Public Document Pack

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
THURSDAY, 25TH JUNE, 2020

A MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL will be held on THURSDAY, 25 JUNE, 2020

at 10.00 AM. The Convener has directed that this meeting will be conducted in accordance with

Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and will be accessed remotely by all

Members via MS TEAMS. The meeting will be live streamed to the public and a link will be on the

Council website.

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,
19 June 2020

BUSINESS		
1.	**Convener's Remarks.**	
2.	**Apologies for Absence.**	
3.	**Order of Business.**	
4.	**Declarations of Interest.**	
5.	**Minutes** (Pages 5 - 30) Consider Minutes of Scottish Borders Council held on the following dates for approval and signing by the Convener:- 30 January 2020; 26 February 2020; and 26 March 2020. (Copies attached.)	5 mins
6.	**Committee Minutes** Consider Minutes of the following Committees:- (a) Tweeddale Area Partnership 14 January 2020 (b) Local Review Body 20 January 2020 (c) Executive 21 January 2020 (d) Cheviot Area Partnership 29 January 2020 (e) Sustainable Development 31 January 2020 (f) Planning & Building Standards 3 February 2020 (g) Berwickshire Area Partnership 6 February 2020 (h) Police, Fire & Rescue and Safer Communities Board 7 February 2020	5 mins

	(i) Audit & Scrutiny	10 February 2020	
	(j) Executive	11 February 2020	
	(k) Local Review Body	17 February 2020	
	(l) Lauder Common Good Fund	18 February 2020	
	(m) Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership	18 February 2020	
	(n) Selkirk Common Good Fund	19 February 2020	
	(o) Civic Government Licensing	21 February 2020	
	(p) Peebles Common Good Fund	26 February 2020	
	(q) Planning & Building Standards	2 March 2020	
	(r) Major Contracts	3 March 2020	
	(s) Innerleithen Common Good Fund	4 March 2020	
	(t) Pension Fund Committee	5 March 2020	
	(u) Pension Fund Board	5 March 2020	
	(v) Audit & Scrutiny	9 March 2020	
	(w) Local Review Body	16 March 2020	
	(x) Planning & Building Standards	18 May 2020	
	(Please see separate Supplement containing the public Committee Minutes.)		
7.	**Committee Minute Recommendations** Consider the recommendation made by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 23 June 2020. (Copy to follow.)		5 mins
8.	**Responding to Covid-19** (Pages 31 - 38) Presentation by the Chief Executive. (Briefing Note attached.)		20 mins
9.	**Capital Programme - Community Engagement & Consultation** (Pages 39 - 42) Consider briefing note by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure. (Copy attached.)		10 mins
10.	**Tweed Valley Tourism Business Improvement District Update** (Pages 43 - 48) Consider report by the Executive Director. (Copy attached.)		10 mins
11.	**Scottish Community Development Centre on Area Partnerships and Community Fund** (Pages 49 - 112) Consider report by Service Director Customer and Communities. (Copy attached.)		15 mins
12.	**Standing Orders - Proposed Amendments** (Pages 113 - 118) Consider report by Chief Executive. (Copy attached.) Note: To consider this item, Members will require to suspend Standing Orders.		5 mins
13.	**Appointment of Members** Consider:- (a) Appointment of Councillor Thornton-Nicol as Dementia Champion; and		5 mins

	(b) Appointment of Councillor Tatler to replace Councillor Edgar as the substitute Member on Scotland Excel Joint Committee.	
14.	**Calendar of Meetings 2020-2021** (Pages 119 - 126) Consider draft Calendar of Meetings for the period August 2020 to July 2021. (Copy attached.)	
15.	**Any Other Items Previously Circulated**	
16.	**Any Other Items Which the Convener Decides Are Urgent**	
17.	**Private Business** 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."	
18.	**Minutes** (Pages 127 - 132) Consider private Sections of Minutes of Scottish Borders Council held on 30 January and 26 February 2020. (Copies attached.)	2 mins
19.	**Committee Minutes** Consider private Sections of the Minutes of the following Committees:- (a) Executive 11 February 2020 (b) Civic Government Licensing 21 February 2020 (c) Peebles Common Good Fund 26 February 2020 (d) Major Contracts Governance 3 March 2020 (c) Pension Fund Committee & Board 10 March 2020 (Please see separate Supplement containing private Committee Minutes.)	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.**

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells on 30 January 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:-   Councillors D. Parker (Convener), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, S. Bell, K. Drum. G. Edgar, J. A. Fullarton, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, S. Haslam, E. Jardine, H. Laing, S. Marshall, W. McAteer, D. Moffat, S. Mountford, D. Paterson, C. Penman, C. Ramage, N. Richards, E. Robson, M. Rowley, H. Scott, S. Scott, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol, G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston

Apologies:-   Councillors H. Anderson, J. Brown, K. Chapman, T. Miers, E. Small.

In Attendance:-   Chief Executive, Executive Director (R. Dickson), Executive Director (D. Robertson), Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Service Director Customer & Communities, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Planning Officer, Clerk to the Council.

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1. **CONVENER'S REMARKS**
   The Convener advised that the following had been recognised in the Queen's New Year Honours List:

   - MBE – Steve Penny, Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue
   - OBE – Martyn Blissitt, services to animal health (vet adviser to Scottish Government re spread of disease in livestock)
   - OBE – Ian Davidson, services to agriculture for his work with the Scottish Rural Development Programme.

   DECISION
   AGREED that congratulations be passed to those concerned.

2. **MINUTE**
   The Minute of the Meeting held on 19 December 2019 was considered.

   DECISION
   AGREED that the Minute be approved and signed by the Convener.

3. **COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEES – RATIFICATION BY FULL COUNCIL**
   There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Regulatory) seeking approval to amend the Scheme of Administration to add an additional referred function to the Common Good Fund Sub-Committees. The report explained that there may be circumstances when all of the Members of a Common Good Fund Sub-Committee had an interest in a funding application and as a result the Sub Committee was unable to determine the application. While such matters could be determined instead by Full Council, this approach did result in applications of a particularly local nature being decided with no input from those elected to represent that local community. It was therefore proposed to add a new referred function (a starred item) to the Scheme of Administration which would allow the Sub-Committee to make recommendations to Council on such application. The application would then be finally determined by Council. In this particular and exceptional circumstance, those Members who had an interest would declare that interest but would be able to participate in the discussion on that recommendation. It was therefore proposed to add the following text to the Scheme of Administration under Common Good Fund Sub-Committees: "* Make recommendations to Council on any grant application for local expenditure where the Sub-Committee would otherwise be inquorate for any reason, including the composition of the applicant body".

DECISION

AGREED to amend the Scheme of Administration to add the following referred function to each Common Good Fund Sub-Committee:

"*** Make recommendations to Council on any grant application for local expenditure where the Sub – Committee would otherwise be inquorate for any reason, including the composition of the applicant body**"

4.   **COMMITTEE MINUTES**
The Minutes of the following Committees had been circulated:-

Kelso Common Good Fund	19 November 2019
Chambers Institution Trust	20 November 2019
Peebles Common Good Fund	20 November 2019
Hawick Common Good Fund	26 November 2019
Planning & Building Standards	9 December 2019
Local Review Body	16 December 2019
Pension Fund Board	17 December 2019
Pension Fund Committee	17 December 2019
Selkirk Common Good Fund	18 December 2019
Planning & Building Standards	13 January 2020
Standards	16 January 2020

DECISION
APPROVED the Minutes listed above subject to paragraph 5 below.

5.   **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**
There had been circulated copies of a recommendation made by the Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee at their meeting on 26 November 2019 regarding the future funding of the Hawick Reivers Festival. The Convener ruled this recommendation as not competent on the grounds that such a recommendation had budget implications and was out-with the remit of the Sub-Committee. The Leader advised that Officers would work with the festival organisers to help them identify other sources of funding.

DECISION
NOTED.

6.   **RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION BY ON THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ON THE REPLACEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS IN SCOTLAND POST EU-EXIT**
There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive seeking approval for the proposed response to the consultation by the Scottish Government on the replacement of the European Structural Funds in Scotland post EU Exit. The report explained that on 5 November 2019 the Scottish Government released a consultation paper aimed at providing input into its policy dialogue with UK Government on the development of a new funding instrument. This would be the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which had been previously announced by the UK Government as its replacement for European Union Structural Funds (i.e. European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund). European Structural Funds were an important source of funding to support economic development and training. The deadline for responses to the consultation was 12 February 2020. The Scottish Government had indicated that its consultation excluded European funding such as LEADER, Fisheries etc. which would be handled separately. The proposed response, contained in Appendix 1 to the report, indicated that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund should focus on tacking regional economic inequalities with the aim of improving economic cohesion across Scotland and the UK. NUTS 2 regions should be used to identify regions of intervention as they provided a geography with consistent regional economic data and were strategic enough to address the different economic challenges which were experienced across Scotland and the UK. This regional geography included the new Southern Scotland NUTS 2

statistical area which was officially recognised in 2017. The Southern Scotland NUTS 2 area comprised the local authority areas of Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire (excluding Arran and the Cumbraes) and South Lanarkshire. To recognise relative prosperity the measure of Gross Value Added (GVA) per head should be used as this provided a measure of productivity and income produced in regions. The Southern Scotland NUTS 2 area had the lowest GVA per head of all the NUTS 2 regions in Scotland and the UK. Recently released economic statistics showed that this had been the case for the past 20 years, but had been masked because of the inclusion of its geography in wider city based NUTS 2 areas. The lack of recognition of Southern Scotland as a NUTS 2 region had meant that the area had been unable to access significant amounts of monies from the EU Structural Funds. Members thanked officers for their work on this complex subject.

DECISION
AGREED to submit the response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Replacement of the European Structural Funds in Scotland Post EU-Exit, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

7.   **DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: TWEEDBANK - VISION FOR GROWTH SUSTAINABILITY**
There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director seeking approval for Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance as a basis for public consultation. The report explained that a 34ha site was allocated within the Council's adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016 to the north of Tweedbank for mixed use development which included housing and business uses. The site was incorporated into the LDP as part of Supplementary Guidance (SG) on Housing, as required by the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division of the Scottish Government following Examination of the LDP.   The Housing SG had been approved by the Council and was cleared by Scottish Ministers in November 2017. The LDP stipulated the requirement for Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to be provided for the site. The purpose of the SPG was to give greater clarity on measures to achieve a satisfactory development on the site. This included identifying site constraints to be addressed, the identification of zones for specific uses, indicative housing densities for the residential zones, a possible area for a care home facility, placemaking and design guidance and a pre-application checklist. A draft version of the SPG was attached as Appendix A to the report. Once approved the Draft SPG would be subject to public consultation for a period of 12 weeks giving the opportunity for any third parties to make any representations on the proposals within it.   This would include holding a public exhibition in the Tweedbank Community Centre. At the conclusion of the consultation period all consultation responses and any proposed consequential amendments to the Draft SPG would be reported to the Planning and Building Standards Committee for their review and comment. Thereafter a summary of the representations received, the proposed amendments, and any comments from the Planning & Building Standards Committee would be reported back to Scottish Borders Council. Once approved by Council, the SPG would be a material consideration in guiding planning applications for the development of the site. In considering the purchase of Lowood Estate Council agreed that all future strategic decisions relating to the Estate would be considered by Council. Consequently, the decisions regarding this SPG for Tweedbank required to be made by Council. Members supported the paper although there was some discussion on the timescale for development. The need for a high quality development with a proper community feeling with an identifiable social focus was highlighted, along with the need for sustainable homes.

DECISION
AGREED:-

(a)   **to approve the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, contained in Appendix A to the report, as a basis for public consultation;**

(b) **that Members of the Planning and Buildings Standards Committee review responses received during the public consultation period and any proposed adjustments to the Supplementary Planning Guidance in advance of the item being reported to Council for final decision; and**

(c) **to consider a future report setting out representations made during the consultation period, any proposed amendments to the draft document and any comments from the Planning & Building Standards Committee for final decision making on the Supplementary Planning Guidance.**

8. **CORE BANKING SERVICES**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Regulatory) advising on the outcome of the recent collaborative procurement for core banking services and seeking delegated approval to implement a new contract for banking services. The report explained that following the collaborative procurement exercise undertaken with City of Edinburgh Council, Fife Council and Edinburgh Leisure, the Royal Bank of Scotland had been awarded the contract to provide banking services to the 4 organisations for a period of up to 6 years. The contract award and implementation would require a number of key documents to be completed to allow the transition from the Council's current banking services provider, the Bank of Scotland, to be completed.

DECISION
AGREED to:-

(a) **note that the tender outcome had resulted in the Royal Bank of Scotland being awarded the contract; and**

(b) **authorise the Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory, to implement the new banking contract in line with the Scheme of Delegation.**

9. **CCTV PROVISION IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS**

9.1 With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 26 June 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure which provided details of the consultation process that took place in relation to Public Space Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) provision in the Scottish Borders. The report provided information around the financial implications for renewing or replacing the current Public Space Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) provision in the Scottish Borders and detailed the 4 options which had been considered. Members discussed the proposals in detail and were divided in their opinion regarding the responsibility for providing this service and whether it should be the Council, Police Scotland or a joint approach. It was noted that although Police Scotland were supportive of CCTV provision they were not able to provide any financial input. Members commented on a number of aspects including the benefits of making people feel safer and whether CCTV reduced crime or displaced it to areas where there was no coverage. It was also noted that officers were happy to provide advice to any community which wished to provide CCTV in their area.

9.2 Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Laing, and following advice from Mr Robertson on the wording regarding the financial implications, moved as an amendment that the recommendations be amended to read as follows:-

"That Council
(a)   Notes that the consultation process is now complete;
(b)   Notes the financial implications of renewing or replacing the current Public Space CCTV provision in the Scottish Borders;
(c)   Continues with its current policy of maintaining the current Public Space CCTV provision;

(d) Agrees to consider funding as part of the financial planning process to implement a phased replacement of the current systems in eight towns with an appropriate split of fixed and wireless technology; and

(e) Notes the requirement to budget for the Capital cost of this in future years."

Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Edgar, moved the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Penman moved that the vote be taken by roll call and this was unanimously approved.

Roll Call Vote

Motion	*Amendment*
Councillor Aitchison	*Councillor A. Anderson*
Councillor Edgar	*Councillor Bell*
Councillor Fullarton	*Councillor Drum*
Councillor Greenwell	*Councillor Laing*
Councillor C. Hamilton	*Councillor Marshall*
Councillor S. Hamilton	*Councillor McAteer*
Councillor Haslam	*Councillor Moffat*
Councillor Jardine	*Councillor Paterson*
Councillor Mountford	*Councillor Penman*
Councillor Parker	*Councillor Ramage*
Councillor Richards	*Councillor Robson*
Councillor Rowley	*Councillor H. Scott*
Councillor S. Scott	*Councillor Thornton-Nicol*
Councillor Tatler	*Councillor Turnbull*
Councillor Weatherston	

The Motion was carried by 15 votes to 14.

DECISION
DECIDED to:-

(a)   note that the consultation process was now complete;

(b)   note the financial implications of renewing or replacing the current Public Space CCTV provision in the Scottish Borders;

(c)   continue with the current policy of maintaining the current Public Space CCTV provision until it was beyond economic repair; and

(d)   take no further future action.

10. **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR WEATHERSTON**
Councillor Weatherston, seconded by Councillor A. Anderson, moved the Motion as detailed on the agenda in the following terms:-

"Following many complaints over several years from Sports groups and parents of children, Scottish Borders Council agrees to write to the Scottish Government requesting an addition to the Dog Fouling (Scotland Act) 2003 to create a new offence. It is requested that it be made an offence for a person in charge of a dog to allow it to defecate at any time on a sports pitch or children's play area."

Councillor Weatherston spoke in support of his Motion which was unanimously supported.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the Motion as detailed above.

11. **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR GREENWELL**
Councillor Greenwell, seconded by Councillor H. Scott, moved the Motion as detailed on the agenda in the following terms:-

"That the Council call on COSLA to set up a policy forum specifically related to developing policies and policy adjustments aimed at supporting serving and former members of the Armed forces and their families in accordance with the commitments made by all local Authorities in support of the Armed forces Covenant."

Councillor Greenwell spoke in support of his Motion which was unanimously supported.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the Motion as detailed above.

12. **OPEN QUESTIONS**
The questions submitted by Councillors McAteer, Paterson, Bell, Robson and A. Anderson were answered.

DECISION
NOTED the replies as detailed in Appendix I to this Minute.

13. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**
13.1 **Planning & Building Standards Committee**
It was noted that Councillor Aitchison had resigned from the Planning and Building Standards Committee. Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Fullarton, moved that Councillor Richards be appointed.

13.2 **Executive Member for Transformation**
Councillor Aitchison, seconded by Councillor Mountford, moved that Councillor Haslam be appointed as the interim Portfolio Holder for Transformation.

DECISION
AGREED that:-

(a) **Councillor Richards be appointed to the Planning and Building Standards Committee with immediate effect; and**

(b) **Councillor Haslam be appointed as the interim Portfolio Holder for Transformation.**

14. **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 II 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
15. **Minute**
The private section of the Council Minute of 19 December 2019 was approved.

16. **Committee Minutes**
The private sections of the Committee Minutes as detailed in paragraph 4 of this Minute were approved.

17. **Committee Recommendation**
    Members approved recommendations from the Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee relating to a grant to the Provost Council and an addition to their moveable assets inventory.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 p.m.

Question from Councillor McAteer

To Executive Member for Adult Social Care
Having regard to the recent Court of Session decision (27 December 2019, 'Roy McHattie vs South Ayrshire Council'), which declared South Ayrshire Council's actions leading to the closure of Kyle Adult Care Centre as unlawful, can you explain what action was taken by Scottish Borders Council to
(a)   assure members that this council is not exposed to any similar unlawful conduct; and
(b)   that SBC has fully complied with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010 and the Carers Act (Scotland) 2016, with regard to the process and decisions taken to decommission day services in the Borders

Reply from Councillor Weatherston
Council officers are aware of the decision in the McHattie case. In that instance a decision by South Ayrshire Council was over turned by the Court because the court concluded the Council had failed in its Public Sector Equality Duty and failed to properly consult.
SBC is very conscious of its duties under the Equality Act and its duties to involve service users and carers in the provision of the services. It seeks to comply fully with its legal obligations at all times.
The law requires the Council to conduct Equality Impact Assessments and such assessments have been carried out. This includes assessments which formed part of the budget papers in 2017 and was available to Members as part of the budget process. This assessment was completed before the review of day services in the Borders commenced. Further EIAs have been was conducted as the proposals progressed to ensure the Council's continuing obligations were met.
Council officers are satisfied that the processes followed comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.
It is considered that the risk of facing a similar successful challenge is unlikely for SBC, however officers (including the Chief Legal Officer) are examining the detail of the McHattie case and assessing our practices against that judgment to provide further certainty.

Supplementary
Councillor McAteer asked that Councillor Weatherston assure the carer groups that they would continue to receive an effective service in Hawick. Councillor Weatherston advised that the service was working well in other areas and he was confident that Hawick would receive an effective service.

Question from Councillor Paterson

To Executive Member for Children and Young People
Can the Portfolio Holder please tell me when the 60 year old windows will be replaced in the Classrooms of Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School in Hawick? On a recent visit with an officer from the Council to look at the state of the windows we were approached by a number of staff unhappy at the possible long term health problems for children and staff having to teach and learn in such damp conditions all day every day.

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton
The windows at Drumlanrig Primary School were originally scheduled to be replaced during financial year 2022/23.

Following a further assessment of the condition of the windows, which have deteriorated more quickly than anticipated, the replacement programme has been accelerated and works are scheduled to be completed during calendar year 2020. The works will be undertaken in a phased manner, on a room by room basis, to minimise disruption to the school curriculum.

Questions from Councillor Bell

To the Leader
On 6th December you sent out a notification that Cllr Mountford was stepping down from his position as portfolio holder for Transformation & HR. Given the Improvement challenges facing this Council that is an important portfolio. Who now holds it?

Reply from Councillor Haslam
Me.

Supplementary
Councillor Bell asked why there was no permanent Executive Member appointment made. Councillor Haslam advised that she was looking at the current structure of Executive Members with a view to re-aligning them with the new Corporate Management Structure

To the Executive Member for Children and Young People
In line with statements made; there was, I understand, an evaluation done of the pilot in 3 schools of unstaffed libraries. Please could Councillors see the results of the pilot study and the conclusions drawn from it?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton
Council Officers have been progressing the plans for future delivery of school library services. A report will be brought to the earliest possible full Council in March 2020, which will contain the information from the evaluation, conclusions and recommended route forward for this service.

Supplementary
Councillor Bell asked that this decision be taken at the same meeting as the budget was being considered to allow for any budget implications. Councillor Hamilton advised that she would discuss with officers.

Question from Councillor Robson

To the Executive Member for Roads and Infrastructure
Can The Executive member advise what discussions if any, have been had with the Scottish Government about alterations to the Sheriffhall roundabout in Midlothian?

Reply from Councillor Edgar
I am not aware of any discussions taking place between the Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council regarding this project.

The scheme is a Transport Scotland proposal as part of the City Deal and, as it is within Midlothian, I would imagine that they have been in discussions with that Council.

Supplementary
Councillor Robson asked that if in light of Scottish Government discussions regarding the proposed flyover not going ahead if any of the funds would be directed to schemes in the Scottish Borders. Councillor Edgar advised that he would investigate.

Question from Councillor A. Anderson

To Executive Member for Adult Social Care
Further to the decision to withdraw funding from Borderline, I have had sight of a letter from the Directorate for Mental Health (DMH) on behalf of the Minister regarding the decision to withdraw this funding. It states that the DMH has been informed that 'an Equalities Impact Assessment was completed by NHS Borders, as well as service user and wider stakeholder consultation…' Are you able to provide a copy of this assessment and documentary evidence of this service user and wider stakeholder consultation?

<u>Reply from Councillor Weatherston</u>
Please find attached the published Equalities Impact Assessment documentation as requested which references the stakeholder consultation.

EIA Stage 1 - BORDERLINE published

EIA stage 3 Borderline published.

<u>Supplementary</u>
Councillor Anderson asked if Councillor Weatherston considered that this demonstrated proper consultation for the withdrawal of this service. Councillor Weatherston advised that the evidence provided did warrant the decision and he was happy to discuss this further with Councillor Anderson.

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of the
SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL held in
Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells
on 26 February 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:-   Councillors D. Parker (Convener), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, H. Anderson,
                J. Brown, S. Bell, K. Chapman, G. Edgar, J. Fullarton, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton,
                S. Hamilton, S. Haslam, E. Jardine, H. Laing, S. Marshall, W. McAteer, T. Miers,
                D. Moffat, S. Mountford, D. Paterson, C. Penman, C. Ramage, N. Richards,
                E. Robson, M. Rowley, H. Scott, S. Scott, E. Small, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol,
                G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston.
Apology:-   Councillor K. Drum.
In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Executive Director, Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory),
                Service Director Assets and Infrastructure, Chief Social Work & Public Protection
                Officer/Interim Service Director Children and Young People, Service Director
                Customer and Communities, Service Director HR & Communications, Chief
                Officer IJB, Joint Director of Public Health, Clerk to the Council, Democratic
                Services Officer (F. Henderson).

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1. **BUDGET COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**
    There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance and
    Regulatory on the steps taken to engage with stakeholders as part of a consultation exercise
    on the budget. The report highlighted the budget Communication Strategy used and
    provided feedback gathered from the Scottish Borders Budget Challenge. This feedback had
    been considered as part of the 2020-2021 Financial Planning process. As part of the agreed
    budget consultation exercise on the Council's updated Financial Plan, the SB Budget
    Challenge was made available from 30 September 2019 to 31 January 2020 to members of
    the public on the Council website. Members of the public were reminded that the Council
    had limited resources and that going forward was unable to continue to provide services in
    the same way. The public could then use the online simulator tool to advise the Council what
    the priorities were in each local area so that the Council could use the information to inform
    which services communities wanted to protect. As at the 31 January 2020, 953 members of
    the public completed the Simulator and gave their views on prioritisation of local community
    based services. The number of people taking part in the Budget Challenge had increased
    significantly compared to those participating in previous years. A summary of the public
    feedback from the Scottish Borders Budget Challenge was detailed per locality and for the
    Scottish Borders as a whole in Appendix 1 to the report. Members were delighted that public
    participation in the Budget Challenge had increased and thanked Officers. Members noted
    that potholes and recycling were high on the priority list.

    DECISION
    NOTED:-

    (a)   the budget Communication Strategy used;

    **(b)   the feedback from the Scottish Borders Budget Challenge detailed in Appendix 1
            to the report.**

2. **FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND RESOURCES 2019/20**
2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory
    Services on the estimated revenue and capital resources available for financial year 2020/21
    following publication of the local government finance settlement (LGFS) on 6 February 2020.
    The report recommended the financial strategy to be followed by the Council the following

year and identified the financial constraints and major risks to be addressed. The report also outlined the process supporting the construction of the draft revenue and capital Financial Plans for 2020/21 as well as draft plans for future years. The Corporate Management Team had worked with political groups to support Members in setting a corporate revenue and capital budget, meeting identified pressures facing the Council. These pressures had arisen from a variety of factors and the principle pressures identified were due to the anticipated continuing constraints on external revenue and capital funding from central government, the impact of national pay negotiations, the increasing pressures from demographics, particularly the increasing numbers of very elderly people requiring care services, as well as general inflation. The budget development process had been conducted to ensure that the financial plans of the Council were aligned with its business and people planning objectives and the level of resources available. The report highlighted that total revenue resources of £295.757m were available to Elected Members assuming the Council accepted the 2020/21 settlement offer from Scottish Government including the ability to vary Council Tax by up to 4.84% in 2020/21. The impact of other potential variations in the Council Tax was shown in the tables contained in paragraphs 7.2 and 9.1 of the report. The benefits, in terms of financial stability and effective change management, derived from adopting a longer term corporate approach to the revenue and capital planning process and were widely accepted. Financial year 2020/21 represented the third year of the revenue 5 year financial plan for the Council agreed in February 2018. It was anticipated Members would continue to adopt a longer-term approach to financial planning and consequently the estimated resources available over the following four financial years were also shown. These estimates would continue to be updated annually as the detail of the financial settlement from Scottish Government became known. There was a commitment by Scottish Government to provide a three-year settlement from 2020/21; this had not materialised, but it was hoped that from 2021/22 a three year settlement would be provided assisting long term financial planning.

2.2   The Council had approved a revised approach to organisational change under the banner of 'Fit for 2024' when the budget was set for 2019/20 in February 2019. This approach was reshaping the transformation programme ensuring individual projects were more cross-cutting and focused on joined up business process review. The Fit for 2024 programme had been a strong driver in developing financial plan proposals for the 5-year period of the plan. In line with previous Audit Scotland recommendations scenario planning had once again been used to model a range of scenarios with regard to Scottish Government grant, Council Tax increases and estimated future inflation. This analysis was included at Appendix 2 to the report. Approval was also sought for the financial strategy for the Council covering the period 2020/21 – 2024/25. The strategy provided the overall framework for the financial management of the Council and covered the revenue budget, capital investment plan, the Council's treasury management arrangements and the recommended policy on reserves. The approach to the development of the 2020/21 budget had been aligned with the financial planning process in the NHS reflecting the increasing maturity of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) and the requirement to deliver shifts in the balance of care across the partnership from acute to community settings. The financial plan was highly dependent on the delivery of savings and a risk based approach had once again been used to set the level of recommended balances to be held in contingency. In terms of borrowing, the proposed Plan included a total borrowing over the 10-year period of £202m borrowing an increase of £108.4m from the previous plan. It was estimated based on assumptions around cash flow and interest rates that this was deliverable within the estimated revenue resources, although there was a risk however if interest rates rose above the assumed levels that additional charges may be incurred. Regular monitoring would be undertaken to ensure that borrowing levels were sustainable and affordable. The Executive Director Finance & Regulatory Services answered Members' questions and explained that 80% of Council funding came from Scottish Government which included funding for the core and new initiatives; the pattern over the last few years had been less funding on the core and more on new initiatives which were ring fenced.

DECISION
AGREED to:-

(a)   note the estimated revenue resources for 2020/21 to 2024/25;

(b)   note the estimated capital resources for 2020/21 to 2029/30 and the requirement to adhere to the prudential code for capital borrowing;

(c)   note the flexibility provided through the LGFS process to allow Council Tax to be increased by up to 4.84% in 2020/21, and this flexibility was factored in to the total resources made available to Councils;

(d)   approve the financial strategy set out in section 4.4 (a) to (h) of the report having considered the risk register highlighted in appendix 1 to the report;

(e)   proceed to consider the proposed Financial Plans submitted by political groups for 2020/21; and

(f)   Approve the Council Taxes to be paid in 2020/21 in respect of all chargeable dwellings.

3.   **CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2020/21 – 2030/31**
There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance and Regulatory presenting Scottish Borders Council's updated Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) supporting the 2020/21 financial planning process. The report explained that the requirements of the Prudential Code were updated in December 2017 including the recommendation that Councils published a Capital Investment Strategy to support their Capital Plan. Scottish Borders Council first produced this document for 2019/20 and had updated and developed the second strategy to support the strategic investment priorities of the Council through the Capital Plan. The Capital Investment Strategy was designed to highlight the capital investment priorities and explained how these priorities would assist with the delivery of the Council's Strategic Corporate Plan 2018 -2023. As such, the CIS was structured to reflect the themes of the Corporate Plan. The document should be read in conjunction with the Council's 10 year capital investment plan 2020 – 2030 and the Treasury Strategy which provided detail of the Council's Prudential Indicators and set out how the Capital Investment plans (CIP) of the Council would be financed. The Capital Investment Strategy had been compiled through input from all relevant Council Services including service input, the Property and Asset team and Finance. In response to a question about the Learning Estate Strategy, the Chief Executive advised that it should be available within the next 2 months.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the Capital Investment Strategy as part of the suite of 2020/21 budget papers.

4.   **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020/21**
There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Regulatory, seeking approval of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21. The Treasury Management Strategy was the framework which ensured that the Council operated within prudent, affordable financial limits in compliance with the CIPFA Code. The Strategy for 2020/21 was appended to the report and reflected the impact of the Administration's Financial Plans for 2020/21 onwards on the prudential and treasury indicators for the Council. Councillor Bell, as Chairman of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee, advised that the Strategy had been considered by that Committee on 10 February 2020. The report included detailed projected external borrowing for the next five financial years and then at five year intervals up to 2049/50, together with the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit.

DECISION
AGREED to:-

(a)   **approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;**

(b)   **note that the draft Treasury Management Strategy had been considered by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 10 February 2020;**

(c)   **review its capital expenditure plans going forward to ensure they remained realistic, affordable and sustainable; and**

(d)   **instruct officers to ensure that the revenue consequences of all capital projects be fully considered as part of the revenue financial planning process and be reflected in annual budgets.**

5.   **FINANCIAL PLAN FROM INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IIA)**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director HR & Communications providing assurance that any potential equality impacts of the proposals brought forward within the Council's Financial Plan from 2020/21 had been identified and would be managed accordingly. The report explained that the Council had a legal obligation in terms of the Equality Act 2010, when exercising functions, to have due regard to the need to:

(a)   eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;

(b)   advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c)   foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Carrying out and considering the findings of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of the decision making process was the method of ensuring "due regard" was paid to the effect of the relevant policy or practice on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality. Initial Integrated Impact Assessments on the 2020/21 Financial Plan proposals had been undertaken as an integral part of the revenue and capital budget planning processes in order to fully inform decisions proposed by officers and approved by Members. Some of the proposals had been carried forward from previous years and so had already been subject to an impact assessment. Where that was the case they had not been re-assessed at this stage, although may be as detailed proposals developed. While some of the assessed proposals indicated no impact, it was recommended that any potential impact continue to be monitored, given the nature of the proposals. These 117 proposals may potentially impact in a positive or negative way on one or more of the Protected Characteristics or Socio-Economic Factors and any potential negative impact would require ongoing management through their implementation stage, in terms of mitigating and alleviating these impacts. Any positive impacts identified at this stage should be maximised during the planning and implementation stage of the proposals.

DECISION
AGREED:-

(a)   **to note the summary outcomes of the 68 Initial Equality Impact assessments undertaken in respect of the 2019/20 Financial Plan proposals, as detailed in Appendix I to the report; and**

(b)   **that officers undertake further and ongoing Impact Assessment work, as necessary, in respect of these proposals with specific reference to the equality or socio-economic groups on whom there may be possible impact:**

(i) that where there was an identified relevance to the Council's statutory duty and there was a possible positive impact on one or more equality characteristic or socio-economic group, actions to maximise this impact would be identified and implemented as part of the project planning and delivery of each proposal or project; and

(ii) that where there was an identified relevance to the Council's statutory duty and where there was a possible negative impact on one or more equality characteristic or socio-economic group, actions to mitigate and alleviate this impact would be identified and implemented as part of the project planning and delivery of each proposal or project.

6. **DRAFT 5 YEAR REVENUE AND 10 YEAR CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLANS**

There had been detailed on the agenda Motions by both the Administration and the Opposition Groups and supporting papers had been circulated relating to each.

6.1 **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR HASLAM**

Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Aitchison, moved the Motion as detailed on the agenda, thus:

"The Conservative/Independent Alliance Administration recommend that Scottish Borders Council:

(i) approves a council tax increase of 4.84% for financial year 2020/21 commencing 1 April 2020, with a band D equivalent of £1,253.91, as set out in table 1 below:

Table 1

Council Tax band	Proportion of Band D Council Tax	Annual charge applicable from 1st April 2020
A	6/9	£835.94
B	7/9	£975.26
C	8/9	£1,114.59
D	**9/9**	**£1,253.91**
E	12/9	£1,647.50
F	15/9	£2,037.60
G	18/9	£2,455.57
H	22/9	£3,072.08

(ii) approves the Administration's 5 year revenue plan 2020/21 – 2025/26 and 10 year capital investment plan 2020/21 – 2030/31 set out in documents 9(a) and 9(b) on the agenda; and in doing so,

(iii) notes the following:

The publication of the Local Government Settlement on the 6th February 2020 confirmed a reduction in the core revenue support grant from central Government to Scottish Borders Council of £1.8m (0.9%) and a reduction in Capital Grant of £4.2m (25.5%) in 2020/21, compared to the 2019/20 Settlement issued by Scottish Government in December 2018.

These reductions have been compounded by lack of clarity with regard to the new funding model for School replacement which has changed significantly from the previous model on which we based our plans a year ago. These issues have left the Council Administration with no credible alternative other than to increase the Council Tax by 4.84%, as allowed by the Local Government Settlement, in 2020/21. This

increase replaces resources lost through Scottish Government cuts elsewhere in the Settlement. The council tax increase will provide the ability to invest in new schools and care facilities that are desperately needed in our communities at a time when capital grant from the Scottish Government has been cut.

The income raised by the Council tax increase will provide up-front capital finance to transform Peebles High School, and deliver Community Campuses to replace Galashiels Academy and Hawick High School much earlier than would otherwise have been possible and in line with previously agreed timescales.

The income raised will also help the Council to invest in 2 new 60 bed Care Homes in Hawick and the Central Borders to better meet the needs of a growing elderly population in the Borders.

While these facilities are in the planning and development phase, the increased Council Tax will fund investment in improving the condition of the road network with a further £2.2m invested on top of the additional £2.3m announced in last year's budget. This funding is to fund extra road resurfacing and pothole repairs in our communities in response to the priority feedback provided by 953 responses to the consultation on the 2020/21 budget.

Taken together the increases in the Council Tax approved by this Administration will deliver £4.3m of extra investment in improving the condition of the road network. With this additional resource, the total investment in the road network proposed by this budget will total £40.4m in revenue the next five years and £84.6m in capital over the next ten years.

In addition, we will transform 3 of our High Schools and provide 120 new care beds for our most vulnerable elderly population. These developments will occur in Hawick and the Central Borders.

A particular welcome feature of this year's budget process has been the significant increase in the level of engagement of Borders citizens. We have listened to the 953 responses from our public budget consultation. The priority of our residents was very clearly roads, protecting our winter services, reducing fly tipping and dog fouling. This budget reflects those priorities and continues our ambitious programme of investment in outdoor community spaces."

6.2 **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BELL**

With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 30 January 2020, and in terms of Standing Order 26, Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Robson, moved the motion as detailed on the agenda in the following terms:-

"Under the terms of Standing Order 26 Council agrees to revisit - as part of the Opposition Budget motion - its decision at the meeting of 30th January 2020 in respect of agenda Item 12 (CCTV Provision in the Scottish Borders).

This Motion is seconded by Councillor Robson and signed by Councillors A. Anderson, H. Anderson, J. Brown, K. Chapman, K. Drum, H. Laing, C. Ramage and E. Thornton-Nicol.

The Opposition Parties on Scottish Borders Council – the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democratic Party recommend that Council:

(i)   approves the Opposition Parties' alternative 5 year revenue plan 2020/21 = 2025/26 and alternative 10 year capital investment plan 2020/21 – 2030/31 set ou tin documents 9(b) and 9(c) on the agenda; and in doing so

(ii)   approves a council tax increase of 4.84% for financial year 2020/21 commencing 1 April 2020, with a band D equivalent of £1,253.91, as set ou tin the Table 1 below:

Table 1

Council Tax band	Proportion of Band D Council Tax	Annual charge applicable from 1st April 2020
A	6/9	£835.94
B	7/9	£975.26
C	8/9	£1,114.59
D	**9/9**	**£1,253.91**
E	12/9	£1,647.50
F	15/9	£2,037.60
G	18/9	£2,455.57
H	22/9	£3,072.08

(iii)   notes the following principles and proposals:

1. The Opposition Parties have prepared an alternative 5 year revenue plan of £1.51bn for the Scottish Borders and a 10 year capital plan of £464m;

•   This budget builds on opportunities and improves the lives of Borderers whatever their age by Investing in our Future. It focuses on delivering quality services, opportunities for all in a thriving economy, empowering communities and enabling people to live independently and achieve their goals.

•   This budget rebuilds educational capacity, protects teacher ratios, library services, school mental health services and frontline Council services; whilst also recognising that we must modernise service delivery and make efficiencies.

•   The Opposition budget specifically proposes :-

    ➤   £24.7m investment over ten years into new or refurbished Primary schools
    ➤   To expand the program of High School provision through renewing or replacing secondary schools in Galashiels, Peebles and Hawick by 2027 at a cost of £128.2m
    ➤   £18.5 investment in two new nursing homes
    ➤   Investing a further £5.9m capital and £4.5m revenue in 2020/21 into Early Learning & Childcare
    ➤   To continue investment to a total of £55.2m in flood studies and Flood & Coastal protection over the capital period
    ➤   To reinstate Librarians in all High Schools
    ➤   To commit funding for a Climate Change Champion and to invest revenue in environmental and bio-diversity projects
    ➤   To revisit the Council decision of January this year and renew public sector CCTV in priority towns

2. The Opposition Parties propose to finance the associated Revenue and Capital costs through rescheduling Community Fund investment, through discontinuing the second Council-funded CAT team when its contract comes up for renewal and through changes to the Council Tax across all Bands.

(iv)   agrees that Scottish Borders Council mainstreams funding – initially £1m - from September 2020 into Borders Decides. This will devolve decisions about road

maintenance, traffic management and the environment to local level. Prioritisation of spend will be decided by the community through participative budgeting, and based on officer recommendations.

6.3   Councillors spoke in support of their respective Motions.   Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Turnbull, moved that the vote be taken by "roll call".   Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Moffat, moved as an amendment against a "roll call" vote.

VOTE
On a show of hands -
For the roll call vote - 28
Against the roll call vote – 5

DECISION
DECIDED that the vote on the 2 Motions would be taken by roll call.

ROLL CALL VOTE

MOTION	*AMENDMENT*	*ABSTENTION*
Councillor Aitchison	*Councillor A. Anderson*	*Councillor C Penman*
Councillor Edgar	*Councillor H. Anderson*	
Councillor Fullarton	*Councillor Bell*	
Councillor Greenwell	*Councillor Brown*	
Councillor C. Hamilton	*Councillor Chapman*	
Councillor S. Hamilton	*Councillor Laing*	
Councillor Haslam	*Councillor Moffat*	
Councillor Jardine	*Councillor Paterson*	
Councillor Marshall	*Councillor Ramage*	
Councillor McAteer	*Councillor Robson*	
Councillor Miers	*Councillor Thornton-Nicol*	
Councillor Mountford		
Councillor Parker		
Councillor Richards		
Councillor Rowley		
Councillor H. Scott		
Councillor S. Scott		
Councillor Small		
Councillor Tatler		
Councillor Turnbull		
Councillor Weatherston		

There being 21 votes for Councillor Haslam's Motion and 11 votes for Councillor Bell's Motion and 1 abstention, Councillor Haslam's Motion was accordingly carried.

DECISION
DECIDED to approve the Motion as detailed in paragraph 6.1 above including the Administration's Budget as contained in Appendix I to this Minute in the Minute Book.

7.   **FEES AND CHARGES 2020/2021**
There had been circulated copies of a schedule of proposed 2020/21 fees and charges. The fees and charges were based on the approved 2019/20 charges plus an inflationary increase of at least 3% unless there was a business reason not to do so, such as charges being set nationally or if the increase would have a negative effect on usage.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the fees and charges schedule with effect from 1 April 2020, as detailed in Appendix II to this Minute in the Minute Book.

8. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 BLOCK ALLOCATIONS**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Regulatory, seeking approval for the proposed individual projects and programmes within the various block allocations in the 2020/21 Capital Financial Plan. Appendices A – V attached to the report contained proposals for various projects to be allocated resources from the various block allocations within the 2020/21 Capital Financial Plan as shown in the table below.

App	CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROPOSALS	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	Total Allocation
	Flood & Coastal Protection				
A	Flood Studies	600	350	350	**1,300**
B	General Flood Protection Block	292	160	160	**612**
	Land and Property Infrastructure				
C	Asset Rationalisation & Demolition	1,865	2,750	1,382	**5,997**
D	Cemetery Land Acquisition & Development	0	859	420	**1,279**
E	Building Upgrades	847	584	624	**2,055**
F	Cleaning Equipment Replacement Block	46	50	50	**146**
G	Commercial Property Upgrades	66	40	40	**146**
H	Contaminated Land Block	18	93	93	**204**
I	Energy Efficiency Works	3,418	1,045	1,045	**5,508**
J	Health and Safety Works	682	585	585	**1,852**
K	Outdoor Community Spaces	1,344	640	828	**2,812**
	Road & Transport Infrastructure				
L	Accident Investigation Prevention Schemes Block	40	40	40	**120**
M	Cycling Walking & Safer Streets	189	211	221	**621**
N	Lighting Asset Management Plan	160	160	160	**480**
O	Roads & Bridges -inc. RAMP, Winter Damage & Slopes	7,660	7,660	11,615	**26,935**
	Corporate				
P	ICT - Outwith CGI Scope	80	80	80	**240**
	Learning Estate				
Q	Learning Estate Block	2,718	1,800	1,800	**6,318**
	Sports Infrastructure				
R	Culture & Sports Trusts - Plant & Services	409	290	290	**989**
	Culture & Heritage				
S	Public Halls Upgrades	225	99	0	**324**
	Economic Regeneration				
T	Borders Town Centre Regeneration Block	100	100	100	**300**
U	Hawick Regeneration	1,596	489	0	**2,085**
	Social Care Infrastructure				
V	Care Inspectorate Requirements & Upgrades	54	55	57	**166**
	Total	**22,409**	**18,140**	**19,940**	**60,489**

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It was noted that not all projects had been fully identified at this point. As and when this information became available further reports would be brought to the Executive Committee for consideration.

DECISION
AGREED to approve the block allocations as shown above and the breakdowns as detailed in Appendices A-V to the report.

MEMBER
Councillor Brown left the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
The Convener adjourned the meeting at 1.05 pm and reconvened at 1.15 pm.

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

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

10.   **HAWICK FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME**
      There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure requesting authority to proceed with the award of the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme's Main Works Construction Contract, and thereby the commencement of the final delivery of the Scheme. The recommendations contained in the report were approved.

11.   **UNION CHAIN BRIDGE – MAIN WORKS PROCUREMENT UPDATE**
      There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure which provided an update on the Stage 2 National Lottery Heritage Fund application, the procurement of the Main Works Contractor and a recommended way forward for funding the project. The recommendations contained in the report were approved.

The meeting concluded at 1.35 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCOTTISH COUNCIL held via teleconference on Thursday, 26 March, 2020 at 10.00 am

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Present via Webex call:- Councillors D. Parker (Convener), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, H. Anderson, J. Brown, S. Bell, K. Chapman, C. Cochrane, G. Edgar, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, S. Haslam, E. Jardine, H. Laing, W. McAteer, T. Miers, D. Moffat, S. Mountford, D. Paterson, C. Ramage, N. Richards, E. Robson, M. Rowley, H. Scott, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

Apologies:- Councillors S. Marshall

Absent:- Councillors J. A. Fullarton, S. Scott and E. Small

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), Chief Legal Officer and Clerk to the Council

1. **CONVENER'S REMARKS**
   As detailed on the agenda, the Convener confirmed that he had directed that the meeting of Scottish Borders Council was taking place in accordance with Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, whereby all Members and those Officers in attendance were accessing the meeting remotely via telephone links.

2. **EMERGENCY DECISION MAKING PROCEDURE**
   There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive on Emergency Decision Making Powers for Urgent Decisions. The report recognised the need for Scottish Borders Council to take steps to reduce risks for its Members, staff and citizens arising from Coronavirus (COVID-19). To mitigate those risks, all formal Council and Committee meetings had been cancelled, with any public consultation meetings also postponed. It was however vital to ensure that the Council was able to continue to exercise its essential functions. This meant that there needed to be a process whereby urgent decisions could be made during this extraordinary period. The report therefore proposed an interim decision making process and, to implement, that process, proposed some additions to Standing Orders. It was important that those urgent decisions were able to be made in the most efficient and effective way possible. This would enable the Council to be agile and responsive at this difficult time. It was proposed to delegate further decision making responsibility to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Convener, the Leader, and the Leader of the Opposition, on a temporary basis, through a new Standing Order No. 49(a)(ii). There could however be situations where formal Council or Committee meetings did require to take place during this period. Where that was necessary, it was proposed that such meetings should minimise social contact and therefore Members should mostly attend those meetings remotely, through a new Standing Order No. 49(a)(iii). The Convener advised that an email had already been issued to all Members regrading those decisions which could not be delegated. He confirmed that a full record of all decisions made under the new procedure would be kept and published and Councillor Haslam, Councillor Bell and he would ensure that all Members were fully aware of the decision being taken. With reference to the revocation of the Standing Orders No. 49(a)(ii) and (iii) through Standing Order No. 49(a)(iv), the Convener advised that, in terms of a Motion signed by Members, the required signatures would be accepted by email. Although the powers could be kept in place until 30 September 2020, the Convener expressed the hope that these could be removed at a much earlier date. Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of the recommendations in the report and spoke in support of this approval. Thanks were given to the Chief Executive, Directors and all Council staff for their work over the last few weeks and their continuing efforts as well as those of the Council's partners and

volunteers working across communities in the Borders. Councillor Aitchison asked that the Motion be taken by Roll Call and this was unanimously agreed.

Roll Call Vote

For	Against
Councillor Aitchison	
Councillor A. Anderson	
Councillor H. Anderson	
Councillor Bell	
Councillor Brown	
Councillor Chapman	
Councillor Edgar	
Councillor Greenwell	
Councillor C. Hamilton	
Councillor S. Hamilton	
Councillor Haslam	
Councillor Jardine	
Councillor Laing	
Councillor McAteer	
Councillor Miers	
Councillor Moffat	
Councillor Mountford	
Councillor Parker	
Councillor Paterson	
Councillor Penman	
Councillor Ramage	
Councillor Richards	
Councillor Robson	
Councillor H. Scott	
Councillor Tatler	
Councillor Thornton-Nicol	
Councillor Turnbull	
Councillor Weatherston	

There being no votes against, the Motion was unanimously approved.

DECISION
AGREED:

(a)   **to hold Council and committee meetings only where absolutely necessary for statutory reasons, from now until 30 September 2020, to minimise social contact during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak;**

(b)   **to delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with those Officers and Members identified in paragraph 4.2 of the report (through the addition of Standing Order No. 49(a)(ii)) those decision making functions of Council which could be legally delegated until 30 September 2020;**

(c)   **to add Standing Order No. 49(a)(iii), providing that the Convener of the Council and/or the Chair of its Committees (whom failing, the Vice-Convener or Vice-Chair) would direct that any meeting which must be held before 30 September would be held in accordance with Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and that other Elected Members who attend would attend such meetings using video or audio technology;**

(d) that the above decisions could be revoked without suspension of Standing Orders if, before 30 September 2020, the situation improved and the health risks had significantly reduced or, that the date could be extended if the outbreak continued to pose risk;

(e) to add Standing Order No. 49(a)(iv), which provided the procedure whereby Standing Order No. 49(a)(ii) and Standing Order No. 49(a)(iii) could be revoked; and

(f) to amend Standing Order No. 51(b) to provide that Standing Order No, 49(a)(iv), would not be capable of suspension.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 am

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Scottish Borders COUNCIL

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Briefing Note by Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory
SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25 June 2020

1   Background

1.1   The COVID-19 emergency situation, currently affecting the UK, has caused unprecedented pressure to society and the economy with significant financial challenges that are changing and emerging every day. As reported in the press, April 2020 saw a 20% reduction in GDP with this shock being felt throughout the UK economy. The current pandemic is causing a major impact in delivery of public services, with the Council having a key role to play in supporting Borders communities, businesses and residents during this time. As well as directly dealing with the impact of the virus and protecting communities, the Council is now preparing for the re-opening of key public services across the region, in line with the Scottish Government's Route Map.

1.2   Funding has been made available from both the UK and Scottish Governments to respond to the immediate crisis. Much of this additional money has been directed through Local Government to provide appropriate local responses over the last few months. The level of support provided has not been sufficient to fund the full financial impact of COVID-19 and there has also been a significant impact on the level of income which funds local services.

1.3   The Scottish Government has written to Councils to confirm 'if there is not further funding made available to the Scottish Government from the UK Government, it will be extremely challenging to offer further funding to local government'. This leaves a significant gap between national funding provided and financial impact of COVID-19 currently being experienced and further impacts anticipated throughout the remainder of this financial year and possibly into next.

1.4   This situation is not only being experienced in the Borders, and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) has acknowledged that additional financial support from the Scottish Government is critical to ensuring that all Councils remain financially sustainable. Work is now underway nationally to consider financial strategies to redirect resources to address the challenges posed by COVID-19. This includes exploring areas that could be reduced or stopped to free up resources. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Directors of Finance Section have been working with COSLA on what further flexibility might be identified in the budget.

1.5 The Scottish Government has taken a twin track approach to cost estimate collections and have separated Integration Joint Board (IJB) activities out from impacts on other Council Services. All Councils have consequently submitted cost collection returns both through COSLA and the IJB to feed into a national process to assess the local government financial impact arising from COVID-19.

1.6 It should be noted that variables around the opening of key services such as education recovery mean the full year implications may be far greater than estimated in this first quarter of the year. The national and local approach has now turned to assessing the full year projected implications.

1.7 The impact of COVID-19 on the Council finances will be prolonged and will require significant action to allow the Council to continue to support those most vulnerable. Current actions around deployment of staff to support key priority service areas has been very successful but may result in challenges when service delivery starts to resume and resources need to continue to be prioritised. The Council will need to make difficult decisions, revise revenue and capital plans and reprioritise expenditure to support those who need it most. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) has commenced an exercise to re-plan the Council's 2020/21 revenue and capital budgets which will be reported to Elected Members as soon as possible in August/ September 2020.

1.8 Through many years of careful planning and management of resources, the Council is in a position where it can respond to the current challenges both through corporate management of the budget and the use of reserves where necessary to support the COVID-19 response. The pandemic will have a fundamental impact on the way the Council is organised and delivers services going forward, with the Fit for 2024 programme instrumental in ensuring the Council builds on all transformational benefits digital technology can bring in reshaping public service delivery for the future.

2 Funding

2.1 The following funding has been confirmed from the Scottish Government (SG) for general use by Councils to support them in delivering the COVID-19 response (further budgets have been identified for specific purposes):

SG Funding	£m	Comment
Council Hardship Fund	1.100	To be used flexibly to support pressures
Share of Barnett consequential funding - national £155m	3.409	To be used flexibly to support pressures
Share of £50m IJB fund	1.078	To support Social Care pressures
Total	**5.587**	

2.2 As well as additional funding Scottish Government has also provided flexibility support, altering grant conditions to broaden the scope of existing specific grants and by assisting the Council with cash flow in the early part of 2020/21.

Flexibility support	Comment
Specific Grant flexibility	SG are allowing Councils to be flexible in the use of grants such as allowing PEF and Early Years expansion funding to be used more widely to support vulnerable children, eg Early Years will fund £0.846m to support external early years providers as reflected in the COSLA return
SG cash flow benefit	Revenue Support Grant (RSG) payments have been adjusted to assist Council cash flow by accelerating funding to the early part of 2020/21

2.3 Although a national commitment has been made to fund 'reasonable' expenditure resulting from the COVID-19 response, it is likely the Council will need to fund a significant element of the 2020/21 pressure. Action has already been taken to establish a COVID-19 reserve. To date budget contributions to this reserve are as follows:

Council Funding	£m	Comment
2020/21 Financial Plan	0.500	SG funding following negotiations with the Green Party
Corporate Transformation	0.250	2020/21 budget growth not required, now funded from Earmarked balances
Community Fund	0.340	Earmarked balance from 2019/20
2019/20 underspend	1.458	Net top up to reserves in 2020/21 from 2019/20 underspend
Total Council COVID-19 reserve	**2.548**	

3 Estimated budget impact

3.1 Based on April 2020 month end an assessment of the financial impact of COVID-19 for Scottish Borders Council Budget has been undertaken. Impacts have been collated into the two Scottish Government returns below and fall into the following 3 categories:

- additional unplanned expenditure;
- loss of income; and
- delays in delivery of financial plan savings.

COSLA cost collection return (all non-IJB Council impacts)

3.2 The COSLA return reflects anticipated impact to the 30 June 2020. An updated return was submitted on the 15 May 2020. This second COSLA return reports net adverse impact on Council budgets of £6.88m from additional expenditure and loss of income with expenditure and income pressures of £7.257m and off-setting anticipated cost reductions of £0.377m. These impacts cover a 12 week period to the 30 June 2020 as per the agreed national template. It is reasonable to assume that many of

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these impacts will, however, continue beyond the 30 June 2020. If it is assumed that 50% of these impacts will be experienced during the second quarter of 2020/21 as the economy recovers gradually and income starts to recover then further net impacts could be around £2m taking the full year adverse effect of COVID-19 for the Council to around £9m.

IJB return (all IJB impacts split between Health and Council impacts)

3.3 A separate return has also been made to Scottish Government based on services delivered via the IJB. The IJB return again based on April 2020 month end, reports full year estimated impact of £6.04m for health and social care including £1.6m of undeliverable savings.

3.4 The total estimated impact for the Council as a whole for 2020/21 is therefore estimated at over £15m, excluding Council Tax impact.

3.5 Council Tax

Council Tax, with assumed funding of £67.1m in 2020/21, is a significant element of the Council's resources. Monitoring of Council Tax income during April 2020 and the early part of May 2020 has indicated that the Direct Debit payments have not, as yet, been materially affected by the pandemic, with payments broadly in line with anticipated income. There has, however, been a decrease in the cash and cheque payments to the value of around £0.600m in the first month of 2020/21. This may be expected considering the current lockdown arrangements nationwide and may result in a cash flow issue rather than a budgetary issue with residents catching up on payments when they are able to. The situation does, however, give the Council an imminent funding issue. If the first month position continues for 6 months, the Council would be £3.6m short of funding, with a 12 month continuation resulting in a £7.2m shortfall. The full year Council Tax income forecast has also been affected by delays in the house building market with an estimated shortfall in income of £0.500m for 2020/21. Council Tax (arrears, non-payment, and increase in Council Tax Reduction) income pressures have not been included in the COSLA return as requested. A modelling exercise is being undertaken nationally to provide Scottish Government with a figure outwith the COSLA return approach outlined above as it is felt it is currently too early for Councils to project the impact.

3.6 Staffing implications

The Council has used a flexible deployment approach to target staff resource at the areas of service most in need during this response period. Due to the continued response requirements it is clear that many staff will need to continue in their redeployed roles for quite some time. This has a significant impact on other services. Combined with the major resource implications across a range of services as some areas move into the recovery phase, for example education, staffing is a major challenge moving forward. For example, we estimate that an additional 1,800 hours of school cleaning will be required. The average weekly hours of our cleaning staff is currently around 20 hours, therefore we may require 90 more cleaners. The following table provides information on the current deployment of staff in place:

Scottish Borders Council – 25 June 2020

Service	Service deployed to	Number of staff deployed
Property Services	Community Hubs/ PPE Distribution	6
SB Contracts and Roads	Refuse and CRCs and Deliveries	70
Parks and Environment	PPE Distribution	4
	Refuse and CRCs and Deliveries	36
Transformation, HR, Business Support, Road Safety, Capital Projects	Community Hubs	32
Education	Education Hubs	120
Across services	Food preparation and delivery	26
Across services	Contacting vulnerable residents who are shielding	45
Across services	SB Cares	16

3.7 <u>SBContracts</u>
The Significant Trading Organisation (STO) is budgeted to deliver a surplus for the Council in 2020/21. This position is dependent upon the ability to deliver capital projects and a range of revenue schemes, both funded by the Council and a range of external customers. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the ability of SBContracts to trade in the first 3 months of 2020/21 and as such substantive revisions have had to be made to the work programme and associated income assumptions which will be reflected in the budget replanning exercise.

3.8 Included in the two returns above is the likely significant impact on the delivery of Financial Plan savings during 2020/21 as a result of the emergency situation. Following the completion of the 2019/20 outturn position, there are confirmed savings of £2.92m which were delivered temporarily in 2019/20 which are now being carried forward into 2020/21 for permanent delivery. These added to the 2020/21 financial plan savings of £9.171m give total savings to be delivered of £12.091m in 2020/21. Following an assessment of deliverability there are now around £3.5m of savings which are assessed as having issues with deliverability. The £3.5m is split £1.6m to the IJB and the balance to the Council, this will be updated as part of the May 2020 month end monitoring exercise.

3.9 It is crucial, in order to maintain the financial stability of the Council, that delivery of financial plan savings is prioritised and progressed. It is thought likely that Scottish Government funding will focus on additional costs and reductions in income leaving Councils to address shortfalls in financial plan savings internally.

4 Management action instructed by CMT

4.1 As well as the established COVID-19 Council reserve above CMT have agreed it is necessary for key decisions to be taken corporately on assessing current budgets with a view to removing any uncommitted budget at this early stage in the year to increase the COVID-19 reserve as follows:

Management action
Review of 3 year operational capital plan
Review of 2020/21 revenue budget:
• Zero based budgeting for quarter 1 to centralise unspent budget to allow corporate decision making on deployment of resources
• Review of Earmarked balances
• Review of 2020/21 Budget Growth to assess impact of delays
• Maximise delivery of financial plan savings
• Reinforcement of continued discretionary spend freeze which was very beneficial in 2019/20

4.2 The projected financial position as a result of the current pandemic means the Council will need to pull together all available resources as soon as possible to ensure it is as prepared as possible to respond to currently known pressures and increasing financial pressures as 2020/21 progresses. This budget review seeks to identify uncommitted budget and will remove this in 2020/21 leaving budget managers with resources to manage service delivery in the remainder of the financial year.

4.3 A mid-year budget exercise based on the 1st quarter of 2020/21 will be undertaken based on the approach above, the outcome of which will be presented to Elected Members at the earliest opportunity in August/ September 2020.

5 Scottish Borders Council support to Communities and businesses

5.1 The Council is supporting and facilitating significant activity across the region both through funding provided by the Scottish Government for specific activity and through prioritisation of the Council budget. Significant funding is also being provided to organisations in the Borders direct from Scottish Government, there is therefore a need to ensure there is an integrated effort to make best use of resources available. The current support includes the following key aspects.

5.2 Business Grants (£39.9m)
The Council is making good progress in the payment of Business Grants with the latest payment details with around 57% of the anticipated eligible grant now paid as shown below:

Local Authority	Total number of Applications	Number of Grants Awarded	Number of Grants Rejected, Referred or Deferred	Value of Grants awarded
Scottish Borders	2,918	2,470	247	£26,596,000

Recent communication from COSLA has confirmed that as applications nationally have slowed down substantially the grants scheme will close on the 10th July 2020 rather than the original end date of 31st March 2021. What this means for any surplus funding from the business grants scheme is yet to be clarified, however the officers have indicated that any surplus sums sitting with Councils are likely to be clawed back.

5.3 <u>Newly Self Employed Hardship Fund (£0.495m)</u>
A Hardship Fund has been set up for those businesses which were set up on or after the 6 April 2019 and therefore did not submit a tax return including income from self-employment for 2018/19. Local Authorities are administering this fund with Scottish Borders Council receiving £0.495m to do so. Progress of payment shown below:

Local Authority	Total number of Applications	Number of Grants Awarded	Number of Grants Rejected, Referred or Deferred	Value of Grants awarded
Scottish Borders	20	132	67	£264,000

Recent communication from COSLA has confirmed that this scheme is being repurposed from the 15 June 2020 which will offer grants to bed and breakfast businesses who were previously unable to access other schemes.

5.4 <u>Food Fund (£0.576m)</u>
The Council has been allocated a share of £30m nationally to support the continued provision of Free School Meals and funding for vulnerable groups along with food support for those on the shielding list. Community Councils and Resilient Community teams are providing significant food security support to communities during this period. As per a return submitted to the Scottish Government at the end of May 2020, 52% of the funding has been committed to May 2020. The fund covers the 12 week period to the 30 June 2020, the current commitment is in line with full utilisation of the funding over the 3 month period. The extension of the scheme over the summer holiday period will require additional funding and discussions are ongoing between COSLA and Scottish Government on this point.

5.5 <u>Childcare Hubs</u>
Childcare Hubs have been provided in cluster areas to provide childcare for children of key workers who do not have access to any alternative childcare and also to vulnerable children. Settings are open 7.30am to 6pm seven days a week with lunches provided each day.

5.6 <u>Support to transport, early years and social care providers</u>
During this first quarter of 2020/21, the Council has worked closely with transport, early years and social care providers to provide cash flow support and maintain funding commitments. These businesses are seen as key suppliers to the public sector. This support has been provided to ensure, where possible, that these businesses remain financially sustainable, can continue to operate and are therefore available to support the Council when lockdown eases.

6   Conclusion

6.1   As the Council moves from the response phase into a tandem approach to response and recovery it is important to note that the road to recovery will be very long and difficult. At each step the Council's response will be guided by the Scottish Government's approach to re-opening public services and social distancing. Social distancing poses significant challenges to the re-opening of schools and the provision of public transport across the region. We are currently in unchartered territory and there is presently no clear road map to recovery. The process is therefore likely to be very long and difficult and the repercussions may be felt for several years to come.

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

Briefing Note by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
25 June 2020

1 Background

1.1 During the COVID-19 response phase, the capital projects team have endeavoured to maintain momentum on the delivery on most of the underlying capital programme. This has been done against a backdrop of disruption within the various consultancies as they too have required to adopt new working practices during this period. Consequently, MS Teams has been adopted heavily but successfully.

1.2 As we enter the recovery phase (Phase 2 of 6 of Scottish Government guidance for construction activity), and a subsequent gradual reduction in the restrictions which have been imposed, the capital projects team are looking to undertake a series of community and public consultations / engagement activities to help inform the continuing design development of a variety of capital projects, with a particular focus on the Learning Estate, particularly Eyemouth, Galashiels and Peebles.

1.3 In addition, consultation will be required to support the on-going design development of the planned residential care facilities in Hawick and Tweedbank with a variety of partners and agencies and third sector organisations, including NHS Borders. Additional consultation may be required on other projects as the capital programme is developed through the remainder of the current financial year.

1.4 All planned engagement and consultation will be carefully managed and monitored in relation to each capital project, and would effectively comprise ad-hoc and informal (i.e., non-statutory) consultation and is therefore not intended to replace or substitute statutory consultation (for example during a detailed planning application) which would otherwise be undertaken in the normal manner.

1.5 This is particularly important, as following a recent meeting with the Scottish Futures Trust, indications are that funding requests for new school investment (which had been originally planned for April 2020) will now be issued in September 2020 and there is an expectation, when submitting requests that demonstrable consultation has taken place regarding proposals.

2 Consultation Process

2.1 MS Teams has proved invaluable during the COVID-19 pandemic across a range of use case scenarios. Although other alternatives are available, such

Scottish Borders Council – 25 June 2020

as Zoom and WebEx, the deployment of Office 365 across the organisation has resulted in MS Teams becoming the de-facto standard. Importantly, it is also available as a free download and is available across a range of operating systems and devices, including Windows (Microsoft), iOS (Apple) and Android (Google) and therefore is universally and freely available by individuals, groups or companies.

2.2   MS Teams currently supports meetings with up to 250 participants, however for the purposes of consultation and engagement, numbers at this level are likely to be unwieldy.

2.3   To allow the widest possible contribution therefore, it is proposed to limit MS Teams meetings to approximately 12-15 or so max participants in any one session. Clearly the level of interest in some of the emerging capital projects will require multiple sessions with multiple groups, but as presentations can be recorded and revisited within MS Teams, then there is no need for the team to constantly repeat the same presentation. Limiting numbers also allows all participants to make a meaningful contribution.

2.4   The Capital Projects team will of course coordinate activity with the Customer & Communities team, Education or other internal stakeholders as required. A template (Appendix 1) has been attached to this paper which will identify all pertinent consultees as part of any capital project proposal and for records to be kept as part of the Project Execution Plan. Paper copies of Citizen Space consultations could be provided for any individuals who do not have access to online technology

2.5   When much wider consultation is required, the intention would be to publish the same presentation materials to 'Citizen Space', the Council's community engagement tool, which will then be extensively publicised on social media through the Communications team. This would allow individuals or groups to respond as required, and over a much longer timeframe of say 4-6 weeks. By way of a recent example, a public consultation for Peebles High School which commenced before and carried on during the early lockdown period received over 300 responses.

3   Summary

3.1   It is intended to use of MS Teams and 'Citizen Space' to carry out ad-hoc and formal community and user group engagement / consultation to assist in the design development of various capital projects, including but not limited to Galashiels Academy, Peebles High School and Eyemouth Community Campus.

Author(s)

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Martin Joyce	Service Director Assets & Infrastructure

Appendix 1

Consultation Record Template

Indicative template to capture all consultation and engagement undertaken

Consultations with Users, Groups and Communities			
	CAPITAL PROJECT		**Locality**
	Name / Description		ID
No	**Consultee / Group**		**Consultation Date(s)**
1	**Internal Staff Group(s)**		
	Identify relevant teams		
2	**Portfolio Holder(s)**		
	Identify relevant portfolio holder(s)		
3	**Ward Members**		
	Identify relevant members		
4	**Council Members**		
	Other relevant Members, i.e. Leader, Convener		
5	**Community Council(s)**		
	Individual or Multiple (i.e. School clusters)		
6	**Area Partnerships**		
	Identify relevant AP(s)		
7	**Community Planning Partnership**		
	All or individual partners within CPP as required		
8	**Partner Organisations**		
	NHS etc		
9	**Third Sector Groups**		
	Development Trusts or others not on CPP		
10	**Other**		
	Any other pertinent community, action or special interest groups		

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TWEED VALLEY TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE

Report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25 JUNE 2020

1   **PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1   **This report provides an update on the Tweed Valley Tourism Business Improvement District (BID), outlines the support provided by the Council for the BID and recommends appropriate governance support.**

1.2   The Tweed Valley BID Steering Group has developed an exciting vision for the future of tourism in the Tweed Valley. The BID business plan has a clear objective of growing a stronger, more sustainable tourism industry in the Tweed Valley. The BID levy will provide an estimated income of £350,000 over 5 years to deliver a range of tourism development and marketing activity, potentially supplemented by other external funding opportunities.

1.3   The Steering Group has engaged with a wide range of businesses during the consultation process and understands the ambitions of local businesses to develop and grow tourism in the area. With the formal agreement of the Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council, the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Steering Group progressed to a formal ballot on 14 November 2019. The outcome of the ballot was successful.

1.4   The BID was due to become operational in April 2020. However, due to the COVID19 pandemic and with the current business restrictions and challenges for the local tourism and hospitality sector, the Tweed Valley BID company agreed to suspend the collection of BID levies for one year until April 2021. The group has developed an initial COVID19 recovery response plan focusing on supporting businesses with digital advice and guidance as well as further development of their marketing activities to increase the profile of the Tweed Valley as a safe outdoor destination for visitors.

1.5   It is important that governance processes and procedures are established to ensure appropriate transparency of funding and resources. In order to monitor the Council's financial input and contribution to the project, the Council agreed that an Elected Member representative is nominated on to the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Board. It is recommended that a Tweeddale Ward member should be proposed for the Board.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   I recommend that Council:-

(a)   Notes the successful Tweed Valley Tourism BID ballot on 14 November 2019;

(b)   Notes the positive steps, Tweed Valley Tourism BID Company are progressing in terms of their initial COVID19 recovery response to support local tourism and hospitality businesses; and

(c)   agrees to appoint an Elected Member from Tweeddale to represent the Council on the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Board.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Tweed Valley Tourism BID Steering Group has developed an exciting vision for the future of tourism in the Tweed Valley. The BID business plan has a clear objective of growing a strong, sustainable tourism industry in the Tweed Valley. The key aims of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID are to

1. Develop the Tweed Valley into a world-class activity destination
2. Ensure the long-term sustainability of tourism in the are
3. Improve the visitor experience
4. Increase the number of visitors
5. Give visitors more reasons to stay longer and spend more
6. Help create local jobs

The BID levy will provide an estimated income of £350,000 over 5 years to deliver a range of tourism development and marketing activity, potentially supplemented by other external funding opportunities.

4 TWEED VALLEY TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

4.1 The Tweed Valley Tourism BID was progressed following a period of business plan development and local business consultation. With the formal agreement of the Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council, the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Steering Group progressed to a formal ballot on 14 November 2019. The outcome of the ballot was successful.

4.2 The Steering Group have progressed with the next development phase of the BID including establishing a legal entity (BID company); setting up financial and administration arrangements; and recruiting project management resources. The business plan, which was developed by the Steering Group and consulted with local businesses during the development phase, was planned to be implemented over the five year period from 1 April 2020.

4.3 Due to the COVID19 pandemic and current business restrictions and challenges for the local tourism and hospitality sector, the Tweed Valley BID company agreed to suspend the collection of BID levies for one year until April 2021. The group has developed an initial COVID19 recovery response plan focusing on supporting businesses in two key areas: 1) specific digital advice, guidance and support 2) further development of their marketing activities including brand & website development and social media to increase the profile of the Tweed Valley as a safe outdoor destination for visitors. Funding has been secured from Scotland's Towns Partnership and VisitScotland as well as a contribution of £15,000 from the Council's Economic Development Service to deliver these activities.

4.4 When the BID becomes operational in terms of levy collection in April 2021, financial monitoring of the BID levy collation will be provided by the Council's Customer Services team. A detailed Operating Agreement between the Council and the new proposed BID company is at the final stages of being approved. The Council will issue appropriate bills advising those in the designated BID area of the requirement to collect the BID levy on behalf of the new BID company.

4.5   It is important that governance processes and procedures are established to ensure appropriate transparency of funding and resources. In order to monitor the Council's financial input and contribution to the project, Executive agreed that an Elected Member representative is nominated on to the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Board.

4.6   For Elected Member's duties on the Board, the Council has guidance within its Code of Conduct which should be considered in terms of Councillors being directors, particularly with regard to the requirement to comply with the rules of the organisation as well as code of conduct and declaring interests. It is the duty of the nominated Elected Member to observe and comply in all respects with the Councillors' Code of Conduct. It is their responsibility as a Councillor to make sure that they are familiar with, and that their actions comply with, the provisions of the Code.

4.7   It is recommended that a Tweeddale Ward member is nominated for the Board. An appropriate Council officer will also provide advisory support and act as an observer on the Board where appropriate.

5   IMPLICATIONS

5.1   **Financial**

There is a very limited financial implication in relation to the Tweed Valley Tourism BID, which was covered under the previous report to Executive.

5.2   **Risk & Mitigations**

The representation of an Elected Member on the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Board, along with appropriate Council and BID Scotland advisory support, will help to ensure the appropriate management of the project. Financial monitoring of the BID levy collection will be provided by the Council's Customer Services team.

5.3   **Equalities Integrated Impact Assessment**

The Economic Development Service will recommend to the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Steering Group and BID companies to undertake Integrated Impact Assessments at the appropriate stages of project proposals.

5.4   **Acting Sustainably**

Business Improvement District (BID) initiatives are promoted by the Scottish Government to support sustainable economic growth. The BID model, led by the private sector, 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.

5.5   **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.

5.6   **Rural Proofing**

Rural Proofing is not required as the proposal does not relate to new or amended Council policy or strategy. Towns and town centres act as a potential hub for rural communities and it is anticipated that any actions/ activities would add value to the wider rural economy rather than having a negative impact.

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

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation arising from this report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Comms, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the report.

Approved by

Rob Dickson   Signature ....
Executive Director, Corporate improvement and Economy

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
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Background Papers: None
Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 20 August 2019

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Julie Hogg can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.
Contact us at: Julie Hogg jhogg@scotborders.gov.uk tel: 01835 826527

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Scottish Borders COUNCIL

REPORT BY SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE ON AREA PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY FUND

Report by Service Director Customer & Communities

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25 JUNE 2020

1   **PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1   **This report presents the findings of the review which was commissioned by Scottish Borders Council of the Area Partnerships and the Community Fund.**

1.2   At its meeting on 26 June 2019, the Council decided the scope, approach and timeline for the Area Partnership review consultation, including the future allocation and governance of the Community Fund. The consultation was to be undertaken by an external organisation in order to ensure impartiality.

1.3   The consultation, which was undertaken by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), employed a range of methods in order to ensure that as many people as possible, who wished to do so, were able to participate.

1.4   A total of 199[1] individuals responded to the consultation. Of these, 121 responded to the survey, 59 took part in a focus group, nine participated in one-to-one stakeholder interviews and ten Elected Members attended a seminar. Due to the low number of respondents the results should be read as indicative rather than statistically significant.

1.5   Responses to the consultation were mixed but the overriding message is that people want to be involved in shaping the Area Partnerships to ensure that they are fully inclusive, meet the needs of all stakeholders and achieve meaningful involvement and community engagement.

1.6   This report proposes that the findings of the review are shared with stakeholders and that a further report is brought to Council in August 2020 outlining the next steps in evolving the Area Partnerships and Community Fund.

1.7   The recommendations made by SCDC appear throughout their report (appendix one).

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[1] This number reflects participations rather than individual participants i.e. an individual that took part in both the survey and a focus group will have been counted twice.

1.8   Since this report was received, the Council has been responding to the current Covid-19 pandemic, and there has been a great deal of further learning and experience of working with our communities through our Community Assistance Hubs. This learning should also be considered in evolving the Area Partnerships, the Community Fund and the wider Community Planning Partnership arrangements.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   **I recommend that Council :-**

(a)   Notes the results, findings and subsequent recommendations of the report produced by the Scottish Community Development Centre (appendix one);

(b)   Agrees that the report is shared with stakeholders; and

(c)   Agrees that a further report be brought to Council in August 2020 outlining the next steps in evolving the Area Partnerships and Community Fund arrangements.

3   BACKGROUND

3.1   On 26 June 2019 the Council decided the scope, approach and timeline of the Area Partnership review consultation, including the future allocation and governance of the Community Fund.

3.2   In order to ensure that the review was completely impartial, clear and transparent an external organisation, the Scottish Community Development Company (SCDC), was commissioned to undertake the consultation work on behalf of Scottish Borders Council. The consultation ran from 23 August – 28 October 2019 utilising a range of methods to enable as many people as possible to participate.

4   THE REVIEW OF AREA PARTNERSHPS AND COMMUNITY FUND

4.1   The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) is recognised as the national lead agency for community development in Scotland with a 25-year history of activity spanning multiple geographies and several policy areas. More information about SCDC is available at www.scdc.org.uk.

4.2   The review undertaken by SCDC gathered views regarding local decision making, including what the arrangements could look like in each locality (governance arrangements may vary in each area in order to best suit local circumstances), and the new Community Fund. The review looked at:

a. Membership of Area Partnerships and decision making/voting rights/agenda setting within the partnerships;
b. Role of communities within the Community Planning Partnership (CPP);
c. Role of communities and other partners to deliver actions and meet priorities identified in each area's Locality Plan;
d. Training required to develop skills/competencies required to support changes and enable effective community level governance;
e. Support required to enable the shift to community level governance;
f. General decision making process;
g. Impact of the combining of funding streams to form the Community Fund; and
h. Decision making arrangements and allocation of the Community Fund.

4.3   The consultation took place from 23 August – 28 October 2019 utilising a number of methods to ensure that as many people and groups as possible were able to take part:

- An online survey available on the Council's Consultation Hub
- Paper copies of the survey were available through libraries and Council Contact Centres.
- Six focus groups took place across the Borders. One focus group took place in each locality and one, centrally located, targeted groups working across the Borders and those with an interest in equality issues.
- Nine interviews with key stakeholders (individuals) took place with representatives from:
    o Community Planning Partners

o   Scottish Borders Council senior officers
o   Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network
o   Registered Social landlords
- Seminar with Elected Members

5   CONSULTATION FINDINGS – OVERVIEW

5.1   SCDC has produced a report setting out the responses to the consultation gathered from all methods. Quantitative information from the online and paper surveys is supported by the qualitative information gathered at the focus groups and key stakeholder interviews.

5.2   118 people responded to the online survey of these,
- 54% responded as an individual
- 31% responded on behalf of their organisation/community group
- 15% responded on behalf of their community council

5.3   Online responses by locality were as follows:

Area Partnership area	Total	% of responses by AP area	% of Borders population by AP area
Berwickshire	31	26%	18%
Cheviot	12	10%	17%
Eildon	28	23%	31%
Teviot & Liddesdale	15	12%	16%
Tweeddale	29	24%	19%
Cross Borders	6	5%	

5.4   Most responses came from the Berwickshire, Tweeddale and Eildon areas. Berwickshire and Tweeddale returned a greater percentage of responses when compared to the population make up. Due to the low number of respondents the results should be read as indicative rather than statistically significant.

5.5   The review has reflected the strong view, which had previously been communicated to Members and officers, that local people did not feel they had been appropriately included in the design of the new partnership structures or current community funding arrangements.

5.6   The full findings and recommendations are available in the SCDC consultation report (appendix one).

6   FURTHER LEARNING FROM COVID-19 RESPONSE

6.1   In response to the Covid-19 emergency, five Community Assistance Hubs (CAH'S) were set up to provide support at a local level, to work with and help co-ordinate other service areas, 57 Resilient Community Teams and other voluntary groups, and to provide individual support to approx. 4,500 individuals who are shielding.

6.2   The response to Covid-19 within communities has been amazing and local groups, in the main voluntary, have been providing a huge amount of

support within their communities. There is an opportunity to build on this along with the significant learning and benefits of setting up the five CAH's.

6.3 All stakeholders should be asked to consider the findings of the SCDC report as well as the experience and learning over the last few months responding to Covid-19. A further report will then be brought to Council in August outlining the next steps to evolve the Area Partnerships, the Community Fund and the wider Community Planning Partnership arrangements.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 **Financial**
The Community Fund has a base budget of £471k in 2020/21 which will be directed to support work with communities.

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

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

7.4 **Carbon Management**
There are no significant effects on the Council's carbon emissions arising from this report.

7.5 **Rural Proofing**
(a) This report does not relate to a new or amended policy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

(b) Not acting upon the findings in the name of SCDC's report would have a negative impact on the Area Partnerships and the Council's reputation as an organisation that listens to the community.

7.6 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**
No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

8 CONSULTATION

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

Approved by

JENNI CRAIG   Signature ……………………….
Service Director Customer & Communities

Author(s)

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Background Papers: Scottish Borders Council, 26 June 2019

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

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A review of Local Area Partnerships and the Community Fund in Scottish Borders

Mick Doyle & Paul Nelis

www.scdc.org.uk

Contents

1. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

This study was widely targeted at those groups and individuals active in community activity in the Scottish Borders. A significant proportion of those individuals took part but its conclusions should be used as a basis for further dialogue. What is clear is that despite strong desire for meaningful community involvement in decision making, there are significant concerns about opportunities for participation via the Area Partnerships and the operation of the Community Fund.

These clearly suggest that while people want to be more involved, change is required to secure people's commitment by strengthening the arrangements. This includes a number of important overarching themes essential to growing effective empowerment which strongly suggests that the partnership structures and funding approach cannot be viewed in isolation.

Below is a summary of key findings and recommendations.

1.1 The Area Partnerships Findings

- There is general support for the Area Partnerships as an improvement on local Area Forums but people raised significant design flaws.
- There are positive responses to changes in the way dialogue was facilitated in relation to discussing the draft locality plan. Although some people like these approaches more than others.
- Issues such as representativeness, influencing the agenda, how meetings are run and how issues are progressed need to be addressed.
- There is widespread concern about the extent that the partnerships tackle inequality at present. However, there are shared partner aspirations to do this.
- CPP formal partners view the Area Partnerships as opportunities to share information and co-ordinate activity. But mostly see limited evidence of meaningful community involvement.
- There is a need to respond to concerns about the size of the boundaries. There is a wider context for participation with other organisations already existing who should be playing a greater role in the Area Partnerships either at the meetings or by feeding in other ways.
- Area Partnerships need to link more effectively to engagement processes such as Community Learning Partnerships, town master planning and community led action planning.
- Making and sustaining these links effectively requires resources for capacity building addressing inequality.

Summarised Recommendations (see page 33 for full description)
• These findings should be used by the Council, its partners and community reps to strengthen the design of Area Partnership structures.
• The ownership of Area Partnerships should be broadened beyond the Council itself with more explicit roles for communities and other Community Planning Partners.
• Meetings should have more input from community reps in setting the agenda and making decisions alongside other partners.
• Action to make the Partnerships more responsive to inequality should be implemented.
• Communities, staff and elected members should have access to training in empowerment policy and practice issues.

1.2 The Community Fund Findings

There was a recognition that the fund was in the early stages of implementation and that there was therefore limited experience to base conclusions.

- There is a need to further promote and clarify the Community Fund's overall purpose, criteria, application and decision-making processes.
- There is also a need to fully clarify the relationships between the Community Fund and participatory budgeting.
- Many respondents felt that community representatives should be involved in decision making.
- There is very limited support for integrating the Village Halls and Community Council grants into the Community Fund at this time and a general belief that aspects of the current systems are working well.

Summarised Recommendations (see page 42 for full description)
• The purpose and criteria of the Fund should be further clarified and promoted following discussion with communities and partners on how best to achieve this.
• The current approach to participatory budgeting in the Borders should be clarified and opportunities for community involvement identified.
• The role of community reps in making decisions on Community Fund applications should be clarified, strengthened and consistently applied.
• Capacity building support for groups bidding for the Fund should be more widely available.

1.3 Overarching themes

- Promotion of the overall vision for empowerment and the current and potential role of the Area Partnerships and Community Fund, within this, is needed.
- There is a continuing desire to participate in improving communities and shaping services and enthusiasm for community empowerment by everyone

we engaged with. There are differences in how to achieve it, although there are many common aims.

- There is a strong view that available capacity building support needs to be strengthened to fully realise the potential of community empowerment including participation in Area Partnerships.
- Empowerment enabling cultures and behaviour amongst partners will be a key pre-requisite for success. Conscious planning to support Elected Members, officers and community members to develop more constructive relationships is therefore needed.
- Sharing accurate knowledge of empowerment enhancing legislation, other empowering policy and frameworks such as the National Standards for Community Engagement is viewed as important to developing shared goals.
- Many participants feel that the current arrangements do not adequately address inequalities concerns. There is therefore a view that any strengthening of the Area Partnerships, of how resources for communities are targeted and distributed, must seek to improve this situation.

Summarised Recommendations (see page 44 for full description)
• Review and approve how CCB support is planned, resourced and targeted and involve other CPP partners in assessing and meeting CCB needs.
• Adopt Audit Scotland Principles for Community Empowerment and involve local communities in developing scrutiny arrangement for empowerment locally.
• Identify and learn from best practice in community empowerment across Scotland and develop local learning opportunities to share these lessons.
• Identify and address factors which affect how inequality is addressed in the area partnerships and other CPP structures and develop actions to improve the situation.

Next Steps

Summarised Recommendations (see page 52 for full description)
• Form a working group consisting of local representatives, Elected Members and officers, drawing on the findings to plan appropriate action.
• Facilitate event designed for local people to feedback the results of this review.
• The working group should consider whether there are implications for the current locality plans.
• Identify, audit and promote existing opportunities for engagement and empowerment as part of an ongoing improvement plan linked to the CPPs' aims and responding to the recent Best Value Review.

2. Introduction

Scottish Borders Council commissioned SCDC to contribute an independent perspective to its review of the operation of local participation structures and funding arrangements with a view to strengthening these where required. The findings will complement the Council's wider review of related issues including budget discussions linked to resourcing community empowerment and the review of its support to community councils locally.

Although the primary brief for the review was to review the Area Partnerships and the Community Fund, a wider set of issues, which many participants saw as essential for successful community empowerment, emerged strongly from the conversations. These are discussed in section seven of the report and, in summary, it was felt that strengthening the partnership structures must take these wider cross-cutting issues into account to successfully deliver their wider aims.

In producing this report, we have used a number of abbreviations to avoid repetition of the names of organisations or key structures in some parts the document. These are:

SBC – Scottish Borders Council

APs – Area Partnerships

CF – The Community Fund

PB – Participatory Budgeting

CPP – The Community Planning Partnership

LOIP – Local Outcome Improvement Plan

CCs – Community Councils

CCB – Community Capacity Building

SCDC – Scottish Community Development Centre

3. Aims of the work

The Scottish Borders Council wished to undertake community engagement to seek the views of local stakeholders on the role of Area Partnerships. It also wished to review the new Community Fund introduced in April 2019, including how it operates and the future proposed integration of funding for community councils, local festivals and village halls. The work sought to explore local views on how well individuals, community groups and other partners thought the Area Partnerships operated.

As the fieldwork progressed, it was clear from an early stage that these aims stimulated discussion on how to improve community involvement in local decision making more generally and this is reflected in the findings.

The opportunity to be involved in the consultation has been widely promoted by Scottish Borders Council and was open to all members of Scottish Borders communities. It was marketed via:

- All 67 operational Community Councils in the area.
- A local social media campaign and media releases to the local press.
- 295 3rd Sector /Community groups identified through the Council's databases and via the 3rd sector interface.
- 29 local festival organisations
- 283 individuals that are members of the Scottish Borders People's Panel.
- 39 community planning and other partners and equalities groups.
- Additional individuals that are on the AP distribution lists
- All Community Fund applicants.

Hard copies of survey materials located in local libraries and Council Contact Centres.

4. The Policy Context

The Area Partnerships exist in parallel with other developments in policy and practice which shape their mission and purpose. This builds on a long-term commitment to local participation through the Council's support for community councils and the development of the previous Area Forums for the five areas now covered by the Area Partnerships. The Councils Fit for 2024 Transformation strategy also foregrounds empowerment as a key theme and states that:

".. there is a strong appetite for strengthened community empowerment, engagement, and participation in the Scottish Borders. …. there must be a greater focus on supporting communities to participate in the shaping and enhancing of community resilience and quality of life".

4.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Council and its CPP partners are committed to respond to the opportunities and duties in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, particularly but not exclusively those related to Community Planning and tackling inequalities via locality planning. The Guidance for the Act sets out duties, mechanisms and support needs for community participation in detail and summarises expectations as follows.

"The CPP and community planning partners work with community bodies to ensure that all bodies which can contribute to community planning are able to do so in an effective way and to the extent that they wish to do so. "

The Act places equal emphasis in using empowerment to tackle inequality:

"The CPP develops locality and thematic approaches as appropriate to address these, with participation from community bodies representing the interests of persons experiencing inequalities."

4.2 Wider Engagement Expectations

The wider policy environment foregrounds community engagement in many areas of public policy and services. This includes Children and Young People's Services, Health and Social Care, Community Justice Services and physical and land use planning. The expectation on all linked legislation and policy is for clear connections to be made to the community planning process to deliver community influence and involvement in these areas of public service. These services have distinct aims and duties, which are also relevant to this review, but they are also related to the Community Empowerment Act, especially the development and monitoring of local plans at CPP and Locality Levels which are seen as a key means for local people to influence their direction. More recently the Place Principle has been promoted by the Scottish Government as a way to focus many of these policy aims in a flexible

localised approach to community needs and service responses. It describes "Place" as follows.

> *"Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose, and is at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities. Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them."*

4.3 Area Partnership Proposals & the Scheme of Administration

The new Area Partnerships have now been operational since February 2018 and replace previous Area Forums, clearly seeking to provide a local framework for meeting many of the policy aspirations above. The paper proposing their establishment describes their role as follows.

> *"With the greater emphasis on community empowerment, participative budgeting, and locality planning – not just for the Council, but for other public authorities/services - their main aim will be to form a community engagement platform to develop priorities and outcomes for the area. They will act as a community consultation body, not just for the Council, but other service providers in the area, becoming a strong voice for their own area".*

This ambition has framed the development of the Area Partnerships which derive their legal identity as a council committee in line with the Council's Scheme of Administration, an arrangement which we understand was in place for the previous structures.

4.5 Scottish Borders Best Value Assurance Report

While this recent report recognised many strong and improving areas of the Council's activity, it does identify challenges in achieving its empowerment aims:

> *"Implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 has been slow in some respects. The Council and the Scottish Borders community planning partnership need to finalise and implement its locality plans. It also needs to implement a performance management framework that can measure progress against the community plan and locality plans."*

This observation illustrates that achieving empowerment is a challenging process and, from our experience, this has been in the case in areas across Scotland. Many approaches are being tested in different parts of the country and instituting a review of the progress and future direction offers Scottish Borders the chance to contribute to this debate and also look more widely at how it can learn from these as it thinks about how to proceed in the future. This study is already providing useful data about the issues which will have a valuable role locally and has the potential to add to the discussions across the country as a whole.

4.6 Principles for Community Empowerment

Audit Scotland convened a multi-agency Strategic Scrutiny Group drawn from a range of national organisations. They produced a report with principles and recommendations for improving the outcomes of empowerment in community planning and public services. These principles describe the features of good community empowerment and frame how scrutiny bodies will hold agencies and community planning partners accountable for implementation of empowerment agenda in the future, backed up by legislation and policy described above. Future planning on empowering communities in Scottish Borders would find these helpful in thinking about the challenges and preparing for how scrutiny and accountability of community empowerment is likely to develop. The document's purpose is described as follows;

> *"Although this document was primarily developed for scrutiny bodies it will also benefit public bodies and their partners to be aware of the expectations of scrutiny bodies as encapsulated in a shared framework of what good community empowerment looks like.*

Fig 1 - Effective Empowerment – from Audit Commission Principles
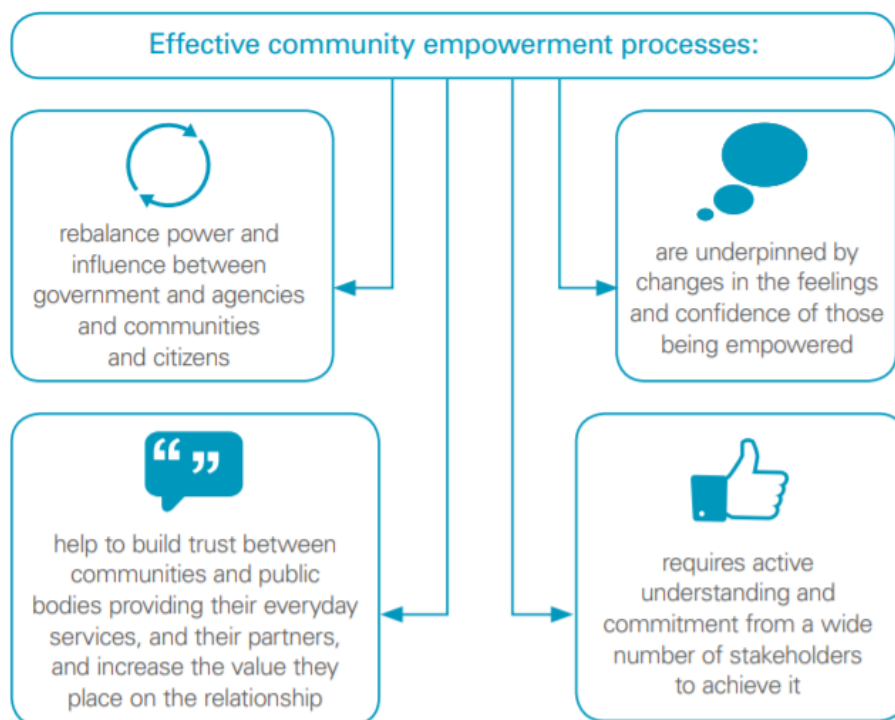
Taken as whole, these policies and legal duties set a delivery context for community empowerment and engagement locally. Their significance becomes clear as we look at the findings of the report and what participants feel must be done to deliver what are clearly the overlapping aspirations of Communities themselves, the Council, its CPP partners and the Scottish Government.

4.7 Methods

The research used a multiple-methods approach to engage local people and other stakeholders in dialogue. It had four strands:

- Desk Research – The team looked at the key local and wider policy framework relevant to the work, including the Scheme of Administration, published records of partnership meetings, Community Fund guidelines, the Community Learning and Development plan and other CPP partner statements on engagement.
- An online survey targeted community and third sector partners with 121 respondents (including 3 paper copy responses) commenting on a range of structured and open-ended questions about experiences of, and improvement suggestions for, the Partnerships and local funding arrangements.

The charts below (Fig 2 & 3) provide an overview of where participants in the research came from. And what roles they were playing locally.

Fig 2 - Survey Participation by Area Partnership

121 RESPONSES

Multi Locality, 5%
Berwickshire, 26%
Tweeddale, 24%
Cheviot, 10%
Teviot & Liddesdale, 12%
Eildon, 23%
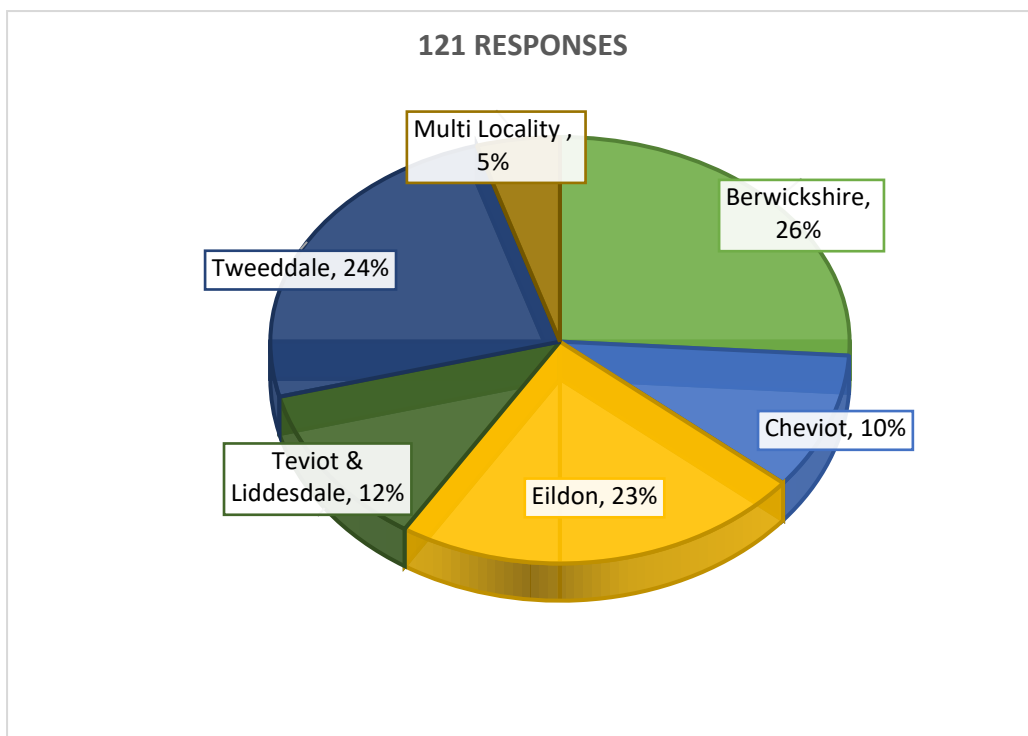
Fig 3 - Overall Survey Participation by Role

121 RESPONSES
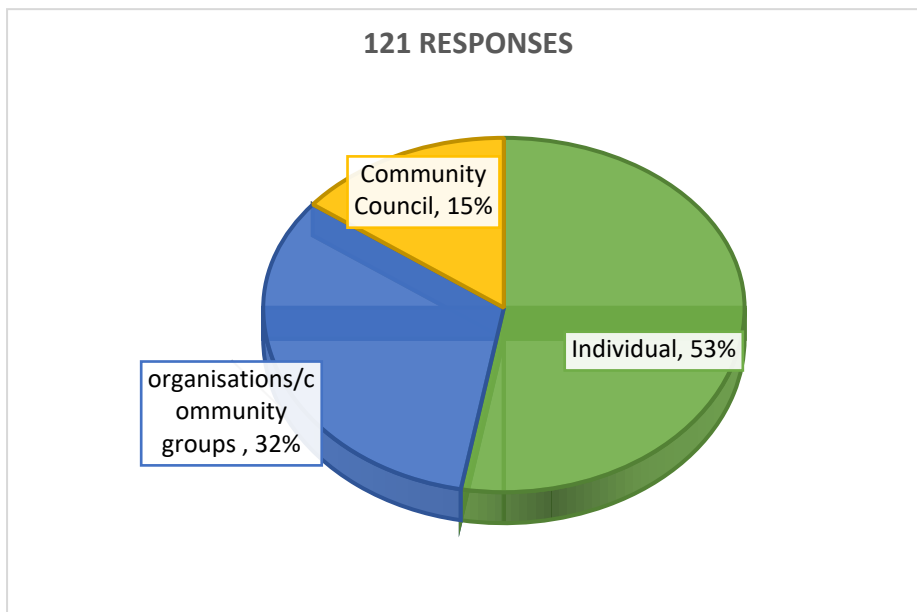
- Six qualitative focus groups were conducted, one in each of the partnership areas and an additional focus group targeting those with an interest in equalities issues or from cross Borders groups.

These explored participants' experience of the Partnerships and funding arrangements and sought views on how these could be strengthened. 72 community representatives signed up to attend, with 59 participating overall. The focus group topic guide is included as Appendix 1.

Fig 4 - Focus Group Participants by Partnership Area

59 FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS
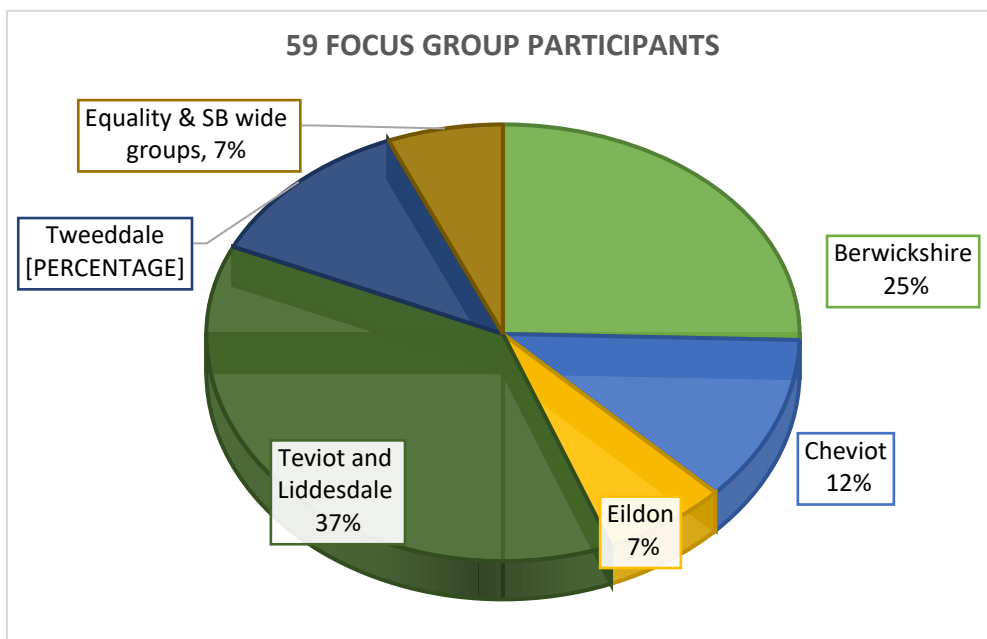
The table below sets out the actual attendance at each focus group. Whilst there were a small numbers of individuals respondents the majority were there as members of local community organisations or participation processes such as patients' forums.

Partnership Area Focus Group	Number of participants
Berwickshire	15
Cheviot	7
Teviot & Liddesdale	22
Tweeddale	7
Eildon	4
Equalities and Scottish Borders wide	4

- Nine individuals took part in detailed stakeholder interviews. These were senior staff or community representatives from:

    o Community Planning Partners such as the NHS and Police Scotland,
    o Capacity building services delivered by multiple organisations.
    o Scottish Borders Council senior staff
    o Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network
    o Registered Social Landlords

See appendix 2 for the topic guide for Key Stakeholders.

There was also an additional seminar for Elected Members to explore the issues with 10 members in attendance. Members participating were predominantly from the opposition group. Their responses are identified in the relevant sections of the report on the Area Partnership and Community Fund. Overall the concerns appeared to overlap with those of local people. One Elected Member who was unable to attend also submitted written comments based on the topic guide. The topic guide for the session can be viewed as appendix 3.

Our recommendations are drawn from a synthesis of the primary research data from all sources augmented by SCDC's experience across Scotland.

5. The Findings in Detail

The findings of the research are presented in three broad categories

- **The Area Partnerships**
- **The Community Fund**
- **Overarching themes which affect community empowerment**

5.1 Who provided their views?

The online survey had 118 responses, there were also 3 paper responses which makes a total of **121 respondents**. The respondents are made up of 3 distinct groupings:

- People identifying themselves as individuals 64 (53%);
- People commenting on behalf of their organisations/community groups 39 (32%)
- People commenting on behalf of their community council 18 (15%).

Fig 5
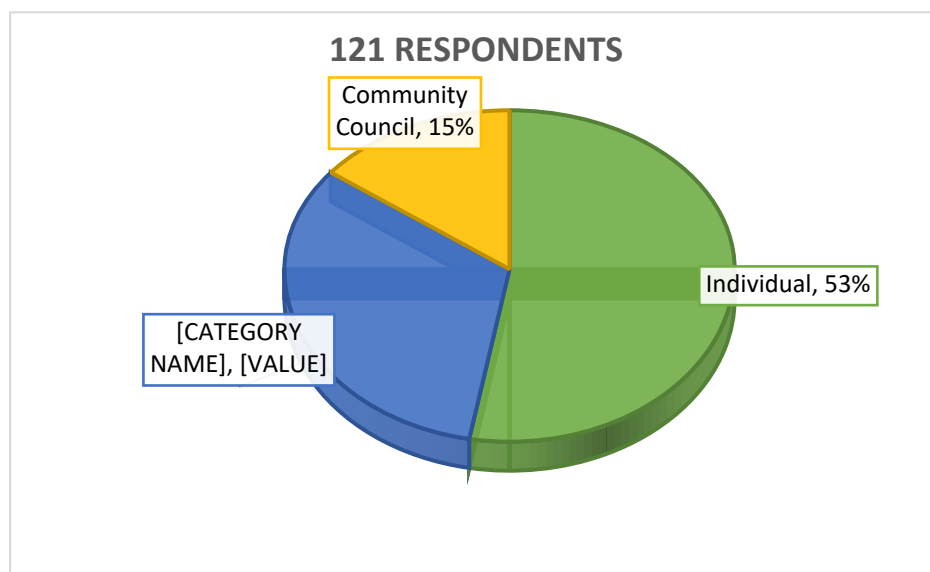
5.2 Respondents identified the Area Partnership which they fall within. Eildon, Berwickshire and Tweeddale had most respondents. The breakdown of respondents by area is as follows:

Option	Total	Percent of All
Berwickshire	31	26%
Cheviot	12	10%
Eildon	28	23%
Teviot & Liddesdale	15	12%
Tweeddale	29	24%
Multi Locality	6	5%

5.3 Analysis of overall experience by Area Partnership

69 (57%) respondents said that they or someone from their organisation/community council have attended an Area Partnership meeting. Of those who have attended the AP meeting; 28 (40%) reported a 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' experience. 25 (36%) said the experience was 'Acceptable' and 16 (24%) reported that their overall experience was 'Good' or 'Very good'.

Fig 6

RESPONDENTS EXPERIENCE OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS - 69 RESPONDENTS

Good or Very Good, [VALUE]

Poor or Very Poor, 40%

Acceptable, 36%
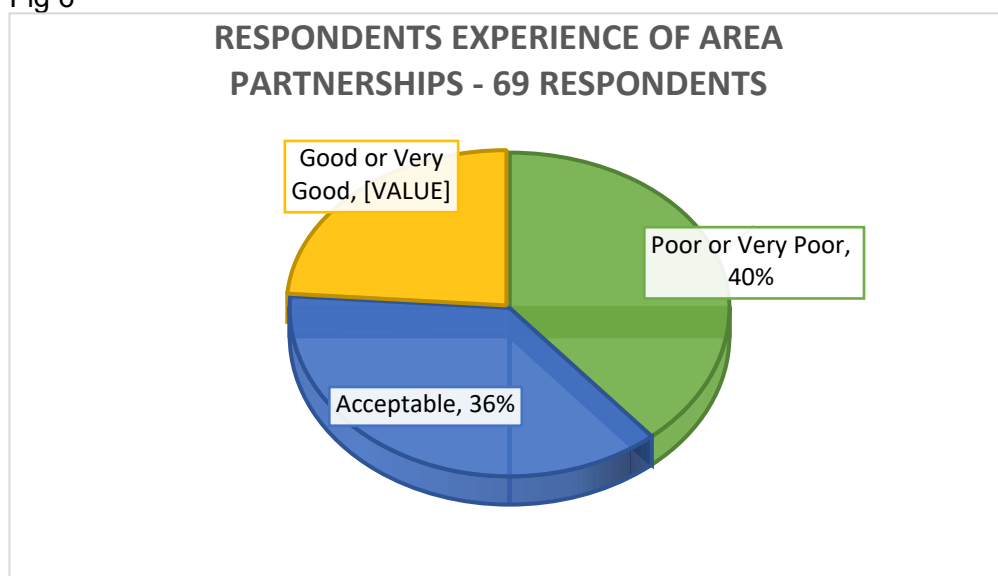
Of the 69 respondents who have attended an AP meeting there was very little difference in their experience across the 5 APs. It should be noted that the responses from those attending each AP is low.

The responses by Area Partnership are detailed below:

Berwickshire
There were 31 respondents from the Berwickshire area. Of that 31,15 (48%) people said that they attended the Berwickshire Area Partnership meetings. Of those who have attended the meetings 2 (13%) reported that their overall experience was 'Acceptable' with twice that 4 (27%) reporting a 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' experience. 9 (60%) people did not

answer the question and the reasons for this are not clear. Some respondents found the AP meetings were well organised and useful for information dissemination, however, most people reported issues with the format and decision making, poor feedback and disappointment that the community could not influence the agenda.

Comments from Berwickshire online respondents and focus group participants:

- "I have found the meetings informative and inclusive with everyone given a chance to discuss specified topics." **(Berwickshire online survey response)**
- "Little usable feedback – or sense of progress." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**
- "The last one I attended was a classic case of "railroading" an agenda, by the Chairman, to (a) achieve the time limit deadline and (b) minimise active contributions from the attendees. When an application for a Berwickshire Community Fund grant was considered, the Chairman provided no opportunity for questions and/or explanations and did not even ask for a show of hands in approving or rejecting the application, thereby reducing the supposedly democratic process to a rubber stamp exercise, following the Initial Assessment by SBC officers." **(Berwickshire online survey response)**
- "Lack of clarity about purpose of the groups, there structures & processes for influence." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**
- "Communication with potential participants – weak." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**

Cheviot
There were 12 respondents from the Cheviot area. Of the 12, 6 (50%) people said that they attended the Cheviot AP meeting. Of those who have attended the AP meeting; 4 (67%) reported a 'Poor' experience. 2 (33%) said that their experience was 'Acceptable' or 'Good'. People report that there are helpful presentations at the events, lack of information about when the meetings are happening, a lack of consistency in attendance and little time to debate the issues arising.

Comments from Cheviot online respondents and focus group members:

- "We feel that under the new format we receive less information than the previous Area Forums. We are continuously asked opinions and it is collected but nothing is done with it and we don't see any actions." **(Cheviot online survey response)**

- "People who turn up are often different from meeting to meeting. The staff have changed recently. We are required to work in tables with post its which stifles discussion." **(Cheviot Focus Group)**

- "There have been helpful presentations by officers and useful discussions in groups. However, the Cheviot meetings are poorly attended. Many CCs and other community organisations do not send representatives. As a result, it would be difficult to say the partnerships reflect the views of the wider community." **(Cheviot online survey response)**

- "The presentation on the Tablets (iPad for pupils) took a lot of time and the discussion about the playpark was slotted in. It wasn't handled well and there wasn't enough time to answer all the questions on an important community issue – very rushed." **(Cheviot Focus Group)**

- "There has been some confusion as to what the events have been trying to achieve although some improvement of late. There have been so few people attending. Important subjects but little focused time to debate and make a difference." **(Cheviot online survey response)**

- "We don't know what actions are taken as a result of our discussion in groups. We were told that our discussions would feed into local area plans around 4 themes. We still don't have a plan." **(Cheviot Focus Group)**

- "Agencies (like the Police) have come along to the meetings and asked for input to their plan, this is positive although I don't think anyone contributed. We moved on to the next item." **(Cheviot Focus Group)**

Eildon
There were 28 respondents from the Eildon area. Of the 28, 17 (59%) people said that they attended the Eildon Area Partnership meeting. Of those who have attended the AP meeting; 10 (59%) reported an 'Acceptable' experience. 5 (29%) expressed a 'Good' experience. People reported that the AP is a good place to meet councillors, they are well organised, but the overall feeling is that that the meetings are not hugely relevant and there was limited opportunity for the community to have a say on important decisions.

Comments from Eildon online respondents and focus group members:

- "The meeting I attended did not feel hugely relevant for my area of work and felt like a duplication to work I was already tasked with carrying out. I also have found it challenging to give time to attending. I didn't find the meeting hugely helpful and it seemed more like a talking space for service and Councillors." **(Eildon online survey response)**

- "The meeting and interaction during the meeting was good. However, the outcomes from the group were summarised into what outcomes the council facilitators wanted rather than from the group attending." **(Eildon online survey response)**
- "Well chaired, adequately organised but a confusing mix of subjects covered with little prior warning or preparation possible." **(Eildon online survey response)**
- "Partnership are not about coming to agreements on things in my experience, its often about being lectured to." **(Eildon Focus Group)**
- "I think partnership is a misnomer as things stand at the present moment it's not really a partnership as one party has the others arm up their back." **(Eildon Focus Group)**
- "The partnerships are often about telling us things that the Council have done and not really even asking if we agree. We've got the script and the PowerPoint and this is how amazing it all is –its post rationalisation." We don't have any votes – were the audience - we are allowed to chunter on about but then there is no more time" **(Eildon online survey response)**

Teviot & Liddesdale

There were 15 respondents from the Teviot & Liddesdale area. Of the 15, 11 (73%) people said that they attended the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership meeting. Of those who have attended the AP meeting; 11 (91%) reported a 'Poor' or 'Very poor' experience as illustrated below.

Comments from Teviot & Liddesdale online/paper copy respondents and Focus Group members:

- "Not coordinated and initial discussions seemed rather broad. Didn't encourage involvement and unsurprisingly attendance has drifted away. Local groups need to have active participation in the decision making to make this work." **(Teviot & Liddesdale online survey responses)**
- "Agenda pre-set, no time for interaction with other community to share CURRENT challenges. Cheap group discussions which are somewhat irrelevant; what applies in a town does not apply in a rural community." **(Teviot & Liddesdale online survey responses)**
- "The focus of the groups I attended was driven by council officers rather than community representatives. The range of issues covered was at times too focussed on a single issue; e.g. Housing when the subject was Place and too general when the subject was community priorities." **(Teviot & Liddesdale online survey responses)**
- "There were far too many items on the agenda and very little about rural communities. The agenda contained policy items that few

people knew anything about and so could not feedback on."
(Teviot & Liddesdale Focus Group)

- "We were given no chance to speak until the end of the meeting (matters arising), we used to have monthly meetings and this changed to bi-monthly." **(Teviot & Liddesdale Focus Group)**
- "There is a difference in the demographics and numbers of CCs means that one size does not fit all. Moving the meeting around means that we have to travel quite far." **(Teviot & Liddesdale Focus Group)**
- "We do not have the resources to attend. We are not eligible for expenses." **(Teviot & Liddesdale paper survey response)**

Tweeddale

There were 29 respondents from the Tweeddale area. Of the 29, 16 (55%) people said that they attended the Tweeddale Area Partnership meeting. Of those who have attended the meeting; 6 (38%) reported a 'Good' or 'Very good' experience, 5 (31%) reported an 'Acceptable' experience and 5 (31%) reported a 'Poor' or 'Very poor' experience. Tweeddale Area Partnership is slightly better thought of than the other APs, people said that it is well organised and there are opportunities to ask question about the theme. However, it also has the same issues as other APs which limit the effectiveness of the model – poor attendance at meetings by the community, restricted agenda setting, limited time for discussion about important issues and lack of continuity from meeting to meeting.

Comments from Tweeddale online respondents and Focus Group members:

- "They have been well organised, and every effort is made to keep to time which is always appreciated." **(Tweeddale online survey response)**
- "There is no focus or direct action to engage the people to have a direct input into the theme. Transport was discussed recently and there was no one there from the community who could have a direct input e.g. a community transport organisation or volunteer drivers." **(Tweeddale Focus Group)**
- "It is a good idea that important subjects are raised with communities and that those communities are given the opportunity to question and to comment. The present format can be improved to make the consultation processes more meaningful. Subject information needs to go out early, be raised at then next meeting, thought about and concluded at a subsequent meeting. Some subjects are very complex and cannot be concluded in a 20-minute session." **(Tweeddale online survey response)**

- "The APs tend to sandwich in big issues like the iPads presentation and the play parks which leaves little time for discussion and debate." **(Tweeddale Focus Group)**
- "There isn't a fair representation of the community attending the APs and while holding them in different venues means more can potentially attend, it actually results in different people attending each time, so there's no consistency and therefore no understanding of the format. The format has been different at each meeting I've attended." **(Tweeddale online survey response)**

5.4. Overview of Views on Impact

The survey of 121 people across all partnerships showed that – 44 (36%) people said that the impact was 'Low' to No impact', - 18 (15%) did not know and 12 (10%) reported a 'Moderate to Major impact'. 47 (40%) of respondents did not answer the question (see Fig 7). Those who feel that APs are having an impact also acknowledge that the APs are in their infancy and are still developing and that as a result it's hard to determine the impact at this early stage. Others who describe the impact as low to moderate say that the APs are simply 'talking shops' and that it is a 'top down decision-making structure which has little space for the community.' There is a concern that the APs aren't making clear links with other programmes/agendas and that the meetings have been used to impose cuts on the community. Whilst there is an obvious concern that only 10% expressed a positive view with a much bigger negative opinion expressed, the numbers who didn't know or didn't answer may raise other issues about whether people feel able to judge the effectiveness of the Partnerships. This relates to the point made by Elected Members, senior officers and local people that we need to do more on what "good looks like" in the context of community empowerment and also raise levels of understanding about it.

Fig 7

WHAT IMPACT IS THE AP HAVING IN YOUR AREA?

Major to Moderate impact, 10%

Not Answered, 40%

Low impact to No impact, 35%

Don't know, 15%
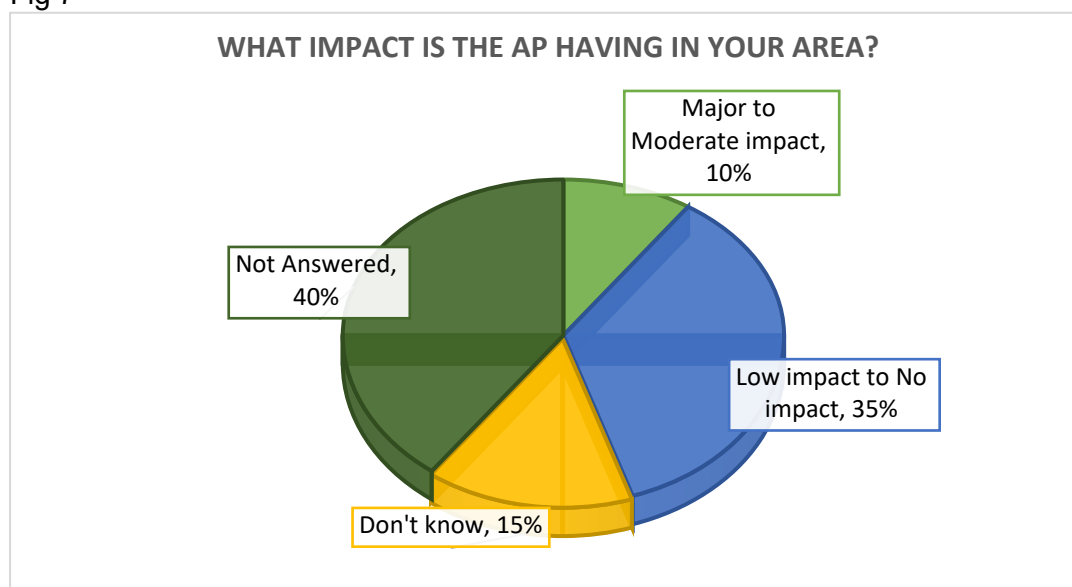
Comments

- "The comments that have been discussed over the time have now made their way into the priorities for the development plans with young people quite centre stage in many. I think it will take time to see the overall impact of them once the development plans are actioned." **(Online survey response)**
- "I feel that the Area Partnership and its role is still evolving so expect to see greater impact as the Partnership evolves." **(Online survey response)**
- "To date I see little coming out of the area partnership other than the general information exchange that happened in past CC Forum meetings. As said above I am not clear that, at this point, any actions of real relevance to our community have resulted from the Area Partnership." **(Online survey response)**
- "…there was previously a drive for local area plans for each area and then these were linked up to the areas partnerships. I understand the local plans are back on the agenda but it's unclear how this relates to the AP locality plans or other from the Health & Social Care partnership. We did have one meeting of the AP looking at health and Social Care but the links aren't clear." **(Equalities and cross community working Focus Group)**
- "At many of the meetings we've had proposals about cuts to toilets, playparks etc and discussions about the community taking them on. In many instances the AP meetings have been used to involve the community in making cuts to service provision." **(Teviot and Liddesdale Focus Group)**
- "It is not viewed as having any particular impact or relevance to individuals and there is no perceived connection between Council decisions and the AP." **(Online survey response)**

5.5 The representativeness of the Area Partnerships

Survey respondents and stakeholders who attended the AP meetings reported that they were a good way to meet agency representatives and SBC officials and Elected Members. However, the research indicates that APs are not representative of the community, they do not have a diverse cross section of the community and are dominated by the concerns of larger villages. A selection of comments illustrate these sentiments below:

- "I have only attended one meeting, which was very informative, and a great place to voice concern to all of the councillors present, not just our local (community based) councillors who attend our village meetings. I did however feel that a lot of the focus of the meeting was on the larger communities within the locality, and some of the smaller villages are forgotten." **(Online survey response)**
- "I have attended all of the APs in different areas under the 'quality of life theme'. I find them useful because they are linked into the local plan and I can meet other agency reps as well as community members to discuss specific issues regarding quality of life." **(Community Planning Partner – Stakeholder)**

- "Rather a large and disparate gathering. A few rather vocal individuals tend to dominate the floor with well-rehearsed views which tends to be intimidating for the occasional contributor. Not sure how valid/representative the views made known are, given the self-selecting nature of the audience. The two I've managed to attend" **(Online survey response)**

- "In my role I have attended all 5 of them on a number of occasions. I would say they are a good start but more needs to be done to get a good cross section of the actual community to attend and participate. Some are better than others at this and I think they are an improvement on the more formal community meetings. Everything takes time to develop and they are in their development stage." **(Online survey response)**

- "Agency partners would appear at APs only when their theme came up which is not useful." **(Teviot and Liddesdale Focus Group)**
- "If you get diff types of people in a room you get diff solutions- you don't get the same old thinking and same old answers, leading to a different outcomes from conversations ….. One of the benefits should be that multiple levels of impact of change, cuts or service restructuring. are better understood. We haven't achieved this in the Area Partnerships." **(Equalities and cross community working Focus Group)**

5.6 'Do you feel that you/your organisation/community council has a clear role in the Area Partnership?

Fig 8

DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU/ YOUR ORGANISATION/ COMMUNITY COUNCIL HAS A CLEAR ROLE IN THE AREA PARTNERSHIP? (121 RESPONSES)

[CATEGORY NAME], 40%

[CATEGORY NAME], 22%

[CATEGORY NAME], 37%
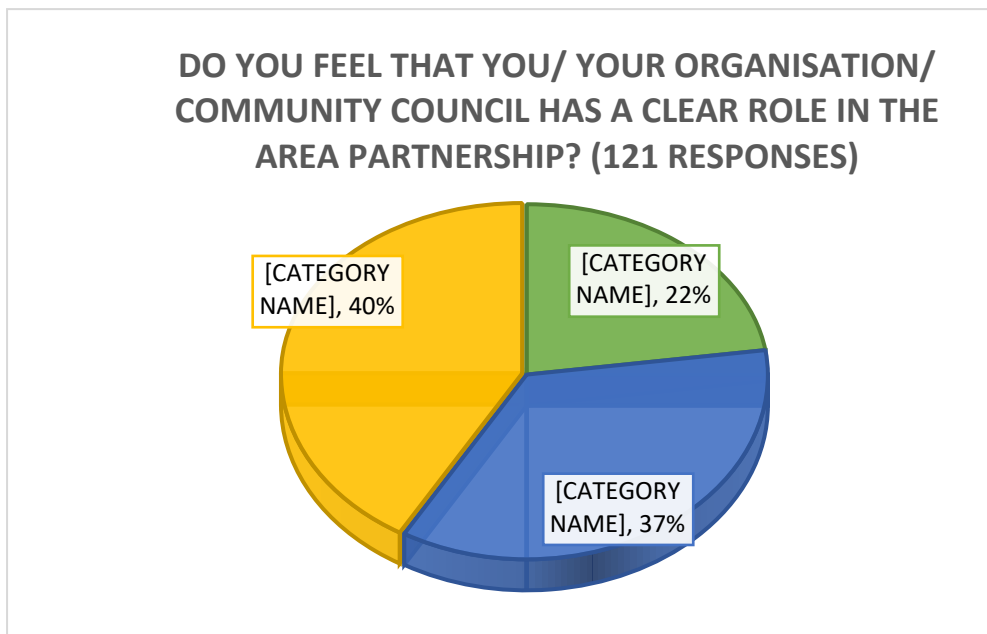
45 (37%) of the 121 people who responded to the survey said that they or their organisation/community council did not have a clear role in the Area Partnership. 27 (22%) said they had a role. A large number 49 (40%) of people did not respond to this question again prompting questions about whether the process is sufficiently backed up by clear aims and understanding of rights and duties. Some respondents were positive about the APs and advised that they thought the model is in its infancy and that the structure of meetings is changing over time. Overall, most people were less positive and felt that they had a diminished role where the views of community councils and other community groups are being ignored.

Many felt that they are being used as a 'tick box' exercise to 'rubber stamp' SBC decisions. Many respondents who answered said that there is no partnership working or co-production happening at the AP meetings. People would like more co-ordination between the Community Learning Partnerships and to include the voice of young people in the future. Some respondents would like to see a clearer purpose for Area Partnerships and be involved in establishing this and real decision-making power being devolved to the community rather than budget decisions being restricted to local authority councillors.

5.7 The Area Partnership meetings and how they contribute to achieving change

69 (57%) of respondents who have attended AP meetings were asked to comment on the how the AP is doing under the headings identified below using a combined matrix question looking at different aspects of the meetings. In most criteria people who attended the meetings suggested that the APs performance is either 'Poor' or 'Very poor' against a range of criteria. The areas where the APs are performing well are in selecting the issues it is dealing with and information sharing. The challenges are the limited role for the community, having the right people attend who represent the community and the lack of transparency in decision making. The detailed elements of responses to the question regarding how the APs are doing against certain criteria are detailed below:

a. Achieving Partnership aims.

Fig 9

Percent of All

Unsure / Don't Know	29%
Very Poor	7%
Poor	32%
Acceptable	23%
Well	6%
Very Well	3%

☐ Percent of All
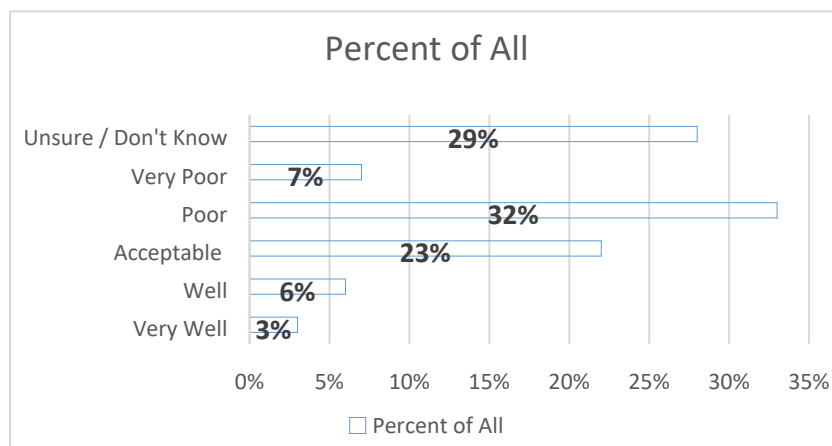
27 (39%) people said that the AP's attempts to achieve its partnership aims are 'Poor' or 'Very Poor'. With 22 (32%) expressing this in the range from 'Acceptable' to 'Very Well'. The 20 (29%) who were 'Unsure/Don't know' may suggest a lack of clarity on either the purpose of the partnerships or whether they are meeting their aims.

b. Selecting the issues it is dealing with.

Fig 10
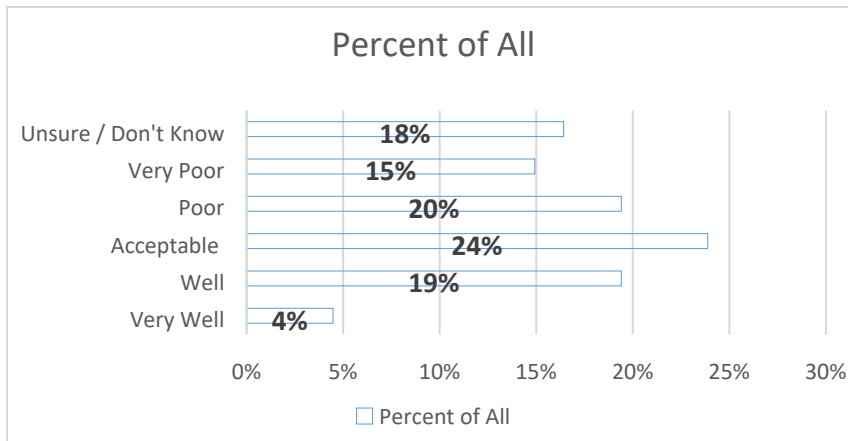
Although 16 (24%) described selection of issues as 'Acceptable', 24 (35%) described it as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor', while 16 (23%) said that APs are doing 'Well' or 'Very Well' in selecting issues for discussion at the meetings.

c. How the meeting agendas are determined.

Fig 11
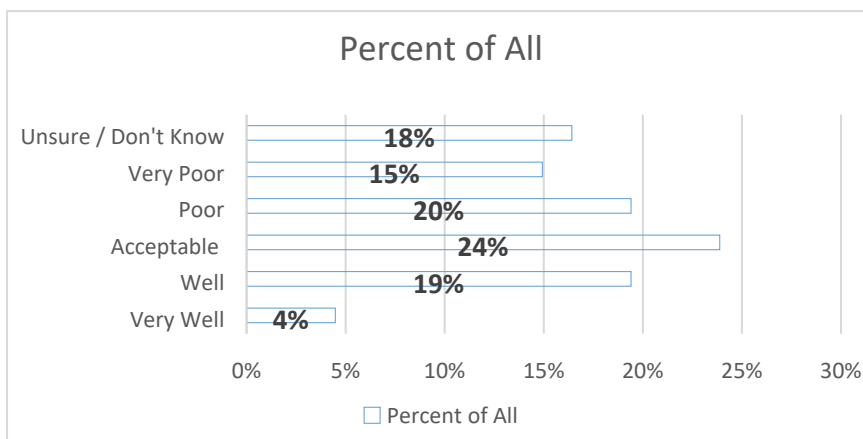
24 (35%) said that their AP's are 'Poor' or 'Very poor' in how the meeting agendas are determined, and 16 (23%) thinking this was being done 'Well' of 'Very well'.

d. How local people or community reps can express their views.

Fig 12

Percent of All

Category	Percent
Unsure / Don't Know	9%
Very Poor	19%
Poor	27%
Acceptable	24%
Well	15%
Very Well	6%
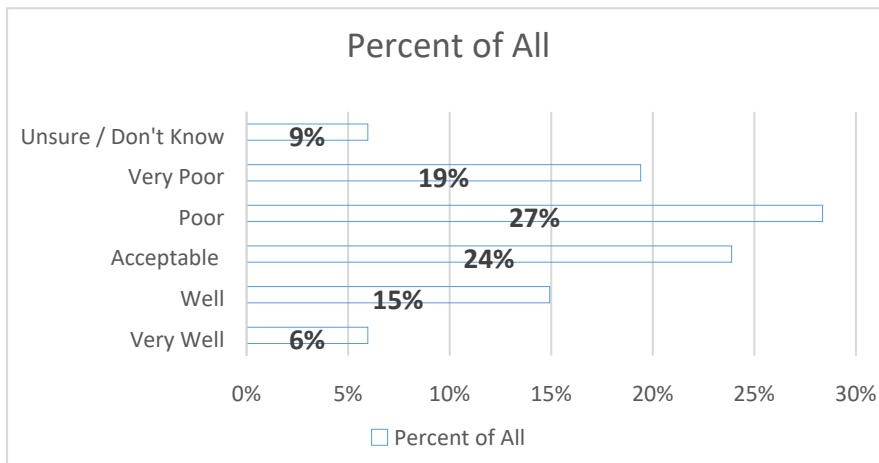
32 (46%) said their APs were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' in allowing people or community reps to express their views, with 14 (21%) saying that it was 'Well' or 'Very Well'. There is far less ambiguity about this question with very few 'Unsure/Don't know'. This further illustrates the strength of feeling around this issue.

e. The way decisions are made e.g. voting arrangements.

Fig 13

Percent of All

Category	Percent
Unsure / Don't Know	30%
Very Poor	22%
Poor	13%
Acceptable	22%
Well	10%
Very Well	3%
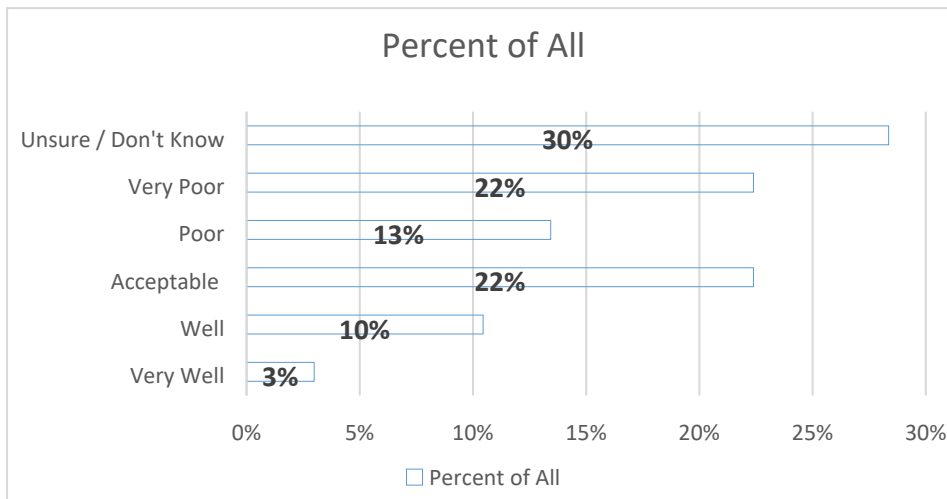
24 (35%) said their AP's are 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' in the way decisions are made. Many people 21 (30%) 'were 'Unsure/Don't know' about the way decisions are made for APs which suggests that more information is needed for those participants involved in the process.

f. The right people attending and participating to ensure the Area Partnerships achieve their aims.

Fig 14

Percent of All

Category	Percent
Unsure / Don't Know	12%
Very Poor	26%
Poor	36%
Acceptable	19%
Well	4%
Very Well	3%
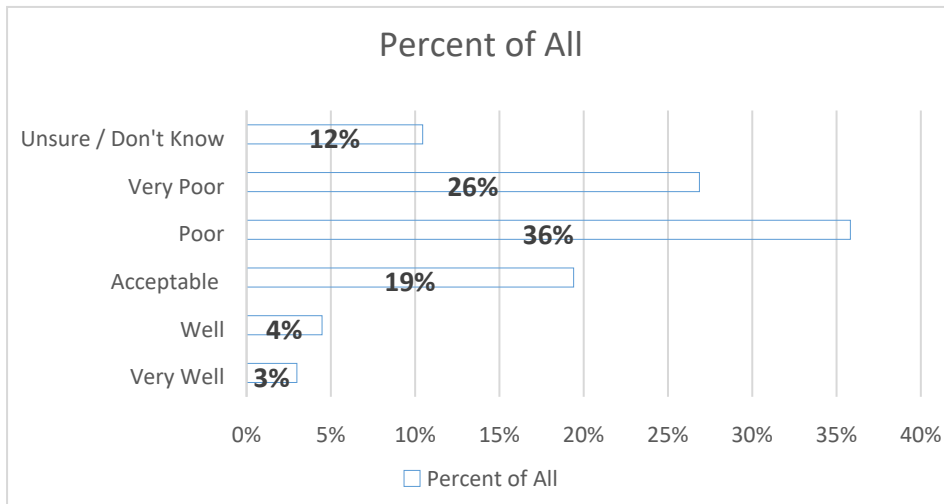
43 (62%) said their APs were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' in ensuring that the right people attend to achieve their aims. 5 (7%) felt that they did this 'Well or 'Very Well'.

g. Ensuring that communities can influence the agenda.

Fig 15

Percent of All

Category	Percent
Unsure / Don't Know	10%
Very Poor	27%
Poor	36%
Acceptable	20%
Well	4%
Very Well	3%
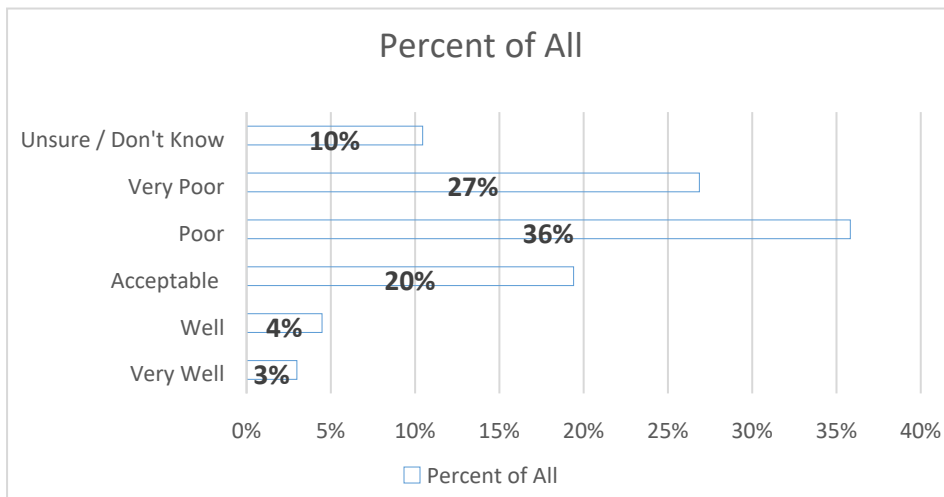
42 (61%) said their APs were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' in ensuring that communities can influence the agenda. 5 (7%) felt that they did this 'Well or 'Very Well'.

h. How it helps you influence decisions.

Fig 16
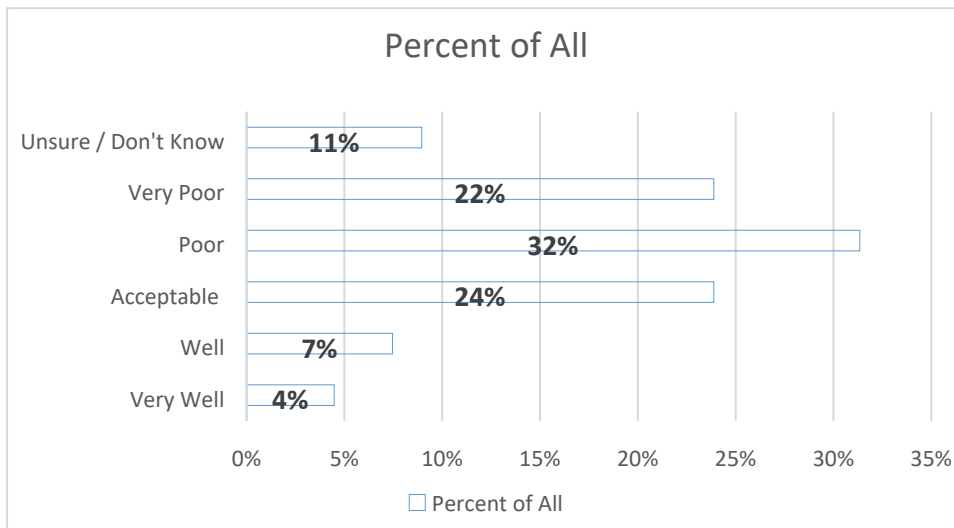
37 (54%) said their APs were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor' in helping individuals influence decisions. 8 (11%) felt that they did this 'Well or 'Very Well'.

i. How well it provides access to information.

Fig 17
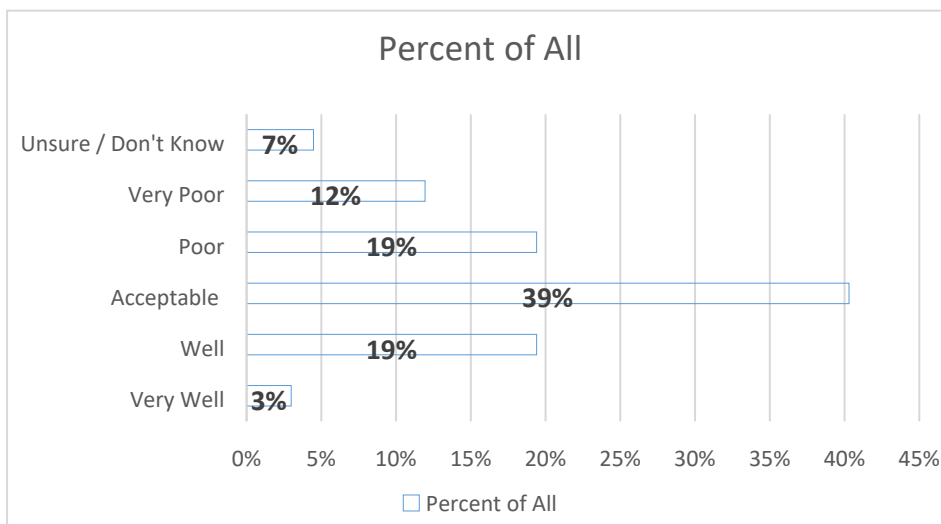
27 (39%) said their APs are 'Acceptable' in providing access to information. With a further 15 (22%) saying this was achieved 'Well' or 'Very Well'. This verifies the findings from the focus groups and interviews, however some comments were more mixed.

Comments:

- "Whilst much of the meeting is devoted to public consultation, some items require a decision by Councillors only, and it is not always clear whether comments from the public are wanted." **(Online survey response)**
- "There was no 'partnership' on display, merely what the more cynical might conclude was an event that would tick a box for the council labelled 'community consultation/partnership'." **(Online survey response)**
- "The intention is there to support empowerment, but I don't think APs do that. At the moment paid statutory staff outnumber the community, comments from the community voices are not minuted. This send signals around equity, power and interests." **(Stakeholder - Community Planning Partner)**
- "Not co-ordinated and initial discussions seemed rather broad. Didn't encourage involvement and unsurprisingly attendance has drifted away. Local groups need to have active participation in the decision making to make this work." **(Online survey response)**

5.8 General observations Equality of access to the meetings

Another key issue raised by a number of participants were related to the accessibility of the AP process in terms of a lack of resources to address barriers people face in attending the sessions. This includes the need to explore how out of pocket expenses such as transport costs can be met for those on low incomes.

> "5000 local people don't have access to a car. Transport is therefore a Civil Rights issue." **Stakeholder - Equalities focus group**

Or to promote the availability of other supports such as BSL interpreting, advocacy support for those with mental health issues or provision of materials in accessible formats.

> "…if you are marginalised by a disability you might not be up on the jargon like you would if you worked in the vol sector." **Stakeholder - Equalities focus group**

> "If you are an ordinary member of the public, have a mental health problem or learning disability it can all be too much." **Stakeholder - Equalities focus group**

5.9   Involving local people in design

There was a strong view that local people, including experienced community activists, had not been included appropriately in the design of the new partnership structures or the funding proposals. Despite frustration that they were being consulted now after the fact, it was felt that doing this would produce a better result in terms of partnership processes and ultimately other outcomes. Participants felt they could be meaningfully involved in design of workable processes for influence.

"If you get different types of people in a room you get different solutions - you don't get the same old thinking and same old answers, leading to a different outcomes from conversations….. One of the benefits of really local participation should be that multiple levels of impact of change, cuts or service restructuring. are better understood." **Focus group participant**

There was also a view that learning from other structures like Community Learning and Development Partnerships or Parent Teachers Association processes could improve things.

"Some of the Area Partnership meetings should focus on how we help people participate. The PTA mechanism is a better way of engaging people – not perfect but better that the Area Partnership for helping people be involved in shaping policies at an earlier stage" **Focus group Participant**

For many people, genuine influence in the system had been designed out to some extent with the lack of a community perspective undermining partnership processes on a very fundamental level.

"Partnerships are not about coming to agreements on things in my experience, its often about being lectured to. I think partnership is a misnomer as things stand at the present moment its not really a partnership as one party has the others arm up their back" **Focus group Participant**

There were many observations regarding the way that agendas were set in the meetings, as well as the fact that local people's views were seldom recorded in the minutes.

When these were combined with more general concerns about the overriding roles and voting rights of Elected Members in decision making at the meetings, and in relation to grant awards, questions arose regarding the status of the Area Partnerships as a formal council committee. This raised issues about the additional powers of Elected Members arising from the Council's Scheme of Administration which governs the operation of the Area Partnerships and whether this was fully reflective of broader partnership and empowerment principles. This is why a recommendation of this review is to consider whether this structure best suits overall aims of the Area Partnerships or whether it might be sending the wrong messages to communities and other CPP partners.

5.10 The Wider Environment for Effective Participation

Good community involvement processes and structures must foster strong feelings of belonging and community. There is a strong view that the Area Partnerships on their own cannot deliver this meaningful empowerment or effective locality planning unless they link more effectively to a broader "ecosystem" of community organisations at the more local level where local experience helps people develop their views, ideas and proposals.

It was felt that the sense of community was strong in the villages and distinct towns, but generally much less so across the Area Partnership boundaries where settlements were too far apart, varied and affected by different localised concerns or relationships to wider services. As a result, people did not always feel they shared common bonds with other localities within the partnership area.

> "Local means different things in rural villages and the towns." **Focus group participant**

There was also a view expressed by many that reductions in support for community activity had a negative impact on this wider landscape of organisations operating at a more accessible scale and that rebuilding this was an important part in building robust foundations for more strategic discussions at the Partnerships.

> "We have lost a sense of community along the way and we have lost that to some extent as youth clubs and other local work has reduced. It's a challenge to re-engage people but an exciting one as the best solutions and ideas often come from communities." **Focus group participant**

The process needs to be able to develop links between groups actively locally where there are common interests and priorities and also to be able to use these links to help all partners make sense of the wider agenda across Partnership boundaries and ensure that people were able to participate at different levels for different reasons.

There are also pragmatic reasons for investing in this broader ecology.

> "Area partnerships could perhaps be a site for brokering the relationships needed to encourage groups to share resources, collaborate rather than compete and avoid seeking to claim the same social markets." **Stakeholder – SBC senior staff**

The Area Partnerships should therefore seek to consciously improve links to community councils, community development trusts, issue-based groups and those serving specific segments of the population. The premise is that these organisations all play a current, or have a potential role, in bringing the voices of their members and service users to the fore and that the current process is not succeeding in bringing them into locality planning. This is largely, but not exclusively due to what people view as limitations of the scale, infrequency of meetings and lack of connectedness of the Area Partnerships. It should be noted that to improve the responsiveness of the process overall would also require other groups to be self-critical in how well they view their communities as represented and how the voices of harder to reach groups are included.

The Area Partnerships need to be able to effectively link not only with representative groups but also other participation processes, such as Community-led Action Planning, Community Learning Partnerships, or town wide masterplans. They should also make clear connections to major infrastructure initiatives like community school capital development project or Greenspace initiatives. A participant in the equalities

and cross community focus group described the limitations of the current Area Partnership structures in delivering this wider approach.

"They [the partnerships] are too formal in organisation and not engaging enough. Even if we could bring a whole multi-faceted diverse group of people in, I am not sure we would get the right outcomes. It's too ambitious and needs a layered approach to involving folk. There should be local sub groups structures with more local representatives with more diverse conversations bringing more dimensions in. I am not sure that one meeting can capture all of this." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**

5.11 Elected Members' views on the Area Partnerships

Elected Members also added a distinctive perspective to the discussion on the Area Partnerships. The purpose of this discussion was to gather views rather that develop proposals and the points below are a summary of what was raised:

- Members thought the current Area Partnership process was an improvement from the old Area Forums which were too Elected Member led. However, the consensus was that there was a significant distance to go to develop them.
- Members saw the Partnerships as important in democratic terms if enough representative participation could be secured and sustained and this helped the authority identify and respond to local issues.
- The representation of community concerns was seen as a way to ensure that less money was wasted on low priority action so more resources are available for key priorities. It was viewed as important that dialogue also helps communities understand the current financial challenges for services.
- It was felt that the Locality Plan process allowed the APs to have a clearer focus.
- A number of Members felt that the more facilitative approach was popular and noted that as this has become less frequent, the attendance has reduced significantly.
- However, it was felt that, even with well facilitated dialogue, people find it difficult to see how the AP activity is sufficiently connected to the decision-making processes and where their influence was in these. Having confidence in this was viewed as crucial to maintaining involvement.
- Members thought that the recording of the meetings could be improved to enable better feedback and that it shouldn't always be the Council who is responsible for follow up action.
- Members noted that the process was not attracting widespread participation which may be partly a feature of how it is promoted. It is recognised that this is also linked to the scale of the areas and frequency of the meetings. There was a view that they won't be able to assist communities who feel additionally marginalised by their rural locations.
- The difficulties in accessing the meetings and the availability and costs of transport were acknowledged.

- There was a sense that Members wanted to see the Partnerships strengthened in ways that suited a wider range of local people using techniques and approaches which better suited some population groups especially young people. Some Members felt that to achieve this there would need to be a culture change in the Council as whole, in relation to co-producing services with young people, for example.
- In common with many other participants in the research, they recognised that specialist consultative work such as that carried out in schools or with those with health problems needed to be more effectively linked to the thinking at Area Partnerships.
- There was a recognition that support to more localised community councils and other forms of local community organisations was important to help them take issues to, and action from, the Area Partnerships.
- Some Members felt that related structures, such as the CLD partnerships, could help as a part of the process of identifying and addressing issues in a more joined up way. This was also seen as a better way to keep more people involved.
- There was a concern that the process was focused mainly on Council services when it needed to be able to discuss and influence those of other community planning partners such as the NHS.
- Ultimately there was a view that the Partnerships were a positive move but that they needed to be further strengthened if they were to be able to retain the confidence of local people.

Area Partnership Recommendations

Partnership structures
 	
1   Feedback to each of the 5 Area Partnerships the results of this research, and in partnership with those who attend Area Partnerships - plus SBC officers, CPP partner reps and local community reps, look at short term improvements for each Area Partnership"
 	
2   Establish a longer-term working group of community reps, officers and Elected Members to discuss how APs can be more effective using the SCDC research to guide discussions. The working group should look at issues such as:
    o The relationship to the Scheme of Administration.
    o Increasing transparency of decision making.
    o Engaging the community in setting the agenda for the meetings.
    o Extending decision making to community groups/representative.
    o Ensuring that the contribution of community members, officers and Councillors are accurately recorded and publicised.
3   Each AP should consider whether fixed locations or rotating the venue increases access to the process. In doing so they should consult with potential participants and not just those who attend regularly.

4	Area Partnerships should consider the impact of their boundaries on local participation and have clearer relationships with more local community-based organisations and partnerships in their areas.
5	APs should also be encouraged to seek assistance or views from other local engagement processes to take forward issues they are dealing with and pay due regard to local experience.
6	Opportunities should be created to help this wider range of local stakeholders feed into locality plans.
7	Reforming and strengthened Area Partnerships should be part of a broader discussion about delivering community empowerment in the SBC area as described later in this report.
8	They should improve communication with well-established community councils and community groups at more local levels to more effectively link local concerns to the agenda of the Area Partnerships.
9	They should also involve other local groups including those working on specific issues, local service developments and those representing people experiencing inequality or discrimination.
10	Community empowerment action should not always require issues to be initiated at AP meetings. Mechanisms should be found for ideas and proposals to emerge from local community-led processes and seek support from the AP to achieve change.

At the Meetings

To improve the experience of APs and other consultation activity the CPP should:

| 11 | Continue to develop a range of innovative facilitative techniques for use in the APs and broader participation environment. |
| 12 | Commission training for partners in using good deliberative dialogue techniques. Here are useful training opportunities and facilitation tools which could be explored. |

Avoid exclusion

The current approach does not reach those in greatest need. The recommendations below can help improve this:

13	Look at ways to remove transport and finance barriers to ensure people can attend.
14	Consider the support needs of those who want to attend. And how these can be resourced e.g. BSL interpreting, language interpreting, advocacy support.
15	Co-produce an enhanced equality impact assessment which explores the extent to which Community Empowerment processes, including the Area Partnerships, deliver on equality duties and Community Empowerment Act requirements to tackle inequality.

Improving confidence knowledge and skills for participation

16	The Council and its partners should review how communities are supported to participate in the partnerships and participate more generally in terms of community capacity building support.
17	Provide joint training for councillors, community reps and officers on the National Standards for Community Engagement.
18	Encourage greater networking and shared learning between Area Partnerships and other groups in each area.

6. Community Fund

6.1 Overview

On the online survey 62 (51%) respondents indicated that they belonged to a group that had received a grant from SBC. These grants included the Local Festival Grant, Community Council Grant and the Village Hall Grant. 17 (14%) said that they or their group had applied to the new Community Fund. While the number is low, the responses do give us an indication of aspects of the Fund that are working and areas for improvement. Most responses found the application process, administration of the grant, criteria for the fund and support from officers to be positive. The areas which need improvement centre on the decision-making process and reporting.

The 17 respondents rated their experience as follows:

a. 65% said the 'Grant Criteria' is 'Acceptable' to 'Good'.

b. 59% said that the application process is 'Acceptable' to 'Good'.

c. 53% said the Grant 'decision-making' process is 'Acceptable' to 'Poor'.

d. 35% said that the 'Administration of the Grant' is 'Acceptable' to 'Good'.

e. 29% said the 'Reporting requirements' are 'Acceptable'.

f. 29% said the 'Support from Council Officers is 'Acceptable' and 29% found it to be 'Good' to 'Very good'.

Comments from respondents regarding the Community Fund.

- "Our latest CF application, [was positive] thanks solely to the officer with whom I have been dealing (a recent addition to the team). The level of service provided by SBC to Community Councils and other groups, particularly in the area of grants/funding/finance, should not depend on the individual officer." **(Online survey response)**
- "Very Poor" for the administration & decision-making processes relates solely to the fact that SBC officer(s) still consider it their role to assess CF applications for "appropriateness", only passing to the Area Partnerships applications which meet that criteria. This is fundamentally undemocratic and in direct contravention of the Communities Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (refer to my previous statements)." **(Online survey response)**
- "There are lots of unknowns about the current funding arrangements – there is a lack of info and engagement around the new funding arrangements for those who will be most affected by the decision." **(Tweeddale Focus Group)**
- "I don't think the process builds skills and confidence for participation No clear process for making the funding decisions, the budgets or how we might vote on bids. It's just do you approve or not. There would have been

a way to introduce and frame the decisions in ways that support peoples learning but it just felt like box ticking." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**

- "Ideas for decentralised funding needs to be more clearly linked to community-led priority planning in decentralised forums." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**

- "Partnerships don't see the bids that are screened out and people think this is wrong – NB apparently this has never happened, but it is felt to be an issue." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**

- "Participants feel that local reps should be part of the decision-making processes either by voting at the meetings and or in the recommendations process." **(Berwickshire Focus Group)**

- "Officer recommendations were reported to the last AP meeting. They said they were all right. Councillors were invited to vote with no involvement from anyone else. So why they bothered to bring it to the area partnership I just do not know." (**Eildon Focus group**)

- "The lack of invest in equalities Is already being felt as there is such a lack of cohesion. The biggest area of growth for far-right politics is in rural communities and the impact of issues like mental ill health and violence behind closed doors throws up all sorts of harmful behaviours and creates really vulnerable at-risk communities. The lack of investment in these issues mean that there is a lot of costs stacking up for us in health and other areas." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**

6.2. When asked how the Community Fund could be improved respondents from the survey, stakeholders and focus group said that the fund criteria needs to be revisited and the community should be involved in co-designing and co-delivering the Fund as a transparent and accountable participatory budgeting process. There also needs to be more capacity building support to help smaller groups to access the funding.

Suggestions for improving the Fund include the following:

- "The council is and should be a service provider as opposed to trying to be a funder of other projects as they are not very good at it." **(Online survey response)**

- "The questions should be 'what do you want this money to do around shared purpose, capacity building? It's about resetting and reframing the fund for capacity building and collaboration skills." **(Stakeholder - Area Partnership Partner)**

- "More together thinking with organisations in a town to see if better outcomes could be achieved by working together. Don't wish to see money wasted." **(Online survey response)**

- "Funding support for communities of interest is very important and our role (TSI) of *caretaker trustees* for group with low capacity but high needs is really important for groups who will get bogged down in managing funding or being required to constitute." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**
- "…if the CF is to be open fund you need officer capacity to help groups who don't have their own capacity to navigate the funding process if you want to be inclusive. that support wasn't put it in place and we therefore think that dropping the requirement to have a constitution isn't a good idea if this support is lacking without ongoing anchor support." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**

- "All grant applications should come back to the Area Partnership rather than just the 3 that officers have decided should go forward." **(Cheviot Focus Group)**

6.3. Research participants in the online survey, focus groups and stakeholder interviews were asked to identify support needs for communities in applying for the Community Fund. The responses included the need for capacity building with community groups to ensure that there is equal access to the fund, more information about the fund itself and more information about application process.

Comments

- "Support in form filling if necessary" **(Online survey response)**
- "time and expertise to apply." **(Online survey response)**
- "Due to my own experience in writing applications, found this relatively straight forward smaller groups who are applying would definitely need to be offered support in collecting the additional information, making sure that infrastructure is in place to record the monies and the spend. They would also need support in making sure that their group was able to deal with the council and they're at times incessant additional questioning." **(Online survey response)**
- New applicants would benefit from a presentation of what is required to successfully complete forms/applications. **(Online survey response)**

6.4 Groups were asked about the impact of their Community Fund grant. The following is a selection of their comments which are broadly positive about how the money is being used:

- "The impact, in this case, is significant, in that the funding is to be used to replace the electrical cabling & sockets on the village green, thereby ensuring the continuity of events such as our Gala Day, charity fund raising events, primary school events, Christmas Tree/Lights, etc." **(Online survey response)**
- "Our small rural community would be stagnant without any external grant funding which had allowed and facilitated many positive changes." **(Online survey response)**

- "Improved enjoyment of the Town Centre for Local People and Tourists." **(Online survey response)**
- "We have evidence that the St Mary's Loch Warden service has been a resounding success; the area is tidier and cleaner with less litter lying around, and plant life is flourishing again (SNH inspection was a great success). Without a funding contribution from SBC the service will cease and the area will fall back to an unkempt mess which will discourage tourists." **(Online survey response)**

6.5 Further integration of the Community Fund

It has been proposed that the Community Council, Village Hall and Local Festivals grant are integrated into the Community Fund and decentralised to Area Partnerships. Of the 121 online responses:

63 (52%) respondents said that the funding for Community Councils should not be become part of the Community Fund (see fig 18). There was a similar response for Local Festivals – 56 (46%) and Federation of Village Halls (fig 19) scored even more strongly at – 64 (53%) [fig 20]. This suggests strongly that there is limited support for this proposal and this has been borne out in the focus groups and stakeholder interviews where support for the idea is negligible. There is strong opinion that these funds should stay separate from the Community Fund.

Fig 18

COMMUNITY COUNCIL FUNDING BECOME PART OF THE COMMUNITY FUND (121 RESPONDENTS)

Not Answered, 27%

Yes - Become part of new Community Fund, 21%

No - Stay separate from new Community Fund, 52%

Fig 19

LOCAL FESTIVALS FUNDING BECOME PART OF THE COMMUNITY FUND (121 RESPONDENTS)

Not Answered, 28%

Yes - Become part of new Community Fund, 26%

No - Stay separate from new Community Fund, 46%

Fig 20

FEDERATION OF VILLAGE HALL FUNDING BECOME PART OF THE COMMUNITY FUND (121 RESPODENTS)

Not Answered, 25%

Yes - Become part of new Community Fund, 21%

No - Stay separate from new Community Fund, 53%

Comments

"If the funding for these bodies is not to be ring-fenced within the Community Fund it should be left outside it." **(Online survey response)**

- "Village halls are critical to isolated communities and need to be supported, not left to rot through under funding." **(Online survey response)**
- "The community councils are entitled to the help already being received to continue the work in the community that doesn't need to be dealt with directly by the council. Festivals, they should also be a given, as they bring money and tourism to the borders, and the council should assist with this without vote as well, as it is the easier process. If communities have to keep applying for things over and over, going through a timely process, it won't happen, and events will probably cease as patrons won't want the aggravation." **(Online survey response)**

- "Community councils and village halls need guaranteed funding to be sustainable and to support volunteers who run these organisations serving rural communities.   There are lots of local festivals and the financial support should be justified and should lead to a self-funding future." **(Online survey response)**
- "By tying the two would allow for a bigger pot but would also reduce the depth that can be found. Keeping the two separate could encourage other groups to apply." **(Online survey response)**
- "Huge workload and resource are required to administrate business for the CC, asking us to apply for costs to cover this is unjust and inappropriate. It fails to recognise the increasing importance of the role and the responsibilities it has to deal with." **(Online survey response)**
- " you don't break something unless you are able to make something better. In this context that should be better for the applicants and my cynical head on is that this is about the Council saving money overall" **(Online survey response)**

Note: there was no support in any of the focus groups to bring the Funds together.

6.6 Elected Members refection on the Community Fund

It was acknowledged that the new arrangements are at a very early stage. The main observations from Members were as follows:

- There is a fear of form filling and little understanding of support available.
- SBC needs to clarify the role of the fund in core funding groups. Members had different understandings of what the criteria allowed in relation to this.
- The future Participatory Budgeting position needs to be clarified for local people.
- Community Councils are important and, although some are more effective than others, they need to be sustainably funded and consistently supported in other ways. The consensus was that CCs should continue to have ring-fenced funding but individual effectiveness should be a greater part of the process.
- Members seemed to feel the same about village halls, where the allocation process was thought to be working reasonably well and "democratically".
- Where groups benefit from wind farm money it is accepted that they may need less financial support and should target those in greatest need.
- In equalities terms there were views expressed that the Fund was not being adequately targeted to those in greatest need and that smaller communities in more rural areas, and communities of identity or faith benefit less, if at all.

Community Fund Recommendations

There was a recognition that the fund was in the early stages of implementation and that there was therefore limited experience to base conclusions on, therefore recommendations should be viewed in this light.

19   There is also a need to fully clarify the relationships between the Community Fund and plans for participatory budgeting in light of impending legislative targets for this. This will require:
- Staff to become familiar with the PB Charter which sets out seven key features of what a fair and high quality PB process should look like.
- A strategic framework for PB within the Council in line with recent Scottish Governments research - www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-participatory-budgeting-activity-scotland-2016-2018-2/
- Any PB process should ensure that minority and rural communities are integrated into the process through communication and out-reach work to equitably include them in PB.

20   Community representatives should be more involved in the decision-making process on Community Fund grants. This should be accessible and transparent and should create a better balance of community and officer influence in the decision-making process.

21   The shortage of capacity building support for organisations seeking funding, identified in this research, should be further explored and addressed. Solutions should be explored with capacity building organisations locally.

22   There is a need to further promote and clarify the Community Funds overall purpose, criteria, application and decision-making processes.

23   Further integration of the Village Halls and Community Council grants into the Community Fund should not proceed at this time. This is due to a widely held belief that aspects of the current systems are working reasonably well and that full integration was the "wrong solution" at this time and requires further discussion with communities.

7. Essential building blocks for successful community empowerment

Although the primary brief for the review was to gather views on the Area Partnerships and the Community Fund for Scottish Borders Council, participants made many observations related to a wider set of issues which many participants saw as essential for successful community empowerment. The emerging view across the study was that thinking about the partnership structures in isolation would be a mistake and that the Council and its community planning partners need to consider these wider cross cutting issues as a whole in order to be able to successfully deliver their wider aims of involving people in decision making and improving services. With this in mind the recommendations in this section should be seen as applying to Community Planning Partnerships as a whole and not only to Scottish Borders Council.

7.1 The key role of community capacity building (CCB)

A large number of those participating in the study raised issues about the importance of community capacity building, not only in supporting community activity generally, but also in creating the conditions for community empowerment and involvement in the Area Partnership process. Most believed there is not enough community capacity building support to sustain activity locally and that this also had implications for delivering on commitments like the Locality Plan.

> "We no longer have the community workers we used to have and I think people have really suffered from the fact that they no longer have the support from these posts. We need many more development and community workers to help with work on the ground and the voluntary sector are being asked to do too much." **Local resident – focus group**

Though some organisations do get support there was a view that consistency mattered e.g. community councils and other representative groups need to be able to rely on good quality trusted community development advice and assistance if they were to be able to be key building blocks of participation as part of the "wider ecology" of community voices.

Investment in CCB needs to include empowering support which mobilises activism – and creates knowledge and skills for public participation. There are currently too few staff supporting local people in leadership positions to understand underlying ideas like inclusion, equality and empowerment.

> "The capacity building is not what the council's delivering in the borders. What I mean by Community Capacity Building CCB … is standing alongside the community and helping to animate people to become activists to support everyone in their community and build their skills and confidence, knowledge and experience to take their ideas forward. This really isn't happening in most places and the TSI hasn't got the reach or resources to do it all. These gaps

really restrict how communities can be involved in local structures and policy influencing roles." **Local resident – focus group**

Access to community capacity building support was also thought to be important in supporting groups facing additional barriers – even if approaches to issues like governance are relaxed to enable their involvement.

> " if the CF is to be an open fund you need officer capacity to help groups who don't have their own capacity to navigate the funding process if you want to be inclusive. That support wasn't put it in place and we therefore think that dropping the requirement to have a constitution isn't a good idea if this support is lacking." **(Equalities and cross community focus group)**

The emphasis on CCB was very evident in the survey, focus groups and stakeholder interviews, and it is very clear that participants from communities and all CPP partners view it as essential to the delivery and sustainability of community involvement. This widespread concern suggests that an overall Community Capacity Building strategy is needed to articulate a vision, describe potential supports and address the allocation of roles and resources to appropriately skilled agencies and projects, identifying gaps where required. SCDC would also suggest this is needed to enable compliance with the statutory duties in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This should be linked to the Community Learning & Development (CLD) Plan although it is recognised that this is an area of CLD which is poorly resourced. There is therefore a need to look self critically at what is being provided by a number of CPP partner agencies, where the gaps are and if they could do more.

> "I think we need a common understanding of what CCB and empowerment means and how it links to inclusion and equality." **Local resident – focus group**

Community Capacity Building Recommendations
24. Review the local Community Learning & Development Plan to asses where the relative strengths challenges in CCB are.
25. Develop a CCB working group involving Community Representatives the TSI, SBC other CPP partners e.g. NHS health improvement.
26. Consider strategic investment by SBC in capacity building services.
27. Initiate discussion with CPP partners, Scottish Government and other possible funders about where resources to support increased local CCB could be sourced.
28. Support communities themselves to access resources to develop their own community capacity building resources.
29. Lay the foundations for a holistic community development strategy for the Borders with corresponding local iterations linked to the Community Learning & Development Partnerships

7.3 Culture and relationships

Both local residents and many staff across all sectors recognised the need to achieve culture change if empowerment, locality planning and therefore the Partnerships are to be successful. It was felt by a significant number of participants that confidence in achieving this would be much higher if re-design work was independently facilitated. This issue partly arose from a sense that goodwill is being sapped by disappointment in the current process due to unhelpful organisational behaviours arising from the prevailing culture which many local people believe is not genuinely empowering.

> "The partnerships are often about telling us things that the Council have done and not really even asking if we agree. We've got the script and the PowerPoint and this is how amazing it all is, its post rationalisation."
> **Community rep – focus group**

Many people questioned whether the culture allowed for communities to really achieve change.

> "Ability to influence is key to the whole thing, if you are there and have a point of view and they just ignore that point of view there is really no point in being there." **Community rep - focus group**

This view was also shared by some respondents inside public institutions.

> "we need to make our interactions more like pulling in the same direction. Sometimes it can seem like a tug of war with at least four different interests pulling the same rope." **Stakeholder - Senior Council Officer**

For some, the impact of participation was not helping to address what they viewed as extremely serious real-world issues.

> "There is this sense of powerlessness about some issues like homelessness in our village when there are empty homes. No matter what we say it seems we can't get anything done." **Local resident - focus group**

Other participants were very clear that the traditional methods of groups like community councils may also be unlikely to suit local people and that the culture shift idea needed to encompass new approaches to community and citizen organisation in order to "move with the times". It was felt that the way people discuss things has changed, and we still have "traditional structures". Resolving this problem needs to look at supporting the development of common values, knowledge and skills.

Responses suggested that many of those in public agencies were willing to work differently but don't necessarily know how to do so. Addressing this requires staff training in how to work effectively with communities and in facilitation skills. For communities culture change will require developing their ability to work in more inclusive, accessible ways to bring more people on board. What is clear is that an underdeveloped culture for participation and empowerment affects works with the other factors described in this report to create conditions that can't deliver real partnership. One focus group participant perceived the reality as follows,

"I have gone to all the meetings for my area and there hasn't been a single one where the statutory agencies didn't outnumber local people and local peoples contributions are not recorded in the minutes despite people making articulate contributions and proposals." **Local resident - focus Group**

Culture and Relationship Recommendations
30. Use the Audit Scotland principles to develop discussion involving community representatives, partner organisations, Elected Members and others to develop local principles for community empowerment. 31. Co-produce a local scrutiny process which builds confidence in the empowerment processes for community planning, including the Area Partnerships, and which provide routes to raise issues and resolve disputes.

7.4 The Importance of learning

Achieving the outcomes identified by this study and the policy ambitions of the empowerment process will require all partners to be willing to learn from each other and from others.

Clarity about the potential and constraints on the Community Empowerment Act and other duties is important as a bedrock for this. The accuracy of how all partners interpret the legislative and policy framework for empowerment locally is a key issue it is therefore very important that the learning aims for supporting the empowerment process also involve clarifying the rights and duties affecting all partners in the process.

"I think time spent investing in awareness raising about standards of community engagement and what that really means would be time very well spent. This is required for all partners but probably more so the institutional partners" **Stakeholder – SBC Officer**

Where these are subject to interpretation, a respectful and progressive dialogue is needed to agree what these mean for the empowerment process in Scottish Borders especially since current differences in analysis are undermining progress.

It is worth emphasising that participants also thought that particular training for local reps was an important part of the process in order to ensure that they are equipped for their roles.

"Going back to the suggested training, it's really important that representatives are supported to understand their roles as representatives in terms of being an informed voice on behalf of a range of folk in their communities not just an individual voice. Sometimes this means they need to be expressing more than one point of view." **Stakeholder – SBC Officer**

The training agenda is also important for staff facilitating dialogues:

> "What the APs have been good at is understanding community needs but they do not have the skills to run a locally rooted sustained forum. The effectiveness and the skills of the facilitator is quite variable. There is not a recognition of the skills and expertise that different parts of the community could bring to co-designing or co-delivering the partnership process."
> **Stakeholder – CPP Partner**

Understanding the interplay between vison, rights, duties and potential for empowerment is crucial if partners can meet the challenges and chart a course to improvement. Central to this is reaching agreement on direction and this should be part of learning and other overarching activity,

> "Not sure there is much shared understanding of what better looks like. It would be really good if we good do a piece of work to explore this and adjust the direction before people become too disillusioned." **Stakeholder - CPP partner**

Useful learning from other locations

It is helpful to draw attention to examples of good practice from other parts of Scotland in the planning, promoting and implementation of community empowerment. This relates directly to the recommendations on the importance of learning from each other as local people, Elected Members, staff in public services including those in community planning roles.

Pro-participation policy has been developing over the last decade and has intensified since the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act in 2016. However, the full impact of its provisions across Scotland are still emerging. This is taking place in a context of other challenges arising from austerity affecting the funding of the services which support empowerment and the ability of public agencies to respond to needs expressed by empowered communities. Despite this there are many examples of where community planning partnerships have developed innovative approaches to their work. Some examples of these are listed below.

Promotion of the CPP concept and the structures for tackling inequality

Aberdeen Community Planning Partnership has produced an innovative video on the purpose and ongoing work of community planning in the city as part of its work to reach out to citizens.

https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/

Structures for delivering community empowerment

Aberdeen has locality structures, which target the most disadvantaged sections of the city in line with the duties of the Act. These are clearly described on the Council's website including how they relate to thematic aspects of the CPP's work and therefore how locality planning structures relate to wider decision making processes.

https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/community-planning-structure/

Communities are represented by Aberdeen Civic Forum which unites community councils and other kinds of community organisations in the City
https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/strengthening-community-councils

A helpful local policy framework

The Aberdeen process is supported by a wider Community Engagement group which has been operating since shortly after the Community Empowerment Act was passed.

https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/community-engagement-group/

This brings community level stakeholders and officers together to ensure that the Engagement, Participation and Empowerment Strategy which outlines how all residents of Aberdeen can contribute to life in the city is implemented.

Specific Empowerment Policy

SCDC advocates clear planning for participation and empowerment which integrates the purpose, policy and practice of the work including how resources are identified and deployed for community capacity building. In some areas this is done via the process of development of Community Learning and Development Plans.

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/community-learning-and-development-planning-2018-21

However in some areas, as is the case in the Scottish Borders, the CLD service is not currently delivering community capacity building for community empowerment which raises issues about whether this process is the best, or only place, for planning what is now a statutory duty to resource Community Empowerment and which by necessity needs to involve the work of other community planning partners such as Third Sector Interfaces, Public Health colleagues and others.

Several areas are taking a more integrated look at how to deliver empowerment aims and an example of this is West Dunbartonshire Council and CPP. They have commissioned SCDC to help them produce a West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Action Strategy and Action Plan based on widespread consultation over a period of a year with local organisations at local meetings and via an online survey.

https://www.scdc.org.uk/west-dunbartonshire

Empowerment and whole systems transformation

Perhaps the most complete example of how community empowerment is being linked to wider transformation and service reform approaches is in East Ayrshire Council through their Vibrant Communities initiative.

https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/CouncilAndGovernment/About-the-Council/East%20Ayrshire%20Council%20Structure/Safer-Communities/HousingandCommunities/VibrantCommunities.aspx

East Ayrshire have been implementing a holistic approach over a number of years linking service reform, culture change and a major investment in community development in the settlements across the area.

Among lots of very useful information about the approach is a film of the story of Vibrant Communities and an engaging newsletter on implementing of their transformation strategy.

A Community Based Action Planning

A key element of the process in East Ayrshire is community-based action planning. This is where communities themselves are supported to produce their own action plans based on a thorough process of community engagement locally. This grassroots process is key to the success of Vibrant Communities and the Council's website provides more information….

https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/CouncilAndGovernment/CommunityCouncilsAndAssemblies/CommunityCouncils-Information/Community-Led-Action-Plans.aspx

…and examples of well-established plans

https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/Cumnock%20Community%20Led%20Action%20Plan.pdf

Other authorities are also supporting community-based action planning and Argyle and Bute Council commissioned SCDC to support it by developing an online toolkit that communities could use to produce their own plans.

https://www.communitytoolkit.net/

Wider Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 implementation

It is important to consider how other key aspects of community empowerment are promoted and planned. A key aspect which is gathering pace in Scotland as result of the statutory requirements of the Community Empowerment Act is the process of Participation Requests where local people have new rights to engage in dialogue about how public services operate

Aberdeen City CPP has developed integrated promotional and support materials for communities wishing to make request and these are prominent on the CPP website.

https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Engagement-participation-empowerment-strategy.pdf

Dundee City Council has developed an e–Learning module on range of empowerment issues including participation requests, participatory budgeting and the provisions of the legislation itself.

https://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/service-area/neighbourhood-services/housing-and-communities/community-empowerment

Learning Recommendations
32. Develop a local programme of key knowledge for Community Empowerment, engagement and deliberative democracy aimed at local people, officers, partner agencies and Elected Members
33. Develop a programme of learning visits to other areas of Scotland where good practice may be developing as described above, and lessons are being learnt.
34. Reinvest the learning from the process into the other strands of operational work resulting from the review

7.6 Action on inequality

As the section on policy context clearly shows, the expectation is that Locality Planning is a key function of the Area Partnerships and is expected by law to address inequality directly and specifically. In Scottish Borders the authority has elected to deliver locality planning, and therefore the Area Partnerships in all areas, on a more universal basis. This is technically allowable in the legislation and other authorities have done similar things. This makes it more important than ever that there is a clear plan for ensuring that the Area Partnerships can support the emergence of, and respond to, an agenda that addresses inequality. This should address action on socio economic grounds and also in terms of protected characteristics under the Equalities Act https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/equality-act-2010 and Human Rights policy in Scotland http://www.snaprights.info/

Although intensive inequality indicated by high SIMD rates is rare in the area, participants raised significant hidden poverty in terms of low wages, high living costs, poor quality housing, particularly in the private rented sector linked to estates.

They also highlighted the cumulative impact of these and others in rural areas where issues like transport impacts on the ability to sustain work leading to the view that transport in some communities was really a "civil rights" issue. Locality planning and the fora which support it, need to be able to raise these issues sensitively and promote social solidarity not just amongst those affected buy it but also in the wider community if the issues are to have sufficient priority.

> "If you have a really good inclusive local forum you can create an understanding around different kinds of experiences that are hard for other people to access in day to day life. This can create a sense of acceptance and ownership of how to do things differently for the benefit of all in communities." **Equalities focus group CPP partner**

It was noted that working on equalities can challenge how many people see how local decisions should be made since,

> "We assume that the majority is best but sometimes the minority has such an overriding case that we really need to look at the needs of the minority" **Local resident - focus group**

In terms of empowerment of those experiencing inequality it is important to note that processes and structures need to anticipate how difficult it is for those experiencing inequality to become involved in tackling it. This was also highlighted by participants in the research,

> "I think of your struggling to survive on minimum wage, bringing up a family or trying to get the money for the card meter – you actually don't have the energy to turn round and say "I have rights and I will fight for these". **Local resident – focus group**

Some Area Partnerships are better at dealing with equality issues - and better attended by communities generally - challenging the view that one undermines the other. Several stakeholders also felt that the current processes lack clear links to poverty work, making it unclear where the work of the current child poverty strategy and the previous inequality theme group sat in the new structures.

How partners help or hinder raising equalities issues is incredibly important and we must be aware of competing values and interests that can bring people in communities into conflict over these issues.

> "These issues of power, skills and confidence are really fundamental for equality. We work in an area where over 30% of kids are in receipt of free schools meals and their parents are often migrant workers in the low wage agricultural economy. There is a real need for social housing and the Council wants to respond to this but white middle class home owners have objected. The community has worked really hard to get that housing through but the balance of power sits with powerful retired, middle class, white vested interests object. Power isn't just held by institutions it can sits with those opposing progressive change for their own reasons" **CPP Stakeholder**

Ultimately, the focus on tackling inequality was felt by many to be insufficient and that the economic and wider societal cost of failing to effectively address these was very high.

> "The lack of investment in equalities is already being felt as there is such a lack of cohesion. The biggest area of growth for far-right politics is in rural communities and the impact of issues like mental ill health and violence behind closed doors throws up all sorts of harmful behaviours and creates really vulnerable at risk communities. The lack of investment in these issues mean that there is a lot of costs stacking up for us in health and other areas" **Local resident - focus group**

Many of those responding to the research agree on the need to improve how the CPP reaches those affected by socio economic inequality, including those with long term health conditions or disabilities. This is also a duty in the Community Empowerment Act and it is therefore important to consider how the Area

Partnerships can provide routes through which these citizens in greatest need can be engaged.

A review of what key partner organisations, like the NHS and Registered Social Landlords, could bring to this challenge is needed. These CPP stakeholder organisations felt that in addition to their value as a contact point with tenants or patients, these organisations, through their public health and wider housing role activities, are a vital part of reaching people in order to better understand their experience and highlight the inequality they face. For this reason, there is more that could be done to engage these partners in supporting engagement and empowerment and there is clear willingness from them to do this, providing resources are available to support the process.

Action on Inequality Recommendations
35. Involve local organisations in reviewing the issues which address or inhibit delivering equality in Scottish Borders in terms of: o How resources are being targeted o How equality is being addressed in CPP plans and structures o How effectively communities of interest and identity are included in Local Outcome Improvement Planning and locality planning o Ensure that active meaningful involvement of those with lived experience of inequality is integrated into empowerment improvement plans and Community Capacity Building Strategy 36. Review NHS and Registered Social Landlords' role in tackling inequality with a view to maximising their willingness to help link these communities to Locality Planning.

8. The Community Planning Partnership - Next Steps

Based on these overall findings we propose that the Council, CPP and its partners in communities consider working together to co-produce agreed principles, refreshed structures and a more supportive environment for community empowerment. Early actions which could help achieve this would include:

Community Planning Partnership Recommendations
37. Dialogue to implement these findings should take place across the CPP and directly with communities.
38. Review existing community capacity support across the CPP with a view to improving co-ordination and increasing resources to support community empowerment at grassroots level - and participation in wider decision-making processes.
39. Identify, audit and promote existing opportunities for engagement and empowerment as part of an ongoing improvement plan linked to the CPP's aims and responding to the recent Best Value Review mentioned earlier.
40. Ensure that these actions involve a range of partner organisations e.g. learners' forums, residents' associations, CLD partnerships etc.
41. Additional resources for removing barriers to participation and delivering community capacity building should be identified by the CPP as a whole as well as SBC. In recognition of severe pressure on public sector budgets this may require bids to external funders.

8.1 In conclusion

Although this research suggests that there is limited confidence in the Area Partnership structures as they are currently formulated, there is no apparent desire for these to be discontinued completely now. Nor is there a widespread desire to return to the more firmly Elected Member led Area Forums. We would suggest that, if the recommendations of this study are accepted by the Council, Community Planning Partners and communities, a longer-term process of involving local people in redesigning more suitable structures is implemented.

The research suggests that integration of funding of the community councils, village halls and festivals into the Community Fund is not supported by those taking part. There is a need for renewed promotion of the CF and to review how local groups are supported to access the fund. Other concerns or perceptions of the Fund seem to relate peoples' views of the wider area partnership process.

We suggest that to maximise the value of the research:

- A working group consisting of local representatives, elected members and officers is convened, drawing on the findings.
- The working group should consider whether there are implications for the current locality plans.
- Feedback to each of the 5 Area Partnerships the results of this research, and in partnership with those who attend Area Partnerships - plus SBC officers,

CPP partner reps and local community reps, look at short term improvements for each Area Partnership"

Appendix 1

Focus Group - Topic Guide

<u>Area Partnerships</u>

What do you see as the main benefits of local people's participation in decision making?

What kind of processes and structures have you been participating in that worked well? (over the last 5 years)

What do you think of the Current Area Partnerships.

- As a process for delivering local empowerment?
- In terms of how effectively it is being implemented?
- Its strengths and any challenges?
- How could the approach be strengthened?
- What local people think of it?

How well do you think the APs link up with

- Other formal structures – eg Integrated Joint Health & Social Care, community planning, economic development or other partnerships?
- Community Councils or other community groups working on issues and services?
- Wider aims for involving and empowering local citizens?

What supports might Local people and community groups need to be more involved and effective in the partnerships in terms of

- Support and advice?
- Practical assistance?
- Being representative eg identifying issues and feeding back?

Generally – is there anything you want to add about participation across the borders and how it could be improved?

<u>The Community Fund</u>

- **How familiar are you with the new arrangements for funding?**
- **How well is the new Community Fund supporting community activity in terms of**
    - Supporting community activity across the area?
    - Targeting resources to those who need it?
    - The way decisions are made?
- **How do you think the new approach improves the previous arrangements?**
- **What do you think would strengthen the way the fund operates?**

- **The council is now planning to combine the funds for Community Councils, local festivals and the federation of village halls – what do think about this?**

Appendix 2

CPP Stakeholder – Topic Guide

This interview is designed to hear what a sample of key community planning partners and community infrastructure representatives think of the current arrangements and whether aspects of them need to be improved. The individual interviews are part of an approach which also includes an online survey and focus groups.

What is your involvement with the Local Area partnerships/community funding process?

How do you see them supporting community activity & empowerment locally?

What do you understand as the drivers for the development of the new Area Partnerships/new Community Fund arrangements?

What do you see as the strengths and challenges in the Current Area Partnerships

- As a process for delivering local empowerment?
- How effectively they are being implemented?
- Their strengths and any challenges?
- How could the approach be strengthened?
- What local people think of it?

How well does the Area Partnership link to -

- Other formal structures – eg Integrated Joint Health & Social Care, community planning, economic development or other partnerships?
- Community Councils or other community groups working on issues and services?
- Wider aims for involving and empowering local citizens?

The Community Fund

- How familiar are you with the new arrangements for funding?
- How well is the new Community Fund supporting community activity in terms of:
  - Supporting community activity across the area?
  - Targeting resources to those who need it?
  - The way decisions are made?
- How do you think the new approach improves the previous arrangements?
- What do you think would strengthen the way the fund operates?
- The council is now planning to combine the funds for Community Councils, local festivals and the federation of village halls – what do think about this?

Appendix 3

Elected Members – Topic Guide

What were your key reasons for supporting change in the <u>Area Partnership</u> Structures to the way that they are now in terms of:

- Compliance with legislation like the CE Act?
- For improving Local services in the community?
- For strengthening local democracy?
- Complimenting your own roles as members?
- Supporting comms to support themselves?

What do you think now about the Area Partnerships now?

- As a process for increasing empowerment?
- In terms of how effectively they are being implemented?
- What local people/community groups think of the partnerships?
- Its strengths and any challenges?
- What supports could strengthen the process and participation in it?

How well do you think the APs link up with:

- Decision making - Council services, Integrated Joint Health & Social Care, community planning etc
- Communities - Community Councils or other rep community groups working on issues and services?

<u>The Community Fund</u>

Why did you want to change the previous arrangements for funding?

How well is the new Community Fund currently:

- o Supporting community activity across the area?
- o Targeting resources fairly to those who need it?

What do you think would strengthen the way the fund operates?

Its proposed to combine the funds for Community Councils, local festivals and the federation of village halls into the community fund– what do you currently think about this?

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STANDING ORDERS – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Report by Chief Executive

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25 June 2020

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 **This report proposes amendments to the Council's Standing Orders to take further account of remote meetings. In order to allow one of these amendments, Standing Orders will require to be suspended, as changes had already been made in March 2020, therefore within 6 months.**

1.2 At its meeting on 26 March 2020, Scottish Borders Council recognised the need to take steps to reduce risks for its Members, staff and citizens arising from the Coronavirus (Covid-19), and to ensure the Council was still able to exercise its essential functions, some additions were made to Standing Orders. These additions to Standing Orders were made very early in lockdown and did not take into account the availability of software which gives remote access for all to participate in formal committee meetings, which can also be live streamed and are thus available to public and press.

1.3 With the experience gained in the operation of remote committees, further amendments are proposed to Standing Orders to match the actual operation of committees. It is proposed that Standing Orders are further amended to allow all Members and officers to access meetings remotely. Any references in Standing Orders to "place" and "venues" are to be omitted when a meeting is being held remotely in terms of Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. An alternative indication is to be put in place to voting by a show of hands when a meeting is being held remotely. When a secret ballot is being held, Members will email the Clerk(s) their preference in confidence.

1.4 At its meeting held on 30 August 2018, Council agreed to amend the deadline for the submission of Open Questions for Council from the second to the fourth working day prior to the Council meeting for a trial period of 3 months. It is now proposed that Standing Orders are changed on a permanent basis to reflect that timing. The Convener has the authority to accept questions submitted beyond this timescale.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **I recommend that Scottish Borders Council:-**

(a) Approves an amendment to Standing Order No. 49(a)(iii), "As a result of the Coronavirus outbreak, where an essential decision of Council or one of its committees is required in respect of a matter which cannot legally be delegated, the following procedure shall be adopted until 30 September 2020:
- **The Chair or Convener of the meeting (whom failing their Deputy) shall direct that the meeting will take place in accordance with Section 43 of the 2003 Act.**
- **Elected Members who are to join the meeting will do so using video or audio functionality;**
- **The meeting will otherwise be called in the usual manner, with the agenda and papers published on the Council website;**
- **The meeting will be available to view via a livestream**
- **A minute of the meeting will be taken and published on the Council website;**

(b) agrees that when meetings are held under Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, any references to "place" or "venue" are omitted in Standing Orders No. 5, 8, 10, 11(a), 15(d) and 23;

(c) agrees that Standing Order No. 41 is amended to include " or by an alternative indication when a meeting is being held remotely" after the wording "voting shall be by show of hands";

(d) notes that no changes are required to the wording of Standing Order No. 43 but where a meeting is being held remotely, and voting is being carried out by secret ballot, Members shall email the Committee clerk(s) with their preference; and

(e) approves the changes to Standing Order Nos. 38(a) and 39(a) to reflect that Open Questions are to be submitted by 10 a.m. on the fourth working day prior to the Council meeting.

3   BACKGROUND

3.1   At its meeting on 26 March 2020, Scottish Borders Council recognised the need to take steps to reduce risks for its Members, staff and citizens arising from the Coronavirus (Covid-19). In order to ensure the Council was still able to exercise its essential functions, an interim decision-making process was introduced and, to implement that process, some additions were made to Standing Orders.

3.2   These additions to Standing Orders were made very early in lockdown and did not take into account the availability of software which gives remote access for all to participate in formal committee meetings, which can also be live streamed and are thus available to public and press.

4   PROPOSED CHANGES TO STANDING ORDERS

4.1   In March 2020, Standing Order 49(a)(iii) was added, which detailed the procedure by which committee meetings would be held remotely. Part of that process states that the Chair, or Convener as relevant, and relevant officers in support will be present in one of the committee rooms at Council HQ and that press and public may also attend there. It is proposed to further amend that Standing Order to allow for all Members and staff to participate in the meeting remotely as required and also to accommodate public and press via live streaming. The further amendments are shown in red. Amended Standing Order 49(a)(iii) would thus be:

SO No. 49(a)(iii) "As a result of the Coronavirus outbreak, where an essential decision of Council or one of its committees is required in respect of a matter which cannot legally be delegated, the following procedure shall be adopted until 30 September 2020:
- The Chair or Convener of the meeting (whom failing their Deputy) shall direct that the meeting will take place in accordance with Section 43 of the 2003 Act.
- ~~The Chair, or Convenor as relevant, and relevant officers in support will be present in one of the committee rooms at Council HQ, and will manage the meeting;~~
- Other Elected Members who are to join the meeting will do so using video or audio functionality;
- The meeting will otherwise be called in the usual manner, with the agenda and papers published on the Council website;
- The meeting ~~will be open to the press and public to attend at Council HQ~~ *will be available to view via a livestream*
- A minute of the meeting will be taken and published on the Council website

4.2   Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 allows remote participation in and calling of local authority meetings by a local authority, which, in effect, is the current process being used for committee meetings. Within a number of Standing Orders, there is mention of venues and place i.e. Nos. 5, 8, 10, 11(a), 15(d), and 23. When meetings are called and held under Section 43 of this Act, any references with regard to "place" and "venue" need to be omitted. The notice calling the meeting will state that the meeting is being held in terms of Section 43.

4.3 Standing Order No. 41 includes that "voting shall be by a show of hands" unless the Council decides otherwise. When a meeting is held remotely, it is not always possible to see all Members or indeed, whether Members are raising their hands. It is therefore proposed to amend this Standing Order to add after this "or by an alternative indication when a meeting is being held remotely". In practice, Members are asked if they are in favour of a Motion or Amendment and then the numbers for each are included in the Minute of the Meeting.

4.4 Standing Order No. 43 gives details of the process when voting is by secret ballot for appointment to an office, a committee membership/appointment or a post. It is proposed that when a meeting is being held remotely, such secret ballot will be carried out by Members emailing the Committee clerk(s) their preferred candidate(s). In the event of an equality of votes between two or more candidates which affects such election, the clerk will draw the lots. No change is required to the existing wording of the Standing Order.

4.5 At its meeting held on 30 August 2018, Council agreed to amend the deadline for the submission of Open Questions for Council from the second to the fourth working day prior to the Council meeting for a trial period of 3 months. The complexity of some questions submitted can require research or collation of information to produce a suitable response. It is now proposed that Standing Orders No. 38(a) and 39(a) are changed on a permanent basis to reflect that timing. The Convener has the authority to accept questions submitted beyond this timescale.

5   IMPLICATIONS

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

5.2 **Risk and Mitigations**
There is a risk to the reputation of the Council, should Standing Orders not be amended to reflect the actual current working practice with regard to meetings being held remotely.

5.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**
An Integrated Impact Assessment checklist has been completed. It is felt that live streaming remote committees will allow members of the public greater opportunity to view the decision-making process of Council in operation.

5.4 **Acting Sustainably**
There are no economic, social or environmental effects resulting from approval of the recommendations in this report.

5.5 **Carbon Management**
Holding remote meetings of the formal Council committees, should reduce Member and officer travel across the area and thus reduce the Council's carbon emissions.

5.6 **Rural Proofing**
Live streaming remote meetings of formal Council committees will allow members of the public to view the Council's decision making process in operation without the need to travel to a venue.

5.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**
Changes are required to the Council's Standing Orders and these are detailed in the report. No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in the report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and Communications, and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Tracey Logan　　　　　　　　Signature ……………………………………….
Chief Executive

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jenny Wilkinson	Clerk to the Council, Tel: 01835 825004

Background Papers: N/A
Previous Minute Reference: Scottish Borders Council, 26 March 2020

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

Contact us at Jenny Wilkinson, Scottish Borders Council, Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA. Tel: 01835 825004 Email:
jjwilkinson@scotborders.gov.uk

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			SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL	
			DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS	
			AUGUST 2020 - JULY 2021	
Aug-20	**DATE**	**MONTH**	**COMMITTEE**	**TIME**
SAT	1	AUG		
SUN	2	AUG		
MON (SH)	3	AUG	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES (SH)	4	AUG		
WED (SH)	5	AUG		
THUR (SH)	6	AUG		
FRI (SH)	7	AUG		
SAT	8	AUG		
SUN	9	AUG		
MON (SH)	10	AUG		
TUES	11	AUG	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
WED	12	AUG		
THUR	13	AUG		
FRI	14	AUG		
SAT	15	AUG		
SUN	16	AUG		
MON	17	AUG	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	18	AUG		
WED	19	AUG		
THUR	20	AUG		
FRI	21	AUG		
SAT	22	AUG		
SUN	23	AUG		
MON	24	AUG		
TUES	26	AUG		
WED	26	AUG		
THUR	27	AUG	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	28	AUG	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
SAT	29	AUG		
SUN	30	SEP		
MON	31	AUG		
Sep-20				
TUES	1	SEP		
WED	2	SEP	SELKIRK CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	3.00 p.m.
THUR	3	SEP	DUNS CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.00 p.m.
FRI	4	SEP	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
SAT	5	SEP		
SUN	6	SEP		
MON	7	SEP	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	8	SEP	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
WED	9	SEP		
THUR	10	SEP	GALASHIELS CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	10	SEP	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 p.m.
FRI	11	SEP		
SAT	12	SEP		
SUN	13	SEP		
MON	14	SEP	JEDBURGH CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	4.30 p.m.
TUES	15	SEP	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	15	SEP	MAJOR CONTRACTS GOVERNANCE GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	15	SEP	KELSO CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.15 p.m.
WED	16	SEP	JCG: STAFF	2.00 p.m.
THUR	17	SEP	TRUST FUNDS	10.00 a.m.
FRI	18	SEP	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	18	SEP	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	19	SEP		

SUN	20	SEP		
MON	21	SEP	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	22	SEP		
WED	23	SEP		
THUR	24	SEP	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	SEP		
SAT	26	SEP		
SUN	27	SEP		
MON	28	SEP	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
TUES	29	SEP	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT & PERFORMANCE SUB	2.00 p.m.
WED	30	SEP	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
Oct-20				
THUR	1	OCT		
FRI	2	OCT		
SAT	3	OCT		
SUN	4	OCT		
MON	5	OCT	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	6	OCT	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EDUCATION)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	6	OCT	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
WED	7	OCT	JCG: TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
THUR	8	OCT		
FRI	9	OCT		
SAT	10	OCT		
SUN	11	OCT		
MON (SH)	12	OCT		
TUES (SH)	13	OCT		
WED (SH)	14	OCT		
THUR (SH)	15	OCT		
FRI (SH)	16	OCT		
SAT	17	OCT		
SUN	18	OCT		
MON	19	OCT	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	20	OCT	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
WED	21	OCT		
THUR	22	OCT	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
FRI	23	OCT	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	23	OCT	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	24	OCT		
SUN	25	OCT		
MON	26	OCT		
TUES	27	OCT		
WED	28	OCT		
THUR	29	OCT	**LEADERDALE & MELROSE BY-ELECTION**	
FRI	30	OCT		
SAT	31	OCT		
Nov-20				
SUN	1	NOV		
MON	2	NOV	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	3	NOV	MAJOR CONTRACTS GOVERNANCE GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	3	NOV	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 p.m.
WED	4	NOV		
THUR	5	NOV	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	6	NOV	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
SAT	7	NOV		
SUN	8	NOV		
MON	9	NOV		
TUES	10	NOV	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
TUES	10	NOV	KELSO CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.15 p.m.
WED	11	NOV		

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THUR (SH)	12	NOV	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI (SH)	13	NOV		
SAT	14	NOV		
SUN	15	NOV		
MON	16	NOV	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	17	NOV	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FINANCE/PERFORMANCE/TRANSFORMATION)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	17	NOV	TEVIOT & LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	18	NOV	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	3.00 p.m.
WED	18	NOV	PEEBLES CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.00 p.m.
THUR	19	NOV	EDUCATION PERFORMANCE SUB-CTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	19	NOV	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 p.m.
FRI	20	NOV	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	20	NOV	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	21	NOV		
SUN	22	NOV		
MON	23	NOV	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
MON	23	NOV	JEDBURGH CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	4.30 p.m.
TUES	24	NOV		
WED	25	NOV	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	26	NOV	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	27	NOV		
SAT	28	NOV		
SUN	29	NOV		
MON	30	NOV	**ST ANDREWS DAY HOLIDAY**	
Dec-20				
TUES	1	DEC	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)	10.00 a.m.
WED	2	DEC	JOINT MEETING LICENSING BOARD/LLF	4.00 p.m.
THUR	3	DEC	GALASHIELS CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	3	DEC	EMPLOYEE FORUM	3.30 p.m.
THUR	3	DEC	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	4	DEC	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
SAT	5	DEC		
SUN	6	DEC		
MON	7	DEC	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	8	DEC	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
TUES	8	DEC	HAWICK CGF SUB-CTEE	4.00 p.m.
WED	9	DEC	SELKIRK CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	3.00 p.m.
THUR	10	DEC	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	10	DEC	INNERLEITHEN COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	3.00 p.m.
FRI	11	DEC	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 am
SAT	12	DEC		
SUN	13	DEC		
MON	14	DEC	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	15	DEC	WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE	1.30 p.m.
TUES	15	DEC	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
WED	16	DEC		
THUR	17	DEC	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	18	DEC	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	18	DEC	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	19	DEC		
SUN	20	DEC		
MON (SH)	21	DEC		
TUES (SH)	22	DEC		
WED (SH)	23	DEC		
THUR (SH)	24	DEC		
FRI (SH)	25	DEC	**HOLIDAY**	
SAT	26	DEC		
SUN	27	DEC		

3

MON (SH)	28	DEC	**HOLIDAY**	
TUES (SH)	29	DEC	**HOLIDAY**	
WED (SH)	30	DEC	**HOLIDAY**	
THUR (SH)	31	DEC	**HOLIDAY**	
Jan-21				
FRI (SH)	1	JAN	**HOLIDAY**	
SAT	2	JAN		
SUN	3	JAN		
MON	4	JAN	**HOLIDAY**	
TUES	5	JAN		
WED	6	JAN		
THUR	7	JAN		
FRI	8	JAN		
SAT	9	JAN		
SUN	10	JAN		
MON	11	JAN	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	12	JAN	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
TUES	12	JAN	TEVIOT & LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	13	JAN		
THUR	14	JAN	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
FRI	15	JAN		
SAT	16	JAN		
SUN	17	JAN		
MON	18	JAN	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	19	JAN	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EDUCATION)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	19	JAN	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
TUES	19	JAN	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 p.m.
WED	20	JAN	JCG: STAFF	10.00 a.m.
THUR	21	JAN	STANDARDS COMMITTEE	10:00 a.m.
FRI	22	JAN	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	22	JAN	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	23	JAN		
SUN	24	JAN		
MON	25	JAN		
TUES	26	JAN		
WED	27	JAN	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	28	JAN	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	**10.00 a.m.**
THUR	28	JAN	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	29	JAN		
SAT	30	JAN		
SUN	31	JAN		
Feb-21				
MON	1	FEB	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	2	FEB		
WED	3	FEB		
THUR	4	FEB		
FRI	5	FEB	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
SAT	6	FEB		
SUN	7	FEB		
MON	8	FEB	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
TUES	9	FEB	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FINANCE/PERFORMANCE/TRNASFORMATION)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	9	FEB	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
WED	10	FEB	SELKIRK CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	3.00 p.m.
THUR	11	FEB		
FRI(SH)	12	FEB		
SAT	13	FEB		
SUN	14	FEB		
MON(SH)	15	FEB	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.

TUES (SH)	16	FEB	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT & PERFORMANCE SUB	1.00 p.m.
WED	17	FEB	SELKIRK CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
THUR	18	FEB		
FRI	19	FEB	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	19	FEB	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	20	FEB		
SUN	21	FEB		
MON	22	FEB		
TUES	23	FEB	WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE	1.30 p.m.
TUES	23	FEB	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
WED	24	FEB	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	3.00 p.m.
WED	24	FEB	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	5.00 p.m.
WED	24	FEB	JCG: TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
THUR	25	FEB	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL (SPECIAL BUDGET)**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	26	FEB		
SAT	27	FEB		
SUN	28	FEB		
Mar-21				
MON	1	MAR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	2	MAR	MAJOR CONTRACTS GOVERNANCE GROUP	2.00 p.m.
WED	3	MAR	INNERLEITHEN COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-CTEE	3.00 p.m.
THUR	4	MAR	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
THUR	4	MAR	EDUCATION PERFORMANCE SUB-CTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	4	MAR	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 p.m.
THUR	4	MAR	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	5	MAR		
SAT	6	MAR		
SUN	7	MAR		
MON	8	MAR	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
TUES	9	MAR	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
TUES	9	MAR	TEVIOT & LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 pm
WED	10	MAR		
THUR	11	MAR	GALASHIELS CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	11	MAR	EMPLOYEE FORUM	3.30 p.m.
FRI	12	MAR	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
SAT	13	MAR		
SUN	14	MAR		
MON	15	MAR	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	16	MAR	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	16	MAR	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
TUES	16	MAR	HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-CTEE	4.00 p.m.
WED	17	MAR		
THUR	18	MAR	TRUST FUNDS	10.00 a.m.
FRI	19	MAR	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	19	MAR	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	20	MAR		
SUN	21	MAR		
MON	22	MAR	JEDBURGH CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	4.30 p.m.
TUES	23	MAR	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	24	MAR		
THUR	25	MAR	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
THUR	25	MAR	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	26	MAR		
SAT	27	MAR		
SUN	28	MAR		
MON	29	MAR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	30	MAR	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 p.m.
WED	31	MAR		
Apr-21				

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THUR	1	APR		
FRI (SH)	2	APR		
SAT	3	APR		
SUN	4	APR		
MON (SH)	5	APR		
TUES (SH)	6	APR		
WED (SH)	7	APR		
THUR (SH)	8	APR		
FRI (SH)	9	APR		
SAT	10	APR		
SUN	11	APR		
MON (SH)	12	APR		
TUES (SH)	13	APR		
WED (SH)	14	APR		
THUR (SH)	15	APR		
FRI (SH)	16	APR		
SAT	17	APR		
SUN	18	APR		
MON	19	APR	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	20	APR	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	20	APR	KELSO CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.15 p.m.
WED	21	APR		
THUR	22	APR	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	23	APR	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	23	APR	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	24	APR		
SUN	25	APR		
MON	26	APR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	27	APR		
WED	28	APR		
THUR	29	APR		
FRI (SH)	30	APR		
May-21				
SAT	1	MAY		
SUN	2	MAY		
MON (SH)	3	MAY	**PUBLIC HOLIDAY**	
TUES	4	MAY		
WED	5	MAY		
THUR	6	MAY	**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS**	
FRI	7	MAY		
SAT	8	MAY		
SUN	9	MAY		
MON	10	MAY	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
TUES	11	MAY	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
WED	12	MAY		
THUR	13	MAY		
FRI	14	MAY	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
SAT	15	MAY		
SUN	16	MAY		
MON	17	MAY	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	18	MAY	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EDUCATION)	10.00 a.m.
WED	19	MAY		
THUR	20	MAY	GALASHIELS CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	20	MAY	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	21	MAY	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	21	MAY	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	22	MAY		
SUN	23	MAY		
MON	24	MAY		

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TUES	25	MAY	HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-CTEE	4.00 p.m.
TUES	25	MAY		
WED	26	MAY	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	3.00 p.m.
WED	26	MAY	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	5.00 p.m.
THUR	27	MAY	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
FRI	28	MAY		
SAT	29	MAY		
SUN	30	MAY		
MON	31	MAY	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
Jun-21				
TUES	1	JUN	MAJOR CONTRACTS GOVERNANCE GROUP	1.00 p.m.
WED	2	JUN	JCG: TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
WED	2	JUN		
THUR	3	JUN	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	3	JUN	EDUCATION PERFORMANCE SUB-CTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	3	JUN	INNERLEITHEN COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-CTEE	3.00 p.m.
FRI	4	JUN		
SAT	5	JUN		
SUN	6	JUN		
MON	7	JUN	JEDBURGH CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	4.30 p.m.
TUES	8	JUN	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FINANCE/PERFORMANCE/TRANSFORMATION)	10.00 a.m.
TUES	8	JUN	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	8	JUN	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
TUES	8	JUN	TEVIOT & LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	9	JUN	JCG: STAFF	10.00 a.m.
WED	9	JUN	SELKIRK CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	3.00 p.m.
THUR	10	JUN	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
THUR	10	JUN	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 p.m.
FRI	11	JUN		
SAT	12	JUN		
SUN	13	JUN		
MON	14	JUN	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	15	JUN	WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE	1.30 p.m.
TUES	15	JUN	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
TUES	15	JUN	KELSO CGF SUB-COMMITTEE	5.15 p.m.
TUES	15	JUN	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 p.m.
WED	16	JUN	COLDSTREAM COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
THUR	17	JUN	EMPLOYEE FORUM	3.00 p.m.
FRI	18	JUN	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
SAT	19	JUN		
SUN	20	JUN		
MON	21	JUN	MELROSE COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
TUES	22	JUN		
WED	23	JUN	EYEMOUTH COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	2.00 p.m.
THUR	24	JUN	**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**	10.00 a.m.
THUR	24	JUN	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6:00 p.m.
FRI	25	JUN	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	JUN	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	26	JUN		
SUN	27	JUN		
MON	28	JUN	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	29	JUN	AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	10.15 a.m.
TUES	29	JUN	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT & PERFORMANCE SUB	1.00 p.m.
WED	30	JUN	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
Jul-21				
THUR (SH)	1	JUL	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI (SH)	2	JUL		
SAT	3	JUN		

SUN	4	JUN		
MON (SH)	5	JUL		
TUES (SH)	6	JUL	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
WED (SH)	7	JUL		
THUR (SH)	8	JUL		
FRI (SH)	9	JUL		
SAT	10	JUL		
SUN	11	JUL		
MON (SH)	12	JUL	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES (SH)	13	JUL		
WED (SH)	14	JUL		
THUR (SH)	15	JUL		
FRI (SH)	16	JUL		
SAT	17	JUL		
SUN	18	JUL		
MON (SH)	19	JUL		
TUES (SH)	20	JUL		
WED (SH)	21	JUL		
THUR (SH)	22	JUL		
FRI (SH)	23	JUL	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	23	JUL	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	24	JUL		
SUN	25	JUL		
MON (SH)	26	JUL		

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