEEDBACK REPORT	33

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Community growing is for all. Community growing is about creating and sustaining places where people can grow together - where they can produce healthy food locally and experience the social, environmental and health benefits of growing. Anyone who wants to grow their own fruit and vegetables should be able to - growing should be accessible and affordable for everyone.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to help empower communities across Scotland and improve access to land for food growing purposes, for those wanting to grow your own. Scottish Borders Council recognises the benefits of community growing in its many forms and through this Strategy seeks to support and promote community growing across the region.

Community growing can confer a whole range of benefits:

### Health

Fruit and vegetable consumption increases when people are involved in community growing. As well as the nutritional benefits, the physical and mental health benefits of gardening and community growing are well documented.

### Environmental

Community growing can mean enhanced space and habitat for wildlife, such as pollinator friendly planting and the management of green infrastructure linking to adjacent wildlife corridors. Community growing can contribute to reducing carbon emissions through reduced food miles and improving air quality, as well as reducing waste packaging and food waste (people are less likely to waste food that they grow, with any grow-your-own waste being composted).

## Economic

Community gardens tend to spend grant funding locally, utilising local goods and services, employing local people and training up local volunteers. Growing your own can be a cost effective component of household food spending, saving families money. The Social Value of community gardening has been measured through studies and clearly demonstrates benefits to stakeholders, volunteers and local people; the skills and training opportunities, both formal and informal, support the local economy indirectly by preparing people for employment.

## Social

A sense of community is encouraged when people participate in good growing activities. Community growing can offer 'social horticulture' creating social inclusion for individuals or groups who may otherwise feel excluded, isolated or lonely.

## Educational

Community growing can contribute to learning, offering both practical skills development and a therapeutic environment. Food growing is for all ages and encompasses a broad range of learning areas including biodiversity, provenance, horticulture, climatology, ecology, cookery, history and health and wellbeing.

## Food Security

Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. Grow-your-own and locally grown produce ensures sustainable, safe access to produce in the Scottish Borders.

Our vision for community growing in the Scottish Borders is that people wishing to grow their own fruit and vegetables can access or develop a range of community growing opportunities in their area.



Community food garden ©Abundant Borders

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

## 2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The aim of this strategy is to support and facilitate anyone who wants to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. Scottish Borders Council has consulted with communities and groups already involved in Community Food Growing initiatives to help us develop this Strategy.

The key objectives of the Food Growing Strategy are:

- To provide a central resource for community growing information
- To raise awareness around community growing in the Scottish Borders
- To show you how to get growing: where, how and who can help you/your community
- To help you get your community growing project off the ground
- To help identify potential allotment sites and growing spaces

In preparing this Strategy we consulted with members of the public and with community groups. Survey responses identified a need for support to individuals and communities interested in food growing, broadly falling into three themes:



Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden ©Lisa Brydon

Support for getting started - Skills and Advice; training, confidence and resources to get started...	<b>Getting started: how can I get growing?</b>
Help to find space – existing sites and new growing spaces and getting the right permissions in place...	<b>Where can I grow?</b>
How to resource your project: Funding, networking and skills sharing...	<b>Where can I get support for my growing project/growing activities?</b>

In the following sections the Strategy sets out the context of Community Growing in the Scottish Borders, addressing these three questions, drawing together resources and information from across the Region to help you get started. Finally, the Action Plan sets out the Council's commitment to develop Community Growing over the next 5 years.



Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden ©Lisa Brydon

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

*"K has spent over a year and a half volunteering at the walled garden. He had never considered gardening before and was quite apprehensive... and was totally surprised at how enjoyable it was. He remarked on how it was like a 'family' and everyone 'looked out' for each other, he was amazed at how sociable it felt.*

*He has learned a lot about gardening over the year and even passed on tips and ideas to others such as companion planting, planting chives round the pear trees to help keep the aphids away. He also liked the fact that the gardening was all organic and learning how to make our own liquid fertiliser with comfrey and nettles.*

*One of the huge benefits of the experience is having company and being with other volunteers; it's something to look forward to and a routine to help get him out. This has contributed to increased self-confidence and he has been able to obtain a SQA Volunteering Skills Award. This, along with all the other skills gained and confidence on a personal level has helped with his illness and contributed to his general wellbeing and feeling part of a community project. Due to his new found confidence he now volunteers on another project, talking to the public and looking after an exhibition. This is a huge step, and his time spent in the garden has contributed to his much improved mental health."*

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

# 3. COMMUNITY GROWING

There are several ways that Communities - Individuals, Schools and Community groups - can grow their own fruit and vegetables or help others in food growing. This strategy focuses on the most common ways of doing this, listed below.

### 3.1. Allotments

Allotments are plots of land made available for non-commercial gardening and food growing, leased by an individual or community group for that sole purpose. The standard sized according to most current legislation is 250m<sup>2</sup> for a full plot or 125m<sup>2</sup> for a half plot. As well as those managed by Scottish Borders Council, there are others leased and managed by Allotment Associations, or run privately by 3rd party groups. See the [map](#) for locations in your area. If you are interested in leasing an allotment, you can apply online for a Council site [here](#). If you are on the waiting list, there are other growing opportunities that you might want to consider in the meantime - such as local community gardens, garden shares schemes, or adopting a bed in your local public park!



Lee Brae Allotments



Mossilee Allotments

*Scottish Borders Council manages 82 allotment plots at various sites in Peebles, Innerleithen and Hawick.*

*There are also privately run allotments sites across the region, in towns such as Peebles, Galashiels Eyemouth, Tweedbank, Hawick, Kelso, Selkirk, and Traquair.*

## 3.2 Orchards

Orchards are areas where there are a minimum of 5 fruit trees. Greener Melrose have established a community orchard at Drygrange Community Woodland and plans are afoot for Kelso Community Orchard. According to a recent inventory\* there is a rich legacy of orchard sites within the Scottish Borders. Jedburgh was once famous for its orchards and the 'Jethart Pear' - Queen of Scots House in Jedburgh still has remnants of the original infamous orchard where Lord Darnley was allegedly found upon his death. [\\* https://www.orchardrevival.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BORD-Orchard-Inventory-Area-Report-v1-2018-web.pdf](https://www.orchardrevival.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BORD-Orchard-Inventory-Area-Report-v1-2018-web.pdf)



Apples ©Abundant Borders

## 3.3 Community gardening and food growing in public spaces

Community growing is about growing food within a shared space, where communities can come together and share the workload, learn, connect, and grow in a way that works for them. There are lots of different kinds of community gardens and growing sites, from therapeutic growing projects to community gardens, to 'public' beds that are adopted by community groups for growing plants, flowers, herbs or fruits and vegetables.



Courthouse Beds ©Adam Skelton

## 3.4 Schools

Across the Scottish Borders there are a large number of growing projects within Primary and Secondary schools already happening as an integral part of delivering the Curriculum for Excellence, Outdoor learning, Learning for sustainability and School Improvement Plans. From polytunnels to community gardens, there are opportunities to develop these further and for volunteers to get involved.

## 3.5 Community Planning Partners

There are opportunities to change the way Community Planning Partners manage their land. Within the NHS, there is scope to develop sites within their estate for community and therapeutic food growing. The Space to Grow Project in Melrose is a great example of what can be achieved, with the therapeutic benefits of gardening and food growing being offered to patients and volunteers alike.

### 3.6 Social enterprise and Business

There are a number of ways that community growing projects can be developed through Social Enterprise and Business. For example, Borders Food Communities has piloted an approach to getting locally grown produce from community gardens to the market place. Community farming can offer opportunities for community growing. Local Businesses such as Jarvis Pickle in Eyemouth have worked in partnership with organisations such as Abundant Borders to develop their own community herb gardens.

There are also opportunities for better connecting local growers and growing groups to communities who may benefit from their produce. Schemes such as Community Fridges, Fareshare, etc help to distribute food to anyone who needs it.

### 3.7 Other ways of growing

There are, of course, other ways of growing your own food – be it on your doorstep, balcony, garden, or even hydroponics. While the Strategy focusses on Community gardening and allotments, we recognise the hugely important role of ‘growing your own’ in all its many forms. If you are simply in need of some guidance and advice, then please check out section 4 and 6 for links to resources and training opportunities.



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Courthouse Garden, Peebles ©Adam Skelton

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

# 4. GETTING STARTED: HOW CAN I GET GROWING?

Through consultation for this strategy you said (42%) you would like support for growing activities. If you or your group are needing help there are lots of organisations that can assist you to get started and develop your skills.

Scottish Borders Council in partnership with Live Borders, has operated a community volunteering project at Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick since 2010. This provides opportunities for a wide range of volunteers and voluntary groups to access and support for skills development in food growing, under a supervised programme offered by the Council. During the last 10 years, the project has made a huge difference in terms of supporting volunteers with specific needs to get involved in community food growing.

Anyone wishing to consider how to get their project off the ground is welcome to visit the garden at Hawick and meet the volunteer coordinator to discuss their project. The volunteer coordinator can offer real support to new groups, in terms of 'dos and don'ts' and provide tips and advice in setting up your project. The Volunteer Co-ordinator and team of volunteers have a wealth of experience about the creation and management of raised beds for people with access issues and we can help ensure that you get the best possible start for your project. Anyone wishing to find out more can contact Lisa Brydon on [Lisa.Brydon@LiveBorders1.org.uk](mailto:Lisa.Brydon@LiveBorders1.org.uk).

## 4.1 Skills training, workshops and advice

Who Can Help?	Support Available
<b>Assistance with funding</b>	
The Bridge <a href="https://onlineborders.org.uk/community/thebridge">https://onlineborders.org.uk/community/thebridge</a>	Finding the right funding for your idea How to apply for funding
BAVS <a href="http://www.bavs.org.uk/">http://www.bavs.org.uk/</a>  Communities & Partnership Team, SBC	Can advise on local funds to get you started - full list of local funds available online here; <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/261/community_fund">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/261/community_fund</a>
Men's Sheds <a href="https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed/">https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed/</a>	Can help you explore funding for your project
Keep Scotland Beautiful – Climate Challenge Fund <a href="https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/">https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/</a>	Funding and sustainability advice
<b>Support and Training</b>	
Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society <a href="http://www.sags.org.uk/">http://www.sags.org.uk/</a>	Advice on setting up your allotment group. Links to other Allotment Societies.
Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC The Conservation Volunteers Scottish Borders Public Health Team Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Borders	Offer a programme of “How to” workshops, for example composting, preserving, cooking, wildflowers and companion planting
Drygrange Community Orchard	Orchard development: Tree identification, planning, planting and maintaining an orchard
Scottish Orchards <a href="http://www.scottishorchards.com/new_scottish_Orchards/Welcome.html">http://www.scottishorchards.com/new_scottish_Orchards/Welcome.html</a>	Advice on orchard growing
Borders Food Communities <a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>	Gardening and food growing skills sharing Skills development Growing and cooking classes Organic gardening skills sharing

SBC Volunteer Coordinator Lisa Brydon	Advice, guidance and skills sharing
Burnfoot Community Futures <a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/BurnfootCommunityFutures/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/BurnfootCommunityFutures/</a>	Community gardening skills development
Borders Organic Gardeners <a href="http://www.bordersorganicgardeners.org/">http://www.bordersorganicgardeners.org/</a>	Organic gardening skills sharing
Trellis Scotland, <a href="https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/">https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/</a>	Skills sharing, help setting up your site
Abundant Borders <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/</a>	Permaculture – no-dig gardening, skills development, cookery courses

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

*“In 2018 the garden became an official site which was classed ‘Macmillan Friendly’. This allows cancer patients either in treatment or remission to access the garden and join the project along with their family members should they wish to participate. P, along with his wife, started in the spring of 2018. His cancer was in remission and he wanted to get out and join a volunteer project to help him be more physically active. Both P and his wife have thrown themselves into the project and loved every minute of it. For them this has helped on various levels and P’s diabetes has seen a marked improvement in his sugar levels since being in the garden, and also said that some of his friends have remarked on his weight loss since joining.”*

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

*“B started volunteering at the Wilton Lodge Park project in 2014. Being part of a community project was very important to her and she felt it was very important to give something back. Within the garden B helps with seed preparation, digging of the beds, stone removal, planting and pruning.*

*She loves the social aspect of volunteering in particular the walled garden group and takes great pride in the maintenance and upkeep of the vegetable and perennial areas of the walled garden. Being part of the group has helped with her feeling part of the local community and having a routine and purpose in life.”*

## 4.2 Setting up your group

If you are interested in setting up your own growing group, there are several places to go for advice and guidance. Social Farms and Gardens have a comprehensive Community Growing Resources Pack. Other local groups are happy to share their extensive knowledge of getting started.

Who Can Help?	Support Available
The Bridge CVS Communities & Partnership Team	Setting up your group Becoming constituted, etc.
Social Farms and Gardens	Resources for getting started; <a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland</a>
Borders Food Communities	Can put you in touch with local groups who are happy to share their experience of getting started.

## 4.3 Joining a group/getting an allotment

If you would like to find out more about getting involved in growing in your area, there are various groups across the region who would be very happy to hear from you - for a list of growing groups in your area, please see section 4.2. If you are interested in finding out more about allotments in your area, please consult the map [here](#), and read on to find out about groups in your area.



Abundant Borders Team ©Abundant Borders

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

# 5. WHERE CAN I GET GROWING?

Through consultation for this strategy, **you said (28%)** you would like **help finding suitable space for growing** fruit and vegetables, herbs and flowers. If you or your group wants to grow fruit and vegetables there are a variety of ways to get growing or joining in with those who might already be doing this in your area.

The priority for our support will be to match people wanting to grow or to get involved to liaise with those on these sites before creating new growing spaces.

### 5.1 Allotment Sites

The Council is committed to ensuring a sustained supply of allotment sites to meet demand. If you are interested in an allotment please let us know. There are currently public and private allotments sites across the region, and while there are waiting lists in some areas, we are required to ensure that no one waits longer than 5 years. We are also required to support a sufficient supply of land for allotments to ensure demand can be met.

For information on where the allotments in your area are and who to contact please check out [the map](#) online.

If you are a community group looking to start your own allotment site, please see below for information on finding land and accessing support. Or have you thought about the community growing model?



Space to Grow, Melrose©Jan Moffat

## 5.2 Community Gardens and Orchards

There are existing community gardens across the region, such as that in Peebles, Hawick, Innerleithen, Galashiels, Melrose, Eyemouth, and Ayton. As described in part 2 these are about sharing the load, supporting each other and making growing your own more accessible. Community orchards also offer a unique chance to come together. If you are interested in your local Community garden or orchard see the list of contacts below:

Community Growing Project	Description	Contact
<b>Tweeddale</b>		
The Courthouse Garden Beside Peebles Parish Church, Peebles High Street EH45 8SW	Community food garden created by volunteers from Peebles Food Community. Meeting times can vary so please contact Adam for details.	<a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>
The Secret Garden Deans Wynd, off the High Street, Peebles EH45 8SW	Growing and learning community garden: sessions every Saturday 11-2 and daily.	<a href="https://www.tweedgreen.org.uk/community-garden">https://www.tweedgreen.org.uk/community-garden</a>
St Ronans Wells Garden St Ronans Wells Wells Brae, Innerleithen EH44 6RB	St Ronan's Wells community garden with lots for all abilities to do including a ground level herb bed. Volunteers meet from 11.00 - 3.00 on Thursdays and usually the 2nd Saturday each month. As the garden is at the top of a steep slope transport can usually be arranged	<a href="https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf">https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf</a>

Community Growing Project	Description	Contact
<b>Tweeddale (cont'd)</b>		
Peebles CAN Garden Kingsmeadows Road, Peebles EH45 9BH	Volunteer sessions (Tuesdays and Fridays from 10.00 -12.00) welcome gardeners of all ages and abilities, from those who would like to share their knowledge, to supporting people who are learning to grow fruit and vegetables. The garden promotes sustainable living, inclusive communities and living a healthy lifestyle.	<a href="https://www.peeblescan.org/contact">https://www.peeblescan.org/contact</a>
Lamancha Community Hub	Old School House, West Linton, Scottish Borders, EH46 7BD	<a href="http://www.lamanchacommunityhub.org.uk/contact.html">http://www.lamanchacommunityhub.org.uk/contact.html</a>
The Glebe Project The Manse, Innerleithen Road, Peebles, EH458BD	The Glebe Project is a therapeutic growing project for people in the Tweeddale area with a mental health or cancer diagnosis who are in the recovery phase of their illness and have low to moderate support needs. People are welcome to come on a Wednesday between 10.00 and 4.00 for a coffee/tea and a chat, or to work in the garden. Volunteers welcome.	<a href="https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf">https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf</a>
The Edible Garden St. Ronan's Primary School, St Ronan's Rd, Innerleithen EH44 6PB	The Edible Garden is a community garden behind St Ronan's Primary School in Innerleithen, run by volunteers and a steering group. Their aim is to inspire, motivate and build confidence in adults and children of all ages and abilities to learn how to grow their own food in order to promote a healthy lifestyle. They provide workshops about gardening, growing and reducing your carbon footprint. Volunteers meet on Friday mornings 10.00 - 11.00 to tend the garden and pick produce.	<a href="http://www.youcangrow.org.uk/">http://www.youcangrow.org.uk/</a>
<b>Teviot and Liddesdale</b>		
Abundant Borders Hawick Community Food Garden Behind Salvation Army Store, High Street, Hawick TD9 9EE	Abundant Borders support community food gardens across the Scottish Borders. They run training courses and workshops on all aspects of food from sustainable food growing, cooking healthy, affordable meals through to food preservation and avoiding food waste. In Hawick the garden is behind	<a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>

Community Growing Project	Description	Contact
<b>Teviot and Liddesdale (cont'd)</b>		
	the Salvation Army Community Store on the High Street. Volunteers meet Tuesdays and Fridays 10.30 - 12.30 in the winter and 10.30 to 12.30 in the summer. There is a volunteer co-ordinator on site to support volunteers who may have additional needs.	
Burnfoot Grows Together Community Garden Burnfoot Community Hub, 89 Burnfoot Rd, Hawick TD9 8EJ	The Burnfoot Grows Together project is Burnfoot Community Future's ambitious community growing and eating project. The group has transformed the current outside space at the Burnfoot community hub into a new growing, demonstration and educational area.	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/657099337996052/">www.facebook.com/groups/657099337996052/</a>
Wilton Lodge Community Garden Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick TD9 7LG	Volunteer group meets Monday and Wednesday 10am until 3pm, April to November, and every Tuesday and Wednesday 10am until 3pm, December - March. If staying all day folk need a packed lunch but teas, coffees and biscuits provided!	<a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20032/parks_and_outdoors/833/wilton_lodge_park_volunteering">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20032/parks_and_outdoors/833/wilton_lodge_park_volunteering</a>
<b>Eildon</b>		
Selkirk Community Shed The Argus Centre Goslawdales Cottage Goslawdales, Selkirk TD7 4EP		<a href="http://selkirkshedders.org.uk/">http://selkirkshedders.org.uk/</a>
Space to Grow Community Garden Huntlyburn, Borders General Hospital TD6 9BD	The 'Space to Grow' garden project at Huntlyburn is an innovative concept that allows patients the opportunity to leave the boundaries of the ward to spend time in the natural environment and is located only a stone's throw away from Huntlyburn Mental Health unit. The project provides an opportunity to utilize a sustainable resource which impacts positively on mental and physical wellbeing contributing to the patients' recovery and return to independent living by allowing patients to participate in Social Therapeutic Horticulture (STH), be active outdoors and engage/explore/absorb the natural environment.	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/nature4mentalhealth/">https://www.facebook.com/nature4mentalhealth/</a>
Community Allotments, Orchard & Woodland Drygrange, Melrose TD4 6AG		<a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/AGreenerMelrose/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/AGreenerMelrose/</a>

Community Growing Project	Description	Contact
<b>Berwickshire</b>		
Abundant Borders Ayton Community Food Garden Summerhill Park, Ayton, Berwickshire	Abundant Borders support community food gardens across the Scottish Borders. They run training courses and workshops on all aspects of food from sustainable food growing, cooking healthy, affordable meals through to food preservation and avoiding food waste. In Ayton the garden is just off The Beanburn. The garden is open to volunteers each day, though volunteers meet on Monday and Thursday afternoons between 1.30-3.30	<a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>
Abundant Borders Eyemouth Community Food Garden Eyemouth, Berwickshire	Abundant Borders support community food gardens across the Scottish Borders. They run training courses and workshops on all aspects of food from sustainable food growing, cooking healthy, affordable meals through to food preservation and avoiding food waste. In Eyemouth the garden is part of Eyemouth Allotments, off the Harbour Road. The garden is open to volunteers each day, though volunteers meet on Friday mornings between 10.30 – 12.30	<a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>
Abundant Borders Duns Community Food Garden, Todlaw, Duns	Abundant Borders support community food gardens across the Scottish Borders. They run training courses and workshops on all aspects of food from sustainable food growing, cooking healthy, affordable meals through to food preservation and avoiding food waste. In Duns the garden is part of the BHA Housing Development at Todlaw (between Knoll Hospital and Pearsons Garden Centre). The garden will be open from Spring 2020. Contact robin@abundantborders.org.uk for more details	<a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>
Abundant Borders Coldingham Community Food Garden, Coldingham Priory, Coldingham	Abundant Borders support community food gardens across the Scottish Borders. They run training courses and workshops on all aspects of food from sustainable food growing, cooking healthy, affordable meals through to food preservation and avoiding food waste. In Coldingham the garden is alongside Coldingham Priory. The garden will be open from Spring 2020. Contact robin@abundantborders.org.uk for more details	<a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>

## 5.3 Public spaces

Scottish Borders Council has a wealth of over 600 hectares of publicly accessible greenspace that may lend itself to accommodating food growing. From amenity bedding areas to tracts of grass in our towns and villages. 'Guerrilla gardening' is one term used for those engaged in adopting perhaps neglected pockets of ground and turning it over to local food production. 'Incredible edibles' is a network of community food growers who have adopted public spaces in their communities. Or you may see a corner of a park or greenspace near where you live that you simply feel could be turned over to food growing for the community. There may be scope within this network for sites to be informally 'adopted' by community growers on an agreed basis.

The Community Empowerment Act asks all local authorities to identify land for food growing where demand exists. Scottish Borders Council recognise this green network as a tremendous opportunity, and in order to ensure that land for food growing is identified collaboratively with communities, and is in the right location to meet local demands, we welcome enquiries for any sites within your area.

As a community or individual, if you wish to enquire about availability of land in your area, contact us at Scottish Borders Council Parks and Environment service – either online ([hyperlink](#)) or by telephone (insert number and ask to speak to someone about food growing). We can then explore the opportunities with individuals or groups to better understand their needs and consider the suitability of any spaces the Council may manage/maintain, for food growing. Should officers feel that a suitable opportunity could be realised through the 'adoption' of land within the Council's ownership, the proposal would be subject to a council report and permissions/consultations with other services. Where the Council does not believe that it has an appropriate site capable of meeting the local food growing needs, then it may consider what alternatives it can offer, including sites in settlements that may not be local to the individual or group.

Scottish Borders Council is monitoring demand and supply of Allotment sites, using the tools set out in the legislation such as demand thresholds and Annual Allotment Reports. Where necessary, the Council may consider the acquisition of appropriate land to meet the needs of the area, taking into account reasonable distance and travel times.

The Council will always wish to work in partnership to respond to enquiries about access to land for food growing.

Where Council land is not an option then you or your group may have other ideas for places where you would like to grow, and you may wish to consider leasing land from landowners or be interested in community growing as part of new development. We don't intend to be too prescriptive, but we are happy to discuss any local ideas you may have. This section of the strategy sets out the permissions required for you and your group to begin using a space for growing.

Across communities there are also areas of amenity greenspace owned by our other Community Planning Partners (NHS Borders, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland, and Scottish Enterprise). Community groups can apply for these sites to be transferred to Community ownership (for more information please see [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies\\_plans\\_and\\_policies/764/asset\\_transfer](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/764/asset_transfer)) as community growing sites.

If you are interested in these kinds of opportunities for growing sites in your area, please see the following.

## 5.4 Schools

A number of schools within the Scottish Borders have an active gardening area which focuses on growing fruit and vegetables. This can enhance the outcomes and experience delivered within Curriculum for Excellence. There can be links made to all the curriculum areas.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/a-summary-of-learning-for-sustainability-resources>

Initiatives within schools are very happy to hear from those wishing to get involved in food growing and will welcome some support – many hands make light work, particularly through the summer break. If you are interested in finding out more about what's going on in your local school(s) then please get in touch.

## 5.5 Garden share

Schemes such as 'Lend and Tend', where a garden owner shares their garden with individuals or groups of growers, can be a great way to get growing. Schemes like this are already happening in Hawick and Peebles.

## 5.6 Making space for growing

Where council land isn't an option, you or your group may have other ideas for places where you would like to grow, and you may wish to consider leasing land from farmers or be interested in community growing as part of new development. Partners such as Eildon Housing Association are developing opportunities for food growing within their network. We don't intend to be too prescriptive, but we are happy to discuss any local ideas you may have. This section of the strategy sets out the permissions required for you and your group to begin using a space for growing.



Community food garden ©Abundant Borders

## Case Study: St Ronan's Primary School, Innerleithen

The Edible Garden at St. Ronan's School in Innerleithen was established in 2014 in partnership with a local social enterprise company, You Can Cook. This was the first growing project of its kind to be set up in a school in Scotland. The initial project was funded by a grant from the Climate Change Fund and was professionally designed and staffed, all in conjunction with the children as a learning experience. In 2018/19, the direct input of the social enterprise partnership ended and the management of the garden became part of the St. Ronan's Youth & Community Centre, with a designated a sub-group, as part of a carefully planned transition for sustainability. The community centre committee presented a bid to the SBC Locality Bid Fund and was successful in obtaining funding to continue to employ a part-time gardener and make material improvements to the garden.

The gardener leads classroom sessions, alongside school staff, in sowing and propagating.

The children are then involved in the whole growing and harvesting process. The garden produces a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs. Produce is used in cooking projects, can be harvested for home use by all members of our community, are sent home with children from time to time as a family gift or sold in local shops. All ages of children, from Nursery-P.7, are involved, with a Friday afternoon gardening club open to all children and their parents/carers. There are also regular seasonal opportunities for adult gardening drop-in sessions.



## Case Study: Tweedbank Allotments

Tweedbank Allotment Society was founded in 2012 by a group of enthusiastic local residents who, with the help of Scottish Borders Council worked to identify a site and secure funding. The site at Essenside Drive is former amenity grass adjacent to an informal kickabout area. It is leased from the Council and was opened in 2013. The site is managed and run by a group of volunteer members of the Society and accommodates 15 plots, a communal shed and water butts.



## Case Study: Courthouse, Peebles

The Courthouse Garden is a community garden run by Peebles Food Community, on an area of private land that the owners have allowed access to. In the space of two and a bit years, from a disused weed jungle, the community now has a brilliant space growing an abundance of organic fruit, veg and herbs. The garden is maintained by volunteers and produce is shared amongst volunteers and the owners.

All materials such as tools, seeds and plants have been donated by group members while others have been sourced for free locally (polythene, manure, cardboard, pallets, etc), with greenhouses, cold frames, compost bins, and planters all built by the volunteers. Local people of all ages have been involved in the progress of the garden, including great help

from five high school children doing their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. The garden is run without community funding, and has no outgoings such as rent so is a self-sustaining project that can adapt and evolve to community needs.



## Case Study: Salvation Army Garden, Hawick

Abundant Borders is a Charity aimed at giving everyone, regardless of personal circumstances access to freshly grown produce. In 2018, Abundant Borders joined together in partnership with the Salvation Army to develop the grounds behind the Salvation Army shop on the High Street in Hawick. This site offers growing and training opportunities for volunteers, as well as fresh produce to those in the town and immediate area who are using the food banks.

In partnership with the Community Hub, they also employ a sessional worker to deliver healthy cooking and healthy eating initiatives in the town,

for whom in turn they share knowledge and experience in helping to grow the community garden space at The Hub.



## 5.7 What about planning?

Early discussions with landowners and the Planning department about any community growing project is advised – they will explain what consents you may need and what information they need from you to help you get your project moving forward. If you are looking to enclose an allotment site, you may need to submit a planning application seeking consent to do this. You may also need planning permission for new structures, like sheds, and possibly raised planting beds. We would prefer that this be done for the site as a whole as part of the Allotment Management Group's initial planning application, rather than being done on an individual basis each time a plot holder wishes to put up a tool shed, which will also enable a consistent approach to buildings and structures. If there are any designations on the land that might be impacted by your allotment site, the Council will advise you about what you can and can't do. Designations to look out for include:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Landscape Areas, Special Areas for Conservation, Wildlife Sites and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation
- Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Value
- Designed Landscapes and Historic Gardens

Designations can be seen on the relevant proposals map of the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan [here](#).

### **Planning consent is likely to be required for:**

- Any works within a Conservation Area
- Structures on site, including:
- Outbuildings and sheds on each individual plot;
- Communal buildings;
- Fencing; and
- Parking facilities

To begin growing you will need to liaise with the landowner or developer. It's worth noting that new development will now be assessed against policy EP17 (see below) which seeks to safeguard food growing sites wherever possible and integrate community food growing needs into new development.

Planning Officers are finalising a new policy EP17 entitled 'Food Growing & Community Growing Spaces' within the proposed new Local Development Plan. In essence the policy confirms the requirement for the safeguarding and enhancement of any existing food growing area and lays down criteria tests for considering proposals for new or extended food growing areas which meet community needs.

Scottish Borders Council has details of land in its ownership. If the site belongs to the Council, there is a process you need to follow to agree how you intend to use the growing space. Scottish Borders Council Property and Estates team will be involved in agreeing lease arrangements for Council-owned land.

### **Contamination**

When you have found your potential food growing site you should liaise with the contaminated land specialists within Scottish Borders Council's Environmental Health department to establish if land contamination presents a potential constraint which requires further consideration.

How potential land contamination is considered will depend upon the requirement for planning consent for the land's new use. In the first instance a request may be made to Scottish Borders Council for any relevant environmental information held about the proposed site (an Environmental Information Request). Please note that there may be a charge for this. The information provided may assist in understanding the history of the site, its former uses/

operations, neighbouring uses, if previous ground investigations have been undertaken and their findings, and if land contamination is a potential constraint likely to require further assessment.

If land contamination is identified as a potential constraint an appropriate phased risk assessment will also be required, where planning consent is necessary.

Where planning consent is not required the creation of a food growing site may still result in liabilities under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. In considering such liabilities investigations can be undertaken on a voluntary or due diligence basis. SBCs Contaminated Land specialist can be consulted in regard to such investigations to ensure the site is demonstrated to be suitable for its proposed use, and to ensure future regulatory intervention is not necessary.

It is recommended that you liaise with the contaminated land team at an early stage, and throughout the process as necessary - we would be very happy to hear from you!

An overview flow chart of the land contamination evaluation process is presented in Appendix XXX

**We will help by:**

- Creating specific policy safeguarding for Allotments and food growing sites in the Local Development Plan.
- Support community growing within council land where possible
- Planning for future allotment sites in new developments and securing land for growing to meet demand
- Identifying potential community growing sites
- Sharing information on what's happening in your area.



Beds ©Abundant Borders

Who else can help	Support available
Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS)	Maintenance of online resources and database of growing sites <a href="http://www.sags.org.uk/">http://www.sags.org.uk/</a>
Private Landowners	May provide space for your growing and/or allotment project
Community Planning Partners	If you are interested in taking on a community asset such as greenspace around a local community facility, you can apply for a Community Asset Transfer;  <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/764/asset_transfer">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/764/asset_transfer</a>
Registered Social Landlords	Eildon Housing Association Berwickshire Housing Association Scottish Borders Housing Association Waverley Housing Association Hanover Housing Association
Community Land Advisory Service	Help finding land and agreeing lease arrangements with the landowner. <a href="https://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/">https://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/</a>
Land Register of Scotland	Information about who owns land in Scotland. Please note, there is a charge for obtaining land ownership information. <a href="https://www.ros.gov.uk/our-registers/land-register-of-scotland">https://www.ros.gov.uk/our-registers/land-register-of-scotland</a>
Borders Food Communities	Garden share opportunities; information on local community growing projects; networking with other interested growers. <a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

# 6. WHERE CAN I GET SUPPORT FOR MY GROWING PROJECT/ GROWING ACTIVITIES?

During the consultation **you said** (25%) you needed advice about funding your growing project or activities. As well as highlighting some key funding sources, we can help by facilitating sharing of resources and of skills, so that food growing is affordable and accessible to all who want to get involved. In the Borders there are various different models of community growing, from grant-funded to self-sustaining, and it depends on the individual needs and vision of your project which model may be best. There are many ways of achieving your goal of getting involved in growing, so don't feel overwhelmed or alone – please get in touch.

### 6.1 Resourcing your project

Resources – funding, materials, skills, volunteers – are vital to sustaining community growing in its many different forms. During the consultation various specific issues came up as well as funding such as linking up with volunteers, sourcing materials (e.g. timber for raised beds, seeds); lack of tools; a need for training/skills sharing.

We will help by:

- Supporting groups in submitting grant applications for their community growing project(s)
- Creating opportunities for groups to share resources to make growing affordable to more people.
- Providing information for networking with other groups who have a growing project
- Providing information on organisations and businesses that can help community projects as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility commitments
- Share up-cycling and recycling opportunities, for example by connecting community growing groups with wood recycling projects



Space to Grow - Jan Moffat ©Space to Grow

With our partners, we will:

Explore the feasibility of 'sharing events' hosted by different organisations bringing growers together to share plants and seeds

Liaise with the Council's Unpaid Work team (Community Justice Service) who may be able to provide help with clearing your plot and preparing the ground for planting

Share information about potential funding sources and work together to maximise opportunities for all community growing groups in the Scottish Borders.

Who else can help	Support available
Communities & Partnership Team	Community funding applications; advice on local funds available; Community Planning Partners liaison
Social Farms and Gardens	<p>Free enquiry service to talk through any aspect of your project, available to everyone</p> <p>Resource pack available, "Getting Started – Community Growing Resource Pack" for projects based in Scotland.</p> <p>Regional Training and Networking Events</p> <p><a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland</a></p>
Community Food Social Enterprise Network (SEN)	<p>Support for any community food organisation that is aspiring to be a social enterprise.</p> <p><a href="https://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/2012/social-enterprise/">https://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/2012/social-enterprise/</a></p>
Business sponsorship and Corporate Social Responsibility volunteer days	<p>Seek opportunities for groups to use "end of season" stock and donated materials.</p> <p>Many businesses provide Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering opportunities for their staff. Business volunteers could help you create and plant your growing space.</p> <p>Assistance may be available in developing your groups Risk Register through the Institute of Internal Audits UK – Risk Auditors</p> <p>Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering commitments</p> <p>Funding sources and assistance with funding bids</p> <p>Capacity building for local groups and organisations</p>
The Conservation Volunteers	Linking up Corporate volunteering to projects
Criminal Justice Team	<p>Unpaid workers are those who are required to undertake community payback work as part of a sentence. They may be able to help get your project started by helping with preparing your site (clearing the ground, preparing paths, etc).</p> <p>To find out more get in touch with the Unpaid Work Coordinator via</p> <p><a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20037/justice_services/89/community_based_services">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20037/justice_services/89/community_based_services</a></p>

## 6.2 Other Resources

Community food growing has a role to play in carbon reduction, improving health and wellbeing, tackling poverty and enhancing biodiversity.

There are a wealth of resources to help you develop your growing group in any one of these aspects.

The Borders Healthy Living Network (HLN) operates across Burnfoot, Eyemouth, Langlee & Selkirk. The HLN aims to work in partnership to reduce health inequalities and build community capacity for health improvement, and trains and develops local community members to become community health volunteers. They offer a range of healthy living projects and initiatives, including adults cookery classes, food growing partnerships and summer holiday programmes for children. For more information about health improvement and the work we do, please contact us at <mailto:Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk> [Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk).

The Cyrenians operate the Fareshare network across the region, linking up people to produce. They are also interested in the link between food growing and production and healthy food for all. <https://cyrenians.scot/community-and-food/good-food/fareshare/>

### Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

*"I spent years in a very stressful job, needed to get out amongst people once I retired. I didn't want to be inside so decided to go to the community garden. I love the camaraderie, discussions, laughs and that we work as a group, discuss everything and decide what we want to grow and produce."*



Abundant Borders Team ©Abundant Borders



# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES

## SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

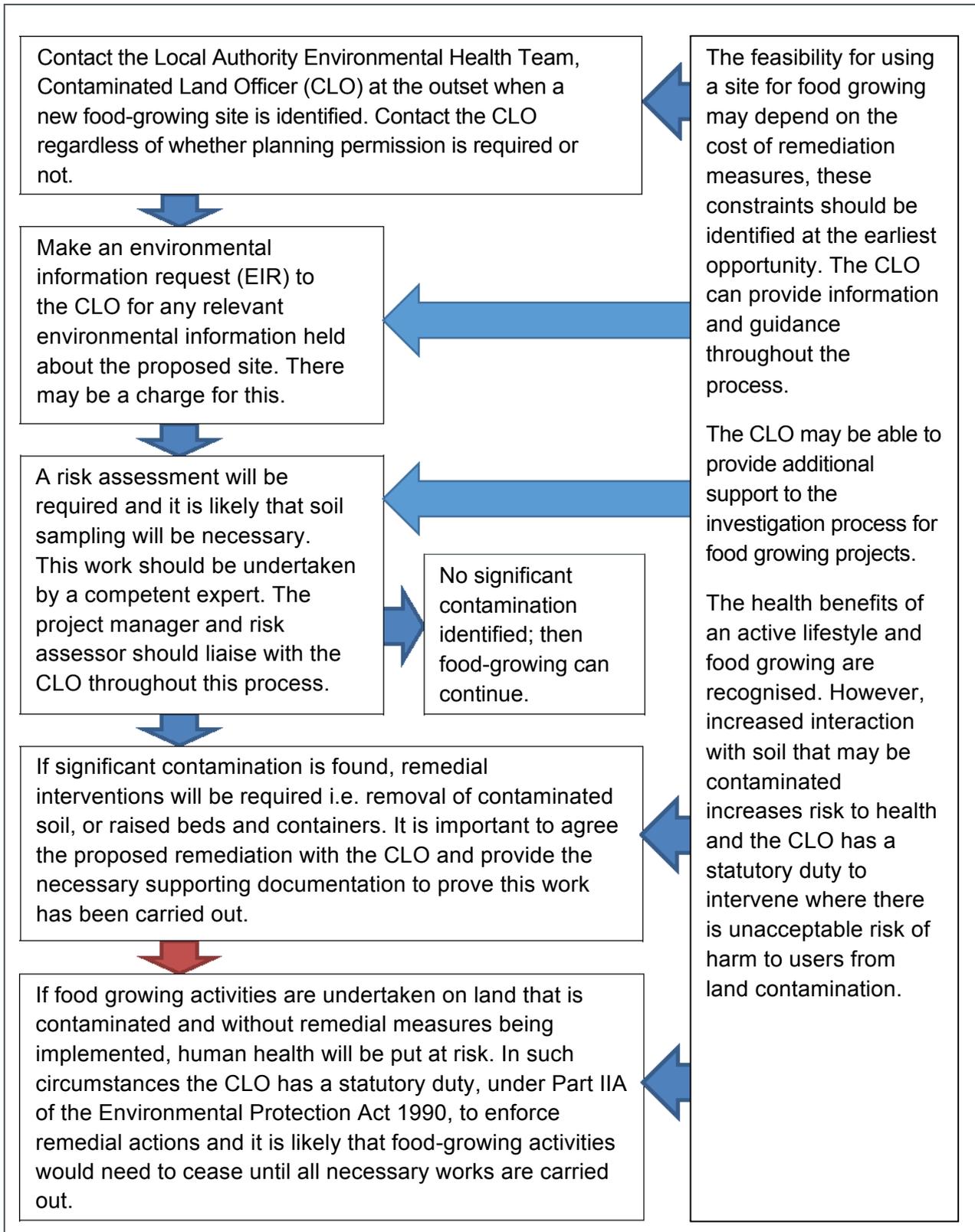
### 7. ACTION PLAN

This Food Growing Strategy covers a five year period from 2020-2025. As well as the activities listed above, Scottish Borders Council will undertake to deliver against the legislative requirements via the Action Plan:

Action	
<b>1. Develop Policy Framework</b>	1.1. Investigate and explore opportunities to develop further policies in support of food growing and community growing with Community Planning Partners  1.2. Adopt new planning policy - EP17 Food Growing and Community Growing spaces – as part of the Local Development Plan, safeguarding food growing spaces and enabling increased provision.
<b>2. Review provision and Management of Allotments</b>	1.3. Review of corporate policies and strategies to support Food Growing and Community Food Growing.  2.1. Co-ordinator waiting list information with Allotments Associations on leased out sites to ensure data collection is handled accurately and appropriately  2.2. Investigate new allotment sites in areas of demand, working with community groups and private landowners where possible  2.3. Implement new Allotment Regulations  2.4. Prepare an Annual Allotment Report
<b>3. Support the Community Growing Network</b>	3.1. Develop a networking event(s) for community growers and volunteers  3.2. Explore the creation of 'Growing Ambassadors', as part of the #yourpart Corporate Programme  3.3. Consolidate resources for food growing through the development of the Volunteer Coordinator role

# APPENDIX ONE

## CONTAMINATED LAND PROCESS



# APPENDIX TWO

## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK REPORT

### SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The consultation ran for 12 weeks from 24 July to 16 October 2019 and was promoted to all Community Councils, In Bloom groups, some 3rd sector organisations and publicly via a press release (30 July) and via website and social media. The total number of respondents was 300.

The breakdown of responses can be summarised as follows;

Locality	No. responses
Berwickshire	43
Cheviot	39
Eildon	126
Teviot & Liddesale	37
Tweeddale	54
Other	1

The following is a breakdown of the responses received.

### Do you grow your own vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers?

	Number	%
No	48	16%
Yes	252	84%
<b>If yes, in what kind of space do you grow your own vegetables, herbs, fruit or flowers (Note: respondent can select multiple answers)?</b>		
Own garden	224	75%
Someone else's garden	13	4%
Allotment	39	13%
Community Garden	20	7%
Back green	1	<1%
School garden	10	3%
Orchard	5	2%
Other (including: <i>My own garden and polytunnel; Pots at front of house; local gardens, farmland; Ruberslaw Wild Woods Camping site; HAPI project at KEC; A few pots by the back door for herbs ; Planters in front of house for flowers; In my flat; on our farm; School for adult education and retreat centre; Hospital garden; Only in pots; community garden at my work in Edinburgh; partner's garden; projects in gardens of care homes and day centres for elderly; Fruit and vegetables are grown for visitors and guests and students of the school; Rented land from Buccleuch Estates; Pick from wild; The walled garden in Hawick as a volunteer</i> )	20	7%

**What is stopping you growing your own vegetables, fruit, flowers or herbs? (Note: respondent can select multiple answers)**

	Number	%
No garden	11	23%
Can't get an allotment	14	29%
Don't know how/lack of skills	23	48%
Time	10	21%
Tools (lack of)	13	27%
Lack of community support/interest	6	12%
Lack of volunteers	0	0%
Nothing!	2	4%
Other (including: No information on who to contact regarding our local allotments; My garden isn't big enough and is North facing; Need help to clear overgrown garden to start this as I'm disabled; Gardens produce garden waste .... it's difficult to dispose of garden waste; Lack of space in garden; Shared garden with neighbours; Just moved house, not organised yet but I plan to; I've got a few but not very much and would like to grow more; I don't have an allotment at the moment however I would like to have one; Cost. Grow a few herbs but would like to grow vegetables; Would like to put in raised beds in my garden to do this but it's expensive to set up with good top soil etc.; Waiting to move into my house; Physical disability)	9	19%

**Would you like to grow your own vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers?**

Yes	49
Percentage of respondents (48) who are not currently growing their own produce	100

**What support, if any, do you need to grow your own vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers?**

	Number	%
Funding advice	75	25%
Support for growing activities	125	42%
Help to find suitable land	83	28%
Help to get a group started locally	59	20%
Other (Including: Advice on eco/perma culture and planting schedule for all year growth; Discount on Council Tax for helping the planet etc.; I like the idea of a community garden as many don't have suitable or enough garden space; Seed and plant share; Seed & plant swaps; reliable source of compost; Growing advice; Information on soil quality, what grows well here, when to start planting etc would be great; Compost cones are useful and I use 2 or 3 of them; Connection to a permaculture resource to work out how to optimally set up our garden for 'no till' gardening to grow fruit and veg and encourage wildlife; Access to compost created from SBC collected green waste; Education on how to grow food effectively, just going on trial and error at the moment!; An advice hub or space tailored to local conditions; Advice on pests and feeding; Expertise; The community orchard would benefit from funding; Funding for seeds etc; Accessibility; Commune gardens are needed in all areas; More ground; Help	75	25%

**What is stopping you growing your own vegetables, fruit, flowers or herbs? (Note: respondent can select multiple answers)**

	Number	%
<i>with how to do container gardening; Education and networking with other growers; Possibly advice on how to stop the plants from being eaten by slugs and other predators; Any assistance to generate locally grown fruit and vegetables will surely be helpful; Advice on growing eg when something goes wrong with gardening there is nobody local to speak to. I have surplus seed each year, maybe a local seed sharing scheme? Local access to information and advice about growing (there aren't any old gardeners to ask!). A seed sharing facility, I have surplus seed each year and would happily share with others.; None personally but a number of people need full support; Advice/mentoring; There are no allotments at all near here and I would love one; A local allotment space would be great to be able to grow more veg etc.; Help to find suitable land.; I would like to extend my garden but I need to apply to SBC for a change of use which will cost me money; Green waste compost delivered cheaply; New gardeners need easily available information about how to grow different types of fruits and vegetables, soil requirements etc; troubleshooting; Would be great if we could get free top soil and access to recycled wood to create raised beds in the garden (bad back so difficult to grow at ground level); No help required as shown by my parents; Help with infrastructure - there is no bus route. ; Info on continuing to garden with back or other problems; connecting with volunteers; have a walled garden that I would like to utilise for community purposes; We're doing just fine, thank you; Allotment space in Newcastleton; Help to build containers; a way of donating excesses, especially of apple varieties, possibly in exchange for occasional help in the garden; Practical advice; Advice on which vegetables are most suitable for this climate.; could council sell reduced cost compost from garden recycling; How to start - no idea what I need! Advice about where in my garden is suitable; Need to get allotments properly maintained and rabbits exterminated.; A tool library would be useful; I need a couple of gardeners (am old); advice regarding tackling problems that prevent successful growth; I would like to start a community garden; Education; Advice; I need to know more about growing food successfully in the Borders climate; Interested in local growing around me.)</i>		
None	14	5%

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

*"I wanted to give something back after retiring and gardening is my thing, I love growing stuff and getting produce back from all the hard work. I also enjoy showing the younger ones tips on growing and what to do with flowers as well as vegetables*

You can get this document on audio CD, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

Parks & Environment  
Scottish Borders Council | Headquarters | Newtown St Boswells  
MELROSE | TD6 0SA  
email: [neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk)



Printed in the Scottish Borders. Designed by Scottish Borders Council Graphic Design Section. JD/01/2020.




---

## **BORDERLANDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH DEAL – DESTINATION TWEED**

**Report by Executive Director**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

---

**17 March 2020**

---

### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the one of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal projects, the Destination Tweed Project, and outlines the support required for the delivery of the development phase of the project.**
- 1.2 The Council received an update report on the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the Heads of Terms agreement at its meeting on 19 December 2019. One of the key projects in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal for the Scottish Borders is the Destination Tweed project.
- 1.3 The Destination Tweed project will celebrate the Tweed from source to sea, building an identity beyond its 100-mile length and creating a unique and world-class visitor destination that will connect and promote multiple assets and be known as one of the great long distance routes in the UK.
- 1.4 The partners currently have a funding application with the National Lottery Heritage Fund that will help build up the overall funding package for this ambitious project. It is important that the Council demonstrates its commitment to this project by supporting the development phase costs of the project. Officers have identified funding from current and future budgets that will address the £174,500 contribution required from the Council.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend that Executive Committee:-**
- (a) Notes the progress being made in developing the Destination Tweed project and the associated submission of a project funding application to National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF); and**
  - (b) Agrees to support the development phase of the Destination Tweed project by providing £174,500 over financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22, as set out in section 6.1.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 One of the key strands of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is 'Destination Borderlands'. The Destination theme has been formed around one key tourism project in each Council area. In the Scottish Borders, that tourism project is 'Destination Tweed', a project that builds on the River Tweed as a key tourism asset for the whole area.
- 3.2 Council officers have been working with Tweed Forum to develop the Destination Tweed proposals over the past 18 months. These discussions have been constructive, with strong support for the initiative. The outline proposal derived from early discussions in the area that highlighted the River Tweed as an internationally recognised name. This project builds on that recognition to use it to promote the area as a visitor destination. This approach recognises that none of the individual towns in the area is capable of competing with the major cities that act as visitor destinations, but that the combination of the visitor assets along the river can compete as an attracting, compelling and effective destination.
- 3.3 It is intended that the Destination Tweed project will celebrate the Tweed from source to sea, building an identity beyond its 100-mile length and creating a unique and world-class visitor destination that will connect and promote multiple assets and be known as one of the great long distance routes in the UK. The River Tweed is a Special Area of Conservation famed for its salmon fishing, great houses and castles, literary connections (Walter Scott, Hogg) and mountain biking. Whilst the Tweed has an incredible array of natural, built and cultural heritage concentrated in and around its banks, it is little known at a national level. The rural economy is increasingly fragile, with the traditional industries such as textiles, farming and fishing being in decline. Tourism can be core to the region's future and has huge potential. This project will showcase the extraordinary assets and experiences on offer.

### **4 BORDERLANDS - DESTINATION TWEED PROJECT.**

- 4.1 This is a large scale strategic project that is aiming to join up an ambitious range of assets, facilities, businesses and activities. It has the potential to raise the visitor profile of the area nationally and internationally. Currently, it is anticipated that the project will cost approximately £20M, with £11M being budgeted as part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.
- 4.2 A shared use trail will connect Moffat to Berwick-upon-Tweed and beyond, providing a focal point for a wide range of conservation and enhancement projects throughout. This cross-border approach helps to support the strategic nature of the project and make it relevant in a Borderlands context. Each year an estimated 375,000 visitors will enjoy the 100-mile route, underpinned by an innovative interpretive experience. An ambitious activity programme will deliver events, learning, skills, training and business development opportunities, supporting a comprehensive approach to place development and regeneration.

4.3 Destination Tweed currently includes the following key components:

- The Tweed Trail giving users a complete and accessible experience from beyond the source to the sea, stretching from Moffat in Dumfries & Galloway to Berwick upon Tweed in Northumberland.
- Ground-breaking immersive interpretive experience. Site specific and fixed interpretation mixed with a digital smart phone audio trail incorporating tours, music, images, video, augmented reality and geo-mapping.
- Archaeology projects that assess, interpret and inform the conservation of archaeological assets along the Tweed, uncovering new stories according to key themes that use the Tweed as a 'timeline'.
- The establishment of dedicated hub/launch points in each of the Upper, Middle, Lower sections to facilitate easy navigation of the Trail and knowledge sharing. For example, a restored Crook Inn could provide services like overnight accommodation, a café, volunteer base and interpretation in the more remote Upper sections.
- Economic focused projects that harness existing assets, building business awareness and confidence, cross-selling, resilience and new services and products. Community grants, joint promotion and connectivity is intended to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.
- River restoration projects that improve the character and biodiversity of the river by improving water quality, controlling invasive species, re-naturalising channelised stretches, thus helping to enhance the building blocks upon which the commercial fishery is based.
- Cultural projects and events that celebrate the intangible heritage of the Tweed including river celebrations and festivals to foster a shared ownership and vision that will protect the Tweed for future generations.
- Enhancing existing relationships and developing new partnerships and opportunities for the communities and stakeholders that live and work within and around the Tweed Valley.

## 5 DEVELOPMENT PHASE

- 5.1 At the outset of project planning, Tweed Forum identified a funding package that represented both the numerous partners engaged in the project, but also the financial commitment required for the development phase of Destination Tweed. On behalf of the partners, Tweed Forum currently has an application being processed by the National lottery Heritage Fun (NLHF) to provide a further major contribution to the project costs (£2.98M). It is especially important that Scottish Borders Council demonstrates its commitment to the project in order to provide reassurance to funders like NLHF that the project will move forward and be delivered successfully.

5.2 It is intended that the development phase of the project will run from March 2020 to March 2022 and will be funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund with match funding from Scottish Borders Council, Sustrans and nine other relevant funding organisations. The development phase will consist of:

- Work Surveys
- Capacity Building Activity
- Professional Fees
- Recruitment and staffing

5.3 The total cost of the development phase identified by Tweed Forum is £561,000. The match funding required from Scottish Borders Council is £174,500, which represents 31% of the overall cost of the development phase.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

- (a) In order to allow the Council to demonstrate its commitment to the project, officers have worked closely with colleagues in Tweed Forum and with other services to identify the £174,500 that is required. The development funding has been identified from a number of existing budgets.
- (b) In 2019/20, it is proposed that £35,000 from the Economic Development budget is allocated. In 2020/2021 it is proposed that £65,000 is allocated from a one off signage budget that is currently in an earmarked budget. This budget was identified a number of years ago as a contribution to support the promotion of the Scottish Borders through the development and installation of some new tourism signage on key routes in the area. In view of the major promotional potential of the Destination Tweed project, officers consider that using this funding to support the development phase of the Destination Tweed project will be a more effective use of this budget in the current promotional context.
- (c) It is also recommended that £70,000 from the Economic Development budget (Tourism) is allocated in 2020/21. This will be deliverable as the Tour of Britain will not be hosted in that financial year, creating an opportunity to support this project. £4,500 will be allocated within the Planning service budget in support of the Archaeological, Biodiversity, Access and Heritage elements of the project.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Tourism development is a priority in the Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 and in the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. Product development is required to continue to develop the tourism sector and offer a level of support required to motivate and inspire businesses. The Council may suffer reputational damage if it does not show commitment to the development phase by declining to provide the

required funding. In addition, if the development phase cannot be appropriately funded, then the project will not be able to progress, thus missing an opportunity for a major investment in the Scottish Borders. A risk register is being developed for this project and this will be regularly updated and reviewed to ensure successful outcomes.

### 6.3 **Equalities**

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is not required as this report relates to the continuation of product development support for this project. A key aspect of the Council's Economic Development service activity is to reduce barriers to economic inequality and encourage inclusive economic growth and this will inform the detailed actions developed as part of the tourism action plan.

### 6.4 **Acting Sustainably**

Tourism development delivers a number of key outputs and outcomes that provide economic benefit and benefits to help sustain local communities. The visitor economy has a positive economic impact on towns and rural areas across the Scottish Borders. The Destination Tweed Project will promote sustainable economic growth. The project, led by Tweed Forum, enables the private and public sectors to work together and invest in improvements to the local business environment, while contributing to the wider regeneration of the local community.

### 6.5 **Carbon Management**

There is no anticipated net increase in carbon emissions at a Scottish Borders level. Individual projects which are taken forward as part of the project will be assessed appropriately to minimise impacts and maximise low carbon opportunities.

### 6.6 **Rural Proofing**

Rural proofing is not required because this project does not change Council strategy or policy. However, the visitor economy is particularly important for the rural areas and communities of the Scottish Borders, often providing some of the limited employment opportunities in these areas.

### 6.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of this report.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, the Monitoring Officer / Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the report.

### **Approved by**

**Rob Dickson**  
**Executive Director**

**Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Bryan McGrath	Chief Officer Economic Development, Chief Executives – Tel 01835 826525
Kate Pearson	Economic Development Officer (Tourism)

**Background Papers:** N/A

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council, 19 December 2019

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

Contact us at Bryan McGrath, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel: 01835 826525, email [bmcgrath@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:bmcgrath@scotborders.gov.uk)

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank