

# Public Document Pack



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 16 MARCH 2021

A MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held on TUESDAY, 16 MARCH 2021 at 10.00 am. The Chairman 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 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,

9 March 2021

| <b>BUSINESS</b> |  |         |
|-----------------|--|---------|
| 1.              | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   |         |
| 2.              | <b>Order of Business</b>   |         |
| 3.              | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>  |         |
| 4.              | <b>Minute (Pages 3 - 10)</b><br><br>Minute of meeting held on 9 February 2021 to be noted for signature by the Chairman (copy attached).   | 2 mins  |
| 5.              | <b>Economic Development - Galalaw, Hawick (Pages 11 - 14)</b><br><br>Consider report by Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy. (Copy attached.)   | 15 mins |
| 6.              | <b>Our Plan and your part in it: SBC's Corporate Performance and Improvement Report Quarter 3 2020/21 (Pages 15 - 70)</b><br><br>Consider report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy (Copy attached.) | 20 mins |
| 7.              | <b>Following the Public Pound Code of Practice (Pages 71 - 84)</b><br><br>Consider report by Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory. (Copy attached.)  | 15 mins |
| 8.              | <b>Proposed Finalised Food Growing Strategy (Pages 85 - 160)</b>   | 15 mins |

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
|     | Consider report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure. (Copy attached.)   |         |
| 9.  | <b>Adoption of Allotment Regulations following consultation</b> (Pages 161 - 186)<br><br>Consider report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure. (Copy attached.)  | 15 mins |
| 10. | <b>Hawick Flood Protection Scheme Update</b> (Pages 187 - 190)<br><br>Consider report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure. (Copy attached.)   | 15 mins |
| 11. | <b>Local Festival Grant Scheme - Payments for 2021/22</b> (Pages 191 - 194)<br><br>Consider report by Service Director Customer & Communities. (Copy attached.)   | 10 mins |
| 12. | <b>Any Other Items Previously Circulated</b>  |         |
| 13. | <b>Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent</b>  |         |
| 14. | <b>Private Business</b><br><br>Before proceeding with the private business, the following motion should be approved:-<br>“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.” |         |
| 15. | <b>Minute</b> (Pages 195 - 196)<br><br>Consider Private Minute of Meeting held on 9 February 2021. (Copy attached.)   | 2 mins  |
| 16. | <b>Eyemouth Operations and Maintenance Project</b> (Pages 197 - 202)<br><br>Consider report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy. (Copy attached.)  | 20 mins |
| 17. | <b>Sale of Howdenburn Former Primary School Site</b> (Pages 203 - 206)<br><br>Consider report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy. (Copy attached.)  | 20 mins |

## NOTES

- Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
- 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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**Membership of Committee:-** Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice-Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine, S. Mountford, M. Rowley, R. Tatler, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE held remotely by Microsoft  
Teams on Tuesday, 9 February 2021 at  
10.00 am

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

Also present:- Councillors S. Marshall, W. McAteer and D. Parker

In Attendance:- Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy, Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, Service Director Customer & Communities, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of 19 January 2021.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.**

2. **MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21**

2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing the budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 31 December 2020 along with explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn expenditure and income and the current approved budget. As reported to the Executive Committee of 17 November 2020 after the first quarter of 2020/21 a residual COVID-19 budget pressure of £0.628m remained, based on forecasts at that point. Forecasts had now been updated to the third quarter of 2021/21 and based on the 31 December a balanced outturn position was forecast at the 31 March 2021. The latest forecast included all known pressures including loss of income, confirmed Scottish Government funding, the effects of the continued freeze on discretionary spend and assumptions around delivery of Financial Plan savings. This position reflected an improvement of £0.628m from the second quarter. During the year financial returns had been made on a quarterly basis to ensure that expenditure associated with social care was included within a return collated with NHS Borders and submitted to Scottish Government as a COVID mobilisation plan. Funding had then been distributed via Health to the Council and this balanced position assumed within H&SC that all H&SC additional expenditure related to COVID-19 would be funded by Scottish Government through the mobilisation return process. As previously reported, there had been a significant impact on the delivery of planned Financial Plan savings during 2020/21 as a result of the emergency situation. Financial plan savings of £12.091m required to be delivered in 2020/21. An analysis of deliverability has been updated as shown in Appendix 4 to the report. Following the December month end £5.670m (47%) savings had been delivered permanently, £0.645m (5%) were profiled to be delivered by 31 March 2021 and £5.776m (48%) had been delivered on a temporary basis through alternative savings. It should be noted that the highly uncertain environment in which the Council was operating may impact on delivery of the remaining £0.645m savings which still required to be delivered before 31 March 2021. Full details of pressures, risks and

challenges and the significant majority of areas of the Council's operation where budget plans remained on track were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

- 2.2 Members discussed the report and received answers to their questions from the Executive Director, David Robertson. The Executive Member for Economic Regeneration and Finance thanked Mr Robertson and his team for their work and drew attention to the huge achievement, under current circumstances, of managers across the Council in identifying savings to project a balanced position at the end of the financial year. In response to a question about Specific Grant flexibility around the use of funds freed up from Early Years expansion Mr Robertson confirmed that the approach had not changed in that the funding was ring-fenced within Education and that the Council had made a commitment in full in terms of Early Years expansion and delivery of 1140 funded hours. In terms of the projected annual additional COVID-19 pressures detailed in a table within the report, Mr Robertson explained that the estimate of £0.604 impact on income from Council Tax was related to the estimated collection levels for 2020/21 including the impact of delays in house building. Clearly the pandemic would have a significant temporary effect on the local economy and affect income from fees, charges and Council Tax. The assumption was that there would be a bounce back but this would be closely monitored. Mr Robertson added that, where families faced financial difficulty in repaying Council Tax debt the Council had a range of flexible payment arrangements to offer.

#### **DECISION**

##### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) **note the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 31 December 2020, the pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of this position and the identified areas of financial risk as reflected in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) **approve the virements attached as Appendix 2;**
- (c) **approve the earmarked balances attached at Appendix 3, noting the support these balances were providing to the 2021/22 Financial Plan totalling £1.562m;**
- (d) **note the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 4;**
- (e) **delegate authority for the remainder of the financial year to allow the Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory to approve any year-end adjustments required for COVID-19 related funding expected late in the financial year; and**
- (f) **request the Corporate Management Team to continue to take all possible management action to balance the budget in the current year.**

#### **3. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing an update on the progress of the 2020/21 Capital Financial Plan and seeking approval for virements and the reallocation of funds. The monitoring tables in Appendix 1 to the report detailed actual expenditure to 31 December 2020. Key issues identified in the tables were summarised within the main report. The review of the capital budget, in light of financial implications of COVID-19 approved by Council on 5 November 2020, focussed on assessing the impact of the national "lockdown" on the construction industry and the associated inevitable delays in current and planned programmes of work. The assessment of COVID-19 impacts had continued during the third quarter of the year with a net budget variance of £4.033m now being identified. This included net timing movements from 2020/21 of £4.143m, the most significant of which were Coldstream Cemetery development £0.528m, Borders Town Centre regeneration block £0.653m,

Residential Care Home upgrades £0.685m and Residential Care Home Tweedbank £0.500m. Appendix 2 of the report contained a list of the block allocations approved for this year and the various approved and proposed projects to be allocated from them within the 2020/21 Capital Plan. A list of estimated whole project capital costs for single projects which would not be completed in the current financial year was contained in Appendix 3 to the report. In a discussion of the report, Members expressed disappointment in the delays in the planned programmes of work, but also recognised the reasons for this in terms of the impact of COVID-19. In terms of the pause in work to develop plans for two Residential Care Home projects in Hawick and Tweedbank, Mr Robertson explained that further work was being carried out on demographic modelling and on the strategy and vision around Residential Care in the Borders and he agreed to the request to bring a report back to a future Executive to provide an update on this.

#### **DECISION**

- (a) AGREED the projected outturns in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget and approved the virements required.**
- (b) NOTED:-**
  - (i) the budget virements previously approved by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory and the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure detailed in Appendix 2 under delegated authority;**
  - (ii) the list of block allocations detailed in Appendix 2; and**
  - (iii) the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3.**
- (c) AGREED to request a report to Executive Committee to provide an update on the Council's strategy and vision in terms of the Residential Care projects in Hawick and Tweedbank.**

#### **4. BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2021**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2020 and details of the projected balances at 31 March 2021. The report explained that the unaudited Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £6.315m at 31 March 2020. The projected General Fund useable reserve was projected, to remain at £6.315m at 31 March 2021 in line with the Council's Financial Strategy. Any year end overspend as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic would, however, require to be funded from reserves. The total of all useable balances, excluding developer contributions, at 31 March 2021 was projected to be £26.625m, compared to £29.866m at 31 March 2020. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £7.720m would be affected by any further capital receipts, developer contributions, interest credited and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year. In response to a question about the level of reserves Mr Robertson advised that, although he would prefer it to be higher, the level of reserves at just over 2% of revenue expenditure was within the required level based on the Council's risk profile.

#### **DECISION**

##### **NOTED:-**

- (a) the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2021 as contained in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report; and**
- (b) the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.**

5. **COVID-19 RESPONSE - PROPOSALS TO FURTHER SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS FACING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP**

5.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities presenting a number of proposals for the allocation of the Scottish Government "Addressing future need to support individuals at financial risk 2020/21" Fund. The report also outlined further measures to provide wider financial support to those individuals who required additional help. It was explained that Scottish Government announced on 20 October 2020, that a fund of £30m would be made available to Local Authorities to support those who were facing financial hardship as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) over the winter period and to continue the provision of Free School Meals during the forth-coming school holidays. The Fund had been split into 2 areas – Supporting Individuals at Financial Risk (£20m) and Free School Meals (£6.95m to cover the October, Christmas and February school holidays), with the balance of £3.05m expected to be provided to support school meals during the Easter holidays in 2021/22. Scottish Borders Council had been allocated approximately £330k of the £20m element for Supporting Individuals at Financial Risk, providing that any claims made were in accordance with the Fund's criteria and guidance. The £6.95M element of the funding for Free School Meals (of which Scottish Borders Council received £111k) had also been allocated to provide Free School Meal vouchers for the October, Christmas and February school holidays.

5.2 A Financial Insecurity Group, made up of relevant officers and led by the Service Director Customer & Communities had met to discuss the Fund and potential spend. Proposals for allocation were presented in the report which were based on Scottish Government guidance, main objectives and expected outcomes of the fund. All claims for this phase of the Fund had to be made by 31 March 2021. Approval was being sought in order to ensure that Scottish Borders Council expedited and maximised the opportunity to make claims in an efficient and timely manner using existing third sector and other organisations with established networks. The Service Director Customer & Communities, Jenni Craig, gave a summary of the proposals detailed within the report and provided further information to Members where requested. In the ensuing discussion Members recognised the fact that COVID-19 was pushing more people into poverty. They welcomed the funding but expressed concern that this would not be enough. It was noted that more information and identification of areas of need would be produced through the Anti Poverty Strategy Working Group. In response to a question, Mrs Craig agreed that an effective communications plan would be key and gave assurance that there would be a wide range of communications including through schools, to identify gaps and ensure the funding reached those most in need of support. In terms of timing, payments would be made as soon as possible but definitely by the end of this month.

**DECISION**

**AGREED:**

- (a) **to delegate authority, to the Service Director of Customer & Communities, to allocate funding as per the areas detailed below:**
  - (i) **Fund the expansion of the Connecting Scotland Project to address the shortfall at a local level;**
  - (ii) **Provide a one off emergency payment to vulnerable families across the Scottish Borders as detailed in Section 4 of the report;**
  - (iii) **Allocate funding to a range of existing third sector networks, Community Planning Partners (including Registered Social Landlords) and any other partnerships, networks, resilience groups or other organisations who were already working with vulnerable individuals, to assist with essentials in accordance with the guidance, based on the**

**principles of digital, fuel and food poverty and other items deemed as emergency essentials;**

- (iv) Provide payments for families with disabled children under 18 years old who were not eligible for the Child Winter Heating Assistance payment.**
- (b) in relation to the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy:**
  - (i) to approve an increase in the removal costs to £500 for moves within the Scottish Borders and £800 for moves from another Local Authority area, to take effect from 1 February 2021;**
  - (ii) to approve an addition to disregard income of up to £20 per adult and £5 per child as detailed in paragraph 5.3.2.**
  - (iii) to approve to disregard all Scottish Child Payment awards.**
  - (iv) to delegate authority to the Service Director of Customer & Communities to review and update the maximum removal costs which could be paid through Discretionary Housing Payments Policy on an annual basis.**
- (c) to a marketing and promotion campaign to raise awareness of the Scottish Welfare Fund; and**
- (d) that all claims, financial monitoring and evaluation would be undertaken in accordance with the guidance and requirements of the Fund.**

## **6. LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LHS) 2017-22 YEAR 3 PROGRESS**

6.1 With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of 20 August 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Corporate Improvement and Economy seeking agreement of the Annual Progress Report, setting out what had been achieved in the delivery of year three of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-22, and approval to submit this to the Scottish Government More Homes Division. The Council and its partners had made good progress since the LHS was formally approved. Work in 2019/20 included the delivery of 141 affordable homes; the submission of a very ambitious Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2020-2025) underpinned by up to £158m of investment; implementation of the first year of the Affordable Warmth and Energy Efficiency Strategy; development of the Warm and Well Borders project; initiation of the pilot of the Missing Shares Scheme in Hawick; undertaking of a study on wheelchair accessible housing in the Borders; and the completion of 82 major adaptations. These were just some of the achievements over the year. In addition to the Annual Progress Report appended as Appendix 1 to the report a detailed monitoring and evaluation matrix was appended as Appendix 2. The Scottish Government had increased its Affordable Housing Investment Programme funding allocation to Scottish Borders to £16m. An additional £3.377m was then made available via slippage from other Council areas, therefore the total annual grant spend increased to a record £19.375m. This had supported the delivery of 141 affordable homes in 2019/20, exceeding our annual 128 unit target. There were also 14 assisted purchases through Scottish Government's Open Market Shared Equity Scheme. Unfortunately due to the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic it was anticipated that annual affordable housing completions in 2020-2021 would be reduced to around 122 new homes. This would fall slightly short of the LHS annual target of 128 homes. The current SHIP identified 1,125 affordable homes for anticipated completion from 2021-2026. The report went on to detail work carried out on energy efficiency measures, the advice provided by the Council's Homelessness Team, support given to Private Landlords and funding support given for adaptations and repairs.

6.2 Members welcomed the report and the positive news it conveyed. In response to a question about whether a proportion of housing was prioritised towards young people and families officers explained that each Registered Social Landlord (RSL) had its own

housing allocation policy but offered to make an enquiry with the RSLs and provide Members with this information. The Chief Planning & Housing Officer agreed with a Member's point about the changes to town centres and opportunities for conversion to housing, particularly of upper floors of buildings. He explained that there was a significant piece of work ongoing involving RSLs and engagement with property owners to look at ways of re-purposing town centres.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the progress made in delivering on the strategic actions as set out in the Annual Progress Report and Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix, as appended to the report; and**
- (b) approve submission of the Annual Progress Report and Matrix to the Scottish Government More Homes division.**

## **7. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE EMPLOYABILITY CHALLENGE IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS**

- 7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy to highlight the challenges of increased unemployment and numbers of redundancies in the Scottish Borders. The report set out Scottish Borders Council's approach to employability and training in response to existing and new employability measures introduced by the Scottish and UK Governments. It sought the Council's endorsement for this work and also updated the Executive on actions being taken at a South of Scotland level. The report highlighted that unemployment had increased significantly in the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and was likely to increase further due to the end of the UK national furloughing scheme for employees. Young people aged 16-24 had been particularly affected. The report highlighted Scottish Borders Council's significant role in providing leadership in tackling employability and in supporting UK and Scottish Government employment and employability programmes. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an adverse effect in progressing the local delivery of these programmes. The report also set out the Council's involvement in the recently announced UK and Scottish Government employability programmes especially Kickstart, Youth Guarantee and the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment Programme (PACE). The importance of co-ordinating the work of the Borders Learning and Skills Partnership was highlighted together with the strategic approach being developed at a South of Scotland level. Appendix 1 to the report detailed unemployment figures and percentage increase in unemployment since 2019, for the Scottish Borders. The information included a breakdown by Ward and comparator figures for Scotland. Appendix 2 to the report set out the Council's involvement in externally funded employability projects.
- 7.2 In response to the challenges arising from increasing unemployment in the Scottish Borders, the Council's Corporate Management Team had established a Leadership Group on Employability. This was led by Rob Dickson, Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy. Also there was an inter-service Employability officer group which reported into this Leadership Group. In terms of the regional approach, a South of Scotland Education and Skills Strategic Coordination Group had established a sub-group of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP). The Group was chaired by Professor Russel Griggs and the Council would be represented by the Service Director Young People Engagement and Inclusion. Members discussed the report, noting the sobering statistics but welcoming the programmes of work being carried out across the Scottish Borders and South of Scotland. The importance was stressed of liaising with employers to find out what was required as was the need to keep up pressure for payment of the Living Wage. Members endorsed the action being taken by the Corporate Management Team in setting up the Leadership Group and in response to the request for

regular feedback Mr Dickson confirmed that quarterly updates would be provided either as part of or in parallel to reporting on corporate performance.

**DECISION  
AGREED to:-**

- (a) **note the scale of the unemployment challenge particularly facing young people in the Scottish Borders as set out in Section 3 of the report;**
  - (b) **note the additional Scottish Government and UK Government employability support measures as set out in Section 4;**
  - (c) **note the Council's involvement in existing employability measures as set out in paragraphs 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5;**
  - (d) **endorse the Council's approach to Employability as set out in section 5 and its involvement in the UK Government's Kickstart initiative, and the Scottish Government's Youth Guarantee and the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) programmes as set out in paragraphs 5.7 to 5.11; and**
  - (e) **note the establishment of the South of Scotland Education and Skills Strategic Coordination Group that would link into the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP) as mentioned in Section 6.**
8. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**  
**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 1 to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

**SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS**

9. **EARLSTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - RELOCATION OF BORDER COATINGS TO LAUDER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

A report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure was approved.

**MEMBER**

Councillor Aitchison left the meeting.

10. **TEVIOTDALE INDOOR BOWLING CENTRE, HAWICK**

A report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure was approved.

*The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm*

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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – GALALAW, HAWICK**

**Report by Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 March 2021**

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

- 1.1 This report provides an update on an economic development opportunity to allow business expansion at Galalaw Industrial Estate, Hawick in collaboration with South of Scotland Enterprise.**
- 1.2 During 2020, Officers from a range of services within the Council have collaborated with colleagues from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) to identify a development opportunity that will allow business expansion within the Galalaw Industrial Estate in Hawick.
- 1.3 The Council has the ability to accept £250k of funding from SOSE to allow for the design and implementation of road infrastructure to allow for future development at Galalaw.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:-**

- (a) Note the contents of the report**
- (b) Accepts the offer of £250k grant funding from South of Scotland Enterprise to allow for business expansion at Galalaw Industrial Estate in Hawick.**

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### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Galalaw Industrial Estate comprises an area of development land to the north of Hawick. The area has been included as development land within the local planning process for a number of years.
- 3.2 While there has been investment in terms of the creation of both retail and industrial services within the overall estate, parts of the land use zoning remain undeveloped.
- 3.3 Since its creation in April 2020, Officers have worked with SOSE colleagues to investigate a range of investment opportunities to allow for business or industrial expansion within the overall Galalaw Industrial Estate.

### **4. SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ENTERPRISE FUNDING UPDATE**

- 4.1 The Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 includes for business and industrial use zoning at site BHAWI002 covering some 6.6Ha. At the present time, this zone has not been developed on. The Council is also not in full control of all of the land.
- 4.2 Early concept work has identified that the most appropriate way to open up and access the BHAWI002 land is by way of a development road that joins the existing main Galalaw access road. The access road would then rise up to the north allowing development plots to be created in a variety of shapes and sizes dictated by business and industrial demand.
- 4.3 A proposal has been developed where an enabling works contract would see some 80 – 100m of new access road formed with services. This relatively short length of access road would release the first 1 or 2 development plots within the overall BHAWI002 land use zone.
- 4.4 Using permitted development rights available to the Council, it is proposed that the access road is commenced during March 2021. The works would be completed during the summer period of 2021 allowing for the formation of the first development plots to commence.

### **5 FUNDING**

- 5.1 The discussions with SOSE has identified that £250k of funding is available to cover the cost of this initial road access. Subject to Executive approval, the Council will receive this grant and apply it to the costs of the road infrastructure. There will be no funding required from the Council.
- 5.2 Officers are aware that SOSE is focusing on the provision of business infrastructure as part of its work programme. In collaboration with SOSE, discussions will continue in 2021/22 financial year to identify other suitable business or industrial development opportunities that will help deliver much needed business space in Hawick.

## **6 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES & ASSET MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 Council officers will work with SOSE in terms of the marketing and disposal of the first of the development plots on a serviced site arrangement.
- 6.2 It would be intention that the access road is adopted in the fullness of time so that it becomes part of the road network. Discussions have taken place with colleagues from Regulatory Services and these will continue as the work progresses to ensure that the road infrastructure is capable of being adopted.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

- (a) The £250k cost of access road works will be funded by South of Scotland Enterprise in terms of a grant.
- (b) Discussions will continue in 2021/22 between SOSE and Council Officers to identify and implement additional projects in order to deliver an investment on the same scale as the original £3M business infrastructure proposal.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- (a) The Council owns the land associated with the access road to enable the release of the first 1 or 2 development plots. Further discussions will be required during 2021/22 to investigate the ability to secure all of the land covered by land use zone BHAWI002. A further report on this will be presented to Council at the appropriate future point.
- (b) The Council is in control of the design and construction of the access road and the technical/construction risk will be managed within the £250k grant funding.

### **7.3 Equalities**

- (a) An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been carried out on this report.
- (b) It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

### **7.4 Acting Sustainably**

Officers will ensure that the construction of the access road is undertaken in as sustainable way as possible with particular emphasis on the working methodology to the ensure that materials within the site are able to the re-used wherever possible..

### **7.5 Carbon Management**

Officers will ensure that the construction works minimises the use of carbon.

### **7.6 Rural Proofing**

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

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

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

**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 & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Rob Dickson, Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy**  
**Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

| Name           | Designation and Contact Number  |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Steven Renwick | Projects Manager – 01835 826687 |

**Background Papers:** Report to Scottish Borders Council Nil  
**Previous Minute Reference:** Nil

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

Contact us at [PlaceProjects@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:PlaceProjects@scotborders.gov.uk)



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## **OUR PLAN AND YOUR PART IN IT: SBC'S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT QUARTER 3 2020/21**

**Report by Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 MARCH 2021**

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

- 1.1 **This report presents a high level summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 3 2020/21 performance information with more detail contained within Appendices 2a and 3. A condensed version of the report is presented as Officers responsible for compiling much of the 3rd Quarter data were heavily committed to managing the Covid-19 Response at the time of preparing this report. This has allowed the report to be available on the normal timescale for Executive. The fourth Quarter 2020/21 Outturn Report will be provided in June.**
- 1.2 SBC approved a revised Corporate Plan (Our Plan and Your Part in it 2018-2023) in February 2018, with four corporate themes. In order to monitor progress against the four themes, performance and context information will be presented quarterly to Executive Committee, with an annual summary in June each year.
- 1.3 The information contained within this report and appendices is also made available on the SBC website. This can be accessed at [www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance)

#### **2 STATUS OF REPORT**

- 2.1 Quarter 3 performance information is presented in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 2.2 The Corporate Management Team agreed a 'slim line' suite of appendices will meet the requirement to report performance on the Corporate Plan (Our Plan and Your Part in it 2018-2023) for quarter 3 2020/21. This will revert to the full suite of appendices for future quarterly reports.
- 2.3 Quarter 3 Community Action Team performance is reported in Appendix 3.

### **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- (a) Notes the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 6 of this report;**
- (b) Acknowledges and notes the performance summarised in Sections 7 and 8, and detailed within Appendices 2a and 3, and the action that is being taken within services to improve or maintain performance.**

## **4 BACKGROUND TO SBC PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 4.1 SBC approved a revised Corporate Plan in February 2018 (Our Plan and Your Part in it 2018-2023). Against a continued challenging external context, the plan presented how SBC will focus Services for our communities, set across four corporate themes:
1. Our Services For You
  2. Independent, Achieving People
  3. A Thriving Economy, With Opportunities For Everyone
  4. Empowered, Vibrant Communities.
- 4.2 In order to ensure that the corporate themes are addressed effectively, SBC's Performance Management Framework (PMF) was updated and presented to Council on 30 August 2018. This revised PMF set out how SBC would strengthen its performance management across both SBC Services and Commissioned services.
- 4.3 The Appendices reflect a quarterly reporting format structured around the four corporate themes and use a mixture of narrative, highlights, performance and context indicators.
- (a) Updates on Fit for 2024, Change and Improvement projects are contained in Appendix 1. These are monitored by Corporate Management Team (CMT) and through the SBC Financial Plan and associated monitoring (*please note this appendix has not been produced for Quarter 3 2020/21 in order to condense the performance report*).
  - (b) Appendix 2a contains updates on specific performance and context indicators, structured around SBC's 4 Corporate Themes.
  - (c) A schedule of indicators is provided for information at Appendix 2b covering quarterly performance reporting and annual reporting through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.
  - (d) To reflect the significant investment made by SBC, an overview of the work and impact of Police Scotland's Community Action Team is provided in Section 8 and within Appendix 3.

## **5 ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO SBC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI)**

- 5.1 Additional indicators have been added to this report including:
- (a) The indicators reported for Adult Social Care are under review. A proposal has been presented to the Corporate Management Team with the view that a revised set of indicators shall be incorporated in future quarterly performance reports.
- 5.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the presentation of 2020/21 performance reports with a combined Quarter 1 and 2 report being presented to Executive in January 2021 and subsequently, with this condensed version of the Quarter 3 report. The full Quarter 4 2020/21 outturn report will be provided to Executive in June 2021.

5.3 On this occasion we have been unable to provide Quarter 3 figures for the following Service areas:

- (a) Customer Contacts. Technical reports are to be developed in order to provide this information. Discussions are ongoing between SBC and the council's IT provider in order to progress this work and subsequently enable these figures to be reported.
- (b) Property;
- (c) Major Projects.

5.4 Previously reported figures have been revised as follows:

- (a) Q1 Community Resilience figures have been updated.

## **6 PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE THEMES**

### **6.1 Performance measures – summary of successes**

- (a) The determination time for planning (local developments - householder) was better than target (8.0) at 6.1 weeks overall for the quarter. The figure for local developments – non-householder was on target at 8.0 weeks. An improvement on the previous quarter.
- (b) The collection of Council Tax that was due has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the decision to pause recovery action for a significant part of the year. However, the collection rate is improving with a rate of 81.28% at the end of Quarter 3 2020/21, which is close to target and only 0.98% down on the same period in the previous year.
- (c) The average time taken to process Stage Two and Escalated complaints remains positive and within the target of 20 working days.
- (d) At the end of Quarter 3, 68% of Valuation Roll amendments were completed within 3 months, which is above the target of 50%, although a slight reduction on the previous quarter (Quarter 2 – 69%). At the end of Quarter 3, 93% of new properties were added to the Council Tax Valuation list within 3 months, exceeding the 91% target.
- (e) Looked After Children (LAC) (all ages) in community family based placements surpassed the 80% target in Quarter 3 2020/21, with 81% of LAC in Community Family Based Placements rather than residential. LAC aged 12+ in this category remains below the 70% target at 62%.
- (f) Performance against the Adult Social Care indicators remains positive and above target in Quarters 2 & 3.
- (g) 91.3% of council properties (Industrial and Commercial) were occupied at the end of Quarter 3. This is above the 88% target and greater than the annual figure for 2019/20.

- (h) As restrictions eased during Quarter 3 the number of volunteer led walks increased through the Walk It programme. The number of people volunteering rose from 151 in Quarter 2, to 159 at the end of Quarter 3.

## 6.2 Performance measures – summary of challenges

- (a) Performance relating to Stage 1 complaints handling has remained out with targets for the last three quarters. Stage 1 complaints took an average of 6.7 days to process in Quarter 3, and improvement on quarter 2 (8.8) – the current target is 5 days. The percentage of complaints closed within timescale fell out with targets across all stages in quarter 3 (Stage one, Stage 2 and Escalated).
- (b) School attendance remains just below targets in Quarter 3. Secondary attendance improved in quarter 3 (94.9%) compared to the previous quarter (94.2%). However, Primary attendance fell slightly in quarter 3 (92.6%) when compared to quarter 2 (92.9%).
- (c) 68% of mediation cases have shown agreement/improvement following mediation in the year to date in 2020/21 against a baseline target of 80%. The decrease in success rate is largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown meaning there is little opportunity to conduct mediation through face-to-face contact.
- (d) There has been a decrease of 83 referrals to mediation in the year to date in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20 for the same period, which equates to a 65.9% decrease. The decrease in referrals is largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown and the inability to conduct face-to-face mediation. Where possible mediation is conducted through other than face-to-face contact.

## 7 COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM – SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY AND IMPACT

- 7.1 An infographic summary on the impact of the Community Action Team (CAT) is provided at Appendix 3.

During Quarter 3 of 2020/21 the CAT has:

- Carried out 393 hours of High Visibility foot patrols and 1,509 hours of mobile patrols;
- Carried out 71 static road checks;
- Issued 62 warning letters to under 18s regarding anti-social behaviour;
- Issued 394 parking tickets;
- Carried out 73 Person Drug searches (53% positive) and 23 Premises Drug searches (100% positive);

- 7.2 Examples of “Tasking” in Quarters 2 included:

- (a) Off road motorcycle issues, youth anti-social behaviour and the execution of drugs warrants in Berwickshire;
- (b) Youth anti-social behaviour issues in Cheviot;
- (c) Off-road motorcycle issues in Eildon;
- (d) Drugs warrants executed in Teviot;

- (e) Youth anti-social behaviour and the execution of drugs warrants in Tweeddale.

## **8 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Financial**

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

### **8.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Effective performance management arrangements will ensure that services, and those providing services on behalf of SBC, are aware of any weaknesses and can take corrective action in a timely manner, therefore mitigating any risks more effectively. The Council's Risk Management Policy and framework ensures that all services and services delivered by third parties, identify and manage risks to the achievement of their objectives, with senior management providing appropriate levels of oversight. Performance should be enhanced by having robust risk management arrangements in place. In response to the Best Value Assurance Audit of SBC during 2019, a Best Value Audit Action Plan was created. This action plan includes provision for strengthening SBC's approach to performance reporting.

### **8.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no adverse equality/diversity implications. Performance reporting may help the Council to identify and address any equality/diversity issues and improve processes and procedures.

### **8.4 Acting Sustainably**

Economic, social and environmental impact of SBC actions can be monitored more effectively if there are effective performance reporting arrangements in place.

### **8.5 Carbon Management**

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

### **8.6 Rural Proofing**

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

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

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

## **9 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications

have been consulted and any comments received are incorporated in the final report.

## 10 FUTURE REPORTS

10.1 Corporate Performance for Quarter 4 2020/21, including the 2020/21 Annual position, will be reported to the Executive Committee on 8 June 2021.

### Approved by

**Rob Dickson**  
**Executive Director**  
**Corporate Improvement and Economy Signature .....**

### Author(s)

| Name              | Designation and Contact Number           |
|-------------------|--|
| Melanie Hermiston | Business Services Officer – 01835 826803 |
|                   |  |

### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** 19 January 2021

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

Contact us at: Policy, Planning & Performance, Scottish Borders Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, Tel 01835 824000, [performance@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:performance@scotborders.gov.uk)

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## APPENDIX 2a: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

**Trend Key** (trends are typically represented over the preceding year)

|  |                                      |  |                                      |  |                     |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
|  | Increasing value - improvement       |  | Decreasing value – improvement       |  | Broadly level trend |
|  | Increasing value - deterioration     |  | Decreasing value - deterioration     |  |                     |
|  | Increasing value – context indicator |  | Decreasing value – context indicator |  |                     |

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 **OCTOBER** to **DECEMBER 2020**



### Planning Permission – Average Time to Determine (Weeks)

| Performance Indicators       | Basis                      | 17-18 | 18-19 | Q3 19-20 | Q4 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | 19-20 | Target | Trend | Status |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| Major Developments           | Average Weeks to determine | 12.4  | 13.9  | 12.9     | -        | -        | -        | 12.9  | -      | n/a   | n/a    |
| Local Devs – Non Householder | Average Weeks to determine | 7.7   | 9.0   | 7.4      | 8.3      | 9.7      | 9.2      | 8.0   | 8.0    | ↗     |        |
| Local Devs –Householder      | Average Weeks to determine | 6.8   | 7.0   | 6.1      | 5.9      | 6.2      | 6.1      | 6.2   | 8.0    | ↗     |        |

### Planning Permission – Application Numbers

| Performance Indicators | Basis                  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Number of applications | Total number in period | 1,369 | 1,200 | 257      | 324      | 317      | -      | ↗     | Context |

#### Observations:

Adjusted data for time to determine continues to be received from Scottish Government twice yearly.

**Q1 Local Devs – Non Householder** - Although performance has dropped back slightly by this measure, it continues to remain above the national average (11.9). Q2 Performance improved slightly during this quarter and improved compared to the Scottish average, at three weeks faster in determination period compared to the national position (12.2).

**Q1 Local Devs – Householder** - A slight drop in performance on the previous quarter by this measure, but still ahead of target and nearly two weeks faster than the

national average (7.9). Q2 Performance remaining relatively steady, ahead of target and about two weeks faster than the national average (8.3).

A total of 317 **planning permission applications** have been received during Q3 2020/21. This is 32 more (11%) than the figure of 285 received during the same quarter in 2019/20.

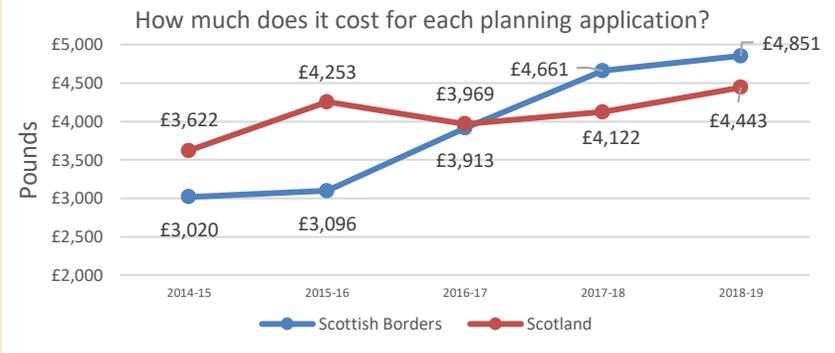
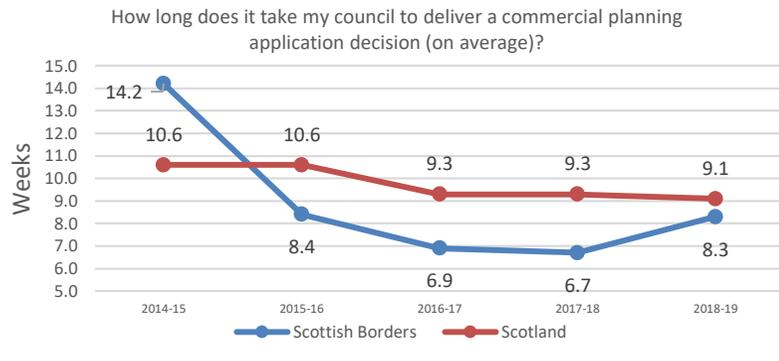
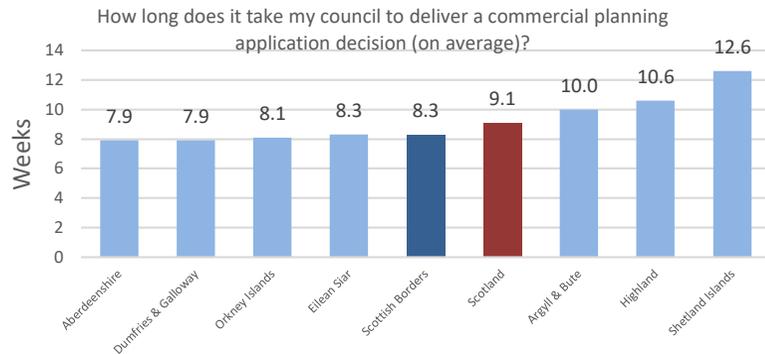
# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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### Planning – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Waste and Recycling

\*SEPA verified figs

| Performance Indicators                  | Basis                                  | *2018  | 2019   | Q1 2020 | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Target | Trend | Status |
|---|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Household Waste Recycled                | % Recycled rolling annual basis        | 38.80% | 47.61% | 52.20%  | 55.29%  | 55.86%  | -      | ↗     | n/a    |
| Household Waste Landfilled              | % Landfilled rolling annual basis      | 60.84% | 28.67% | 14.69%  | 0.03%   | 0.06%   | -      | ↗     | n/a    |
| Household Waste Other Treatment         | % Other Treatment rolling annual basis | 0.36%  | 23.72% | 33.10%  | 44.68%  | 44.07%  | -      | ↗     | n/a    |
| Recycling – Community Recycling Centres | % Recycled rolling annual basis        | 57.95% | 63.56% | 70.98%  | 74.01%  | 74.09%  | -      | ↗     | n/a    |



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#### Observations:

**Note: Recycling data is reported on a rolling annual basis. Years relate to calendar years to align to SEPA reporting. Q2 2020 relates to the year to June 2020.**

**It is important to note that the data used to calculate this indicator has not yet been validated by SEPA and it is possible that some material streams will need to be re-categorised. This may result in an adjustment to performance for the year.**

The Council's Waste and Recycling Performance Indicators have shown significant improvement since June 2019. This follows the closure of the Council's landfill site and the commencement of a new residual waste contract, which involves the pre-treatment of

waste to extract potentially recyclable material prior to treatment by Energy from Waste. The latest performance figures show the impact of a full year under the contractual arrangements and we therefore do not anticipate further significant improvements at this stage.

It is worth noting that Covid-19 has seen a significant increase in the quantity of waste generated by households as a result of lockdowns and increased home working. For example we have seen glass tonnage increase by up to 40% in some months. At this stage the impact on household recycling performance appears to have been limited. However further analysis is required to understand the full impact.

The **household waste recycling** performance has increased by 0.57%, from 55.29% to 55.86%. This is the combined result of seasonal fluctuations in waste generation and the new residual waste contract.

The **household waste landfill** rate has stayed fairly static, increasing by 0.03% from 0.03% to 0.06%.

The **household waste other treatment** rate has decreased by 0.61%, from 44.68% to 44.07%. This is the combined result of seasonal fluctuations in waste generation and the new residual waste contract.

The **Community Recycling Centre** performance has stayed fairly static, increasing by 0.08% from 74.01% to 74.09%.

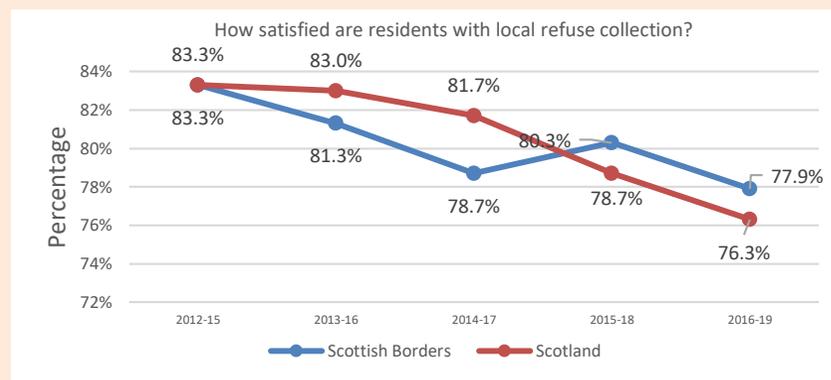
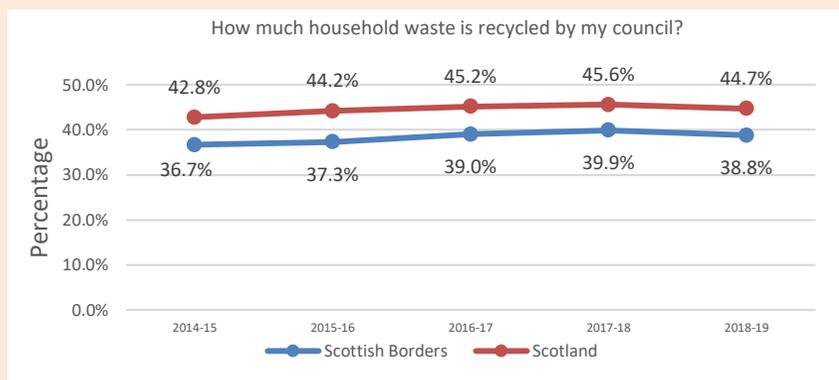
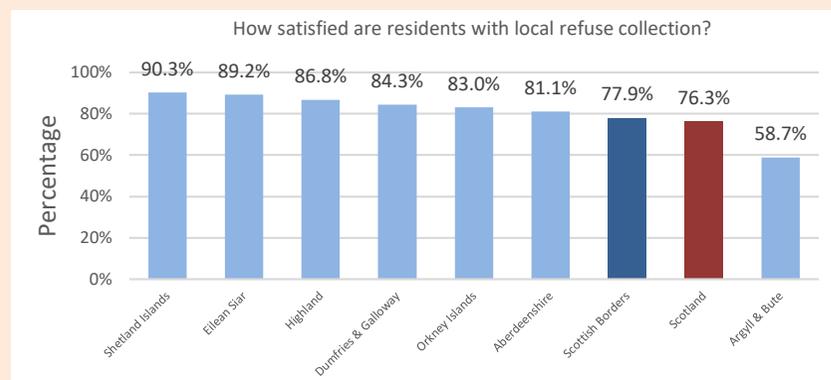
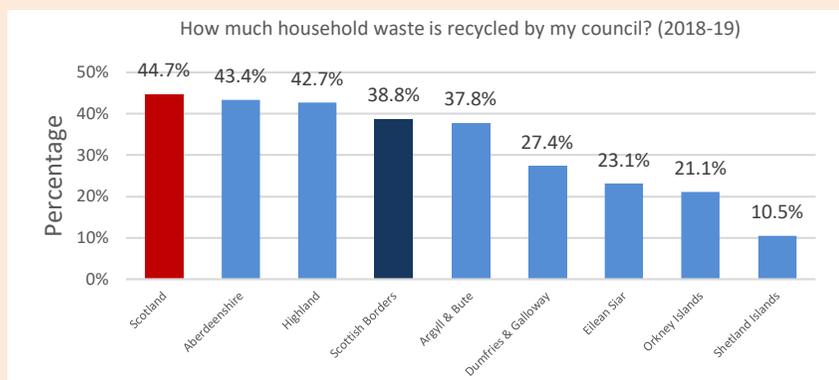
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## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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### Waste – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



**Note: The impact of the residual waste contract which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 will not yet be reflected within the Scottish Borders figures on this page.**

Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

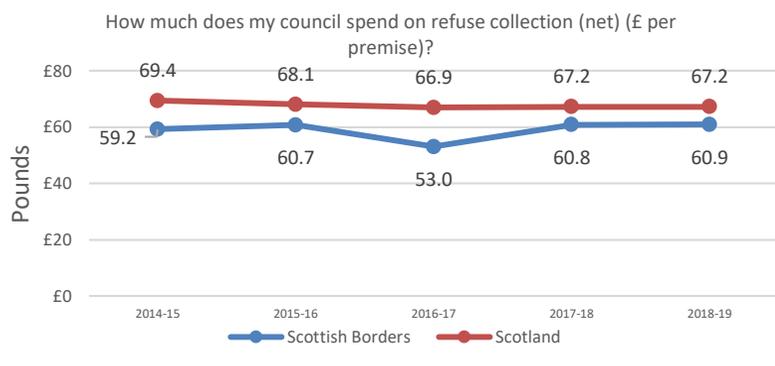
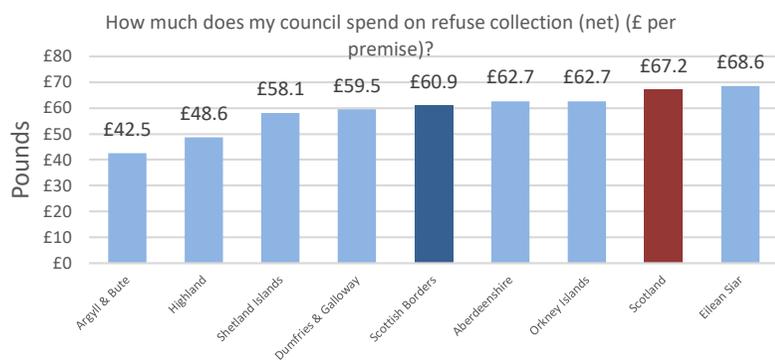
# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Waste – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)

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Note: The impact of the residual waste contract which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 will not yet be reflected within the Scottish Borders figures on this page.

Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Energy Use (26 key Sites)

\* Vs Q3 2019-20

| Performance Indicators  | Basis         | 18-19      | 19-20      | Q1 20-21  | Q2 20-21  | Q3 20-21  | Target | Trend * | Status |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|--------|
| Electricity Consumption | Kwh in period | 7,921,217  | 7,567,839  | 1,035,561 | 1,197,382 | 2,199,464 | -      | ↓       | n/a    |
| Gas Consumption         | Kwh in period | 11,744,733 | 12,183,596 | 1,810,396 | 1,175,895 | 3,923,696 | -      | ↓       | n/a    |



Pages

#### Observations:

Note: Figures relate to 26 key sites and include some estimated bills so will be subject to minor changes. Overall, energy consumption was 3% lower than the same period last year.

**Electricity consumption** in Q3 was 3% lower than the same period last year. Electricity usage decreases are linked to:

- LED lighting upgrades;
- Solar PV installations;
- CHP installations

**Gas consumption** decreased by 3% in Q3 compared to the same period last year. This reduction in usage is partly linked to milder weather this year but, conversely, we have also seen increases at some sites linked to the increased ventilation requirement due to Covid-19.

#### Actions taken to improve performance

As part of the transformation programme of works the Energy Efficiency Programme (EEP) is focussed on

delivering cost effective energy reductions that represent best value for money while reducing energy consumption and costs as much as possible.

#### What we have done:

- Continued with our programme of LED upgrades on various sites;
- Continued with our programme of installing solar panel arrays;
- Retrofitting oil heating systems with biomass boilers;
- Converting oil boilers to natural gas;
- Installing gas CHP which generates electricity while capturing heat that would otherwise be wasted and using it in our buildings;
- Upgraded aging storage heaters with high heat retention heaters or new quick reacting closely controlled electric heaters;
- Replacing thermally inefficient glazing with high efficiency double glazing.

#### What's coming up:

- Further phases of LED lighting projects;
- Construction phase completing a multi-site energy

efficiency project procured through the Non-Domestic Energy Efficiency Framework (NDEEF);

- Looking at ways to maximise renewable energy potentially by installing battery systems;
- Conducting option appraisals to eliminate expensive and high carbon fuels from our estate;
- We are identifying and planning priority work at our most inefficient properties and highest consumers;
- We are working closely with our managed services partners to identify and implement efficiency opportunities;
- We continue to work hard with our new buildings to ensure they are run as efficiently as possible;
- We are actively engaging with new building projects at design concept stage to ensure our new building stock is as efficient as possible and renewable energy opportunities are realised.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Road Casualties

| Performance Indicators             | Basis            | 2018 | 2019 | Q1 20 | Q2 20 | Q3 20 | Q4 20 | 2020 | Trend | Status  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|---------|
| Fatalities on Borders Roads        | Number in period | 11   | 6    | 2     | 0     | 1     | 2     | 5    | ↘     | Context |
| Seriously Injured on Borders Roads | Number in period | 65   | 68   | 20    | 5     | 16    | 6     | 47   | ↘     | Context |

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#### Observations:

Note that Road Casualty figures here are reported on a calendar year basis, by quarter.

Tragically there were 2 **fatalities resulting from road accidents in the Scottish Borders** in Q4 of 2020. This compares to a figure of 1 in the previous quarter, while there were no fatalities in the equivalent period of 2019. Overall, in 2020 there were 5 fatalities on Borders Roads. This is a reduction of 1 fatality when compared to 2019 and 6 less than in 2018.

Based on un-validated data there were 6 people **seriously injured as a result of road accidents** in the Scottish Borders in Q4 of 2020. This is 2 more than the equivalent period of 2019 but 10 less than the previous quarter in 2020. The total number of people seriously injured on Borders Roads in 2020 is 21 fewer than in 2019.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Customer Advice & Support Services

| Performance Indicators                      | Basis  | 18-19   | 19-20   | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status   |
|---|--|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Housing Benefit New Claims                  | Average time to process in days                        | 24.20   | 13.63   | 21.08    | 14.42    | 15.09    | 23.00  | ↗     | On Track |
| Housing Benefit Change Events               | Average time to process in days                        | 6.51    | 4.90    | 4.16     | 6.39     | 3.94     | 7.00   | ↗     | On Track |
| Welfare Benefits – People Contacting Us     | Number in period                                       | 1,329   | 1,264   | 278      | 272      | 296      | -      | ↘     | n/a      |
| Welfare Benefits – Monetary Gain            | £m in additional benefits, cases closed in the quarter | £4.537m | £4.916m | £1.174m  | £1.074m  | £1.030m  | -      | ↘     | n/a      |
| Welfare Benefits – Cumulative Monetary Gain | £m in additional benefits, cases closed ytd            | £4.537m | £4.916m | £1.174m  | £2.248m  | £3.277m  | -      | ↘     | n/a      |



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### Observations:

**Housing Benefit:** We are continuing to prioritise new Housing Benefit claims to help assist claimants who may be required to claim Universal Credit instead of Housing Benefit.

**Welfare Benefits:** The number of referrals received in Q3 2020/21 is almost on par with the same period last year, with only 1 fewer referrals received in 20/21. Covid-19 has impacted on the monetary gains, with £40.3k less in monetary gains for Q3 2020/21 when compared to the same period in 2019/20 with the cumulative total £172.6k less than the same period in 2019/20. Referrals for appeals reduced and

The Tribunals Service are providing appeal hearings which left several cases to be resolved. Macmillan referrals have reduced which has followed a national trend and appears to be linked to a reduction in cancer diagnoses. However, the monetary gains are at similar levels to last year. The referrals to the Early Years Service have also reduced but gains have increased on last year with particularly good take up levels in Best Start Grants, which is paid at three stages from birth to starting primary school.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Customer Contact

| Performance Indicators                         | Basis            | 18-19                     | 19-20            | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|--|------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Voice interactions logged by contact centres   | Number in period | 94.1k                     | 78.7k<br>11mths  | n/a      | n/a      | n/a      | -      | n/a   | n/a     |
|  |                  | 83.4k<br>11mths<br>equiv  |                  |          |          |          |        |       |         |
| Face to face interactions – logged through CRM | Number in period | 58.5k                     | 49.2k<br>11mths  | n/a      | n/a      | n/a      | -      | n/a   | Context |
|  |                  | 52.4k<br>11mths<br>equiv  |                  |          |          |          |        |       |         |
| Total Customer Contacts                        | Number in period | 162.2k                    | 138.5k<br>11mths | n/a      | n/a      | n/a      | -      | n/a   | Context |
|  |                  | 144.5k<br>11mths<br>equiv |                  |          |          |          |        |       |         |

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#### Observations:

*Note: It has not been possible on this occasion to report contact numbers. There is a need for technical reports to be developed in order for these measures to be reported.*

We actively promote the website and the Customer Advice & Support Service (0300 100 1800) telephone number. We are also continually working to increase the number of services delivered digitally and to encourage self-service.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Council Tax Collection



| Performance Indicators             | Basis             | 18-19  | 19-20  | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Council Tax Due that was collected | % in period (ytd) | 96.84% | 96.62% | 29.79%   | 55.48%   | 81.28%   | 82.26% | ↗     |        |

#### Observations:

The **collection of Council Tax** has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the decisions to pause recovery action for a significant part of the year. The collection rate is improving but at the end of Q3 it is down slightly by 0.98% compared to the same time last year. Despite the continuing significant challenges we expect the collection level to further improve but it is likely that at 31st March the collection will still be down in comparison to the previous year.

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### Property



| Performance Indicators | Basis                   | 18-19   | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Target  | Trend | Status  |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------|----------|----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Capital receipts       | Cumulative in year £m   | £1.444m | £676k | £14k     | £151k    | £1.185m | ↘     | Context |
| Properties surplus     | Number at end of period | 30      | 39    | 42       | 41       | -       | ↘     | Context |
| Properties marketed    | Number at end of period | 5       | 7     | 7        | 7        | -       | →     | Context |
| Properties under offer | Number at end of period | 16      | 15    | 16       | 15       | -       | ↘     | Context |

#### Observations:

The market has been severely affected as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Two sales were completed in Q1 generating a receipt of £14,200. A further sale in Q2 resulted in **total receipts** for the year of £151,217. The cumulative target for the year has been reduced

significantly to reflect little progress with sales or prospect of interest in properties currently being marketed due to the on-going pandemic. No further assets have been declared **surplus to the Councils requirements** in Q2. There are still 7 **properties currently being actively marketed** and 15 now **under**

**offer**. The situation continues to be reviewed with our selling agents and the sales of industrial development sites are still being pursued with interested parties.

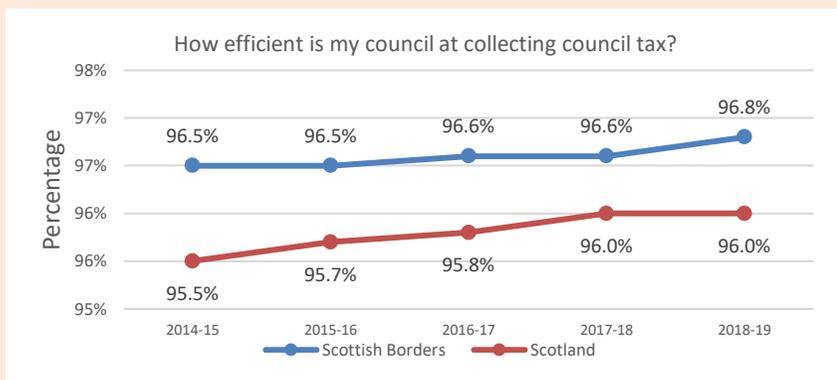
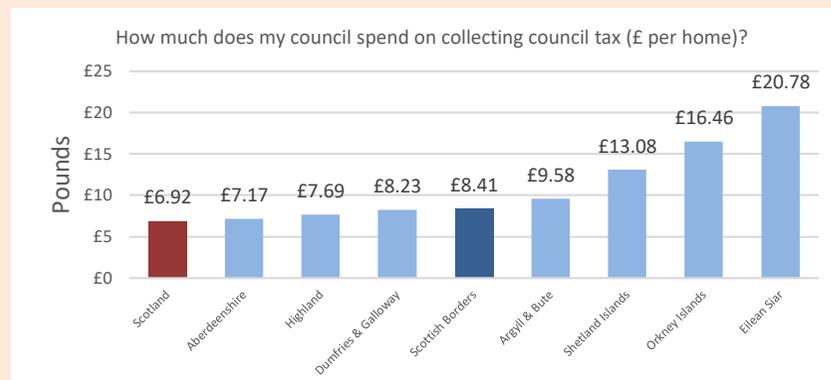
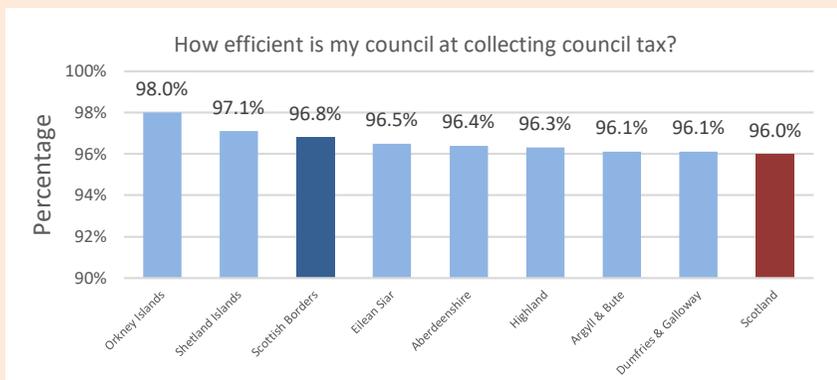
# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

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### Council Tax Collection – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

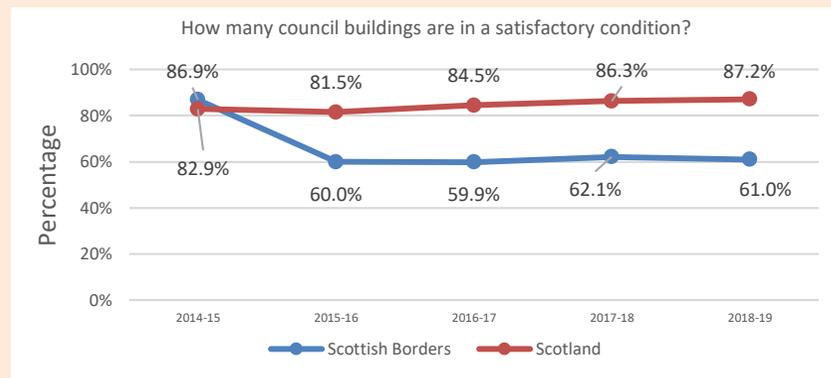
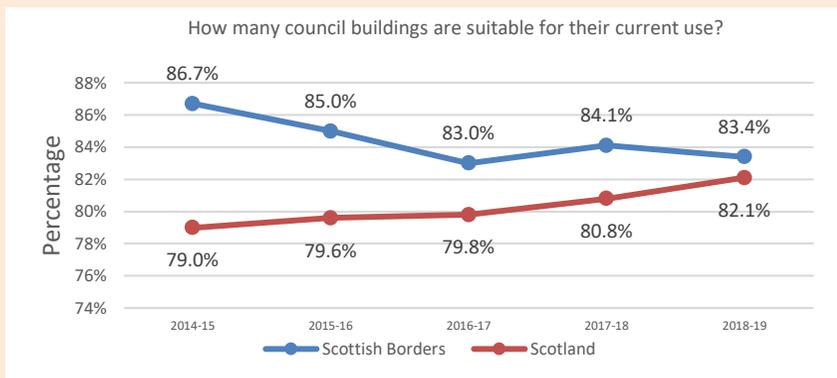
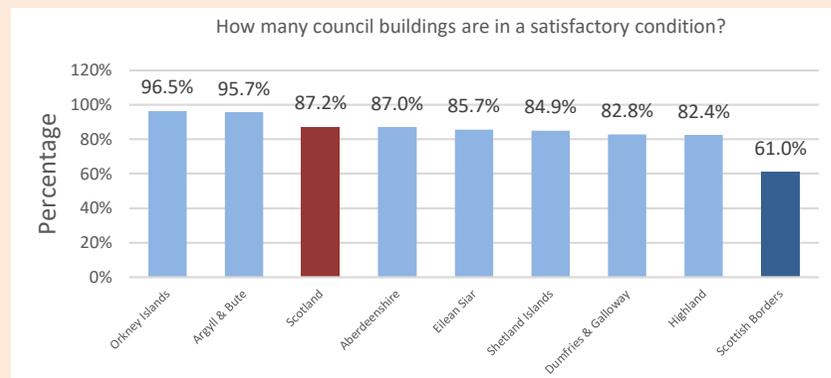
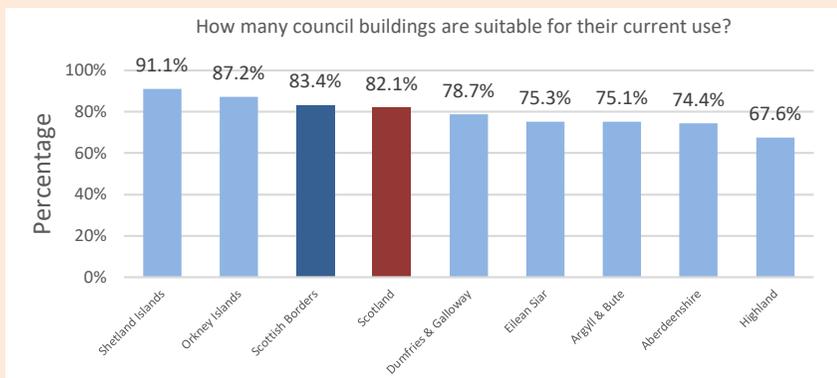
# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Property – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)

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Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Complaints Handling

| Performance Indicators                      | Basis                           | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Complaints Closed at Stage One avg days     | Average time to process in days | 4.55  | 5.1   | 7.2      | 8.8      | 6.71     | 5      | ↗     | Red     |
| Complaints Closed at Stage One within time  | % Closed within 5 working days  | 81.0% | 80.6% | 73.4%    | 69.1%    | 79.05%   | 100%   | ↗     | Red     |
| Complaints Closed at Stage Two avg days     | Average time to process in days | 18.22 | 19.65 | 21.8     | 22.8     | 17.58    | 20     | ↗     | Green   |
| Complaints Closed at Stage Two within time  | % Closed within 20 working days | 73.9% | 70.2% | 46.2%    | 62.5%    | 68.42%   | 100%   | ↗     | Red     |
| Complaints Closed – Escalated – avg days    | Average time to process in days | 14.83 | 20.23 | 19.5     | 16.6     | 17.67    | 20     | ↗     | Green   |
| Complaints Closed – Escalated – within time | % Closed within 20 working days | 78.6% | 62.4% | 100%     | 100%     | 66.67%   | 100%   | ↘     | Red     |
| Number of Complaints Closed                 | Number in period                | 645   | 614   | 139      | 233      | 173      | -      | ↘     | Context |

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#### Observations:

In Q3 (2020/21) we averaged 6.71 **working days to respond to Stage One complaints**. This has decreased by 2.09 working days when compared to Q2 (8.8). However, when compared to Q3 2019/20 (6.7) there has been an increase of 0.01 working days. The percentage of **complaints closed within 5 working days at Stage One** has increased by 9.95% in Q3 (2020/21) compared with Q2 (69.1%). This has increased by 7.55% when comparing to the same period in 2019/20 (71.5%). Q3 (2020/21) experienced a decrease of 5.22 **working days to respond to**

**complaints at Stage Two** when compared to Q2 (22.8). There has been a decrease of 0.02 working days when compared to the same period in 2019/20 (17.6). There was an increase of 1.07 **days taken to respond to complaints after they have been escalated** in Q3 2020/21 when compared to the previous quarter (16.6). In comparison to Q3 in 2019/20 the number of days decreased by 6.13 (23.8). The **percentage of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days** has decreased this quarter by 33.33% when compared with Q2 (100%). In comparison to Q3 in 2019/20, this has increased by 16.67% (50%). It should be noted that

the small number of complaints that are escalated means significant swings in percentages can occur when just 1 or 2 complaints breach timescales. Q3 (2020/21) experienced a decrease of 60 **complaints closed** when compared with Q2 (233). When compared with Q3 of 2019/20 there has been an increase of 45 complaints closed. This increase will likely be a result of the situation created by Covid-19. There were 46% of complaints noted as 'Justified' and 48% as 'Unjustified'. In addition, 6% complaints were classified as 'Policy'. The most common complaint category in Q3 was 'Failure to Deliver Service' (34.3%).

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Complaints Handling – How do we compare to others ? (SBC Complaints Annual Report 2018/19)

#### Complaints Closed by Stage

|                          | 2017/18 |              |          | 2018/19 |              |          |
|--------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|
|                          | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland |
| Stage One                | 75.4%   | 78.6%        | 88.9%    | 78.4%   | 75.3%        | 87.1%    |
| Stage Two                | 20.8%   | 18.7%        | 8.4%     | 17.2%   | 21.3%        | 9.7%     |
| Escalated from Stage One | 3.8%    | 2.7%         | 2.6%     | 4.3%    | 3.4%         | 3.1%     |

#### Complaints Closed by Stage

|                          | 2017/18 |              |          | 2018/19 |              |          |
|--------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|
|                          | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland |
| Stage One                | 4.0     | 8.6          | 8.1      | 4.6     | 7.9          | 7.1      |
| Stage Two                | 17.7    | 18.2         | 23.8     | 18.2    | 18.5         | 29.9     |
| Escalated from Stage One | 18.0    | 18.9         | 15.5     | 14.9    | 20.3         | 23.0     |

#### Complaints Upheld / Not Upheld

|                                       | 2017/18 |              |          | 2018/19 |              |          |
|---------------------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|
|                                       | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland |
| Stage One - Upheld                    | 42.0%   | 44.7%        | 65.8%    | 36.8%   | 47.9%        | 64.5%    |
| Stage One - Not Upheld                | 58.0%   | 55.3%        | 33.5%    | 63.2%   | 52.1%        | 34.6%    |
| Stage Two - Upheld                    | 38.2%   | 36.9%        | 53.5%    | 45.0%   | 36.8%        | 55.9%    |
| Stage Two - Not Upheld                | 61.8%   | 63.2%        | 46.2%    | 55.0%   | 63.1%        | 44.1%    |
| Escalated from Stage One - Upheld     | 50.0%   | 39.6%        | 54.0%    | 39.3%   | 48.2%        | 52.3%    |
| Escalated from Stage One - Not Upheld | 50.0%   | 60.4%        | 46.5%    | 60.7%   | 51.8%        | 47.4%    |

#### Complaints Closed Against Timescales

|                          | 2017/18 |              |          | 2018/19 |              |          |
|--------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|
|                          | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland | SBC     | Family Group | Scotland |
| Stage One                | 86.4%   | 64.5%        | 62.9%    | 81.0%   | 61.3%        | 65.0%    |
| Stage Two                | 67.4%   | 79.4%        | 76.6%    | 73.9%   | 71.0%        | 58.2%    |
| Escalated from Stage One | 53.8%   | 65.3%        | 61.5%    | 78.6%   | 61.2%        | 67.4%    |

Sources: Scottish Borders Council Complaints Annual Report 2018/19

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Freedom of Information Requests (FOI)

| Performance Indicators              | Basis            | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| % of FOI requests completed on time | % in period      | 85.8% | 88%   | 81%      | 83%      | 89%      | 100%   | ↗     |         |
| Number of FOI requests received     | Number in period | 1,418 | 1,254 | 197      | 251      | 281      | -      | ↘     | Context |



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#### Observations:

The **number of information requests received** continues to drop for Q3 over the past few years. In 2018 the Council received 347, this figure dropped to 308 in 2019 and, dropped further in 2020 to 281.

Requests continue to be voluminous and complex, especially if more than two services require input. The Information Management Team (IMT) encourage Officers and FOI Co-ordinators to make contact in the early stages to discuss possible solutions such as applying an exemption or requesting a formal extension under EIR. Departments have also been encouraged to set up internal meetings where a request requires input from a number of services. Before working from home the IMT held regular meetings with the Council's FOI Co-ordinators. These meetings are due to start back up in March 2021 to address any gaps and ongoing matters.

Performance is reviewed by SBC's Corporate Management Team on a monthly basis, with response times from individual departments monitored so that any problems or delays can be addressed. Performance information is also discussed at SBC's Information Governance Group on a quarterly basis and improvement actions identified.

Although the Council always endeavours to respond to 100% of requests within the

statutory timeframe, there are a variety of reasons which contribute to the occasions when this is not achieved such as other departmental workload. Coronavirus continues to play its part in the Council not reaching legislative timescales. Currently an average of 89% of **requests were completed on time** in Q3 2020/21 which is higher than in Q1 and 2.

In 2020 the Council received 30 requests to review the Council's original response and 12 of these were received in Q3. Of the 12, the Council's review group upheld the original response to 4 and partially upheld another 4 (meaning that an explanation was provided to the applicant as the Council has a duty to provide advice and assistance). The review group overturned the decision on 2 and the final 2 are awaiting decision.

The Scottish Information Commissioner received 4 appeals from applicants in 2020. The first was upheld, two were withdrawn resulting in no decision and the last is currently with the Commissioner for consideration.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Social Media



| Performance Indicators | Basis            | 18-19  | 19-20  | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|------------------------|------------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Facebook Engagements   | Number in period | 259.6k | 516.7k | 144.8k   | 130.1k   | 123.4k   | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Twitter Engagements    | Number in period | 33.2k  | 58.3k  | 14.2k    | 14.5k    | 10.8k    | -      | ↘     | Context |

#### Observations:

During the third quarter of 2020/21 the total reach of all 265 **Facebook** posts on the SBC corporate account was 1,877,145, with 123,362 post engagements. The number of followers increased by 350 over the quarter. Our **Twitter** posts during the period were seen 404,750 times, with 10,837 post engagements. The number of followers increased by 107.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Assessor – Council Tax Valuation List and Valuation Roll (Non Domestic Rates)

| Performance Indicators  | Basis  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status |
|---|--|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Council Tax Valuation List- Time taken to add new properties to the List  | % Within 3 months of the date of occupation/completion and the issue of the banding notice | 91%   | 90%   | 88%      | 88%      | 93%      | 91%    | ↗     | Green  |
| Valuation Roll (Non Domestic) - Time taken to amend the valuation roll to reflect new, altered or demolished properties | % Within 3 months of the date of completion and the issue of the valuation notice          | 56%   | 63%   | 97%      | 69%      | 68%      | 50%    | ↘     | Green  |



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#### Observations:

These figures are reported annually to Scottish Government. The Assessor Performance Reports are published at [www.saa.gov.uk/scottishborders/our-performance/](http://www.saa.gov.uk/scottishborders/our-performance/) and other statistical information can be found at [www.saa.gov.uk/general-statistics/](http://www.saa.gov.uk/general-statistics/)

The Assessor for Scottish Borders Council is an independent statutory official who is personally responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the Valuation Roll and Council Tax Valuation List for the Scottish Borders Valuation Area.

The Council Tax Valuation List contains all domestic properties showing an allocated Council Tax band which is based on the market value of the property as at 1991. The Assessor measures performance relating to the time taken for new properties to be added to the Valuation List within the current financial year.

Targets are based on previous achievements, the pressures on resources and the volume of work anticipated in other areas of the Service. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the **number of new properties entering the Council Tax List** during Q1, Q2 & Q3. At the end of Q3, 93% of new properties were added within 3 months, exceeding the target of 91%.

The Valuation Roll contains an entry and a rateable value for every non-domestic property in the Scottish Borders. The Assessor measures performance relating to the time taken for valuation amendments to be reflected in the Valuation Roll within the current financial year. The Assessor reviewed his target to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in respect of the impact on physical surveys of non-domestic properties. Whilst the number of amendments during Q1, Q2 & Q3 are comparable to 2019/20 this is in part

due to the improvement of the accuracy of the valuation roll with the identification of new or split non-domestic properties via the Covid-19 Business Grants. At the end of Q3, 68% of **valuation amendments were completed within 3 months**, which is above the target of 50%.

#### Actions we are taking to improve/maintain performance:

Valuation Roll – encouraging a “self-service” risk-based approach to reduce the volume of physical surveys and allow desk-top valuations where appropriate.

Council Tax – maintaining a presumption of no survey. Additional communications to ensure taxpayers inform the Assessor/Customer Advice when they move into a new domestic property.

# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Staff Absence

\* SPI Basis

| Performance Indicators            | Basis  | * 18-19 | 19-20                                | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| SBC Absence Rate – Staff          | Annual absence rate % to end of quarter reported | 5.03%   | 5.23%                                | 4.41%    | 4.41%    | 5.73%    | -      | ↗     | n/a    |
| SBC Absence Rate – Teaching Staff | Annual absence rate % to end of quarter reported | 3.34%   | 3.48%                                | 1.72%    | 1.88%    | 2.86%    | -      | ↗     | n/a    |
| Staff Absence Rate – SB Cares     | Annual absence rate % to end of quarter reported | 8.33%   | Integrated into SBC figs from Dec-19 |          |          |          |        |       |        |

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#### Observations:

*Note: Latest figures are not directly comparable with 2018/19 figures which were compiled on an 'SPI basis'. The 2018/19 figures excluded temporary staff with contracts for less than 12 months, and were based on actual full time equivalent (fte) available and absence days, capped at 224/195 days in the year, excluding school and public holiday periods.*

The change in absence figures is all linked to the Covid-19 restrictions, the initial lockdown and staff working from home saw a reduction in absence, the easing of

restrictions and return to some elements of normal working saw an increase in the third quarter. Whilst there was an increase in Q3 this was 0.32% lower for staff and 1.25% lower for teaching staff compared to 2019.

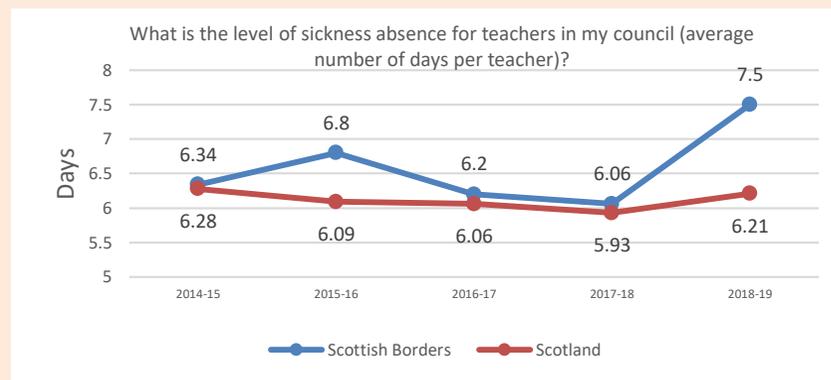
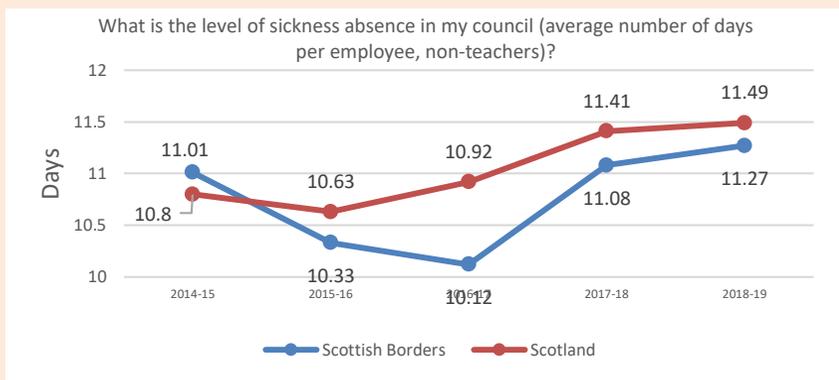
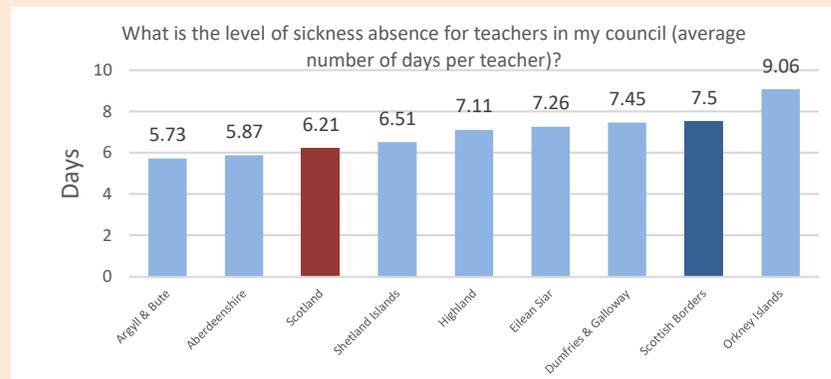
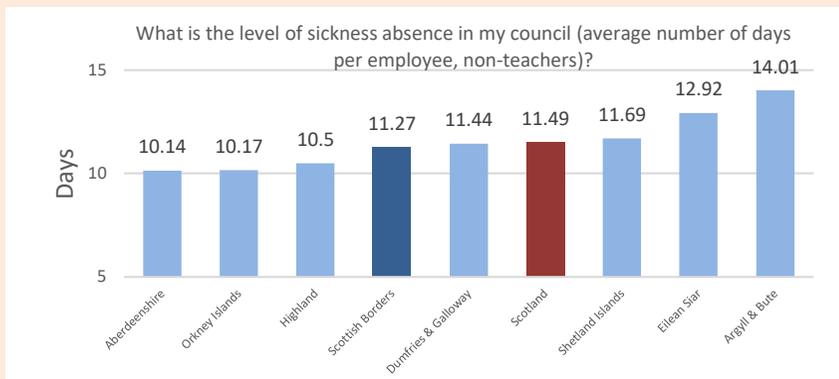
# OUR SERVICES FOR YOU

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### Staff Absence – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

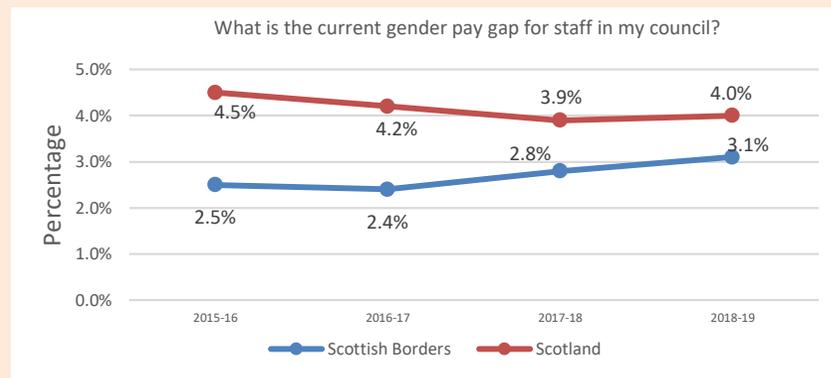
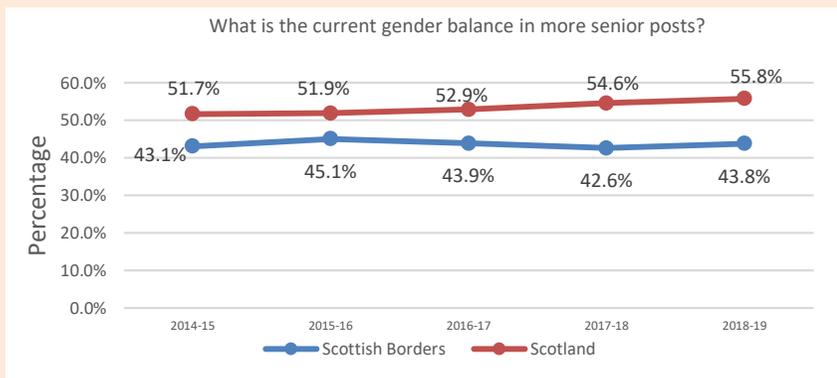
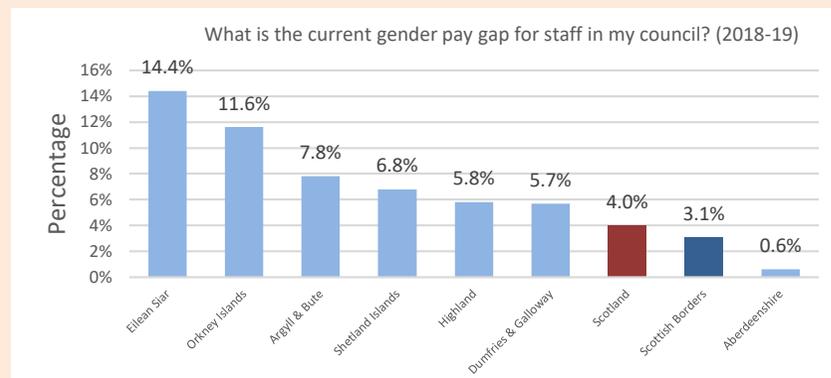
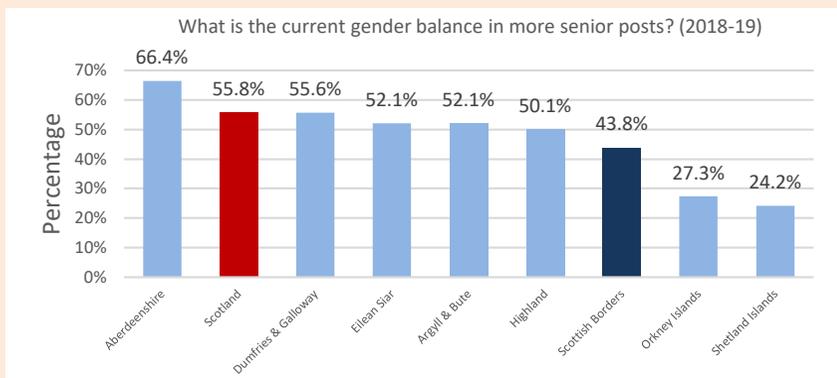
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### Gender – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Schools

| Performance Indicators                  | Basis                  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|---|------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Attendance – Primary Schools            | % Attendance in period | 95.3% | 94.4% | -        | 94.2%    | 94.9%    | 95%    | ↗     |         |
| Attendance – Secondary Schools          | % Attendance in period | 91.2% | 91.0% | -        | 91.7%    | 90.3%    | 92%    | ↘     |         |
| School Attendance – Overall             | % Attendance in period | 93.2% | 92.7% | -        | 92.9%    | 92.6%    | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Exclusion Incidents – Primary Schools   | Number in period       | 31    | 46    | -        | 1        | 2        | -      | ↗     | Context |
| Exclusions – Primary Schools            | Number in period       | 29    | 38    | -        | 1        | 2        | -      | ↗     | Context |
| Exclusion Incidents – Secondary Schools | Number in period       | 263   | 158   | -        | 15       | 32       | -      | ↗     | Context |
| Exclusions – Secondary Schools          | Number in period       | 236   | 153   | -        | 15       | 31       | -      | ↗     | Context |
| School Exclusion Incidents – Overall    | Number in period       | 294   | 204   | -        | 16       | 34       | -      | ↗     | Context |
| School Exclusions – Overall             | Number in period       | 265   | 191   | -        | 16       | 33       | -      | ↗     | Context |
| School / Nursery Inspections            | Number in period       | 15    | 5     | -        | 0        | 0        | -      | n/a   | Context |

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#### Observations:

Q3 **Primary attendance** traditionally has a lower level of attendance when compared to Q2. However, contrary to this, Q3 20/21 is slightly higher than Q2. **Secondary attendance** remains consistent with previous years showing a lower level of attendance in Q3 when compared to Q2.

**Exclusions for primary schools** have doubled in Q3 compared to the previous quarter. Similarly, **Secondary exclusions** have also increased in Q3, more than doubling those recorded in Q2. However, both Primary and Secondary exclusions are lower when

compared to the same period in 2019/20 (Primary Incidents/Exclusions = 15/12 and Secondary Incidents/Exclusions = 38/38 in Q2 2019/20).

#### Actions we are taking to improve/maintain performance:

Continued monitoring of absences, control of authorised absences and further investigation into unauthorised absence has been a priority during the first part of the new academic year.

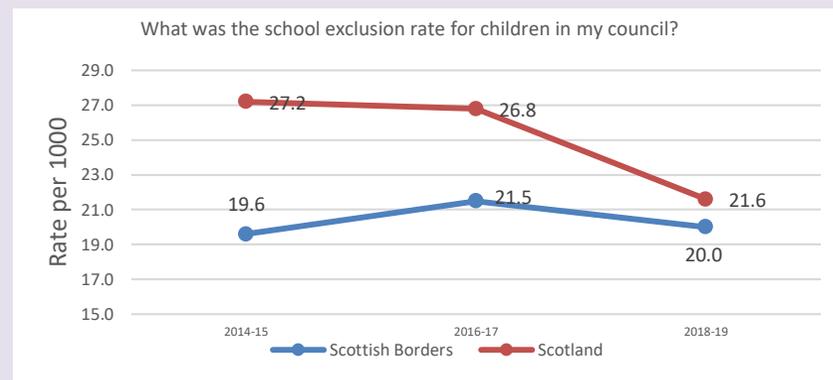
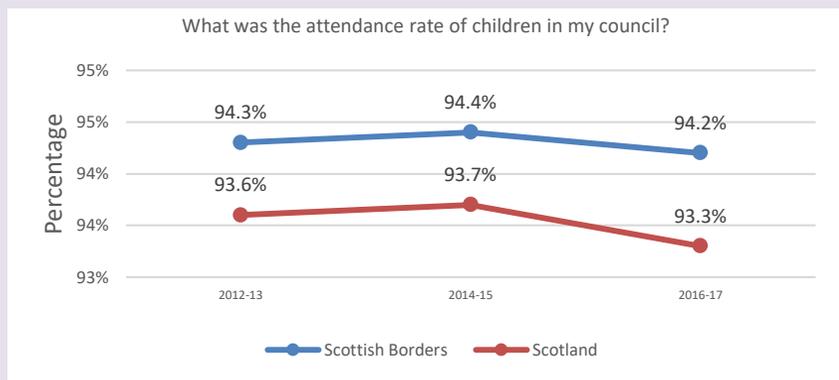
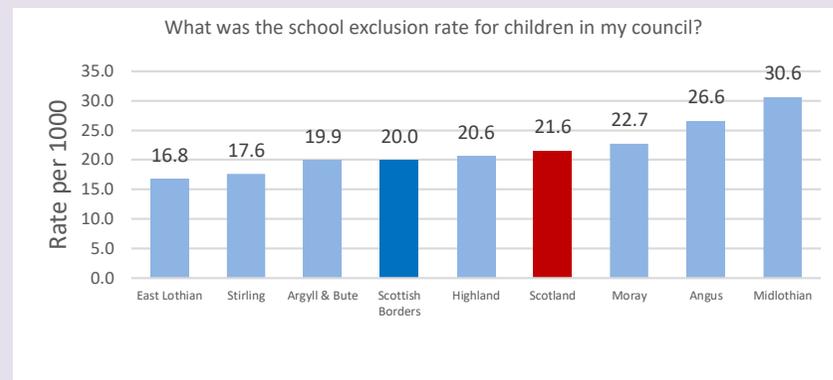
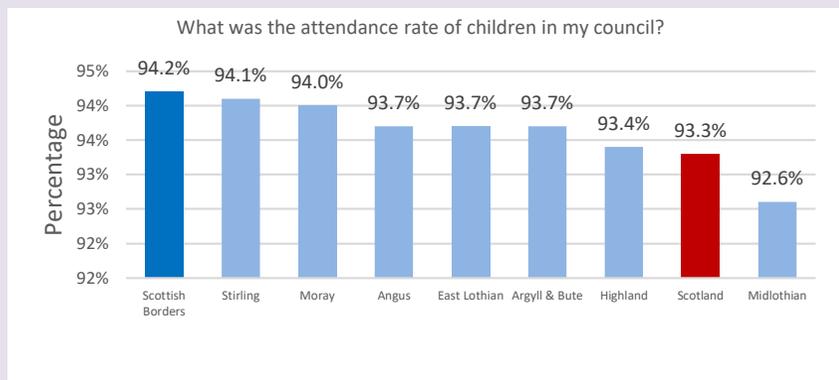
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OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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## Children's Services – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

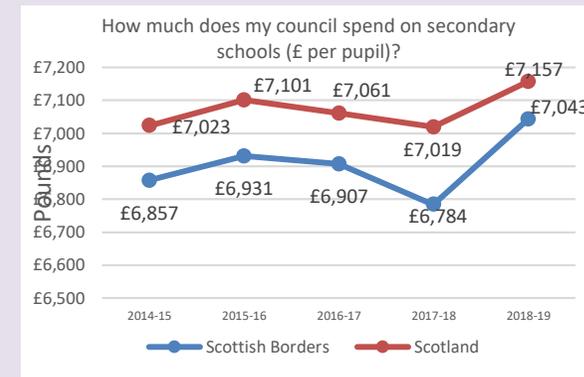
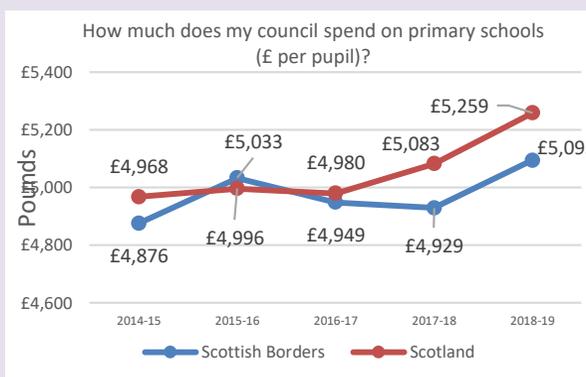
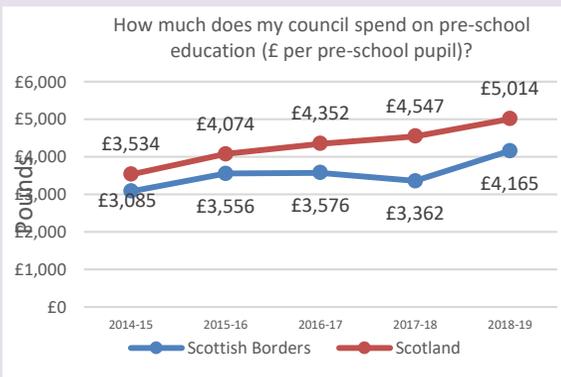
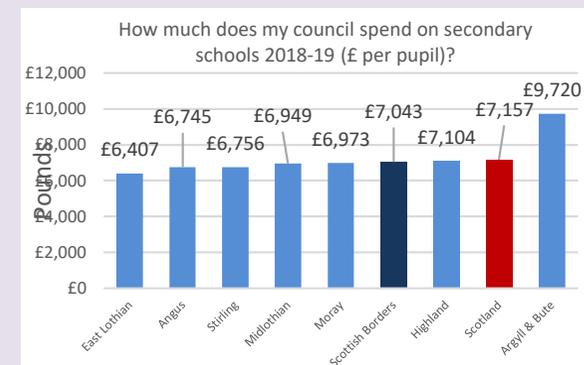
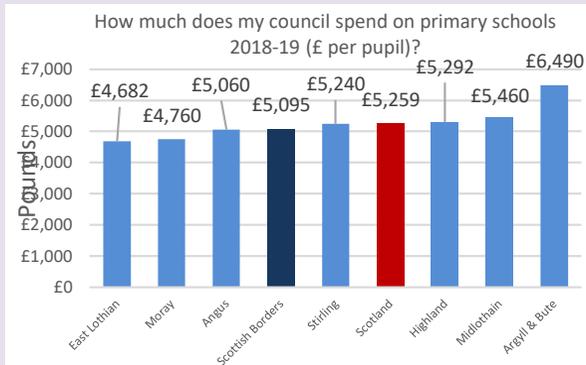
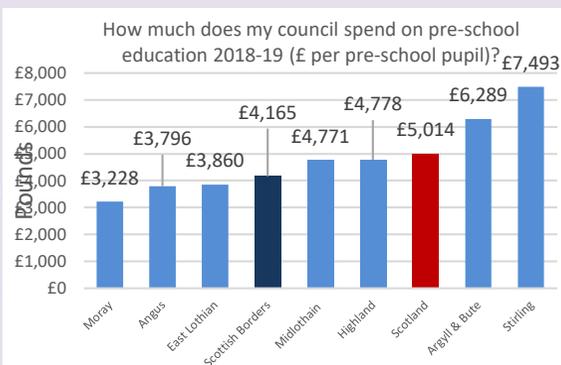
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## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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### Spend on Schools – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

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## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Children & Families Social Work

| Performance Indicators   | Basis                   | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|--|-------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Looked After Children (aged 12+) in Community Family Based Placement rather than residential | % at end of period      | 70%   | 64%   | 64%      | 63%      | 62%      | 70%    | ↘     | Orange  |
| Looked After Children (all ages) in Community Family Based Placement rather than residential | % at end of period      | 84%   | 80%   | 80%      | 80%      | 81%      | 80%    | ↗     | Green   |
| Number of Looked After Children  | Number at end of period | 202   | 200   | 197      | 193      | 181      | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Inter-agency Referral Discussions - child  | Number in period        | 590   | 475   | 80       | 118      | 115      | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Child Protection Register  | Number at end of period | 46    | 30    | 34       | 46       | 53       | -      | ↗     | Context |

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#### Observations:

**Looked after Children (aged 12+) in Community Family Based Placements** has continued to decrease over the last 3 quarters with 62% of this group being looked after in a community family based placement. This is attributed to the incremental implementation of Continuing Care following the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Continuing Care is a non-looked after legal status which allows young people to choose to remain in their existing care placement until 21 years of age. Therefore, we have a number of young people in foster care who are no longer considered to be Looked After as they are in Continuing Care placements (if you include Continuing Care placements the figure is closer to 73%). Also, over the last 5 years we have seen a continuing

rise in young people in kinship care placements (which are community family based placements and the Continuing Care status is equally applicable to them too).

**Looked after Children (all ages) in Community Family Based Placements** remains positive and in Q3 has exceeded the 80% target for the first time in 2020/21 with 81% of LAC being looked after in community family based placements.

The overall **Number of Looked After Children** has decreased for the third consecutive quarter. This is snapshot data and does not take in to account fluctuations throughout the period. This too will be affected by the implementation of Continuing Care.

The **number of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRD)**

continues to fluctuate over the quarters, there was a minor decrease in Q3 to 115 from 118 in Q2. As children are brought to the attention of Social Care via other agencies, organisations or the public, a co-ordinated response is provided. IRD's provide a whole system co-ordinated approach to ensuring vulnerable children are highlighted, supported and their situation monitored to provide stability.

The **number of children on the Child Protection Register** has continued to show an increase at the end of Q3 2020/21. As with the LAC figure, this is a snapshot at the end of the period and doesn't take in to account fluctuations throughout the period.

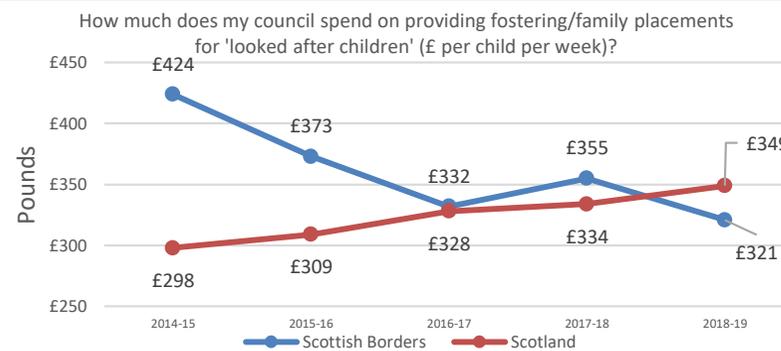
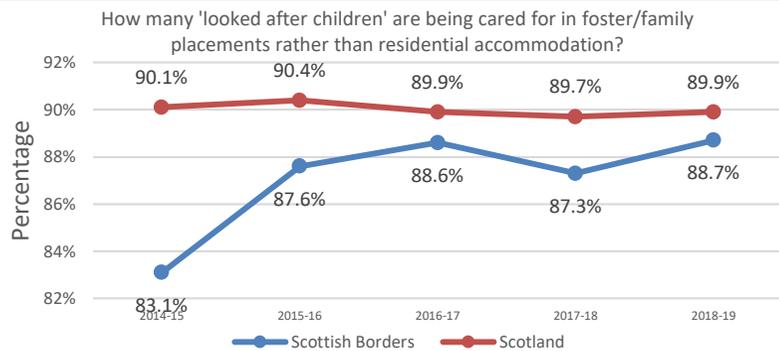
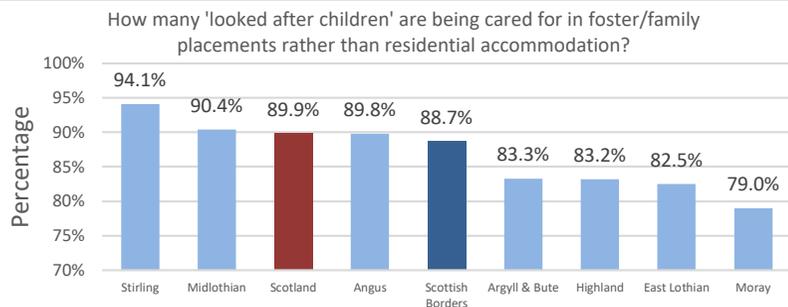
# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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### Children's Services – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

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## Community Learning & Development (Annual Performance)

| Performance Indicators   | 17-18 | 18-19 | 19-20 | Trend | Status |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Participation – Number of Learners   | 877   | 717   | 685   | ↓     | Green  |
| Participation - Number of learning programmes delivered  | 937   | 896   | 817   | ↓     | Green  |
| Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased employability  | 156   | 204   | 147   | ↓     | Orange |
| Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased health and wellbeing   | 635   | 562   | 598   | ↑     | Orange |
| Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased skills   | 374   | 317   | 305   | ↓     | Orange |
| Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Family outcomes  | 379   | 326   | 284   | ↓     | Orange |
| Progression - Number of learning programmes that lead to: Progression to employment, further learning, volunteering or participation in a community activity | 387   | 484   | 400   | ↓     | Orange |
| Progression - Number of learning programmes that lead to: Accreditation (nationally recognised)  | 273   | 346   | 204   | ↓     | Orange |

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### Observations: (Note: Figs currently compiled on Annual Basis)

Each learning programme leads to the achievement of evidenced learning outcomes. Learners of all ages (9-65+yrs) may take part in more than one learning programme, which is delivered locally, largely in schools and Community Centres, across the Borders. Learning is designed to be accessible to vulnerable learners, including: people with few or no qualifications; socially isolated; additional support needs; living in SIMD deciles 1-3; low income; unemployed; health issues and Looked After Children.

Learning programmes include: literacy, numeracy; English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); employability; family learning; transitions for vulnerable young people; building young people's resilience; intergenerational learning; health and wellbeing and skills development.

The impact of covid-19 is apparent in the slightly reduced number of participants. The impact is more marked in the achievement of outcomes: many learners have been unable to reach a point in learning programmes where measurable outcomes have been achieved, including gaining accreditation.

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

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## Modern Apprentices

| Performance Indicators                                   | Basis                     | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|--|---------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| New Modern Apprentices employed this year                | Cumulative in year number | 33    | 39    | 0        | 23       | 24       | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Number of Current Modern Apprentices                     | Number at end of period   | 34    | 50    | 49       | 49       | 43       | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Modern Apprentices securing employment with SBC after MA | Cumulative in year number | 11    | 14    | 1        | 19       | 22       | -      | ↗     | Context |

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### Observations:

There are **currently 43 modern apprentices employed with SBC**. Modern apprentices are undertaking a vast range of learning opportunities in many departments including: Children and Young People, Human Resources, Assets and Infrastructure, Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services.

There have been 24 **new apprentices employed by SBC** this financial year to date, with further apprenticeship opportunities being planned.

Over the last 9 months 22 **apprentices have secured paid employment** with SBC following their apprenticeship.

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

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## Adult Social Care #

| Performance Indicators   | Basis              | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status |
|--|--------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
|  Adults (aged 65+) receiving care at home | % at end of period | 78%   | 79%   | 79%      | 78%      | 79%      | 70%    | ↗     | Green  |
| Adults using Self Directed Support (SDS) approach  | % at end of period | 85.2% | 94.4% | 94.6%    | 94.7%    | 94.7%    | 90%    | ↗     | Green  |

## Bed days

| Performance Indicators  | Basis                               | 18-19   | 19-20   | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target           | Trend | Status |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|-------|--------|
|  Bed days associated with delayed discharges from hospital (residents 75+) | Rate per 1000 population, in period | 761     | 656     | 118      | 153      | -        | 180              | ↗     | Green  |
| Bed days associated with Emergency Admissions (75+)   | Rate per 1000 population, in period | 3,544.9 | 3285.38 | 513.0    | 626.5    | -        | 10% Scottish avg | ↘     | Green  |

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### Observations:

The data for **emergency admission occupied bed days (age 75+)** shows a significant reduction on the previous quarter (513 bed days compared to 833 last quarter). The National data is lagging behind (only up to Q1 2019/20 – 774.0), however generally our performance is better than the Scottish average.

the target of 180. The significant dip in Q1 can be attributed to the impact of the Covid-19 response on hospital discharges.

**Adults using SDS** and those **aged 65+ receiving care at home** remains fairly static and above target.

The rate of **Bed Days Associated with Delayed Discharge** has increased in Q2 2020/21 Please note these indicators are under review with the intention of incorporating to 153 (from a figure the previous Quarter of 118). However, this remains well below additional social care measures in the future.

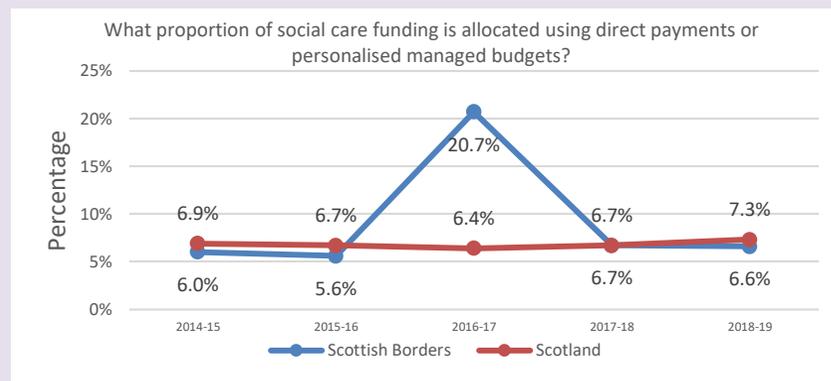
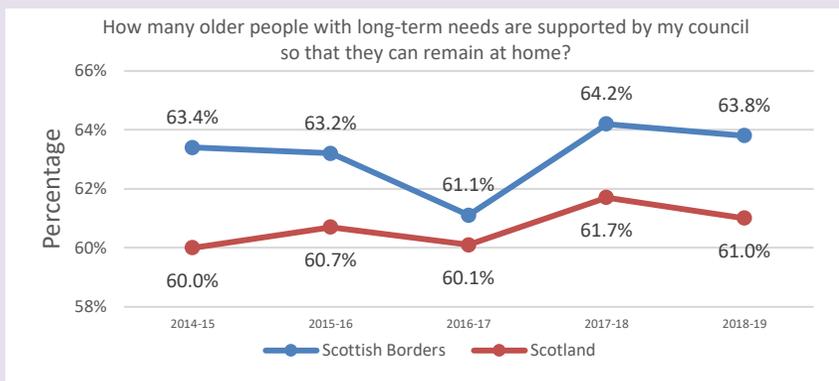
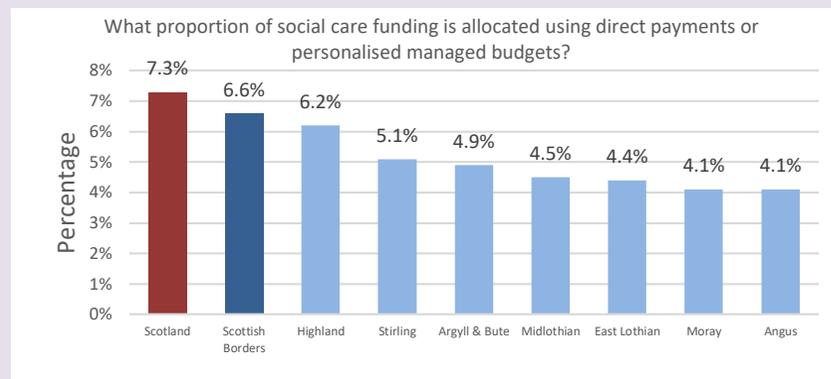
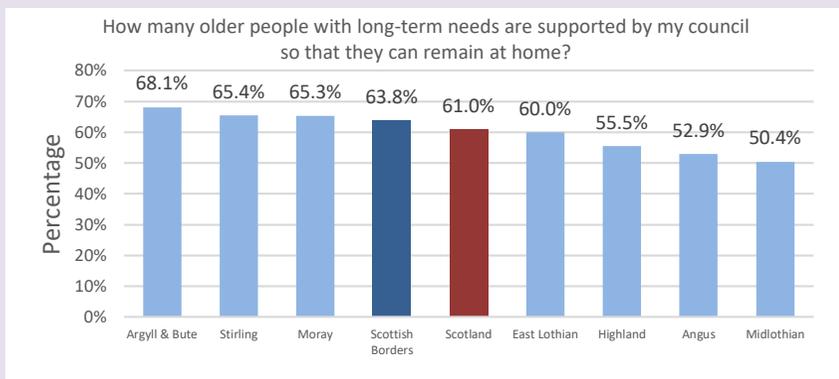
# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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## Adult Social Care Services – How do we compare to others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Adult Protection

| Performance Indicators  | Basis                  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|---|------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Adult protection - Concerns   | Number in period       | 338   | 356   | 63       | 67       | 57       | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Adult protection - Investigations   | Number in period       | 176   | 205   | 36       | 32       | 34       | -      | ↘     | Context |
| Referrals To Domestic Abuse Services  | Number in year to date | 762   | 693   | 101      | 218      | 323      | * 553  | ↘     | Context |
| Reported incidents of domestic abuse  | Number in year to date | 1,005 | 1,129 | 329      | 667      | 975      | * 871  | ↗     | Context |
| High Risk domestic abuse cases discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference | Number in year to date | 93    | 102   | 35       | 64       | 92       | * 77   | ↗     | Context |

\* Target = 2019/20 Q2 Ytd. value

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### Observations:

There has been a decrease in **the number of Adult Protection concerns** raised (57) and a slight increase in **the number of investigations** (34) compared to Q2.

There were 323 **referrals to SBC Domestic Abuse services (Adults)** in the year to date, which is 230 referrals less than 2019/20 for the same time period and equates to a 41.6% decrease. The figures for 2019/20 included referrals into the Court Advocacy Service, which is no longer operating. The 2019/20 figure also included referrals into Safe Housing Options and Domestic Abuse Advocacy Outreach, which ceased to operate as separate services from 01/07/2020. The realignment of services has resulted in a reduction in total referrals. However the Covid-19 pandemic has also had an impact on referrals into domestic abuse services resulting in lower than expected referrals. As government measures to combat Covid-19 are eased it is expected that referrals into the Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support service (DAAS) will start to increase again.

In Q2 2020/21 there were **92 referrals to MARAC** in the year to date compared to 77 in the same time period in 2019/20, which is a 15 referral or 19.5% increase. During the Covid-19 lockdown MARAC has been running via teleconference and agency attendance has been excellent. MARAC will continue to operate via teleconference until normal service can be resumed.

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Safer Communities

\* Target = 2019/20 Q2 Ytd. value

| Performance Indicators  | Basis                  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status |
|---|------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cases showing agreement or improvement after mediation  | % in period            | 93.3% | 90.7% | 50%      | 60%      | 68%      | 80%    | ↘     | Red    |
| % of clients surveyed (Adults) that reported feeling safer on exit from Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support | % in period            | 100%  | 100%  | Annual   |          |          | 100%   | →     | Green  |
| Referrals to mediation  | Number in year to date | 123   | 152   | 26       | 33       | 43       | * 126  | ↘     | Red    |



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### Observations:

67.8% of **mediation cases have shown agreement/improvement following mediation** in the year to date in 2020/21 against a baseline target of 80%. The success rate has been significantly affected by Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. The decrease in success rate is largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown meaning there is little opportunity to conduct mediation through face to face contact. Where possible mediation is conducted through other than face to face contact.

A decrease of 83 **referrals to mediation in the year to date** in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20 for the same time period, which equates to a 65.9% decrease. The decrease in referrals is largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown and the inability to conduct face to face mediation. Where possible mediation is conducted through other than face to face contact.

# INDEPENDENT, ACHIEVING PEOPLE

## OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



### Safer Communities

\* Target = 2019/20 Q2 Ytd. value

| Performance Indicators                 | Basis                  | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target  | Trend | Status  |
|--|------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Number of reported ASB Incidents       | Number in year to date | 5,676 | 5,460 | 2,360    | 4,089    | 5,753    | * 4,227 | ↘     | Context |
| ASB Early Interventions                | Number in year to date | 899   | 804   | 203      | 430      | 614      | * 519   | ↗     | Context |
| Monitored for ASB                      | Number in year to date | 1,561 | 1,636 | 416      | 834      | 1,189    | * 1,235 | ↘     | Context |
| Group 1-5 recorded crimes and offences | Number in year to date | 3,704 | 3,577 | 834      | 1,734    | 2,635    | * 2,733 | ↘     | Context |



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#### Observations:

A 36.1% increase in **reported ASB incidents** in the year to date in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20. This equates to 1526 additional incidents recorded.

The figure is provisional at this time. The significant increase in incident numbers is mainly due to the impact of Covid-19 government restrictions being in place and reported breaches of those restrictions being made to Police Scotland. Through a multi-agency partnership we continue to intervene at the earliest opportunity to reports of antisocial behaviour. The Police Scotland Community Actions Teams (CAT), which are funded by Scottish Borders Council, respond to community issues regarding antisocial behaviour. The CAT have recently introduced a process whereby young persons engaging in antisocial behaviour, who come into contact with the Police, can have letters issued to their parent/guardian advising them of the type of issues the young person has been involved in.

There were 46 fewer **persons monitored for antisocial behaviour** in the year to date in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20, which equates to a 3.7% decrease. There was an initial impact to services due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however all agencies have now adapted their ways of working and responding to issues and monitoring cases are now lower than last year at this point. We are continuously looking at what other agencies do or what diversions can be implemented. A formal process exists between partner agencies to take a consistent approach to addressing antisocial behaviour.

There is an increase of 23 **ASB early interventions** in the year to date in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20 for the same time period, which equates to a 3.9% increase. There was an initial impact to services due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however all agencies have now adapted their ways of working and

responding to issues and early interventions are now higher than last year at this point. We continue to work as a partnership to share information and respond in a coordinated way. We are using analysis to better understand antisocial behaviour and to improve the approach being taken and the outcomes for complainers.

There was a 3.6% decrease in **group 1-5 crimes in the year to date** in Q3 when compared to the same time period in 2019/20, which equates to 98 fewer victims. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a reduction in the number of crimes being reported in Q1 and Q2. As lockdown eased in Q3 crime numbers have increased but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The levels of crimes and antisocial behaviour incidents are constantly monitored and Police Scotland and partner agencies intervene early to address issues identified.

# A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Economic Development and Procurement

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| Performance Indicators   | Basis                       | 18-19    | 19-20  | Q1 20-21       | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|--|-----------------------------|----------|--------|----------------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| New businesses were created with Business Gateway help                             | Number in period            | 218      | 177    | n/a            | n/a      | n/a      | n/a    | n/a   | n/a     |
| Businesses supported by Business Gateway   | Number in period            | 1,497    | n/a    | n/a            | n/a      | n/a      | -      | n/a   | n/a     |
| Industrial and commercial properties owned by the council that were occupied       | % occupied at end of period | 88%      | 91%    | 91.3%          | 91%      | 91.3%    | 88%    | ↗     |         |
| SB Business Fund - grants  | Number in period            | 19       | 11     | n/a            | n/a      | n/a      | -      |       | Context |
| SB Business Fund – grants £  | Amount £ in period          | £57.1k   | £36.3k | n/a            | n/a      | n/a      | -      |       | Context |
| Invoices paid within 30 days   | % in period                 | 84%      | 90%    | 96%            | 95%      | 94%      | 93%    | ↗     |         |
| PCIP Score (Procurement Capability Improvement Programme)                          | Bi-annual score             | 78% 2018 | n/a    | n/a            |          |          | -      | n/a   | n/a     |
| Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages? | Number provided in year     | 191      | 141    | Annual measure |          |          | 128    | ↘     |         |

### Observations:

**Industrial and Commercial Occupancy** figures by locality for Q3 were:

Berwickshire: 81.4%.

Cheviot: 95.3%.

Eildon: 96.8%.

Teviot & Liddesdale: 83.3%.

Tweeddale: 93.3%.

**Invoices paid within timescales** remains above target for the third consecutive quarter.

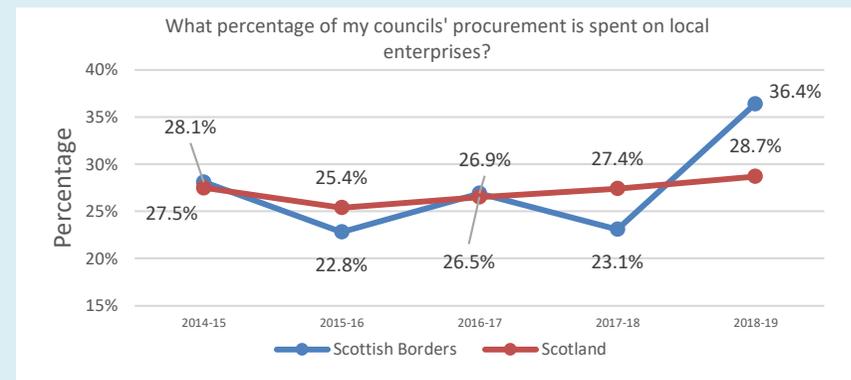
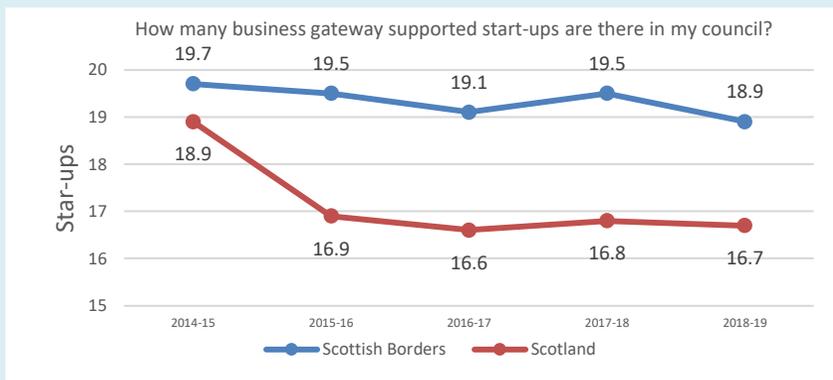
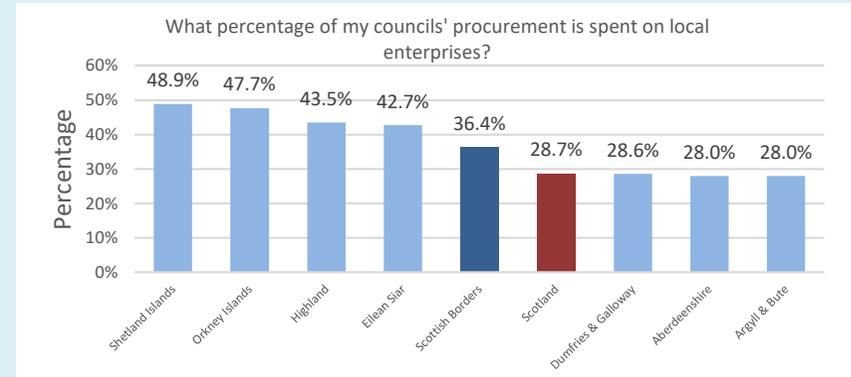
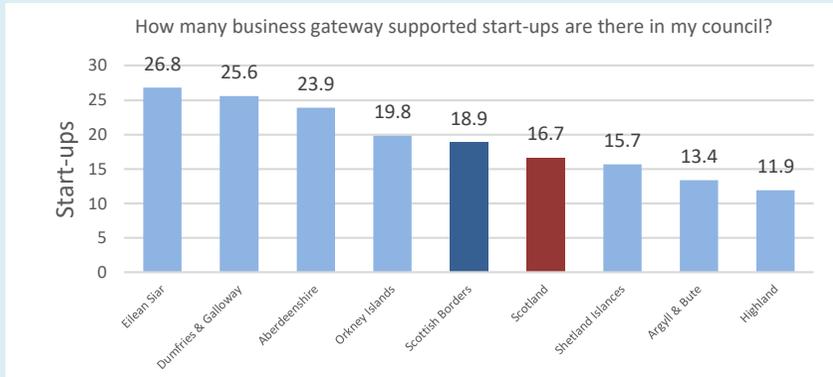
# A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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## Economic Development – How do we compare to Others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Employment

| Performance Indicators  | Basis                     | 18-19       | 19-20         | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target                 | Trend | Status  |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|-------|---------|
| 16 - 64 Employment rate | % final quarter in period | 75.7%<br>Q4 | 74.9%<br>(Q4) | 76.9%    | 78.5%    | n/a      | 73.8%<br>National Rate | ↗     | Context |
| 16 - 64 Claimant Count  | % final quarter in period | 2.47%<br>Q4 | 2.77%<br>(Q4) | 5.23%    | 5.6%     | 5.2%     | 5.97%<br>National Rate | ↘     | Context |
| 18 - 24 Claimant Count  | % final quarter in period | 4.53%<br>Q4 | 5.17%<br>(Q4) | 9.13%    | 10.93%   | 9.9%     | 8.5%<br>National Rate  | ↘     | Context |



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### Observations:

The **employment rate of people aged 16-64** was 78.5% in the year to September 2020. The number of those employed in the Scottish Borders rose by 1,000 this Quarter to 54,600. The rate was above that of Scotland (73.8%) and that of Great Britain (75.7%).

The average rate of **people aged 16-64 claiming out-of-work benefits** was 5.2%, lower than the Scottish rate of 6%. At the end of December 2020, there were 3,505 people claiming out-of-work benefits, which is 135 less than at the end of the previous Quarter.

The average rate of **people aged 18-24 claiming out-of-work benefits** was 9.9% in this Quarter, which was higher than the Scottish average of 8.5%. At the end of

December 2020, there were 765 young people claiming out-of-work benefits, which was 40 less than at the end of the previous Quarter.

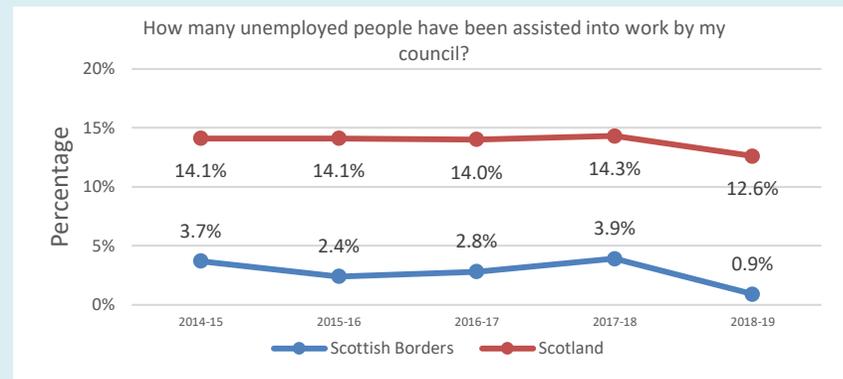
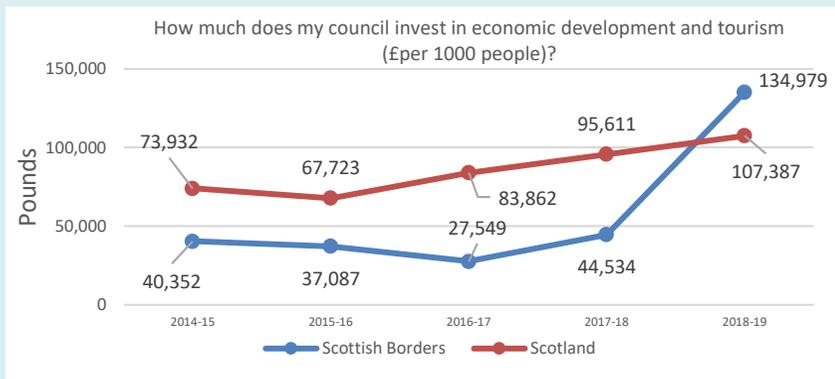
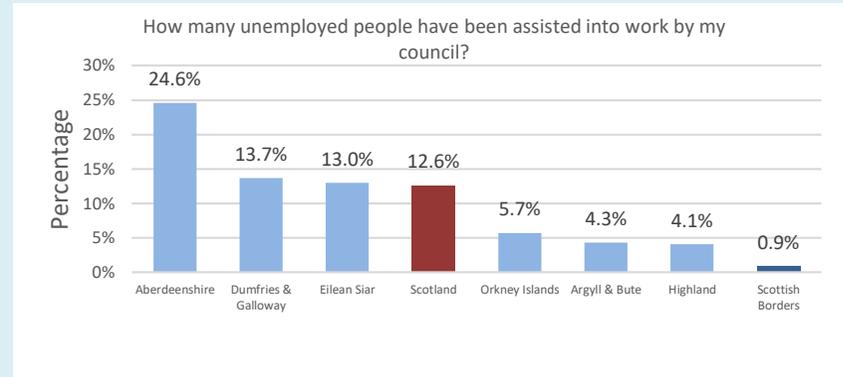
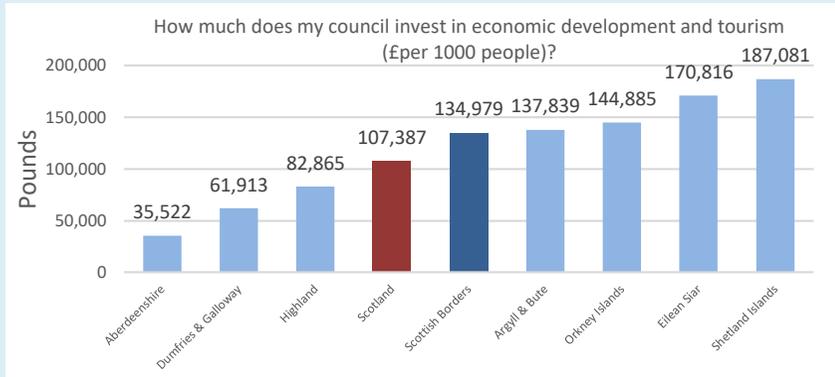
# A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



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## Economic Development – How do we compare to Others ? (Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018-19)



Source: Adapted from mylocalcouncil website, latest LGBF family group & national comparisons

# A THRIVING ECONOMY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Major Projects

| Performance Indicators                      | Basis                                    | 18-19 | * 19-20 | * Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Trend | Status |
|---|--|-------|---------|------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Top Capital projects on target              | Number with 'Green' RAG at end of period | 18    | 12      | 12         | 17       |       |        |
| Top Capital projects slightly behind target | Number with 'Amber' RAG at end of period | 1     | 6       | 6          | 4        |       |        |
| Top Capital projects not on target          | Number with 'Red' RAG at end of period   | 0     | 0       | 0          | 0        | -     |        |

\* June 20 RAG's

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### Observations:

*Note that details of Capital Monitoring are provided to Executive Committee under a separate agenda item.*

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Community Empowerment

|   | Basis                         | 18-19           | 19-20           | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Asset transfer requests Received            | Number in period              | 0               | 4               | 0        | 2        | 0        | -      | ↘     | n/a     |
| Asset transfer requests Agreed              | Number in period              | 3               | 3               | 0        | 0        | 0        | -      | ↘     | n/a     |
| Asset transfer requests Refused             | Number in period              | 0               | 0               | 0        | 0        | 0        | -      | →     | n/a     |
| Community Participation requests Received   | Number in period              | 6               | 3               | 0        | 0        | 0        | -      | ↘     | n/a     |
| Community Participation requests Agreed     | Number in period              | 3               | 3               | 0        | 0        | 0        | -      | ↘     | n/a     |
| Community Participation requests Refused    | Number in period              | 2               | 1               | 0        | 0        | 0        | -      | →     | n/a     |
| People carrying out volunteer work with SBC | Number of people volunteering | 155<br>Q4 18-19 | 181<br>Q4 19-20 | 2        | 151      | 159      | -      | ↘     | Context |

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### Observations:

Although no formal **asset transfer requests** were received during Q3 work is progressing to validate three applications and progress the asset transfer process. One group is actively exploring asset transfer in relation to a property in order to ascertain whether this is something that they would like to pursue.

As restrictions eased during Q3 the number of volunteer led walks increased through the Walk It programme. The estimated economic benefit to the Borders of the recorded volunteering was £3,153.21. We are now able to report on the benefit that volunteering undertaken as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme brings. During Q3 the hours of volunteer work carried out by young people is estimated to have produced an economic benefit of £1,357.20 whilst the benefit of the hours

provided by adults supporting the Scheme had an estimated value of £4,336.08. It is surmised that the lack of **participation requests** received during 2020/21 is due to the global pandemic. Since March 2020 we have seen a huge response from communities, community bodies and the third sector reshaping their services to respond to the needs of their communities. By their very nature, participation requests are much more immediate than asset transfer requests which are developed over a longer period of time. It should be stressed that groups are encouraged to approach services direct with requests and proposals for getting involvement, the more formal route set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 is an option but is not mandatory. Although there hasn't been any formal participation requests, this does not mean that communities aren't participating.

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Community Funding

| Community Fund – Total Value of funding | Basis               | 18-19 | 19-20   | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21  | Target | Trend | Status  |
|---|---------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------|-----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Total Scottish Borders                  | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £198.5k | # £33.2k | # £26.6k | # £158.2k | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Berwickshire                            | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £17.1k  | # £1.4k  | # £2.3k  | # £35.2k  | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Cheviot                                 | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £26.0k  | # £2.35k | # £6.6k  | # £27.9k  | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Eildon                                  | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £88.3k  | # £28.1k | # £10.8k | # £22.5k  | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Teviot & Liddesdale                     | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £22.6k  | # £1.3k  | # £5.2k  | # £2.5k   | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Tweeddale                               | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £43.4k  | # £0     | # £0.8k  | # £54.0k  | -      | n/a   | Context |
| Borders-Wide                            | £ awarded in period | n/a   | £1.1k   | # £0     | # £0     | # £15k    | -      | n/a   | Context |

| Performance Indicators           | Basis                            | 18-19   | 19-20   | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-------|---------|
| Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund | £ awarded in period year to date | £176.7k | £157.7k | £0       | £25.5k   | £99.9k   | -      | ↗     | Context |

### Observations:

**# Community fund:** Please note that the 2019/20 Community Fund was suspended on 20 March 2020, due to Covid-19, and the 2020/21 Fund opened at the beginning of September. Therefore, the amounts reported will relate to this position until all outstanding applications are progressed and is reflected in the increased figures for Q3 2020/21.

In relation to the **Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund**, cumulatively to Q3 20/21, 45 projects have been awarded a total of £99,958. The amounts awarded range from £200 to £9,000 and average £2,221 per project.

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Community Resilience

| Performance Indicators                        | Basis                   | 18-19             | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Q3 20-21 | Target            | Trend | Status  |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|-------|---------|
| Community Resilience – SB Alert Registrations | Number at end of period | 5,266<br>Q4 18-19 | 6,211 | 6184     | 6,260    | 6,322    | 10,000<br>(2 yrs) | ↗     |         |
| Active community resilience plans             | Number at end of period | 47<br>Q4 18-19    | 55    | 58       | 58       | 58       | -                 | ↗     | Context |
| Progressing community resilience plans        | Number at end of period | 6<br>Q4 18-19     | 0     | 0        | 0        | 0        | -                 | -     | Context |



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### Observations:

*Note: Target for SB Alert Registrations is an aspiration to reach 10,000 over 2 years.*

There were 6,322 **people registered with SB Alert** at the end of Q3 2020/21. The benefits of SB Alert will continue to be highlighted through the social media feeds and Resilient Community Groups to encourage additional sign up.

The number of **Active Community Resilience Plans** remained static at the end of Q3 with 58 active plans in place. These plans facilitate the ability of community groups and individuals to respond effectively to local issues and emergencies.

While a majority of communities in the Scottish Borders have signed-up and have plans in place there is still work to do to encourage more sign-ups because of the benefits these plans can have in helping communities mitigate some of the risks associated with emergency situations. Benefits of resilience plans include:

- Identifying a single point of contact for co-ordinators
- Provision of equipment
- Communities are better able to recover after emergency situations (e.g. severe

weather).

More information about community resilience can be found at: [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20008/emergencies\\_and\\_safety/191/resilient\\_communities](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20008/emergencies_and_safety/191/resilient_communities)

During the Covid-19 Pandemic a number of Community Council areas set up new Resilient Community Groups to assist with the response to the Pandemic. All of the existing and new groups have assisted within their communities from delivering shopping, prescriptions etc. to making hot meals and carrying out general assistance for the vulnerable and older people within their communities. This work has been excellent and has ensured that those who require support and assistance have received it from volunteers within their local community.

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

OUR PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 3 OCTOBER to DECEMBER 2020



## Community Benefits



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| Performance Indicators  | Basis                | 18-19 | 19-20 | Q1 20-21 | Q2 20-21 | Target | Trend | Status    |
|---|----------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Contracts awarded with community benefit clauses                            | Number during period | 26    | 18    | 8        | 2        | -      | ↘     | #<br>Note |
| Employment opportunities delivered as a result of community benefit clauses | Number during period | 25    | 46    | 9        | 2        | -      | ↘     |           |

Note: Expected to be Green by end of 2020/21 #

### Observations:

The number of **contracts awarded** during this reporting period **containing a community benefit clause** was impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions that were put in place. During this reporting period contracts awarded that contained a community benefit clause included :

- NDEEF Phase 2; Groceries and Provisions; Sheriff Officer Debt Collections Services; Catering Sundries; Moving and Handling Training; Private Water Sampling; Hawick Flood Protection Scheme; Accessible Changing Room, Coldingham Primary School; Toilet Upgrade & Accessible Changing Room, Philiphaugh C.S; Nursery Toilet Entrance & Screen Works, Coldstream Nursery.

It should be noted that the number of the contracts awarded and start dates of those contracts will be subject to natural variation dependant on the timing of contract award, scope and scale of contract opportunities from the Council. It is therefore not possible to trend this indicator on a short term basis.

The number of new **employment and skills opportunities** created during this reporting period was impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions.

Despite the challenges, the following new start employment opportunities were realised from the following projects:

- The Hawick Flood Protection Scheme – 2 new starts; Repairs and Maintenance Framework - 2 new modern apprenticeships and 4 new starts; Fruit and Vegetables contract – 3 new drivers were employed specifically to make deliveries in the Scottish Borders.

During this reporting period work experience has not been available due to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic.

As evidenced by the new opportunities noted above, local framework agreements including Property Repairs and Maintenance, Small Plant Hire and Roads Aggregate Materials continue to support the local economy through a wide range of employment and apprenticeship opportunities.

Monitoring of all contracted community benefit clauses is in place to ensure delivery is achieved.

*NB: Community Benefits figures are reported twice yearly. Next update will be included in the Q4 performance report.*



## APPENDIX 2b: PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SCHEDULE

# OUR PLAN for 2018-23 and your part in it

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS SCHEDULE



### Our Services For You

| Indicators  | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Planning Application Times  | •                 | Bus & Ind      |
| Planning Application numbers  | •                 |                |
| Cost Per Planning Application   |                   | •              |
| Waste Treatment/Recycling Rates   | •                 | Household      |
| Adult Satisfaction - refuse collection                                    |                   | •              |
| Net cost of waste collection per premise                                  |                   | •              |
| Net cost of waste disposal per premise                                    |                   | •              |
| Energy Consumption & Costs By Fuel Type                                   | •                 |                |
| Road Casualties - Killed & Seriously Injured                              | •                 |                |
| Housing Benefits Processing Times   | •                 |                |
| Welfare Benefits - Referrals & Monetary Gain                              | •                 |                |
| Customer Interactions By Channel  | •                 |                |
| Council Tax - Collection Levels   | •                 | •              |
| Cost per dwelling of collecting council tax                               |                   | •              |
| Operation Buildings % - Suitable for current use / Satisfactory Condition |                   | •              |
| Capital Receipts Generated  | •                 |                |
| Properties Surplus / Marketed / Under Offer                               | •                 |                |
| Complaints - % Within Timescale   | •                 |                |
| Complaints - Days to respond  | •                 |                |
| Complaints - Numbers  | •                 |                |
| FOI's Received & Completed on Time  | •                 |                |

| Indicators  | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Social Media Engagements By Type  | •                 |                |
| Assessor Performance  | •                 |                |
| Gender pay gap  |                   | •              |
| Highest paid 5% employees who are women   |                   | •              |
| Sickness absence days - non teacher   |                   | •              |
| Sickness absence days - teacher   |                   | •              |
| Support services as a % of total gross expenditure  |                   | •              |
| Adult Satisfaction - Libraries / Parks & Open Spaces / Museums & Galleries / Leisure Facilities |                   | •              |
| Cost of parks & open spaces per 1,000 popn  |                   | •              |
| Cost per attendance - Sports / Libraries / Museums  |                   | •              |
| % Roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment by Class                            | Annual Overall    | •              |
| Adult Satisfaction - street cleaning  |                   | •              |
| Cost of roads per kilometre   |                   | •              |
| Cost per 1,000 population -Trading Standards / environmental health                             |                   | •              |
| Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population  |                   | •              |
| Street Cleanliness Score  |                   | •              |
| Staff Absence Rates   | •                 | •              |

# OUR PLAN for 2018-23 and your part in it

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS SCHEDULE



### Independent, Achieving People

| Indicators   | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| School Attendance Rate(s)                                      | •                 | •              |
| School Exclusions Rates(s)                                     | •                 | •              |
| School attendance rate (Looked After Children)                 |                   | •              |
| School exclusion rates ('looked after children')               |                   | •              |
| Schools/Nurseries inspected                                    | •                 |                |
| Resident Satisfaction - Schools                                |                   | •              |
| Cost per Pupil By School Type (Pri/Sec/Pre)                    |                   | •              |
| Funded early years provision which is graded good/better       |                   | •              |
| Children meeting developmental milestones                      |                   | •              |
| Pupil Attainment - Deprived Areas By Level                     |                   | •              |
| Pupil Attainment By Level                                      | Annual            | •              |
| Pupil Attainment By SIMD Quintile                              |                   | •              |
| Pupils Positive Destinations                                   |                   | •              |
| Participation rate for 16-19 year olds                         | Annual            | •              |
| Child - Inter-agency Referral Discussions                      | •                 |                |
| Looked After Children - Number                                 | •                 |                |
| Looked After Children - Placement                              | •                 | Community      |
| Looked After Children - Gross Costs - Residential / Community  |                   | •              |
| Looked After Children - more than 1 placement in the last year |                   | •              |
| Number on Child Protection Register                            | •                 |                |
| Child protection re-registrations                              |                   | •              |

| Indicators   | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Community Learning & Development - Achievement   | Annual            |                |
| Community Learning & Development - Participation   | Annual            |                |
| Community Learning & Development - Progression   | Annual            |                |
| Modern Apprentices - Council Employment  | •                 |                |
| Adults 65+ receiving care at home  | •                 | •              |
| Adults supported at home - agree that services/support had an impact in improving/maintaining quality of life      |                   | •              |
| Home care costs per hour 65+   |                   | •              |
| Residential costs per week 65+   |                   | •              |
| Clients using the Self Directed Support approach   | •                 |                |
| Bed Days - Delayed Discharges / Emergency Admissions 75+   | •                 |                |
| Adult Protection - Concerns & Investigations   | •                 |                |
| Adult Satisfaction - Care or Support   |                   | •              |
| Direct Payments + Managed Personalised Budgets spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+ |                   | •              |
| Domestic Abuse - Referrals / Incidents / MARAC   | •                 |                |
| Anti-Social Behaviour - Numbers / Early Interventions / Monitored  | •                 |                |
| Group 1-5 Crimes Numbers   | •                 |                |
| Mediation - Referrals & Improvement  | •                 |                |

# OUR PLAN for 2018-23 and your part in it

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS SCHEDULE



### A Thriving Economy, With Opportunities For Everyone

| Indicators   | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Business Gateway - Businesses Supported  | •                 |                |
| Business Gateway - Start Ups   | •                 | per 10k popn   |
| Invoices paid within 30 days   | •                 | •              |
| Occupancy Rates of Industrial and Commercial Units   | •                 |                |
| Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local dev plan |                   | •              |
| Procurement Capability Improvement Programme Score   | Annual            |                |
| % of procurement spend spent on local enterprises  |                   | •              |
| Scottish Borders Business Fund - Number / Value of grants  | •                 |                |
| Employment Rate & Claimant Count   | •                 |                |
| Unemployed people assisted into work - council operated / funded employability programmes                          |                   | •              |
| Investment in Economic Development & Tourism per 1,000 Population  |                   | •              |
| Proportion of people earning less than the living wage   |                   | •              |
| Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband   |                   | •              |
| Town Vacancy Rates   |                   | •              |
| Capital Project Summary  | •                 |                |

### Empowered Vibrant Communities

| Indicators  | Quarterly (#Exec) | Annual (*LGBF) |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Asset Transfers   | •                 |                |
| Participation Requests  | •                 |                |
| Volunteer Hours   | •                 |                |
| Community Fund - Value of Funding (inc By Locality)                       | •                 |                |
| Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund - value awarded                          | •                 |                |
| Community Resilience Plans by Stage                                       | •                 |                |
| SB Alert Registration Numbers   | •                 |                |
| Community Benefit Clauses - Contracts / Employment & Skills Opportunities | •                 |                |

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# COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

## IMPACT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2020



|   | BERWICKSHIRE  | CHEVIOT   | EILDON   | TEVIOT  | TWEEDDALE  |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
|   | <b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>  | <b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>  | <b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>   | <b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>  | <b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>   |
| <b>All Localities:</b><br>1. Youth antisocial behaviour issues.<br>2. Road checks.<br>3. Antisocial use of vehicles.<br><br><b>Evidence of Impact:</b><br>1. <b>28 alcohol seizures</b> from youths throughout Scottish Borders in November.<br>2. <b>5 vehicles seized</b> for no insurance, 1 drug driving charge brought and 7 fixed penalty notices issued in November.<br>3. <b>20 road traffic offence charges</b> brought, 1 vehicle seizure and 4 warning issued in December in relation to antisocial use of vehicles. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off road motorcycle issues in Monynut Forest, Duns.</li> <li>Youth antisocial behaviour issues reported in Eyemouth.</li> <li>Following intelligence received, drugs warrants were executed in Duns in December.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth antisocial behaviour issues reported in Kelso.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports of off-road motorcycles causing issues in Selkirk.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following intelligence received, drugs warrants were executed in Hawick in October.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following intelligence received, drugs warrants were executed in Peebles in October.</li> <li>Youth antisocial behaviour issues reported in Peebles.</li> </ol>   |
|   | <b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>   | <b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>   | <b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>  | <b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>   | <b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>  |
|   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings held with landowners to determine a way forward to address issues. Social media campaigns conducted and letters sent to offenders.</li> <li>Regular patrols have resulted in a significant reduction in reported youth issues.</li> <li>Several houses were subject to drug searches and drugs were recovered.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAT have conducted regular patrols and alcohol was seized and warning letters issued regarding youths involved in antisocial behaviour.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 motorcycles seized in December.</li> </ol>                          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class B drugs with a value of £3,150 were seized along with £1980 in cash</li> </ol>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drugs with a total value of £6200, £5000 cash and £1080 in Counterfeit currency were seized.</li> <li>Warning letters issued to parents of those young people engaged in antisocial behaviour. Alcohol seized from several young people.</li> </ol> |

| COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM (CAT) ACTIONS   |    |    |    |    |                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|   | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1                    | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1                                 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Raised in Quarter   | 7  | 9  | 4  |    | 5                     | 4  | 7  |    | 4  | 15 | 13 |    | 7                                  | 5  | 5  |    | 4  | 6  | 10 |    |
| Accepted in Quarter   | 3  | 7  | 2  |    | 4                     | 3  | 4  |    | 4  | 15 | 8  |    | 4                                  | 4  | 3  |    | 4  | 6  | 5  |    |
| <b>% of tasking accepted by the CAT across all localities</b>   |    |    |    |    | <b>2019/20</b><br>70% |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | <b>2020/21 Year to Date</b><br>72% |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Note: Not all issues received and discussed at the CAT oversight group meeting are taken on as actions by the CAT. Some actions may be more appropriately followed up and actioned by another service within SBC or by a partner organisation. Also some actions are tasked directly through Police Scotland so are not reflected in the figures above but show the impact the team is having in the Borders. |    |    |    |    |                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

# COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

## IMPACT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2020



| HI-VISIBILITY FOOT PATROL (HOURS)   |     |     |    | MOBILE PATROL (HOURS)   |       |      |    | STATIC ROAD CHECKS   |    |    |    | ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR WARNING LETTERS ISSUED TO UNDER 18s    |    |    |    | NUMBER OF DRUG SEARCHES UNDERTAKEN PERSONS    |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|--|-----|-----|----|--|-------|------|----|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| Q1   | Q2  | Q3  | Q4 | Q1   | Q2    | Q3   | Q4 | Q1  | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1  | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |    |    |    |  |
| 289  | 322 | 393 |    | 1,020  | 1,275 | 1509 |    | 55  | 70 | 71 |    | 28  | 75 | 62 |    | 65   | 52 | 73 |    |    |    |    |  |
| <p>Foot patrols are the number hours CAT officers spend in a specific location carrying out foot patrols. The figure quoted is in individual office hours.</p> |     |     |    | <p>Mobile patrols are those carried out in marked Police Scotland vehicles and can involve 1 or more officers. The figure quoted is in individual officer hours.</p> |       |      |    | <p>Static road checks are proactive stops of vehicles in known problem locations to prevent or detect criminal or antisocial acts involving vehicles.</p> |    |    |    | <p>Where young people aged under 18 are evidenced committing antisocial behaviour (including drinking alcohol) warning letters are issued to parents/guardians to advise them of the situation. The warning letter initiative commenced on 1st June 2020.</p> |    |    |    | <p><b>53%</b> of searches were positive for drugs</p> <p>NUMBER OF DRUG SEARCHES UNDERTAKEN PREMISES </p> |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|  |     |     |    |  |       |      |    |   |    |    |    | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>16</td><td>17</td><td>23</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>100%</b> of searches were positive for drugs</p>                              |    |    |    | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | 16 | 17 | 23 |  |
| Q1   | Q2  | Q3  | Q4 |  |       |      |    |   |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |  |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 16   | 17  | 23  |    |  |       |      |    |   |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |  |    |    |    |    |    |    |  |

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|  | BERWICKSHIRE |    |    |    | CHEVIOT   |    |    |    | EILDON    |    |     |    | TEVIOT    |     |    |    | TWEEDDALE |    |    |    |
|---|--------------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|-----|----|-----------|-----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|
|   | Q1           | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1        | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1        | Q2 | Q3  | Q4 | Q1        | Q2  | Q3 | Q4 | Q1        | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| <b>PARKING:</b> No of Tickets Issued  | 0            | 59 | 50 |    | 12        | 39 | 38 |    | 14        | 78 | 169 |    | 0         | 103 | 47 |    | 6         | 37 | 90 |    |
| <b>2020/21 Year to date all localities</b>  | <b>Q1</b>    |    |    |    | <b>Q2</b> |    |    |    | <b>Q3</b> |    |     |    | <b>Q4</b> |     |    |    |           |    |    |    |
|   | 32           |    |    |    | 316       |    |    |    | 394       |    |     |    |           |     |    |    |           |    |    |    |

Note: Year to date quarterly totals include tickets issued where the locality wasn't recorded



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## **FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND CODE OF PRACTICE UPDATE**

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

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 MARCH 2021**

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

- 1.1 This report presents the Executive Committee with the Council's updated Following the Public Pound code of practice for approval.**
- 1.2 As noted by Audit Scotland as part of the 2019/20 statutory audit, the Council's Following the Public Pound guidance has not been refreshed since 2006 resulting in a risk that the existing guidance is no longer relevant and the Council is not ensuring it is delivering value for money.
- 1.3 The guidance has now been updated as attached in Appendix 1 as per the Audit Scotland national guidance on Following the Public Pound. Adherence to the guidance will ensure the Council adheres to the principles of good governance in expending public money. It should be noted that in refreshing the guidance it was confirmed that current practices are in line with guidance and no operational changes are required as a result of this update. On approval the guidance will be made available on the Council's intranet to ensure all staff have access to it.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee approve the updated Code of Practice on Following the Public Pound.**

### 3 BACKGROUND AND CONTENT

- 3.1 As noted by Audit Scotland as part of their 2019/20 statutory audit, the Council's Following the Public Pound guidance has not been refreshed since 2006 resulting in a risk that the existing guidance is no longer relevant and the Council is not ensuring it is delivering value for money. Audit Scotland made the following recommendation:

| Issue / risk   | Recommendation  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Following the Public Pound</b></p> <p>The council's Following the Public Pound guidance has not been refreshed since 2006.</p> <p>There is a risk that the existing guidance is no longer relevant and the council is not ensuring it is delivering value for money.</p> | <p>The council should review the guidance to ensure that it is still appropriate and available to relevant staff.</p> |

- 3.2 Under section 51 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 every Scottish Local Authority is required in implementing any arrangement or agreement with another body to follow the principles of Following the Public Pound. The principle of the policy is that the principles of good governance apply in decisions concerning public money irrespective of whether those funds are spent directly or are transferred to trusts or voluntary organisations.
- 3.2 The Scottish Borders Council guidance has now been updated as attached in Appendix 1 as per the Audit Scotland national guidance on Following the Public Pound. Adherence to the guidance will ensure the Council adheres to the principles of good governance in expending public money. It should be noted that in refreshing the guidance it was confirmed that current practices are in line with guidance and no operational changes are required as a result of this update. On approval the guidance will be made available on the Council's intranet to ensure all staff have access to it.

### 4 IMPLICATIONS

#### 4.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

#### 4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There is a risk that staff are unaware of the guidance and the approaches they must take to ensure the Council is delivering value for money. This is being mitigated through the guidance being readily available for all staff on the Council's intranet.

#### 4.3 Equalities

There are no equalities issues resulting from this report.

#### 4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects from this report.

#### 4.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions resulting from this report.

**4.6 Rural Proofing**

This report contains no implications that will compromise the Council's rural proofing policy.

**4.7**

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

This report does not result in any changes to the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation.

**5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**David Robertson**  
**Executive Director,**  
**Finance & Regulatory**

**Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

| Name         | Designation and Contact Number                |
|--------------|---|
| Suzy Douglas | Financial Services Manager 01835 824000 X5881 |

**Background Papers:** Audit & Scrutiny Committee, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in large print and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an Officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified. Contact Suzy Douglas Council Headquarters on 01835 824000 X5881



# **CODE OF PRACTICE**

## **FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'**

## CONTENTS

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CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'

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**1.0 Scope and Background**

- 1.1 This Code of Practice follows the 'Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound' issued by Audit Scotland with the support of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. The guidance sets out a framework for Councils' relationships with bodies through which they seek to carry out some of their functions and the principles that should be applied when considering any **substantial** funding to arm's length and external organisations (ALEOs). The guidance is not intended to apply to the many small revenue grants which councils make to community groups.
- 1.2 'Following the Public Pound' means ensuring that there is proper accountability for public funds used in delivering services, irrespective of the means of service delivery.
- 1.3 When agreeing to transfer funds to an external body, the Council must be clear about its reasons for doing so and proper consideration should always apply. The prime purpose of involvement with an external body should be the achievement of the Council's objectives in the most effective, efficient and economic manner, not the avoidance of controls or legal restrictions, which are designed to secure probity and regularity in the use of public funds.
- 1.4 It is the responsibility of each Service Director to ensure there is clear public accountability for public funds that are provided from their Service's budgets to external bodies. An individual officer may be identified as Lead Officer for each body in receipt of funding from the Council.
- 1.5 The concept of 'Following the Public Pound' applies when the Council decides to fund external organisations which deliver services that might otherwise be delivered by the Council itself. In these arrangements, the Council agrees to provide funds and other resources to companies and organisations for the delivery of specified services. The Council has a number of such arrangements, and these companies / charities are collectively defined as being Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEO's).
- 1.6 This Code covers all external bodies who receive **substantial** funding, including loans or loan guarantees, from the Council e.g. Live Borders, Citizen's Advice Bureaux. It does not include payments made under a straightforward contract for goods and services.
- 1.7 Potential conflicts of interest that arise when Members or officers sit on the boards or committees of external bodies funded by the Council will be removed through the use of funding agreements. These written agreements will define roles, responsibilities and liabilities and will be used to define clear and unambiguous relationships.
- 1.8 The Council will only seek representation on the board or committee of an external body where i) the body clearly contributes to the achievement of the Council's

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'**

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strategic aims and objectives; ii) the body is considered to be a strategic partner; or iii) it is important for the Council's commitment to be visible.

- 1.9 The Code does not apply to external bodies who receive small revenue grants from the Council e.g. Community Councils, village halls, local festival grants and projects supported under the Community Fund. These funds are administered under separate guidance.
- 1.10 The Code does not apply to instances where the Council are distributing funds from a third parties.
- 1.11 In setting out the checks required, the following funding bands will be used. The Code should be applied where it is known or anticipated that payments will reach these thresholds cumulatively over the financial year :
- Cumulative annual funding or one-off funding greater than £500,000 (Category 1)
  - Cumulative annual funding or one off funding greater than £50,000 but less than £500,000 (Category 2)
- 1.12 The Council may provide assistance in kind to external bodies e.g. providing premises rent free, provision of equipment and staff time. The true cost of any assistance in kind will be taken into account in the allocation of funding.

**2.0 Accounting Requirements Applicable to All**

- 2.1 When agreeing to transfer funds to an external body, the Council must be clear about its reasons for doing so. The prime purpose of involvement with an external body should be the achievement of the Council's objectives.
- 2.2 The Budget Manager and budget for the payment will have been identified and agreed by the Service Director.
- 2.3 The Budget Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the Code is followed.
- 2.4 All payments to external organisations, including those made under third-party payments for services, must follow the Council's Financial Regulations.

**3.0 Category 1 (Cumulative annual funding or one-off funding greater than £500,000)**

- 3.1 An option appraisal must be carried out to identify the optimum means of delivery prior to entering into any funding agreement.
- 3.2 The following list determines the minimum information requirements of the Council for the whole organisation and timescales in which these are required:
- A detailed one year business plan or project plan
  - Detailed monthly cash flow estimates
  - A summary 3 –year business plan

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(The above must be provided prior to entering into any agreements and annually before the last day of February).

- Management Accounts covering the previous 6-month period; to be provided no later than 6 weeks after the period they relate to.
- Annual Accounts, audited by a Reporting Accountant and signed by that person; to be lodged no later than 4 months after the organisation's financial year end.
- Monitoring reports, as determined by the Budget Manager, containing information on project status, performance against pre-defined targets and any other details considered applicable.
- Minutes of Board or other governing body, meetings. Budget Manager should attend Board or Management Committee meetings in a non-participatory monitoring capacity.
- Clear evidence of an effective equalities policy covering sex discrimination, race relations, and disabilities.
- Clear evidence that the organisation is aware of its environmental responsibilities and acts accordingly.
- Confirmation that the organisation is registered with Disclosure Scotland or, if a voluntary organisation, has conducted checks for all relevant persons through a Registered Umbrella Body.

### 3.3 Checks to be carried out by the Council

The following list details the financial checks that must be carried out by the Budget Manager, in conjunction with their Finance Team, and timescales for completing these checks.

Annually, check that:

- The required Business Plan and Annual Accounts have been lodged
- The Business Plans have been risk assessed
- The funding is being used solely for the purposes intended
- Any conditions applied are being met, including targets and quality standards
- All milestones in the business plans that should have been met, are being met
- Any projections in the business plans are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) based on past performance and trends
- The cash flow meets projected levels, to ensure viability
- Any necessary income from other sources has been secured
- Insurance is adequate to meet all perceived risks
- Recognised accounting procedures have been followed and standards met, e.g. in relation to depreciation of fixed assets.
- Disclosure checks have been carried out for all new employees/volunteers.

At least every 6 months, check that:

- The Management Accounts covering the previous 6-month period have been received.
- The cash flow indicates that there is enough to meet the organisation's needs for the remainder of the year.

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'**

3.4 If annual or 6-monthly checks give rise to any concerns, the Budget Manager should immediately advise the Service Director and Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory, to agree actions to address these concerns. If considered necessary, the Budget Manager will prepare a report for consideration by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

**4.0 Category 2 (Cumulative annual funding or one-off funding greater than £50,000 but less than £500,000)**

4.1 The following list determines the minimum information requirements of the Council and the timescales in which these are required:

- A detailed one year business plan or project plan.
- Annual Accounts, audited by a Reporting Accountant and signed by that person; to be lodged no later than 4 months after the organisation's financial year end.
- Monitoring reports, as determined by the Budget Manager, containing information on project status, performance against pre-defined targets and any other details considered applicable.
- Clear evidence of an effective equalities policy covering sex discrimination, race relations, and disabilities.
- Clear evidence that the organisation is aware of its environmental responsibilities and acts accordingly.
- Confirmation that the organisation is registered with Disclosure Scotland or, if a voluntary organisation, has conducted checks for all relevant persons through a Registered Umbrella Body.

The above must be provided prior to entering into any agreements and annually before the last day of February.

4.2 Checks to be carried out by the Council

The following list details the financial checks that must be carried out by the Budget Manager, in conjunction with their Finance Team, and timescales for completing these checks.

Annually, check that:

- The required Business Plan and Annual Accounts have been lodged.
- The Business Plans have been risk assessed.
- The funding is being used solely for the purposes intended.
- Any conditions applied are being met, including targets and quality standards.
- All milestones in the business plans that should have been met, are being met
- The cash flow meets projected levels, to ensure viability.
- Recognised accounting procedures have been followed and standards met, e.g. in relation to depreciation of fixed assets.
- Disclosure checks have been carried out for all new employees/volunteers.

4.3 If annual or 6-monthly checks give rise to any concerns, the Budget Manager should immediately advise the Service Director and Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory, to agree actions to address these concerns. If considered necessary, the

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Budget Manager will prepare a report for consideration by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

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**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'**

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**5.0 Payments**

- 5.1 Payments will **not** be made to the organisation until all the required information is submitted and checked and all financial checks have been satisfactorily completed by the Budget Manager and authorised by the Service Director.
- 5.2 A schedule of payments will be agreed between the Budget Manager and the receiving organisation each financial year and tailored to meet the cash flow requirements of the receiving organisation. Payments will be made on an agreed periodic basis of at least quarterly, to minimise the Council's exposure in the event of the organisation encountering financial difficulties.
- 5.3 Prior to any payment being made to an organisation, checks must be made to ensure no sundry debts, council tax or non-domestic rates are owed by the organisation to the Council. If any such debts are due and past the first stage in the recovery process, then this debt must be deducted from the next payment to the organisation.

**6.0 Funding Agreement**

- 6.1 All organisations covered within the scope of this procedure must have a Funding Agreement approved by the Service Director, Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory and Chief Legal Officer.
- 6.2 Where an organisation enters into a funding agreement with Finance & Regulatory Services, the Chief Executive must approve the Funding Agreement.
- 6.3 The Funding Agreement can take different forms, e.g. Service Level Agreement (SLA) or application form and letter of approval with associated conditions. The length and detail of a Funding Agreement will vary depending upon the nature and size of the funding given. The Funding Agreement should be in place within three months of the date of the decision being taken to provide funding.
- 6.4 The agreement will include non-financial targets and information, but as a minimum the following must be included i) the purpose of the funding and the expectation of use; ii) the Council policy/strategy the funding is linked to; iii) the value of funding approved by the Council, including payment date information; iv) the period over which the funding applies; v) financial reporting requirements; vi) monitoring and reporting requirements; vii) a statement on the consequences of failure to provide reporting information to the Council, i.e. the discontinuation of further funding; viii) a statement on the ability of the Council to deduct any debts due to the Council prior to making any further awards; ix) a statement on access to the accounting records of the organisation that requires to be given to Council staff, including internal and external audit staff; x) details of Council representation of Councillors and Officers; xi) the need for the Council to be acknowledged for its support on all publicity material relating to the project/service; and xii) clarification of procedures for cancelling the Funding Agreement.
- 6.5 Monitoring officers should periodically review the SLA or other contract between the Council and the organisation. Where it is considered that a change to a provision

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'**

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within the original agreement is necessary, this should be agreed between the Service, Legal Services and the organisation.

**7.0 The Role of the Budget Manager**

- 7.1 The role of the Budget Manager for each funding arrangement is to ensure that the Council's interests are being maintained and objectives are being achieved, by a) providing advice; and b) monitoring.
- 7.2 Advisory role in general terms means to advise the funded organisation on what they must do to meet the terms of the funding. They will not provide professional advice but may draw attention to the need for such advice and where it might be obtained. The Budget Manager will i) inform the organisation of Council processes, procedures and requirements; ii) on an ongoing basis, remind the organisation of the need to meet any set criteria; iii) advise the appropriate Council officer of any issues of concern.
- 7.3 Monitoring role broadly means to monitor the terms of the Funding Agreement and to ensure that the guidelines and principles of 'Following the Public Pound' are adhered to. This will include i) checking that agreed criteria are being met; ii) monitoring Business Plans; iii) monitoring financial arrangements; iv) monitoring agreed performance measures; v) monitoring risks; vi) monitoring the outcomes of the funding; vii) produce monitoring reports.

**8.0 Representation and Participation in External Bodies**

- 8.1 It is important that the Council is clear about why it wants representation and is transparent in its decision making about which Members or Officers will be involved and why.
- 8.2 Members appointed to partner organisations are bound by the Code of Conduct for Councillors - Appointments to Partner Organisations – Sections 3.19 and 3.20 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-conduct-councillors-9781787810778/>) and Registration of Interests - Sections 4 and 5. Any Elected Member who has an interest in any organisation being funded by the Council must ensure that this interest is included in the register of Members' interests as a (normally non-financial) interest and declared at any meetings where matters concerning the organisation are being discussed.
- 8.3 Council Officers are, at all times, bound by the Code of Conduct for Employees. Any Council Officer who has an interest in any organisation being funded by the Council, must ensure that this interest is included the register of employee interests.
- 8.4 The Council will retain a register of representation on external bodies in a format deemed suitable for the purpose.

**9.0 Termination**

- 9.1 Should any disagreement arise that cannot be resolved by the Budget Manager, then it should be referred to the Service Director and Portfolio Holder who will

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR FUNDING EXTERNAL BODIES AND 'FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND'

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consult with the Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory and Chief Legal Officer and resolve the situation.

- 9.2 Where no resolution can be found, the agreement to provide financial support may be terminated on **written notice** if any of the following arise i) the organisation fails to perform any **substantial** obligation on its part; or ii) the conditions of the investment, including the provision of information requested are not met; or iii) the monitoring/evaluation of the organisation and/or its performance are deemed unsatisfactory by the Lead Officer. The termination shall become effective within 30 days after the receipt of the notice unless the organisation has remedied the identified default within this period or is able to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Council, that any issues can be remedied within an agreed timescale. Under these circumstances, the Council will require the return of all unused monies and retains the right to recover any debts due to the Council incurred prior to the termination date.
- 9.3 The agreement to provide financial support may be terminated with **immediate effect** where the organisation i) is unable, at any time, to satisfy the Council that sufficient cash exists to ensure its cash flow projections can be financed; or ii) passes a resolution for winding up other than for the purposes of solvent amalgamation or reconstruction where the resulting entity assumes all of the obligations of the defaulting organisation; or iii) is deemed insolvent; or iv) makes or proposes to make any arrangement with its creditors; or v) appoints a liquidator, receiver or administrator over any of the assets of the organisation. Any termination of the agreement shall not affect any rights or liabilities placed upon either party which have accrued prior to the date of termination.

## 10.0 Audit and Inspection

- 10.1 This Code is an important internal control to ensure compliance with the guidelines and principles of "Following the Public Pound". Periodically, Internal Audit will carry out a compliance and assurance review across the Council with its findings and recommendations being reported to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the Council's External Auditors will review, as part of their annual audit, any **substantial** funding arrangements with any concerns over issues of probity and regularity made known to the Council and Audit Scotland.



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## **PROPOSED FINALISED FOOD GROWING STRATEGY**

**Report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 MARCH 2021**

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

- 1.1. Following a 12 week public consultation, this report presents the finalised Food Growing Strategy, 'Cultivating Communities', for proposed adoption. The 5 year Strategy is a legislative requirement under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This report summarises the consultation process and outcomes, next steps in delivering on the Strategy Action Plan, and seeks approval for the adoption of the Strategy.**
- 1.2. The Food Growing Strategy supports the Locality Plans for the Scottish Borders and is itself supported with the proposed creation of new policy EP17 in the Local Development Plan.
- 1.3 The Consultation Draft Food Growing Strategy was previously presented to Executive on 15 September 2020.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:-**
  - (a) Notes the feedback provided during the consultation on the Draft Food Growing Strategy.**
  - (b) Approves the finalised Strategy and Action Plan for adoption.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 introduces new duties on Local Authorities. A key requirement of the Legislation is for every Local Authority to develop a Food Growing Strategy under section 119 of the Act. Each Authority must set out in its strategy how it will provide land to meet demand for food growing as allotments or other forms of cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers for community or individual growing.
- 3.2 While Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act came into effect in 2015, the detailed government guidance on preparing the Food Growing Strategy was published in November 2018. Since then Officers have been engaging with stakeholders and undertaking a review of Allotments and Community food growing in the Scottish Borders. The Strategy was originally programmed to be adopted in Spring 2020, but due to Covid-19 and the resultant restrictions and resource pressures this has been delayed.
- 3.3 The Food Growing Strategy is prepared in direct response to this legislative driver. The scope and content of the Strategy is set out in the legislation. The remit is clear, to support community growing in all its guises. The Food Growing Strategy is a legislative requirement, but it is also our vehicle for nurturing and developing community food growing across the Scottish Borders, in line with the national food growing agenda. It is important to note that, while there are linkages, the legislation and resultant Strategy does not directly extend to socio-economic issues or commercial food growing and agricultural land use planning.

### **4 THE STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The legislation outlines that Food Growing Strategies are required to cover 5 year periods, therefore the Food Growing Strategy will run from 2021 to 2026, and will be reviewed thereafter every 5 years developing and furthering community food growing in the Scottish Borders. In preparing this new Strategy, Officers have undertaken various appraisals and measures;
- Benchmarking of other Local Authorities has been undertaken, as well as seeking out advice and guidance from various partners (Greenspace Scotland, etc).
  - A survey of community food growing sites in the region has been prepared and mapped digitally (now available online).
  - A survey of SBC owned allotment sites has been undertaken to identify plot sizes and features.
  - Officers have been working to identify land for potential new food growing sites where there is known demand.
  - Resources (the volunteer co-ordinator) has been brought in-house from Live Borders to better meet the needs of the Strategy.
  - Ensure the Council's flagship food growing project, the Wilton Lodge Park walled garden (part of the HLF legacy), continues to flourish through secured investment in refurbishment of the dilapidated glasshouse.

- Engagement with Community Planning Partners (CPPs) and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations is underway to identify opportunities.
- 4.2 Prior to preparing the Draft Strategy, a 12 week public consultation was launched on 24 July 2019. Stakeholders such as Community Planning Partners, local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, Allotment Associations/Societies and Community growing project managers were engaged with (where possible) through a series of meetings. The aim of this was to gain insight into current/potential local food growing activity and demand for future capacity building, to guide the development of the Strategy. It had a very good response, with 300 respondents. Following the feedback received during this process, a Draft Strategy was prepared and approved by Executive in September 2020 for public consultation.
- 4.3 The Strategy has been developed based on the findings of the consultation process. The aim of this Strategy is to support and facilitate anyone who wants to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. The key objectives of the Food Growing Strategy are:
- To provide a central resource for community growing information
  - To raise awareness around community growing in the Scottish Borders
  - To show you how to get growing: where, how and who can help you/your community group
  - To help you get your community growing project off the ground
  - To help identify potential allotment sites and growing spaces
- 4.4 In developing the Food Growing Strategy, Scottish Borders Council acknowledges the wider benefits associated with food growing including:
- Improving health and wellbeing outcomes
  - Promoting opportunities for social interaction
  - Environmental improvement including climate change and food waste
  - Skills development
  - Economic development and sustainability.
- 4.5 Survey responses identified a need for support to individuals and communities interested in food growing, broadly falling into three themes which form the structure of the strategy:
- Getting started: how can I get growing?** Support for getting started - Skills and Advice; training, confidence and resources to get started.
- Where can I grow?** Help to find space – existing sites and new growing spaces and getting the right permissions in place.
- Where can I get support for my growing project/growing activities?**  
How to resource your project: Funding, networking and skills sharing
- 4.6 The Strategy places emphasis on participation and self-mobilisation, supporting and facilitating the linking up of volunteers to projects, new growing aspirations to existing resources, and skills sharing across the Borders. Within the Scottish Borders there are a wealth of projects and

growing groups who work collaboratively, sharing skills and volunteers. There are opportunities to work with local schools.

- 4.7 The Strategy also sets out new growing opportunities within the Scottish Borders, thinking creatively about how and where communities can get growing. The extensive network of amenity greenspace owned by Scottish Borders Council presents an opportunity for communities to 'adopt' areas for growing: former bedding plant areas and amenity grass areas may lend themselves to adoption for community food growing and the strategy invites exploration of these opportunities within communities.
- 4.8 As part of the Strategy, information on all growing opportunities within the Scottish Borders – existing community growing sites, allotment sites and other growing sites - are listed and mapped to be made available online. This is a 'live' resource that can be updated as new sites become available.
- 4.9 As well as supporting and facilitating self-deployment of individuals and community groups to get growing, the Strategy sets out the Council's commitments through the Action Plan:

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

## **5 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 Following Executive approval, the Consultation process ran for 12 weeks from 15 September to 8 December 2020. This consultation was promoted to all Community Councils, In Bloom groups, various 3rd sector organisations, publicly via a press release and via website and social media. It received 34 responses.
- 5.2 Responses to the consultation included a number of suggestions and a broad range of support (see Appendix 2 for redacted transcript and full SBC response).
- 5.3 Practical issues such as food growing in private gardens, garden waste, composting services, seed banks and seed swaps were raised as possible opportunities. Some responses noted interest in local growing project sites, which can be further developed within the strategy and action plan. The Strategy has been amended to include reference lists and clearer links to the online map of growing sites to reflect feedback.
- 5.4 Issues such as resources were raised by several respondents, with responses outlining suggestions of creating more posts to support community food growing and outreach. Currently the Council has not allocated additional resources to the Food Growing Strategy and Action Plan. However, the Volunteer Co-ordinator post role is currently being developed to provide more outreach and support across the Scottish Borders, building on the successfully established project at Wilton Lodge Park walled garden, and a capital project is underway refurbishing the glass house which will enable an expansion of what is grown and increase in volunteering numbers.
- 5.5 Some felt that the lack of reference to commercial growing in the draft Strategy was a weakness. As outlined previously in this report, the legislation provides a clear remit for the Strategy, which encompasses community food growing on local authority owned land. The wider issues of commercial food growing and agricultural land use planning fall outside the scope of this Strategy.
- 5.6 Furthermore, two respondents felt the Strategy title was misleading, and should instead be renamed something that more clearly expressed this remit. The two suggestions were "Local Community Food Growing Strategy" and "Scottish Borders Grow Your Own Food Strategy". In response, the Strategy title has been changed from 'Scottish Borders Food Growing Strategy' to 'Scottish Borders Community Food Growing Strategy'.
- 5.7 Promotion of organic gardening and the impact of pesticide use on pollinators in relation to biodiversity loss were also raised. The Council continues to consider how it will respond to the Climate Emergency through the Climate Action Plan. These matters, and other related challenges, can be explored and developed as part of this strategy and/or other Corporate Strategies as set out in action 1.3.

## **6 NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 When approved, the Strategy will be adopted and launched on the Council's website, social media and local press and through the current network within the Scottish Borders who have shown interest in the development of the strategy. Additionally, some community engagement perhaps under the

banner of Floral Gateway will be considered to further raise awareness, identify successes and opportunities to further aims of the strategy.

- 6.2 The Actions within the Strategy will be implemented and Officers will work with colleagues across Community Planning Partners and the different Services, to deliver on the commitments contained in the Action Plan.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

- a) There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- b) Within the Parks & Environment Service a Volunteer Co-ordinator post exists, as detailed at 5.5 this post role is currently being developed to provide support across the Scottish Borders.
- c) Work at the Hawick Walled Garden Glasshouse is due to complete in 2021/22 and will enable an expansion of volunteer numbers and growing capacity.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- a) In order to meet the requirements of the legislation Scottish Borders Council has undertaken a consultation exercise and engaged with stakeholders, and their views have been taken into account in shaping the Strategy. The Action Plan aims to ensure that the Strategy is implemented and mitigates potential risks to success.
- b) The Action Plan requires resource to be implemented. There is a risk to delivery if insufficient resource is allocated to the Actions contained therein, e.g. supporting community growing, sourcing land and associated infrastructure for growing etc. There are various options available which will be explored further to mitigate against this.
- c) Due to Covid-19, signs have been erected across outdoor volunteering and allotment sites advising the public to follow government social distancing and other guidance regarding Covid-19 in accordance with Government guidance. The same information is included in the Strategy as a central point of reference.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

An IIA has been undertaken and it is anticipated that there are no adverse impact or unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic (age, disability, gender re-assignment, trans/transgender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race groups, religion or belief, sex-gender identity, and sexual orientation) and those who do not. Indeed, reducing socio-economic inequality is inferred in the promotion and facilitation of local food growing opportunities to all.

### **7.4 Acting Sustainably**

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

## 7.5 Carbon Management

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report; there may be net reduction in emissions related to reduced food miles from the likely increase in locally grown produce.

## 7.6 Rural Proofing

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

## 7.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to the Scheme of Administration of Scheme of Delegation.

## 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 & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**David Robertson**

**Executive Director, Finance and Regulatory Signature .....**

### Author(s)

| Name         | Designation and Contact Number |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Jason Hedley | Chief Officer Roads. Ext 8037  |
| Carol Cooke  | Urban Designer, Ext 5537       |

### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** Executive Committee - Tuesday, 15th September, 2020 at 10.00 am, Agenda item 10.

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

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

**APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT FOOD GROWING STRATEGY (see separate pdf)**

**APPENDIX 2 – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

| Organisation name if given/applicable | Please provide your comments on the draft Scottish Borders Food Growing Strategy.  | Response   |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
|                                       | Agreed   | Noted  |
| Galashiels                            | <p>Fabulous. Taking the credit for other people's hard work as always 😊</p> <p>Why do you want to push people to grow their own but not help them to do so. Why don't you collect garden waste and compost it to give it back to people who can use it in their gardens and spaces for growing.</p> <p>Why not sponsor a seed bank or give away seeds. Why not allow keen gardeners to plant up Bank St Gardens etc using flowers you have paid for. Why no grants for people wanting to garden etc?</p>                           | <p>SBC does not provide a green waste collection service. However a number of commercial operators do within the Scottish Borders, see web link below for details. Sustainably produced and peat free compost can be pre-purchased and picked up from our a number of our Community Recycling Centres, for further details see web link below:<br/> <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste</a></p> <p>While the Council doesn't currently have the resources to run or sponsor a seed bank, this may be something we explore with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.</p> <p>The provision of the planting at Bank Street Gardens and Old Gala House is being organised by Galashiels in Bloom, funded by Galashiels Pay &amp; Display monies this year, with future funding options currently being investigated.</p> |
| Newstead Village Committee            | <p>Glad to hear there is support for communities who are thinking about starting growing projects.</p> <p>Scottish Borders Council must work hard to protect a variety of green spaces from potential development to prepare for more community groups coming forward over the coming years. Reassuring to see this talked about with regards to the Local Plan, but imperative that commitment results in protected green spaces in and around communities. Especially old orchards which could be given a new lease of life.</p> | Noted.   |

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| Retired... member community council | Shame Eddleston does not have a space<br>There seems to be an unused area behind the water works. Not sure who owns it. It's over grown and quite big.  | Noted re: possible site in Eddleston.  |
| Reston Community Company LTD        | <p>The strategy was informative and highlighted several issues, one being of funding and the other planning. Funding, although may be small to start an allotment or growing area, it is still required initially especially if it is a community Garden/allotment.</p> <p>Planning, groups or organisations starting a community garden/allotment may find they need a shed/hut to store tools/equipment, however the erection of a shed or hut may require planning permission, to which this is an expense that may be a difficult to fund. Assistance from the planning department by means of waiver of the fee would be beneficial.</p> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>Where planning consent is required for a change of use of land to form allotments, the planning authority would encourage a single application for the allotments and any structures that may be erected on individual plots such as greenhouses, sheds or poly tunnels. A condition would be added to any consent requiring a design code for these structures to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The design code would include details of the maximum height and size of the structures, or would provide series of styles and types of structures that would be acceptable. The fee for this type of application would be £401 and there is no option for the Council to waive this fee.</p> <p>In the case of existing allotments, where there is no design code in place, planning permission would normally be required for any new structure that may be erected on individual plots. The fee for this type of application would be calculated on the floor space created by the development. Where the floor space does not exceed 40 square metres, the fee would be £202.</p> <p>In both cases, there is no provision for this fee to be waived, unless the applicant is the Community Council, where the fee would be half the normal fee.</p> |

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| <p>Hawick extension to Langholm Chill Club and Langholm digs for Victory Project</p> | <p>Hi , I am not great at putting my words across on paper, so Every little bit of unused land should be shared so long as people are willing to take of it. I started last year growing chillis in hawick and have got 3 charities in Hawick on board, Burnfoot Hub, Katherine elliot centre and Wilton School (cheeky monkeys club). I have a shared drying area and with agreement from the other residents we all have created an amazing array of 47 chilli varieties in a space the size of a double garage.<br/>Garlic, tomatoes, potatoes, onions all in homemade planters.<br/>We build a waist level retractable poly tunnel for £20.<br/>I have been on CH5 news, The Times, Sunday Herald, numerous papers, local radio etc, all because of a newly acquired love for grow and eating what you grow, it's crazy.<br/>I am planning on a 3m x 4m poly tunnel to extend for next year and between Hawick and Langholm create a world record for the largest variety of chilli plants in one display any where in the world 400 varieties. We do have 175 varieties at the moment making us the Chilli Capital place to come in the UK.</p> | <p>Noted – great work!</p> |
|  | <p>This seems an excellent, well thought out piece of work.</p>  | <p>Noted.</p>              |

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|                                      | Looks as though there is lots happening already, and there is plenty of information available.   |   |
| Hawick community council             | <p>I don't understand why planning permission for greenhouses on allotments is required, and I don't understand why this is not made much clearer in the document. It took me over 3 years to confirm this.</p> <p>If this is a Scottish Government regulation, then the SBC should fill in the application template and pay for the application given that a greenhouse is improving public land and that the tenant is paying for the greenhouse itself.</p> | <p>For allotments, where there is no design code in place, planning permission would normally be required for any new structure that may be erected on individual plots. The fee for this type of application would be calculated on the floor space created by the development. Where the floor space does not exceed 40 square metres, the fee would be £202.</p> <p>There is no provision for this fee to be waived, unless the applicant is the Community Council, where the fee would be half the normal fee. There is no provision for local authorities to complete application forms on behalf of applicants.</p> |
| HAPi Hawick Acorn Project initiative | HAPi was set up to allow young adults with limited ability to grow harvest and eat healthily   | Noted.  |
| Greener Melrose                      | <p>Great to see that you have put this together. Lots of great contact information.</p> <p>The name is misleading, as most food produced in the Borders is from farms, so perhaps 'local community food growing strategy' would have been better.</p> <p>I help to organise the Greener Melrose Community Orchard (over 100 trees now 7 years old and producing well) and allotments - we have 10 couples/individuals with raised beds for</p>                 | <p>Noted</p> <p>We can consider amending the name to Community Food Growing Strategy</p>  |

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|  | <p>vegetables and flowers, in a deer and rabbit fenced area, and have recently received funding for an area of c 0.25ha to be rabbit and deer fenced to create a Forest Garden where we will plant perennials and climbers all to produce food. This is all on land owned by Borders Forest Trust and managed by GM under an agreement. We could not find land in Melrose to create allotments. We need to provide you more information for the map.</p> <p>I think you could have provided sections to make comments in, not just one block.</p> <p>I now live in lauder (I helped set up Greener Melrose when I lived 3 miles from Melrose) and in lauder we have no provision for allotments, and I was not aware that SBC were obliged to provide areas for allotments, so i would like to follow this up. There was a great loss of opportunity when the new houses were built on the proposed school site. But there is probably land around the edges of Lauder which can be identified - also the Lauder Common Good Land - there may be space there too. A lot of land is used by recreational horse owners, so there is plenty space, but it all needs expensive fencing against livestock, deer and rabbits and a water supply and parking area provided.</p> | <p>Noted, many thanks - the map is a 'live' resource and can continue to be updated with new and additional information.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted – Scottish Borders Council will take all reasonable steps to meet local demand for allotments as per the legislation, please contact <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a> to discuss any local community growing aspirations.</p> |
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|  | <p>Is there a map showing all the SBC public spaces I can access?</p> <p>The most important thing is that allotments are very close to where you live, so even a mile can be a bit too far for most people.</p> <p>Working with schools is very difficult at the best of times and currently not an option during c-19 restrictions.</p> <p>The planning restrictions seem very onerous, especially if a fee is required for say, a hut. This needs to be reviewed as planning fees can scupper a project. I can't see the link or the details of EP17 referred to in p24 of the draft consultation document.</p> | <p>SBC owned greenspace is all mapped, and there are plans to include this information in the online map available <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Where planning consent is required for a change of use of land to form allotments, the planning authority would encourage a single application for the allotments and any structures that may be erected on individual plots such as greenhouses, sheds or poly tunnels. A condition would be added to any consent requiring a design code for these structures to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The design code would include details of the maximum height and size of the structures, or would provide series of styles and types of structures that would be acceptable. The fee for this type of application would be £401 and there is no option for the Council to waive this fee.</p> <p>In the case of existing allotments, where there is no design code in place, planning permission would normally be required for any new structure that may be erected on individual plots. The fee for this type of application would be calculated on the floor space created by the development. Where the floor space does not exceed 40 square metres, the fee would be £202.</p> <p>In both cases, there is no provision for this fee to be waived, unless the applicant is the Community Council, where the fee would be half the normal fee.</p> |
|  | <p>Looks great, lots of good tips.</p> <p>A comma missing between Gala and Eyemouth on page 7.</p> <p>Will the council set plans for financial security for projects.</p> <p>I live near Innerleithen and know the funding for the school garden co-ordinator is a yearly uncertainty. I would be nice if the council could</p>   | <p>Noted.</p> <p>The resourcing challenge is noted.</p>  |

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|                                       | financially support such important schemes, to allow room for planning ahead and attract good staff and stability.   |  |
| None                                  | I am impressed, this is what the Council should be promoting. All assistance should be given to community projects .   | Noted.   |
| Borders Organic Gardeners (member of) | <p>This is surprisingly comprehensive and I commend the work that has gone into it. I am pleased to see the support for increasing allotments and other ways of food growing. The inclusion of Policy EP17 is great, but it would be good to know that the Council has some leverage with private developers in pushing for this. (Scottish Gov policy support?). The incessant building of large houses on small plots is disturbing but if open space for community gardening is enforced in new developments that would be a huge improvement.</p> <p>I don't know if there is any way in which all the links scattered throughout the document could be in one place to make locating them easier?</p> <p>The networking event when possible, is welcome. Our experience in Borders Organic Gardeners is its hard to cover the whole area with a single event unless its</p> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>We can add in a referenced list at the back</p> <p>Noted with thanks – SBC would be keen to discuss this further with Borders Organic Gardeners</p> |

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|  | <p>huge appeal, like Potato Day. So east and west events may be more useful and also reduces CO2 travel emissions.</p>   |  |
|  | <p>The strategy appears to allow massive transfer of common ground to third parties to grow poor quality produce on the basis that somehow this is going to feed people better than buying produce from retailers. This is a deluded strategy that plays into the shrill screeches from the green brigade who pretend that it is possible to grow sufficient food from a small piece of land to sustain families. I predict that large parts of land currently used for recreational purposes will be annexed by middle class people who have sold their large garden as a building plot and now want to “grow their own” as it is the latest fad. I’m sure that after the first harvest of a slug ridden lettuce that even the rabbit won’t touch, after hours of back breaking</p> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>The socio-economic benefits of community growing are well researched and documented, and are embedded in Government legislation.</p> <p>Careful monitoring of sites will be essential to avoid any greenspace becoming abandoned/neglected.</p> |

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|  | <p>digging and watering, they will abandon their dream and go back to Waitrose deliveries, allowing the annexed land to fall fallow, but still out of bounds to the many. And anyone complaining about the annexing will be treated as persona non grata. This strategy is a disaster waiting to happen, and will do nothing but exacerbate the reduction in fully accessible council land that can be used for all, instead transferring it to a loud, sharp elbowed group of the worst kind of middle class virtue signallers.</p> |               |
|  | <p>A brilliant strategy to encourage more people to grow their own food. I am part of Greener Melrose so keen to see this sort of strategy being picked up by SBC. My husband and I have a vegetable plot in our garden so have been growing food for many years. Creating and supporting school gardens is very important. And also encouraging lower income families to consider growing food. I look forward to hearing about how this strategy progresses and wholeheartedly</p>   | <p>Noted.</p> |

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|                       | support it.   |  |
| Allotments 4 Chirside | <p>Good, clearly set out and good signposting to information.<br/>         Might be useful to have a contact within SBC planning office who can be designated for/to the growing strategy as experience has shown it is difficult to find the right person within the council who can directly help.</p> <p>Chirside have privately run allotments which are open to the residents of the surrounding area but this is not on the map for growing strategy.</p> | <p>Noted. We can include a main contact within SBC for enquiries.</p> <p>Noted – the mapped information available <a href="#">here</a> is live and can be regularly updated with new/additional information. Please contact <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a> with details and these can be added in.</p> |

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|  | <p>I think it would be a good idea for Peebles to grow all its own food. This will make food local, organic, fresh and healthy; also reducing carbon footprint.</p> <p>Set up a project for one borders town to set an example for others to follow: we could utilise existing allotments, gardens, farms and community ventures already in existence to bring this to fruition as well as some extra development.</p> <p>Maybe need some polytunnel space to grow more exotic fruits not acclimatised to the borders. Note it is possible to grow blueberries in scotland as they grow at Gytes allotments.</p> <p>It could be possible to supply local shops with fruit and veges grown at allotments or community garden.</p> <p>We already have people selling local wild goat, venison. Perhaps wild rabbits and pigeons should be on the menu too as they are pests at the allotments.</p> <p>Get all people in Peebles involved and committed to this and we can change the way we shop and eat. Eating seasonal, local and no food waste being priorities too.</p> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>SBC does not have the resources available to develop this currently as a project but if there is interest in developing this further as a community please get in touch - <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a></p> |
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| <p>Abundant Borders</p> | <p>While I appreciate the work that has gone into the document, it is not a STRATEGY document. It is a report which records the activity of some of the community food growing in the Borders. Community food growing is small scale and can only be a small part of any overall strategy.</p> <p>The vast majority of food growing in the Borders is by farms and they are completely absent from this document. SBC should have a comprehensive strategy for food growing in the Borders which should cover all aspects of land use. This should be an integral part of the councils wider strategy. There is no use SBC declaring a climate emergency without tackling industrial scale food growing - including growing animals for food. The country as a whole will only reach net zero carbon in the target period if we tackle farm outputs.</p> | <p>The Council is required to respond to the Community Empowerment Act Part 9 Allotments and produce a food growing strategy for community food growing. Commercial food growing and the wider Land Use planning context are outwith this remit. However, a South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership is to be established to develop a Regional Land Use Framework by 2023 with a focus on delivering net zero emissions through sustainable land management. This RLUP will involve both SBC and D&amp;GC.</p> |
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| Greener Melrose | <p>This is a welcome Strategy which contains a great deal of information and inspiration.</p> <p>It is unfortunately misnamed as it doesn't refer at all to local commercial food growers. It should really be called the Scottish Borders Grow Your Own Food Strategy.</p> <p>It is a reactive document addressing the current levels of demand. Greener Melrose believes that we are living in a Climate and Ecological Emergency which is soon going to get worse. Long supply chains delivering often mediocre food will be increasingly under threat. Growing more of our own food is part of the solution and has many benefits.</p> <p>We welcome the support being given by SBC to this sector but it was unclear which department is doing this, how contact should be made and what form that help would take.</p> <p>We would like to see an additional three full-time outreach posts being established, one in each of the east, central and west parts of the Borders. They could be hosted by existing organisations such as Abundant Borders, Greener Melrose and Peebles CAN. These posts are necessary to reach out to individuals, groups and</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>We will consider amending the name of the Strategy based on the feedback provided. The Council is required to respond to the Community Empowerment Act Part 9 Allotments and produce a food growing strategy for community food growing. Commercial food growing and the wider Land Use planning is outwith this remit. A South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership is to be established to develop a Regional Land Use Framework by 2023 with a focus on delivering net zero emissions through sustainable land management. This RLUP will involve both SBC and D&amp;GC.</p> <p>Noted - contact details can be added in.</p> <p>Noted – SBC acknowledge the financial realities it is faced with in responding to this duty. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects supporting the Councils Food Growing Strategy. The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to communities wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community.</p> |
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|  | <p>schools, to link people up, promote the benefits of growing your own food, demonstrate good practice, run training sessions, link with funders, etc., etc.</p> <p>Many local green groups, such as Greener Melrose, would respond well to approaches made by such a Grow Your Own Officer and organise events, promote on social media, etc. It would be a good collaboration which would allow interest to build more quickly and to address issues of food resilience in the Scottish Borders.</p> | <p>Noted – we would welcome such collaboration as the Strategy develops.</p> |
|  | <p>An excellent idea which I hope can be expanded to provide initiatives and education in all areas of the Borders</p>  |  |

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|                           | <p>I wish you would put as much effort into providing allotments as you do into creating glossy publications with photos etc like this consultation document. I live in Duns and know several people that would be interested in an allotment, but there are none. I would also add that I only came across this consultation by accident (mis-typed google search) so how you feel this is really “consulting” when I suspect that less than 1% of people in the Borders area are aware of it is beyond me.</p>   | <p>Noted – SBC are in discussion with various communities about meeting local demand for allotments, if you would like to have a detailed discussion about your local needs and aspirations, please contact <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a> .</p> <p>We had 300 respondents to our initial survey, which is a good response rate. We would normally have a physical presence in local contact centres, and Floral Gateway events to further promote the consultation however this year this has unfortunately not been possible.</p>   |
| Member of Greener Melrose | <p>Very comprehensive document and well put-together given the time-frame given after SBC's getting onboard. A few comments :</p> <p>1 Much should be made of Abundant Borders' experience and knowledge, to save other groups 'reinventing the wheel';</p> <p>2 The feedback clearly identifies that lack of skills or knowledge is a prime factor holding people back. Given that combined growing and cooking guidance is apparently much more successful than growing alone, that's an area of emphasis for SBC;</p> <p>3 Much should also be made of working with schools, not only because schools provide a forum and leadership from teaching but also there's huge value in catching youngsters early and instilling knowledge and interest;</p> <p>4 That's especially so during the pandemic,</p> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>1.Abundant Borders are doing fantastic work and we have been in discussion with them about their various initiatives.</p> <p>2.Noted.<br/>The inclusion of education within the strategy is recognised as important. The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to schools wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community.</p> <p>3.The benefits of food growing within schools is well documented – SBC have been investigating opportunities for schools to link up to local skills and knowledge within their communities, however the recent restrictions on physical gathering have impeded this.</p> <p>4.Noted</p> <p>5.Noted, this definitely observed in our communities</p> <p>6.Where demand is identified, SBC are currently exploring possible sites for community gardens and allotments. This is an ongoing process that will evolve during the period of the Strategy.</p> <p>7.This depends on the individual owner and their own aspirations, however we are working with Community Planning Partners (CPP's) to investigate opportunities within their estate for community growing sites.</p> <p>8.This isn't something that has been done by a local authority in Scotland as yet, and is not part of our current budget.</p> |

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|                            | <p>where outside activities are at a premium;</p> <p>5 The pandemic and recovery can be used as a way to realign people's activities and values and encourage grow-your-own, more personal care and attention to diet and well-being - SBC can focus on and encourage this, especially given the increased interest in gardening this year;</p> <p>6 Can SBC look at its property holding and identify redundant land for allotments / grow-your-own?</p> <p>7 Can SBC encourage all private landowners and Council Tax payers to do the same i.e. review any spare lots of land that may be turned over to better use?</p> <p>8 Can SBC provide incentives for grow-your-own, using any form of Council Tax incentive?</p> |  |
| Burnfoot Community Council | <p>i would like to see more being done to help individuals to begin growing food in their own gardens.</p> <p>SBC could work with housing associations to assist anyone who wishes to begin home growing. They could organize weed killing or to turn over the garden for a small charge or for free if people are on low income. There could be a borders community plant and seed buying group set up to keep the prices down. They could place orders each season and by buying in bulk the savings would be passed on to groups and individuals</p> <p>Re start the garden waste pick ups and</p>   | <p>Noted – all are invited to make use of the advice and resources provided via the Strategy, whether growing at home or in a community garden/allotment.</p> <p>Support for growing within land owned by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) is managed by the RSLs themselves, with examples such as the Abundant Borders garden in Duns.</p> <p>SBC does not provide a green waste collection service. However a number of commercial operators do within the Scottish Borders, see web link below for details. Sustainably produced and peat free compost can be pre-purchased and picked up from our a number of our Community Recycling Centres, for further details see web link below:<br/> <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste</a></p> |

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|                              | begin a community composting area.<br>When people bring in items to compost, this could be weighed and for every deposit this could allow them to collect an amount of compost for free. The rest could be sold to local gardeners to help cover any costs   |        |
| Tweedsmuir Community Company | I think this is a really useful document, well set out.<br>Great links to useful resources<br>Clear and easy to follow   | Noted. |
|                              | This seems a good document, clearly set out, albeit a bit long!! I enjoyed the visuals and the personal positive examples of people already involved in projects. I agree with most of the suggestions and comments already put forward from previous consultation.  | Noted. |
|                              | This is the kind of strategy that makes you wonder why SBC exists. On the one hand SBC allows houses to be built with tiny gardens or allows homeowners to sell their large garden as a building plot, and on the other hand, SBC extols the virtues of taking public land and turning it into allotments for the same middle class people who have bought the tiny house or sold their garden for a housing plot. It would be impossible to make this stuff up. | Noted. |
| Individual                   | I think its a good strategy and links into anti-poverty / reducing inequalities work.  | Noted. |

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|  | <p>On the whole, this document was a well put together resource for ‘who to talk to’ for someone who wants to start growing their own food in the Scottish Borders. It was heartening and positive, but I fear it doesn’t go far enough. In the face of our present existential crisis, it would more appropriately be a few pages at the end of the sort of document that is really needed. According to the science, our current situation is dire, We have to face up to the reality of the climate emergency and the loss of our biodiversity. We have to do this on a local as well as a national an international level.</p> <p>I was disappointed that the document itself didn’t address the real issues, namely, that we need to have a strong, resilient an sustainable food network that respects the environment whilst providing low cost nutritious food for the local population.</p> <p>In my view, the document should have covered the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A discussion about local farming, which needs to move to a carbon-free, sustainable model that increases biodiversity. This might, for example, involve shifting away completely from the present model, away from sheep and</li> </ol> | <p>Noted.</p> <p>The Council is required to respond to the Community Empowerment Act Part 9 Allotments and produce a food growing strategy for community food growing. Commercial food growing and the wider Land Use planning is outwith this remit. However, a South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership is to be established to develop a Regional Land Use Framework by 2023 with a focus on delivering net zero emissions through sustainable land management. This RLUP will involve both SBC and D&amp;GC.</p> <p>The issues around farming and the low carbon agenda will be covered through the South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership. This is being established to develop a Regional Land Use Framework by 2023 with a focus on delivering net zero emissions through sustainable land management. This RLUP will involve both SBC and D&amp;GC.</p> |
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|  | <p>cattle - the consensus among scientists seems to be that, as a population, we will probably have to shift to a more plant based diet in order to tackle the climate emergency. We may also need to switch to organic forms of food production to try to halt biodiversity loss. These are the sorts of questions I would like to have seen in this document.</p> <p>What sort of help and guidance is being offered to farmers? Is there a way of the council working in partnership with farmers in order to meet the needs of the local people and the environment?</p> <p>2. I would also like to have seen a discussion on the banning of pesticide use both in farms and gardens as well as all council property, verges, pavements etc. Increasing evidence is coming out about the danger to human health from these toxins - both in terms of being exposed to the spray and also the residue in our food. I would like to have seen a discussion around these issues leading to what action the council is taking to protect local people and wildlife. Apart from the threat to human health, we cannot separate the loss of our insect pollinators with our food growing strategies.</p> <p>3. I would like to have seen the council leading the way in helping local people</p> | <p>The Council continues to minimise its use of pesticides and only use pesticides which are licenced for use in the management and maintenance of amenity land including roads and footways. It does so using trained competent staff and contractors and in line with the guidance associated with the application of pesticides. Alternative solutions will continue to be considered in order to continue to drive down use, including less intensive maintenance practices and non-intervention where practicable.</p> <p>Noted – SBC acknowledge the financial realities it faces in responding to this duty. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects supporting the Councils Food Growing Strategy.</p> |
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|  | <p>growing their own food. Rather than waiting for individuals and groups to approach the council (and then potentially ending up on a five year waiting list) I would like to have seen the council take the initiative. Why isn't the council setting up local allotment sites, preparing raised beds or getting forest gardens started and inviting local people to get involved?</p> <p>The council could set up a bank of volunteers and some funded positions that could get the whole thing going. In my view, allotments should be free, people should not have to pay anything to have access to a parcel of land to grow their own food.</p> <p>The council could have a waste collection service that makes compost and then distributes the compost to the local allotments. The council took an incredibly passive role in this document. Why isn't the council taking a proactive role in helping local people to start growing their own food?</p> <p>There needs to be a vision - what is the council hoping to achieve? In my view, that vision needs to be more of us growing our own food ourselves, backed up by local farms, alongside lots of trees and wild spaces.</p> | <p>The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to communities wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community. There is a strong record of success in this area locally where the Council responds to and supports people wishing to get involved in food growing in their community, in a partnership model and this model is likely to yield the most success for both Community and Council in addressing and responding to this issue going forward. Scottish Borders Council will take all reasonable steps to meet local demand for allotments as per the legislation, please contact <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a> to discuss any local community growing aspirations.</p> <p>The issue of allotment regulation including fees is subject to a separate report.</p> <p>SBC does not provide a green waste collection service. However a number of commercial operators do within the Scottish Borders, see web link below for details. Sustainably produced and peat free compost can be pre-purchased and picked up from our a number of our Community Recycling Centres, for further details see web link below:<br/><a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20001/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/465/garden_waste</a></p> <p>Noted.</p> |
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|     | The present document doesn't go anywhere near far enough.  |   |
|     | I think that this is something that Jedburgh could benefit from.   | Noted.  |
|     | I think it's a fantastic idea. Would it be possible for schools to benefit from this? As a Home Economics teacher I despair as our fruit and veg are delivered from Glasgow. Sustainability, using local produce and seasonality are all part of our curriculum! | The benefits of food growing within schools is well documented – SBC have through the Strategy been investigating opportunities for schools to link up to local skills and knowledge within their communities, however the recent restrictions on physical gathering have impeded this.       |
|     | As someone who would like to start up a committee garden here at Lindean I would welcome any help and advice from people who actually have been involved in food growing projects already up and running in the birders. Also funding would be most welcome.     | Please get in touch on <a href="mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk">neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk</a> to discuss local community growing aspirations. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects via the Food Growing Strategy. |
| n/a | Its an excellent basis to build on in local communities.   | Noted.  |



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|  | <p>recognises the benefits of community growing in its many forms and through this Strategy seeks to support and promote community growing across the region."</p> <p>SO IS THIS STATEMENT -<br/>'Our vision for community growing in the Scottish Borders is that people wishing to grow their own fruit and vegetables can access or develop a range of community growing opportunities in their area.'</p> <p>THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT, GIVEN THE NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES AROUND THE BORDERS WHO FIND THEMSELVES IN NEED OF USING FOODBANKS.<br/>I WORK AS A VOLUNTEER WITH THE GALASHIELS FOODBANK, AND AM DISAPPOINTED TO FIND NO REFERENCE (IN THE DRAFT POLICY) TO, OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF, THE GROWING DEPENDENCY ON, FOODBANKS IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS AND HOW THE COUNCIL MIGHT ADDRESS THIS ISSUE, (ALTHOUGH MENTION IS GIVEN IN PASSING TO SOME OF THE COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT THEIR LOCAL FOODBANKS).<br/>OK IT'S A NATIONAL PROBLEM, BUT STILL ONE THAT REGIONAL AUTHOTIES NEED TO ADDRESS IMAGINATIVELY AND WITH GREATER CONCERN THAN HITHERTO.</p> | <p>The strategy responds to the Community Empowerment Act duties, and while there are clear links to food poverty and education and awareness it cannot address the economic and socio-political issues which are at play behind the issue of community food banks and their increased use. There are recognised challenges around Food Banks and the distribution of perishables, however various models such as the Burnfoot Hub have successfully piloted a 'Fareshare' approach to sharing community grown produce.</p> |
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|  | <p>COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING COULD BE ONE OF THESE IMAGINATIVE RESPONSES TO THIS ISSUE, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF THIS AS OUTLINED BELOW.</p> <p>I WELCOME THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE BENEFITS THAT COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING CAN PROVIDE WHICH ARE LISTED IN THE POLICY DRAFT - Health, Environmental, Economic, Social, Educational, Food Security, etc. THE STATEMENT 'Our vision for community growing in the Scottish Borders is that people wishing to grow their own fruit and vegetables can access or develop a range of community growing opportunities in their area' IS ALSO WELCOME.....ALONG WITH THE STATEMENT THAT FOLLOWS - 'The aim of this strategy is to support and facilitate anyone who wants to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. '</p> <p>WILL SBC EMPLOY EXTRA STAFF AND PROVIDE EXTRA FUNDING FOR COMMUNITIES TO ENABLE THIS TO HAPPEN? I WOULD ANTICIPATE A MINIMUM OF 3 PART-TIME POSTS SPREAD GEOGRAPHICALLY ACROSS THE BORDERS.</p> <p>THE FOLLOWING LIST OF OBJECTIVES IS</p> | <p>Noted – SBC acknowledge the financial realities it is faced with in responding to this duty. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects supporting the Councils Food Growing Strategy. The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to communities wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community.</p> |
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|  | <p>ALSO WELCOME -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To provide a central resource for community growing information</li> <li>- To raise awareness around community growing in the Scottish Borders</li> <li>- To show you how to get growing: where, how and who can help you/your community group</li> <li>- To help you get your community growing project off the ground</li> <li>- To help identify potential allotment site and growing spaces</li> </ul> <p>NOTING THAT 'Scottish Borders Council has a wealth of over 600 hectares of publicly accessible green space that may lend itself to accommodating food growing. From amenity bedding areas to tracts of grass in our towns and villages...', AND ALSO THAT 'The Community Empowerment Act asks all local authorities to identify land for food growing where demand exists...' AND THAT 'Across communities there are also areas of amenity green space owned by our other Community Planning Partners (NHS Borders, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland, and Scottish Enterprise),</p> <p>IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF ALL OF THESE BODIES DREW UP LISTS OF WHERE APPROPRIATE SPACES EXIST THAT COULD</p> | <p>Noted</p> <p>We are working with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations on mapping available sites where they are most needed.</p> |
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|  | <p>BE USED FOR COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING PROJECTS. THIS WOULD ENABLE, ENCOURAGE AND ACCELERATE THE EXPANSION OF FOOD GROWING PROJECTS AROUND THE REGION - ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC AND POST BREXIT FOOD SECURITY, AND SAVE THE TIME OF INDIVIDUAL GROUPS HAVING TO GO THROUGH THE PROCESS DESCRIBED IN THE DRAFT DOCUMENT - ‘...Should officers feel that a suitable opportunity could be realised through the ‘adoption’ of land within the Council’s ownership, the proposal would be subject to a council report and permissions/consultations with other services...’</p> <p>I WELCOME THE STATEMENT THAT ‘Planning Officers are finalising a new policy EP17 entitled ‘Food Growing &amp; Community Growing Spaces’ within the proposed new Local Development Plan, which seeks to safeguard food growing sites wherever possible and integrate community food growing needs into new development. IT SHOULD BE MANDATORY (AS CHILDREN’S PLAY AREAS ARE) THAT ANY NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT INCLUDES ADEQUATE SPACE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD-GROWING ON SITE.</p> <p>I WELCOME THIS STATEMENT -</p> | <p>Noted .</p> |
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|  | <p>We (SBC?) will help by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating specific policy safeguarding for Allotments and food growing sites in the Local Development Plan.</li> <li>• Support community growing within council land where possible</li> <li>• Planning for future allotment sites in new developments and securing land for growing to meet demand</li> <li>• Identifying potential community growing sites<br/>and Sharing information on what's happening in your area.</li> </ul> <p>AGAIN, THE DRAFT DOES NOT MENTION THE CREATION OF NEW POSTS AND FUNDING WITHIN SBC TO ENABLE THESE WAYS OF HELPING. THIS WILL BE ESSENTIAL IF THE PROPOSALS ARE TO TAKE OFF EFFECTIVELY, EVEN THOUGH OTHER AGENCIES, GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS ARE LISTED THAT CAN PROVIDE SOME ADVICE AND EXPERTISE. THEY ALREADY HAVE THEIR OWN WORK TO DO, AND AGENDAS TO FOLLOW, AND CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO TAKE ON MORE.</p> <p>SBC DRAFT REPORT IS PROPOSING HELP IN A NUMBER OF WAYS -</p> <p>We (SBC?) will help by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting groups in submitting grant applications for their community growing</li> </ul> | <p>Noted – SBC acknowledge the financial realities it is faced with in responding to this duty. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects supporting the Councils Food Growing Strategy. The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to communities wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community.</p> |
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|  | <p>project(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating opportunities for groups to share resources to make growing affordable to more people.</li><li>• Providing information for networking with other groups who have a growing project</li><li>• Providing information on organisations and businesses that can help community projects as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility commitments</li></ul> <p>Share up-cycling and recycling opportunities, for example by connecting community growing groups with wood recycling projects</p> <p>ALL OF THIS HAS POTENTIAL FOR CREATING ZERO CARBON GREEN JOBS AND IS WORTH FUNDING.</p> <p>I WELCOME THIS STATEMENT -<br/>‘With our partners, we will:<br/>Explore the feasibility of ‘sharing events’ hosted by different organisations bringing growers together to share plants and seeds...’</p> <p>COULD THIS ALSO TAKE THE FORM OF SBC SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF WEEKLY ‘FOOD MARKETS’ IN EVERY BORDERS TOWN - NOT JUST THE ONCE-A-MONTH ARRANGEMENT IN DIFFERENT PLACES THAT IS CONFUSING AND NOT</p> |  |
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|  | <p>LOCALLY BASED ON A REGULAR ENOUGH BASIS.<br/>         WEEKLY MARKETS WOULD HELP KEEP THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF CAR TRAVEL DOWN AS WELL.<br/>         CONSIDERATION COULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO ENABLING EMPTY SHOPS ON THE HIGH STREETS OF OUR TOWNS TO HOST INDOOR SPACES FOR MARKET STALL HOLDERS, AS WELL AS MAKING OUTDOOR VENUES AVAILABLE.<br/>         VISITORS TO THE REGION WOULD APPRECIATE THE PRESENCE OF LOCAL WEEKLY MARKETS TOO.</p> <p>‘...Liaise with the Council’s Unpaid Work team (Community Justice Service) who may be able to provide help with clearing your plot and preparing the ground for planting;<br/>         Share information about potential funding sources and work together to maximise opportunities for all community growing groups in the Scottish Borders...’</p> <p>I WELCOME ALL THE POINTS IN THE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN, BUT AGAIN AM NOT SEEING ANY MENTION OF EXTRA JOBS BEING CREATED WITHIN THE SBC TO FACILITATE AND ENABLE THIS TO HAPPEN.</p> <p>ONCE THE FINAL VERSION OF THE DRAFT DOCUMENT HAS BEEN COMPLETED, EVERY</p> | <p>SBC themselves don’t have the capacity or remit to run weekly markets.</p> <p>Noted – SBC acknowledge the financial realities it is faced with in responding to this duty. Funding advice and guidance is available to communities wishing to pursue projects supporting the Councils Food Growing Strategy.<br/>         The Council does employ a community food growing volunteer co-ordinator and this resource is accessible to communities wishing to receive advice and training on food growing in their community.</p> <p>Noted.</p> |
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|  | <p>HOME IN THE BORDERS SHOULD BE ISSUED WITH A COPY, TO STIMULATE ACTION AND INTEREST IN GETTING INVOLVED IN LOCAL COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING PROJECTS.<br/>PERHAPS COMMUNITY COUNCILS COULD BE GIVEN THE TASK OF HOSTING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE BENEFICIAL OPPORTUNITIES OF LOCAL COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING PROJECTS AS WELL.</p> |  |
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# COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING STRATEGY



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# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

Community growing can offer a whole range of benefits:

### Health

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

### Environmental

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

## Economic

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

## Social

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

## Educational

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

## Food Security

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

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



Community food garden ©Abundant Borders

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES

## SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

### 2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

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

The key objectives of the Food Growing Strategy are:

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

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



Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden ©Lisa Brydon

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

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



Wilton Lodge Park Walled Garden ©Lisa Brydon

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

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

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

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

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

# 3. COMMUNITY GROWING

Supported by digital activity, develop a network of community growers and volunteers, with activities including events

### 3.1. Allotments

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



Lee Brae Allotments



Mossilee Allotments

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

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

## 3.2 Orchards

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



Apples ©Abundant Borders

## 3.3 Community gardening and food growing in public spaces

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



Courthouse Beds ©Adam Skelton

## 3.4 Schools

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

## 3.5 Community Planning Partners

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

### 3.6 Social enterprise and Business

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

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

### 3.7 Other ways of growing

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



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Food Communities Food Share ©Adam Skelton



Courthouse Garden, Peebles ©Adam Skelton

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

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

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

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

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

## 4.1 Skills training, workshops and advice

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

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

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

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

## Volunteer experiences of community growing at Wilton Lodge Park

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

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

## 4.2 Setting up your group

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

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

## 4.3 Joining a group/getting an allotment

If you would like to find out more about getting involved in growing in your area, there are various groups across the region who would be very happy to hear from you - for a list of growing groups in your area, please see section 5.2. If you are interested in finding out more about allotments in your area, please consult the map [here](#), and read on to find out about groups in your area.



Abundant Borders Team ©Abundant Borders

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

## 5. WHERE CAN I GET GROWING?

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

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

### 5.1 Allotment Sites

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

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

### Community Growing Map

We have developed a map of all community growing sites across the Scottish Borders. To find out more about sites in your area click [here](#), or if you have any updates you wish to add please get in touch at [neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk)



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



Space to Grow, Melrose©Jan Moffat

## 5.2 Community Gardens and Orchards

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

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

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

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

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

## 5.3 Public spaces

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

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

As a community or individual, if you wish to enquire about availability of land in your area, contact us at Scottish Borders Council Parks and Environment service – via email at [neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk) or telephone 01835 824000 and ask to speak to someone about community food growing. We can then explore the opportunities with individuals or groups to better understand their needs and consider the suitability of any spaces the Council may manage/maintain, for food growing. Should officers feel that a suitable opportunity could be realised through the 'adoption' of land within the Council's ownership, the proposal would be subject to a council report and permissions/consultations with other services. Where the Council does not believe that it has an appropriate site capable of meeting the local food growing needs, then it may consider what alternatives it can offer, including sites in settlements that may not be local to the individual or group.

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

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

Where Council land is not an option then you or your group may have other ideas for places where you would like to grow, and you may wish to consider leasing land from landowners or be interested in community growing as part of new development. We don't intend to be too prescriptive, but we are happy to discuss any local ideas you may have. Section 5.7 of the strategy sets out the permissions required for you and your group to begin using a space for growing.

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

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

## 5.4 Schools

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

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

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

## 5.5 Garden share

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

## 5.6 Making space for growing

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



Community food garden ©Abundant Borders

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

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

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

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



## Case Study: Tweedbank Allotments

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



## Case Study: Courthouse, Peebles

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

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

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



## Case Study: Salvation Army Garden, Hawick

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

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

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



## 5.7 What about planning?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Contamination**

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

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

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

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

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

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

An overview flow chart of the land contamination evaluation process is presented in Appendix 1.

**We will help by:**

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



Beds ©Abundant Borders

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

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

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

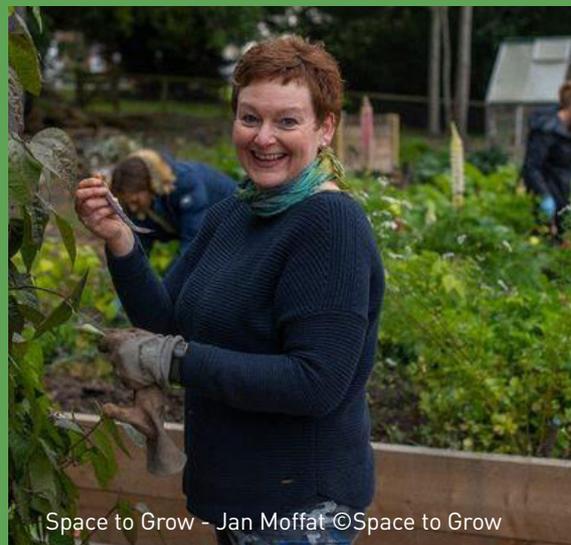
During the consultation **you said** (25%) you needed advice about funding your growing project or activities. As well as highlighting some key funding sources, we can help by facilitating sharing of resources and of skills, so that food growing is affordable and accessible to all who want to get involved.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

### 6.1 Resourcing your project

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

We will help by:

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



With our partners, we will:

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

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

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

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

## 6.2 Other Resources

Community food growing has a role to play in carbon reduction, improving health and wellbeing, tackling poverty and enhancing biodiversity. There are a wealth of resources to help you develop your growing group in any one of these aspects.

### The Joint Health Improvement Team

The Joint Health Improvement Team (JHIT) aims to work in partnership to reduce health inequalities and build community capacity for health improvement. There are six public health priorities for Scotland, Community Growing makes a contribution to many of these and in particular Public Health Priority 6: A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active. The Joint Health Improvement Team leads and co-ordinates a range of projects with communities and vulnerable groups, helping to initiate and develop community led activity. Projects include community cooking classes, good food partnerships and summer holiday programmes for children and families.

The Joint Health Improvement Team uses a model of wellbeing called 'Six Ways to be Well' that fits well with the community growing approach. It encourages people to nurture themselves by eating well, being active, belonging to inclusive communities, enjoying and learning new things, building kind supportive networks and being mindful. Being outside and noticing nature is a good way of being mindful. The Joint Health Improvement Team also provides a range of training opportunities that support the development of community food work. For more information about the Joint Health Improvement Team please e-mail us: [Health.Improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Health.Improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk).

You can find out more about the Six Ways to Be Well here:

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint)

Find out more about Scotland's Public Health Priorities here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities/>

The Cyrenians operate the Fareshare network across the region, linking up people to produce. They are also interested in the link between food growing and production and healthy food for all.

<https://cyrenians.scot/social-enterprise/fareshare>

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

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



Abundant Borders Team ©Abundant Borders

## Case Study: Greenhouse Project

The Joint Health Improvement Team works in partnership with Scottish Borders Council's Unpaid Work Team to grow a wide range of seasonal produce at a Greenhouse site in Galashiels. Produce is distributed back into the community through service settings and activities that support children and families.

The project has developed incrementally to offer new activities:

- REHIS training & cooking classes with Justice Service Users
- Live cookery classes in early years settings
- Recipe bags to support home cooking and healthier meals
- Welfare boxes & food distribution during COVID
- Distribution of plants to encourage home growing



### Produce distributed included:

Spring onions, onions, leeks, rocket, mint, coriander, sage, rosemary, fennel, oregano, spinach, parsley, basil, cucumbers, sweet peppers, carrots, beetroot, radish, pea pods, jalapeno chilli, rhubarb, courgettes, thyme, cayenne chilli, broad beans, tomatoes, potatoes.

### Galashiels Early Years Centre:

The Early Years Centre used the produce to top up 300 food parcels for children and families. Families reported:

- Eating more varied and healthier diets
- Tasting new foods
- Cooking more home-made meals



### Quotes from families & staff confirm the benefits:

*"Thank you so much for the fresh veg last week, I managed to make a pan of soup and a tomato sauce for pasta. We are currently in rent arrears and struggling to get through the week, your food top ups make a huge difference."* (Parent)

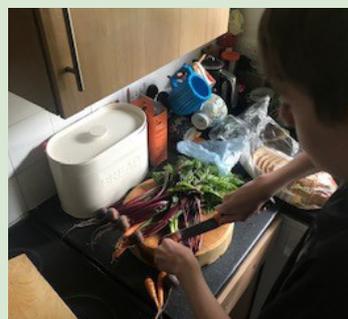
*"Overall I am extremely glad and grateful for the opportunity to work with Mos, the Gala Greenhouse project, and the NHS health Team, I hope the partnership will continue."* (EYC Manager)

New partnerships have developed in the last year with:

- Children 1st
- Action for Children
- LINKS Eyemouth

Feedback from all services suggests the produce helped:

- Families to cook healthier meals & grow their own produce
- Services to maintain connections with families



### Quotes from staff confirm the benefits:

*"Being part of this project has been an especially wonderful experience for our service during the lockdown –the fresh vegetables were highly appreciated by the families we support (single mothers especially found it difficult to go grocery shopping, and receiving those herbs and vegetables made their day); it also gave us at Children 1st an opportunity to see them and keep connected during times of lockdown, even if just at their doorstep"* (Children 1st Staff Member)

# CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES

## SCOTTISH BORDERS FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

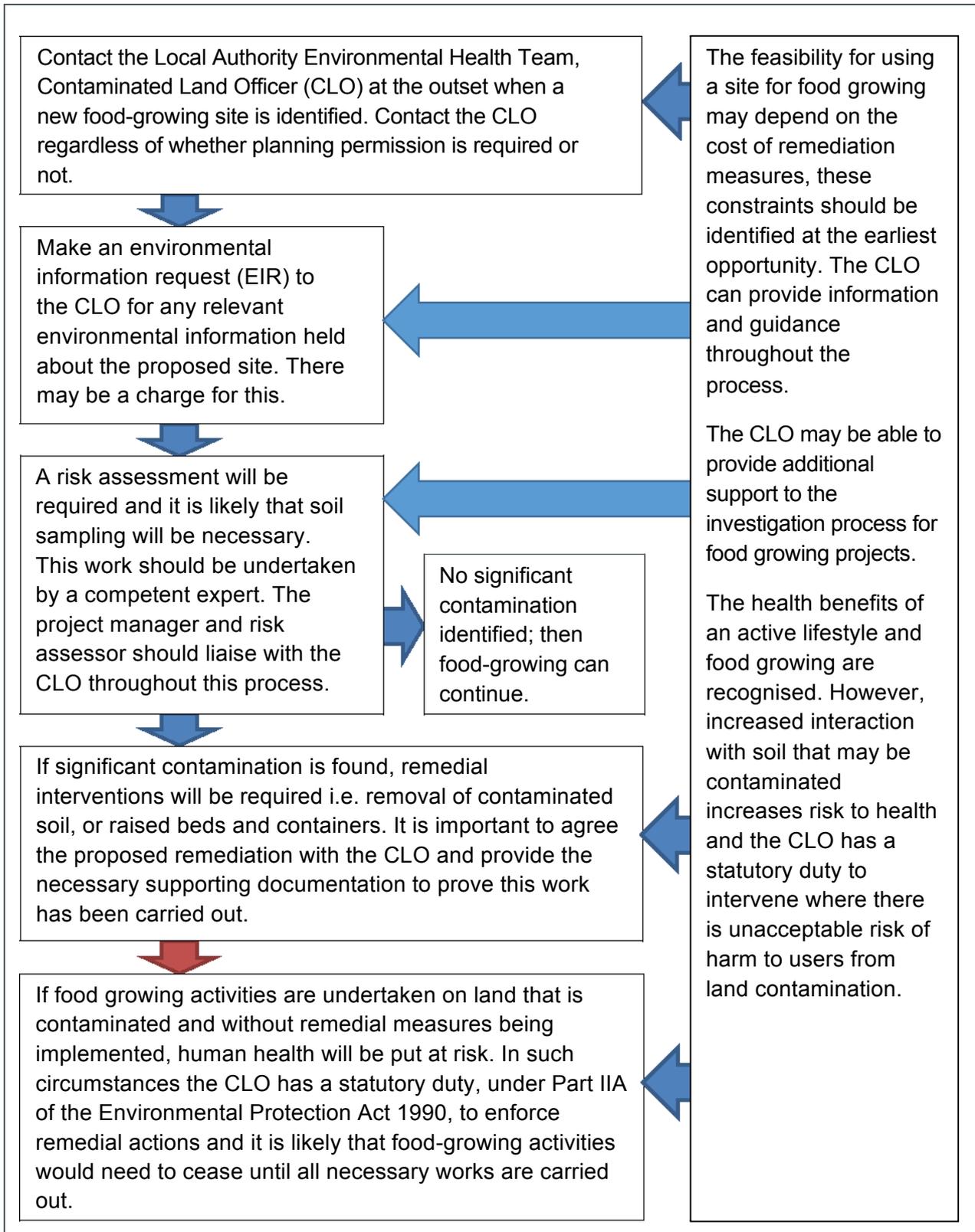
### 7. ACTION PLAN

This Food Growing Strategy covers a five year period from 2021-2026. As well as the activities listed above, Scottish Borders Council will undertake to deliver against the legislative requirements via the Action Plan:

| Action  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1. Develop Policy Framework</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Investigate and explore opportunities to develop further policies in support of food growing and community growing with Community Planning Partners</li> <li>1.2. Adopt new planning policy - EP17 Food Growing and Community Growing spaces – as part of the Local Development Plan, safeguarding food growing spaces and enabling increased provision.</li> <li>1.3. Review of corporate policies and strategies to support Food Growing and Community Food Growing.</li> </ul> |
| <b>2. Review provision and Management of Allotments</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. Co-ordinate waiting list information with Allotments Associations on leased out sites to ensure data collection is handled accurately and appropriately</li> <li>2.2. Investigate new allotment sites in areas of demand, working with community groups and private landowners where possible</li> <li>2.3. Implement new Allotment Regulations</li> <li>2.4. Prepare an Annual Allotment Report</li> </ul>   |
| <b>3. Support the Community Growing Network</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. Develop a networking event(s) for community growers and volunteers</li> <li>3.2. Explore the creation of 'Growing Ambassadors', as part of the #yourpart Corporate Programme</li> <li>3.3. Consolidate resources for food growing through the development of the Volunteer Coordinator role</li> </ul>  |

# APPENDIX ONE

## CONTAMINATED LAND PROCESS



## REFERENCES

### Contacts at Scottish Borders Council for more information:

All community growing and allotments enquiries – Craig Blackie, Parks & Environment Manager - neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk / 01835 824000

Planning issues – [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20050/planning\\_applications](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20050/planning_applications)

Contaminated land - [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20004/business/114/health\\_and\\_safety](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20004/business/114/health_and_safety)

Community funding - [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies\\_plans\\_and\\_policies/773/communities\\_and\\_partnerships](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/773/communities_and_partnerships)

| WHO CAN HELP                                     |   |
|--|---|
| Skills and Advice                                |   |
| BAVS   | <a href="http://www.bavs.org.uk/">http://www.bavs.org.uk/</a>   |
| Communities & Partnership Team, SBC              | <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/261/community_fund">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/261/community_fund</a>   |
| Men's Shed                                       | <a href="https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed/">https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed/</a>   |
| Keep Scotland Beautiful – Climate Challenge Fund | <a href="https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/">https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/</a> |
| Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society          | <a href="http://www.sags.org.uk/">http://www.sags.org.uk/</a>   |
| Scottish Orchards                                | <a href="http://www.scottishorchards.com/new_scottish_Orchards/Welcome.html">http://www.scottishorchards.com/new_scottish_Orchards/Welcome.html</a>   |
| Borders Food Communities                         | <a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>   |
| Burnfoot Community Futures                       | <a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/BurnfootCommunityFutures/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/BurnfootCommunityFutures/</a>   |
| Borders Organic Gardeners                        | <a href="http://www.bordersorganicgardeners.org/">http://www.bordersorganicgardeners.org/</a>   |
| Trellis Scotland                                 | <a href="https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/">https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/</a>   |
| Abundant Borders                                 | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/</a>   |
| Setting up your group                            |   |
| Social Farms and Gardens                         | <a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland</a>                     |

| <b>Community Gardens and Orchards</b>               |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Tweeddale</b>                                    |   |
| The Courthouse Garden, Peebles                      | <a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>   |
| The Secret Garden, Peebles                          | <a href="https://www.tweedgreen.org.uk/community-garden">https://www.tweedgreen.org.uk/community-garden</a>   |
| St Ronans Wells Garden, Innerleithen                | <a href="https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf">https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf</a>   |
| Peebles CAN Garden, Peebles                         | <a href="https://www.peeblescan.org/contact">https://www.peeblescan.org/contact</a>   |
| Lamancha Community Hub                              | <a href="http://www.lamanchacommunityhub.org.uk/contact.html">http://www.lamanchacommunityhub.org.uk/contact.html</a>   |
| The Glebe Project, Peebles                          | <a href="https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf">https://otbds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/garden_flyer_web_reduced-2.pdf</a>   |
| The Edible Garden, Innerleithen                     | <a href="http://www.youcangrow.org.uk/">http://www.youcangrow.org.uk/</a>   |
| <b>Teviot and Liddesdale</b>                        |   |
| Abundant Borders Hawick                             | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>   |
| Burnfoot Grows Together, Hawick                     | <a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/657099337996052/">www.facebook.com/groups/657099337996052/.</a>   |
| Wilton Lodge Community Garden, Hawick               | <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20032/parks_and_outdoors/833/wilton_lodge_park_volunteering">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20032/parks_and_outdoors/833/wilton_lodge_park_volunteering</a> |
| <b>Eildon</b>                                       |   |
| Selkirk Community Shed, Selkirk                     | <a href="http://selkirshedders.org.uk/">http://selkirshedders.org.uk/</a>   |
| Space to Grow Community Garden, BGH                 | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/nature4mentalhealth/">https://www.facebook.com/nature4mentalhealth/</a>   |
| Community Allotments, Orchard & Woodland, Drygrange | <a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/AGreenerMelrose/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/AGreenerMelrose/</a>   |
| <b>Berwickshire</b>                                 |   |
| Abundant Borders, Ayton                             | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>   |
| Abundant Borders, Eyemouth                          | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>   |
| Abundant Borders, Duns                              | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>   |
| Abundant Borders, Coldingham                        | <a href="http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/">http://abundantborders.org.uk/contact/</a>   |

| <b>Planning</b>                                |  |
|--|--|
| Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS) | <a href="http://www.sags.org.uk/">http://www.sags.org.uk/</a>  |
| Community Planning Partners                    | <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/764/asset_transfer">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/764/asset_transfer</a>  |
| Community Land Advisory Service                | <a href="https://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/">https://sc.communitylandadvice.org.uk/</a>  |
| Land Register of Scotland                      | <a href="https://www.ros.gov.uk/our-registers/land-register-of-scotland">https://www.ros.gov.uk/our-registers/land-register-of-scotland</a>  |
| Borders Food Communities                       | <a href="https://www.foodcommunities.org/">https://www.foodcommunities.org/</a>  |
| <b>Support</b>                                 |  |
| Social Farms and Gardens                       | <a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources</a><br><a href="https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland">https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-scotland</a> |
| Community Food Social Enterprise Network (SEN) | <a href="https://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/2012/social-enterprise/">https://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/2012/social-enterprise/</a>  |
| Criminal Justice Team                          | <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20037/justice_services/89/community_based_services">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20037/justice_services/89/community_based_services</a>  |
| <b>Other Resources</b>                         |  |
| The Borders Healthy Living Network (HLN)       | <a href="mailto:Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk">mailto:Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk">Health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk</a>  |
| The Cyrenians, Fairshare network               | <a href="https://cyrenians.scot/community-and-food/good-food/fareshare/">https://cyrenians.scot/community-and-food/good-food/fareshare/.</a>   |

# Volunteering in our communities

To all the wonderful volunteers in our communities, thanks for playing #yourpart to keep our towns and villages looking their best. If you are planning to help with things like tidy-up operations and flower planting please take into account the following guidance:

## SOCIAL DISTANCING



Please adhere to the Scottish Government's latest guidelines regarding social distancing measures.

01

## TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT



The sharing of tools, gloves, etc is strongly discouraged. Volunteers should bring their own gloves wherever possible. When working on Council land, please stick to non-motorised equipment only to avoid any accident or injury.

02

## PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE



Wash hands before arriving at the site. Use hand sanitiser and wipe down with disinfectant any shared equipment or communal areas after use.

03

## TAKE CARE OF WASTE



Please dispose of green waste/litter appropriately, via your local recycling centre if required.

04

## BE RESPONSIBLE



You are responsible for the safety of yourself, others around you and the general public.

05

## KEEP IN TOUCH



Let us know how you plan to help out and we can offer further advice and support. Email [neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodservice@scotborders.gov.uk) or call us on 0300 100 1800.

06



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## **ADOPTION OF ALLOTMENT REGULATIONS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION**

### **Report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure**

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## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 MARCH 2021**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Following the legislative requirements set out in Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Local Authorities in Scotland are required to introduce Allotment Regulations. The statutory consultation on draft Regulations (for Allotment Sites managed by Scottish Borders Council) was approved at Executive on 15 September 2020.
- 1.2 This report summarises the process, provides an update on the feedback received and makes recommendations as to the next steps including formal adoption of the new regulations and a consideration for introducing concessions to the fee structure for allotment rental.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Executive:-**
  - a) **notes the feedback received to the consultation as outlined in this report;**
  - b) **makes the Allotment Regulations contained in Appendix 1 to regulate allotments managed by Scottish Borders Council;**
  - c) **agrees that the proposed amendment to the fee structure for Allotment rental in 2021/22 to include concessions is considered as part of the Budget setting process.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 introduces new duties on Local Authorities to increase transparency on the actions taken to provide and manage allotments. Under Section 115 of the legislation Local Authorities are required to develop Allotment Regulations. The Regulations outline the rules relating to letting of plots, managing the plot, permitted activities, security and maintenance and fees and charging. Local Authorities are also required to set 'fair rents' for allotments. Allotments are defined in Part 9 as land that is owned or leased by a Local Authority and used wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers and not for profit.
- 3.2 Scottish Borders Council has 82 allotment plots across six sites (3 in Peebles, 1 in Innerleithen and 2 in Hawick). Plot sizes vary; there isn't a standard size across the region or across a site. Currently the rental charge for a plot is a fixed rate of £43.50 per annum. This standardised rate, regardless of plot size, has historically received some objection due to the disparity.
- 3.3 The profile of food growing in our communities has been raised significantly by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the resultant draft Scottish Borders Food Growing Strategy, which has recently completed a 12 week public consultation, receiving 300 responses. The intention is to bring a future report presenting a finalised Food Growing Strategy to Executive in Spring 2021, which will address Community food growing in the round, including opportunities;
- a To work together to create community food growing initiatives as a real alternative to Allotments.
  - b Identifying land and supporting communities to utilise repurposed Council land for community food growing, as well as exploring opportunities in land managed by Community Planning Partners.
  - c Maximise the Councils Allotment estate to ensure equality of opportunity and efficient use of the asset.
  - d Recognising opportunities for food growing within major investment projects in the community (such as Gala Campus and Peebles High School).

### **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The standard consultation requirement for proposed Statutory Regulations is four weeks. However, to enable wider engagement, a public consultation was undertaken for a full eight weeks to tie in with the related consultation on the Draft Food Growing Strategy which was run in parallel. The draft Regulations - titled Rules and Regulations for Allotment Plots on Council Managed Land 2020 (Appendix 1) - were shared, both digitally via a weblink and as hard copy on display at all allotment sites. Letters were issued to allotment holders and waiting list members. The consultation period ran for eight weeks from 13 October to 8 December. A statutory notice was posted

in the press for four weeks from 10 November to 8 December in accordance with due process.

- 4.2 The consultation received 29 responses via the online form and email. Excluding duplicates, 4 responses were received via email. 25 responses were received via the Citizenspace online form.
- 4.3 The vast majority of feedback received was in relation to the new fees, objecting to the increase and the lack of concessions made available to allotment holders. No objections were received in relation to the other content and wording of the draft Regulations or Conditions of Let.
- 4.4 It is noted that the Regulations themselves have attracted no objections. On this basis it is recommended that these be adopted by Scottish Borders Council immediately.

## **5 ALLOTMENT FEES**

- 5.1 For context, the following extract from the Government guidance sets out the requirements for Local Authorities to consider in setting Allotment fees;

*"Section 115(3)(b) provides that local authorities must make regulations relating to rent, including a method of determining a fair rent... When determining fair rent levels, authorities should take account of the size and location of the individual allotment for which rent is payable... expenses incurred by the authority in maintaining and managing the allotment site, and any other relevant factors. Local authorities should make provision for concessions on the level of rent payable. "*

- 5.2 The rationale for the fee structure approved for 2020/21 was based on these legislative requirements and sought to address the concerns raised by plotholders that the current flat rate, irrespective of plot size, was inequitable. The new fee structure was developed, comprising an administration fee of £43.50 plus a charge of £0.25 per square metre per annum. The administration fee ensured that the Council could recover management costs and deliver on the increased burden of responsibilities as set out under the new legislation. The charge per square metre ensured that each plotholder paid a rate relative to the amount of land they were leased. Benchmarking with other Local Authorities provided a precedent for this structure.
- 5.3 Due to Covid-19 it was, however, agreed to freeze the rent charge for 2020-21 at the current level of £43.50 per plot per annum for two reasons. Firstly, due to the timing of Covid-19 the Council had not had sufficient time to give advanced notice of changes to rent to allotment tenants. Secondly, many plots had been restricted in their productivity due to the limitations of individuals, either due to shielding or to local travel restrictions imposed by lockdown. Therefore the new rent charge is intended to be implemented with effect from April 2021.

5.4 As summarised above in 4.3, the proposed fees were the subject of the vast majority of feedback received during the consultation, with many objections to the increase in fees that this would represent for individuals. The main themes of these concerns were about the size of the increase in rent, and that there was no discretionary concessions available to those who may be on reduced/no income (see Appendix 2 for a full redacted transcript of feedback).

## 6 CONCESSIONS

6.1 While the legislation advises that Local Authorities should make provisions for concessions, the Council had not, in the proposed fee structure, specified any such concessions. In light of this omission and the feedback received, it is appropriate to set out a proposed concessionary rate and eligibility criteria. This would seek to address feedback, specifically where concerns have been raised around issues of affordability by plotholders.

6.2 In response to the above and following benchmarking across other Local Authorities, it is recommended that Scottish Borders Council adopts a proposed concessionary rate for allotment tenants.

6.3 It is suggested that concessions are included in the new fee structure as part of the 21/22 budget setting process. These can be offered to new or existing tenants based on eligibility criteria. Following recent affordability criteria used by the Scottish Government, the proposed concessions could be offered based on the same eligibility criteria, namely those in receipt of;

- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit

6.4 Following benchmarking with Local Authorities across Scotland, the standard concession offered, where one is available, is 50% discount on annual rent. Based on this, it is suggested that at 50% concession (of the whole amount due) is offered to those eligible in the Scottish Borders. Other discount scenarios have been explored and are included for context in Appendix 3. In summary the new fee will be applied as follows;

| <b>Administration fee</b> | <b>Price per m2</b>                       | <b>Total Allotment Fee</b> | <b>Concession if applicable</b> |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A = £43.50                | B = 0.25p per m2 (depending on plot size) | = A+B                      | 50% discount of whole fee (A+B) |

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

Various scenarios and their financial implications have been considered (Appendix 3). It is not possible to ascertain the level of uptake by current and/or prospective ploholders. For illustrative purposes, if 50% of allotments claimed a 50% concession there would be a £1,845 budget pressure against the £7,381 budget.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

By adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council are fulfilling legislative duties which in themselves do not present any risk. The setting of fair rents for allotment rental, as approved in last year's budget setting process has generated some negative feedback from ploholder concerned with the risk of affordability. The proposal to introduce a concessionary rate mitigates against this risk.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

- (a) The Council has a statutory obligation to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic (age, disability, gender re-assignment, trans/transgender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race groups, religion or belief, sex-gender identity, and sexual orientation) and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not. This involves tackling prejudice and building understanding. Additionally, where proposals are "strategic", the Fairer Scotland Duty requires us to show that we have actively considered how we can reduce socio-economic inequalities in the decisions that we make and to publish a short written assessment on how we have done this.
- (b) An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out. The Council has met its duties under part 9 of the Act, and in doing so has addressed the points it is required to do so particularly in regards to the setting of fair rents. It offers concessions to those who can demonstrate they are unable to pay the costs for the rents and furthermore is undertaking other related initiatives to try and promote the benefits of being an allotment holder and growing your own food. There are also a number of other initiatives around food production, preparation and healthy eating which are in existence locally and nationally which people can access for further support.

### **7.4 Acting Sustainably**

The issues outlined in this report do not have a detrimental impact on environmental sustainability – if adopted, the regulations will set a minimum maintenance standard for allotments which will serve to protect the environment within Council allotments. Because the Council charges a fee for an allotment then this may prevent those with little or no income from seeking to become a tenant. However, in response to this, this report proposes the implementation of a concessionary rate, to reduce the burden

on those with low income, thus mitigating any economic impacts on individuals.

**7.5 Carbon Management**

No effects on carbon emissions.

**7.6 Rural Proofing**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

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

There are no changes to 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 & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Name - John Curry**

**Signature .....**

**Title – Service Director Assets & Infrastructure**

**Author(s)**

| Name          | Designation and Contact Number             |
|---------------|--|
| Craig Blackie | Parks & Environment Manager – 01835 824000 |

**Background Papers:** [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

**Previous Minute Reference:** Executive Committee - Tuesday, 15th September, 2020 at 10.00 am, Agenda item 10.

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

Contact us at Craig Blackie – [cblackie@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:cblackie@scotborders.gov.uk)

**THE SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**Allotment Rules and Regulations 2020**

## Rules and Regulations for Allotment Plots on Council Managed Land 2020

The Scottish Borders Council ("the Council") has a statutory duty to provide allotments in terms of Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 ("the 2015 Act"). These rules are made in support of this statutory function and to support those leasing allotment plots ("tenants") understand their responsibilities. Where there is a contradiction between these rules and the 2015 Act the terms of the 2015 Act including any regulations ("Regulations") shall apply. These rules will be subject to review once final guidance relating to Part 9 of the 2015 Act has been provided.

### 1 Allotment Plot Letting

- (a) For allotment plots on Council owned land, an allotment plot application form must be completed and submitted in writing either by email to [placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk) or send to Business Support Team (Allotments), Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells TD6 0SA or such other address as is publicised by the Council.
- (b) The Council maintains a waiting list and will offer available plots to the first person on the list based on what has been requested or the next available size. Applicants may remain on the list until the prescribed size of plot has been offered however, if a valid offer is refused due to personal circumstances, applicants will be moved to the end of the waiting list if the five year time limit prescribed by the 2015 Act will or has been exceeded.
- (c) Allotment tenancies will only be granted to residents, 18 years or over who reside within the Scottish Borders Council area. Individuals who live outside or move outwith the Scottish Borders area shall not be entitled to retain an allotment tenancy and the Council or the relevant association shall be entitled to require that any such tenancy be brought to an end in accordance with the termination provisions herein.
- (d) The Council reserves the right to inspect any allotment sites and records without giving prior notice to ensure that allotment plots are being managed in accordance with these rules.
- (e) All tenants are required to sign an agreement in terms of the Scottish Borders Council Allotments – Conditions of Let annexed hereto annually in advance agreeing to lease an allotment plot for that year and that they shall adhere to these rules and any that may pertain to the particular allotment site and/or any Regulations.
- (f) The tenant shall ensure that any change of address or contact details are notified as soon as reasonably practicable to the Business Support Team (Allotments) at the address specified in 1(a) above. The Council / Association shall not be held responsible for any losses resulting from a failure by a tenant to provide information.
- (g) Should an existing tenant wish to increase the size of their allotment plot they shall submit a new application form and will be added to the end of the waiting list of applicants wishing to let an allotment tenancy.
- (h) Any applicant who accepts a smaller allotment plot than requested will be removed from the waiting list. Should the tenant wish a larger plot at a later date, a new application must be submitted to join the waiting list.
  - (i) Where a person (or joint applicant) who has had an allotment tenancy previously terminated by the Council or Association makes an application for an allotment tenancy it shall be considered taking into account the circumstances of the previous termination and any Regulation that may apply at that time.
- (j) A tenant shall not sub-let or share occupation of any part of their allotment plot with any

other person without the prior written consent of the Council/Association.

- (k) The Council will consider the transfer of an allotment tenancy to a joint applicant 18 years or over, should the existing tenant be permanently unfit or deceased. If approved, the Council will require written proof to be submitted and a new tenancy agreement shall be signed.
- (l) If an allotment tenancy is terminated, there will be no refund due to the tenant by the Council.
- (m) The first named person on joint applications shall be considered the lead applicant. Should the lead applicant withdraw, the second named applicant will remain on the waiting list unless advised in writing that both wish to withdraw. Further applicants cannot be added and second named applicants will remain on the list as a single applicant.

## **2 Charges**

- (a) An annual management fee will be payable for allotment plots on Council managed/owned sites.
- (b) For Council managed allotment sites the annual management fee for the allotments will be due on 1 April each year. The annual management fee shall be set by the Council at its sole discretion.
- (c) The Council shall consider any management fee not paid in full within 30 days of the invoice date as an indication that the tenant of that allotment plot wishes to give up the allotment tenancy. Following a defined timescale, the Council shall be entitled to enter upon the allotment plot and remove all items and building or erections and make the allotment plot available for re-letting to another person
- (d) Changes to circumstances that affect your ability to pay, must be advised in writing to the Business Support Team (Allotments). The Council will review specific circumstances and offer support and guidance.
- (e) Annual management fees and any other charges that may be payable are subject to annual review and tenants will be notified of any increase in advance. To cover costs, charges will be based on a rate per square metre and what services are provided, which may vary from site to site.
- (f) When an allotment plot is allocated in a secure site, a key will be issued to the tenant.
- (g) A tenant shall notify the Business Support Team (Allotments) of any lost / stolen keys.

## **3 Allotment Plot Management**

- (a) All tenants shall be responsible for keeping their allotment plots in a clean and tidy condition at all times of year to the standard outlined in the rules and regulations at the Council's sole discretion. Allotment sites will be regularly inspected by the Council and/or Association.
- (b) An allotment plot must be used for the sole purpose of growing vegetables, fruit and other produce and tenants may sell such produce grown (other than with a view to making a profit). At least 50% of individual allotment plots should be used for growing purposes.
- (c) All tenants shall be responsible for ensuring that weed growth is controlled and their allotment plots are cultivated by the end of April prior to the growing season all to a

standard outlined in the rules and regulations at the Council's sole discretion, e.g. the allotment plot should either be: well underway in the process of being prepared for crops; in readiness for growing; or be well stocked with growing produce. Seed heads should be removed before they set and pernicious weeds such as couch grass, ground elder, brambles or mares tail must be controlled.

- (d) A tenant shall be responsible for keeping the boundaries and paths adjacent to their allotment plot in a clean and tidy condition. Where a path is adjacent to two allotment plots, the respective tenants shall come to an agreement as to how it is to be kept clear of weeds and any obstructions failing which the Council or Association shall direct the tenants as to how this is to be done.
- (e) The prior written consent of the Council or Association shall be obtained by a tenant regarding the location and size of any buildings to be erected within their allotment plot, which consent will not be unreasonably withheld if the proposals do not unduly shade adjacent allotment plots or take up more than 25% of the said plot. The Council or Association will be entitled to ask for whatever information it considers necessary in order to reach a decision as to whether such consent is to be given.
- (f) A tenant shall not allow trees on the allotment plot, with the exception of fruit trees which must be maintained within the allotment plot and which shall not grow into or cause shade to be cast on neighbouring allotment plots. Fruit bushes are permitted to be grown.
- (g) A tenant shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate pest and disease control is carried out on the allotment plot.
- (h) A tenant must not allow their allotment plot to be used for the storage of glass, timber, refuse or any other material deemed unsuitable by the Council.
- (i) A tenant shall not do anything to adversely affect other allotment plots, including but not limited to, spray damage, fertiliser run off, spreading/seeding weeds or any other activity that may cause damage and/or nuisance.
- (j) Crops, structures, etc. on individual allotment plots are the responsibility of the tenant and the Council and/or Association shall not be liable for any incidents that take place and/or damage occurring to said items save where such incidents and/or damage are as a result of the actions of their employees or authorised representatives.
- (k) Tenants are encouraged to practice good housekeeping and sustainable practices e.g. composting green waste on the allotment plot, the use of water butts for collecting water and responsible disposal of waste material.
- (l) Tenants are responsible for the removal of all waste lawfully from their allotment plot. Small scale burning using a closed vessel such as a chiminea is permitted however must be controlled and must not compromise adjacent allotment plots and/or neighbouring properties.
- (m) To increase sustainability and keep charges manageable, tenants are encouraged to harvest water within their allotment plots to supplement mains water provision where provided. It is not permitted to install additional water taps.
- (n) Where no mains water is provided, plot holders must harvest water within their allotment plot.

#### **4 Structures and Property**

- (a) No greenhouse, polytunnel, shed or storage hut shall be erected on an allotment plot or

in an allotment site by a tenant without the prior written consent from the Council who will advise of a suitable location to minimise or eradicate shading to other allotment plots. Caravans are not permitted on any allotment site.

- (b) Prior to the erection of a greenhouse, shed or other building / structure, the tenant shall provide construction details to the Council or Association for approval. Details shall include: type of structure; size of structure; height of structure; building materials; location on allotment plot (in order that it shall not result in any adverse affect on neighbouring allotment plots) and any other information considered necessary.
- (c) No consent given by the Council shall operate as planning permission, building warrant, or any other approval which the tenant may require from the Council in any of their capacities. The tenant shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary planning consents and/or building warrants in respect of the erection of a greenhouse, shed or other building/structure, if applicable.
- (d) Tenants are solely responsible for the safety and maintenance of any structure as well as boundary fences on their allotment plots. Tenants are not permitted to plant boundary hedges.
- (e) When any structure is to be demolished the tenant shall ensure that all waste materials are removed from the allotment plot and allotment site and disposed of lawfully.
- (f) No more than 25% of an allotment plot shall be used for non growing structures such as sheds, seating, storage.
- (g) The tenant shall indemnify the Council against all claims and liabilities which may be made against the Council arising directly or indirectly from any breach or non-performance by the tenant of their obligations under the Allotment Agreement or from any act, omission or negligence of the tenant or any person acting expressly or implied with the authority of the tenant in relation to the Plot or so arising from the presence of any of the tenant's property and from the expenses of proceedings arising therefrom.
- (h) The tenant shall insure any greenhouse, shed or other building/structure erected upon their allotment plot against the risk of loss or damage by fire and shall provide a copy of the current Certificate of Insurance to the Council, if asked to do so. The tenant shall be responsible for insuring the contents of the greenhouse, shed or other building/structure, if desired.
- (i) The Scottish Borders Council and its employees cannot accept responsibility for any claims, loss or damage which may arise from using this facility, except so far as provided by statute.
- (j) Tenants are responsible for the removal of any structures as requested by the Council following the end of a lease. Failure to do so, may result in charges being levied to cover any costs incurred by the Council.

## **5 Animals/Livestock**

- (a) Dogs are allowed on allotment sites. The tenant shall be responsible for keeping or, if not the owner, ensuring that the dogs are kept under control at all times and that they are kept on a lead.
- (b) Tenants who bring their dogs on to or permit a visitor to bring dogs on to an allotment site are responsible for the safe disposal of any dog waste and for any damage that may be caused by said dogs.
- (c) Tenants shall not kennel animals/poultry overnight nor permit the same on any part of

an allotment site.

- (d) No animals/livestock shall be permitted on an allotment site without the prior written consent of the Council whose decision shall be final.

## **6 Security and Maintenance**

- (a) All tenants share responsibility for the security of an allotment site at all times and shall enter and leave the allotment site only through the authorised boundary gates. Children must be supervised by an appropriate adult at all times.
- (b) Each of the boundary gates of an allotment shall be padlocked and tenants shall lock these at all times on entering and leaving. Where applicable, each tenant shall ensure that keys are retained securely.
- (c) The key to the allotment site remains the property of the Council and/or Association and is issued to a tenant strictly for the purposes of access to and egress from an allotment site and is not transferable to any other person.
- (d) A tenant is responsible for the security of any greenhouse, shed, property etc., on their allotment plot.
- (e) Each tenant shall not enter an un-let allotment plot or one let to another person or remove any item or materials from said allotment plots.
- (f) Issues relating to general site maintenance on Council managed allotments must be reported to the Business Support Team (Allotments) or via the Association where appropriate.

## **7 Monitoring**

- (a) The Business Support Team (Allotments) and/or where appropriate, members of the Association shall be entitled to carry out general inspections (at their discretion) of all allotment plots. The purpose of these inspections will be to assess whether sufficient progress is being made to reach and maintain the agreed cultivation and maintenance standards, as well as noting any non-conformance of rules and regulations.
- (b) Tenants who fail to meet the required standards will receive a first warning letter advising that issues must be rectified within 14 days. If the issue is not rectified within the specified deadline, or no response is received the Council or Association shall issue a formal notice advising that the tenancy will be terminated within 40 days from the letter date. If there is still no response a final notice will be issued confirming that the tenancy has been terminated.
- (c) The tenant will be notified in writing to vacate their allotment plot and where applicable return their key(s) to the Business Support Team r (Allotments).
- (d) The tenant is responsible for any remediation work or waste disposal and the costs thereof required to be undertaken by the Council and/or Association.
- (e) Any tenant who has been issued with a previous warning in a 12 month rolling period, will immediately be issued with a final warning on the second occasion.
- (f) Any tenant who has been issued with two prior warnings within a 12 month rolling period will automatically have their allotment tenancy terminated on the third occasion.

- (g) Issues relating to a tenant's gross misconduct such as theft or inappropriate behaviour will be referred to the Business Support Team (Allotments). In such circumstances the Council reserves the right to terminate the allotment tenancy immediately.
- (h) In the event of any dispute regarding the interpretation of these rules, the matter shall be referred to the Business Support Team (Allotments). The Council shall have regard to the 2015 Act and any Regulations in arriving at its decision.

## **8 Miscellaneous**

- (a) The foregoing allotment rules and regulations supersede any other rules and regulations previously made in respect of allotment plots on Council owned land within the Scottish Borders area.
- (b) The Scottish Borders Council reserves the right to amend the Rules and Regulations in accordance with the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

### **Notes to Allotment Plot Holders**

These rules are made to help ensure that every tenant gets the best results and enjoyment from their allotment plot. It is in the tenant's interests to ensure that these are adhered to.

For information and assistance, tenants are encouraged to join the onsite allotment association where one is provided and seek advice/guidance from other professional gardening bodies where appropriate. Additionally, the Council's Business Support Team (Allotments) and/or the relevant management committee will be pleased to help with any queries you may have.

### **Holidays and Illness**

In the event of longer term holidays or illness, please notify the Business Support Team (Allotments) or management committee in advance as there may be someone willing to tend your allotment plot in your absence. If you are unable to cultivate your allotment in accordance with the rules because of illness or personal difficulties, the Council will, where possible take personal situations into account. However, we are obliged to ensure that plots are being managed appropriately for the sake of neighbouring tenants or those on the waiting list and any action can only be deferred for up to one calendar month to ensure that allotment plots do not fall into a poor state or have a detrimental impact on neighbouring plots. It is a tenant's responsibility to seek assistance to keep an allotment plot in an acceptable condition otherwise there is a risk of having the tenancy agreement terminated.

### **Contact Details**

All correspondence should be addressed to PLACE, Business Support, Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells, MELROSE, TD6 0SA. Telephone 0300 100 1800 or email [placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk).

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs. Telephone 0300 100 1800 or email [placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk)

- 1.0 The allotment shall be let yearly.
- 2.0 Any person wishing to cease their tenancy of an allotment is required to notify it in writing to the address below.
- 3.0 Sub-letting or shared occupation of any part of the allotment is prohibited without the prior written consent of Scottish Borders Council.
- 4.0 The rent charge of £43.50, along with a charge of £0.25 per square metre, shall be paid yearly upon receipt of our invoice. Yearly rent covers April 2020 to March 2021
- 5.0 The allotment must not be allowed to get into an untidy or overgrown state and shall be left in a neat and tidy condition at the end of the lease.
- 6.0 Any person wishing to erect a storage shed, greenhouse etc. must make an application to Scottish Borders Council giving size etc., and the construction must be placed where directed.
- 7.0 Scottish Borders Council shall not be responsible for any damage to the allotment from whatever cause, save where such damage is as a result of the actions of their employees or authorised representatives.
- 8.0 Dumping of **ANY** waste material e.g. stones and weeds on the banks of, or in the River Tweed/Teviot is strictly prohibited.
- 9.0 Where an allotment is bounded by a hedge, which is the responsibility of the allotment holder, then the hedge must be regularly pruned and not allowed to overhang.
- 10.0 No fence shall be fixed around any allotment without written authority from Scottish Borders Council.
- 11.0 If any allotment holder acts contrary to or neglects to observe any of the foregoing conditions and/or the Rules and Regulations, he/she shall be liable to expulsion from the allotment and shall in addition be bound to pay rent up to the end of the term.
- 12.0 These Conditions of Let should be read in conjunction with the Rules and Regulations for Allotment Plots on Council Managed Land 2020.
- 13.0 All correspondence should be addressed to PLACE, Business Support, Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells, MELROSE, TD6 0SA. Telephone 0300 100 1800 or email [placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:placebookings@scotborders.gov.uk)

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**Please sign and return one copy of the Condition of Let forms to the above address.**

I hereby accept the tenancy of an allotment at \_\_\_\_\_ at an annual cost of £\_\_\_\_\_

**WEF DATE SIGNED BELOW**

I have carefully read the Conditions of Let and the Rules and Regulations for Allotment Plots on Council Managed Land 2020 which I agree to observe.

Name:.....

Address:.....

Town:..... Postcode:.....

Home No:..... Mobile No:.....

Email:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....

## APPENDIX 2 – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES RECEIVED (REDACTED)

| FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO ONLINE CONSULTATION   |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Please provide any comments you have on the proposed allotment rules and regulations and conditions of let - Your comments   | Organisation - if applicable |
| I don't believe the new proposed extra charges for allotments of 0.25 per square metre fits with the good food strategy thinking. I would've thought we should be lowering or removing allotment fees and finding lots more land to grow on in light of environmental and social issues. I am involved with community food growing in the borders as a volunteer group organiser and am always happy to assist with finding and supporting more people to grow their own food. I believe there is land available and lots of people ready to grow on it. With climate change, brexit and covid we should be urgently finding ways to grow lots more local food.  |                              |
| I am disgusted at your proposed price increase. For allotment rents at the Gytes in Peebles. I do not believe the Community Empowerment Act was set up to encourage local councils to use allotments as a money making scheme. I would like to ask what extra services you are going to provide for this massive hike in price and also ask if other council rents are also going up by this percentage. I am thoroughly disappointed in Scottish Borders Councils attitude to the ethos of allotments and you should be ashamed.  | The Gytes Peebles            |
| <p>The price hike is unjustified both in terms of what the council actually currently does for the fee and morally as you are creating and increasing inequality due to the unaffordableness of this to pensioners, the unemployed and those on low incomes.</p> <p>It is a fairly costly endeavour to take on an allotment plot. I'll give you my example: I was offered a plot by the embankment 2 years ago - it had no gates and a low fence was put up between the adjacent plot again with no gate. The fence had large wholes which rabbits can get through and was not high enough. Buying chicken wire to rabbit proof and tools along with seeds and plants is quite pricey but we do a good thing eating local food , reducing our carbon footprint and avoid buying items in plastic.</p> <p>You should be encouraging more people to have allotments by keeping the price low and affordable to all and not discriminating against those who can't afford to pay.</p> | The Gytes                    |
| <p>I want to see what you will be providing for this rent rise. You do nothing, except cutting the hedge.</p> <p>The access is appalling.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1, cutting the embankment of the rose Bay willow herb.</li> <li>2, Find out what is wrong with the water pressure and fix it.</li> <li>3, We do not rent the paths so that should be your responsibility.</li> <li>4, Proper control of the rabbits.</li> <li>5 , Provide a concession payment for unemployed and retired people.</li> <li>6, There should be some local who is in charge.</li> </ol>   | Gytes                        |
| <p>Allotments should be basically free.</p> <p>A small service charge: okay. £10-20 per year.</p> <p>This is a far bigger issue than revenue raising for the council.</p>  |                              |
| <p>At a time where you should be encouraging people to grow their own fruit and veg, to help climate change and also people's mental health I think the price rise is ridiculous. Surely you can find other ways of this money.</p>  |                              |
| The plots should be free as it's common good land ,could you please tell me what they get  |                              |

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <p>for working on this land</p> <p>I have no objection to paying a fair rent, either as a flat rate rental, or as a rate per square metre. However I consider it excessive to charge a flat rate PLUS a set amount per square metre.</p> <p>The current rate of £43.50 per allotment, you describe as a management fee but at present we see very little management being done. According to the proposed management rules tenants are responsible for maintenance of fences and paths and the control of weeds, both annual and pernicious. My plot backs onto the disused railway embankment which is infested with weeds of all kinds, including willow herb, brambles, nettles and self seeded trees. Can I therefore expect the Council to reciprocate by controlling the weeds which are outwith my control? The embankment is also infested with rabbits which regularly invade the plots and cause damage. Will the management fee be used to provide weed and vermin control?</p> <p>The gates to individual plots are, quite fairly, the responsibility of the plot holder, but from my reading of the proposed rules, it would appear that the Council are responsible for perimeter fences and gates. Hopefully the management fee will also be used to fit gates and locks.</p> <p>The proposed management rules contain much of which is common sense and which all responsible plot holders should be doing as a matter of course. However, plot holders should also expect the Council to provide a quid pro quo.</p>  |                         |
| <p>My wife and I have rented an allotment for about 15 years at the Gytes, Peebles. The allotment has been a fantastic resource this year, especially given the Covid-19 situation. Whilst we have benefited from the use of the allotment, I am deeply concerned by the Scottish Borders Council (SBC) decision to increase rents once again. I would object to this increase on the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a strong demand for allotments, as a 3-year waiting list would testify. This appears to be a means to reduce demand for allotments by increasing rents, effectively pricing people off the ground.</li> <li>2. SBC should be increasing the number of plots, preferably by providing more land.</li> <li>3. If anything, rentals should be reduced, especially to those people struggling in the current economic situation. I doubt a family living on Universal Credit, regularly resorting to a Food Bank, would be able to take advantage of an allotment.</li> <li>4. Allotments will become only available to more affluent people, further extending inequality based on wealth.</li> <li>5. The local plan highlights the anticipated growth in homes being built in the Scottish Borders. This will increase the demand for allotments, especially as flats/homes with small or no gardens are among the types of construction being proposed.</li> <li>6. This consultation has been poorly advertised. Attaching a couple of notices (which we haven't seen) during the fallow time at the allotments is poor, especially if you genuinely want to consult on allotments.</li> <li>7. We only learnt about this proposal from other allotmenters. SBC should have written to all of us (after all you do send us an invoice) to report the proposal and discuss the rental agreements.</li> <li>8. We are left to conclude that there is no intention to engage constructively with allotment holders and that a decision has been arrived at arbitrarily without our input.</li> <li>9. Were the increased rentals due to additional services being provided, then we need to discuss what is going to be provided. There is nothing in the proposal to show any additional services will be provided, therefore the rise in rents seems particularly unjustified.</li> <li>10. Removing hedges, rabbit-proofing the allotment area, removing rubbish, adding new water points, would be additional services we would be willing to discuss.</li> <li>11. We are not against the idea of those with bigger plots paying a larger rent. This additional cost, which has been proposed, is in the form of a standing charge and area charge that is out of all proportion compared to previous rents. Perhaps the rentals should</li> </ol> | <p>Gytes Allotments</p> |

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>be on the basis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Square meterage only at £0.25/sq.metre (this figure should be discussed); or</li> <li>o Standing charge of £43.50 or square meterage charge at £0.25/sq.meter, whichever is the larger, but not both.</li> </ul>   |                               |
| <p>I am writing to oppose the proposed increase in rent for the allotments at the Gytes Peebles.</p> <p>I have no objection to an annual rent increase or to paying more for a larger allotment but by my arithmetic, the charging of 25p per square metre would put my annual rent up to over £100, a hike of over 100%</p> <p>As most of the allotment holders are pensioners or on a low income, myself included, this is a lot to expect people to pay.</p> <p>At a time of Covid when many have lost their employment and income and many are experiencing mental health issues, as well as financial difficulties, surely we want to encourage gardening in a safe outdoor environment. Gardening has been found to have many health benefits, both mental and physical.</p> <p>I have had an allotment at the Gyte for about 20 years now and have found it to be very therapeutic and I think it would be a great pity if the allotments are made inaccessible to people who have need them, or who over the years put a lot of work into them.</p>  | <p>The Gytes,<br/>Peebles</p> |
| <p>As an allotment holder at the Gytes allotments in Peebles, I am extremely upset to read about some of the proposed rules and regulations and conditions of let. My views are summarised below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I strongly object to the proposed introduction of a 25 pence per square metre charge which will be in addition to the annual management fee. I understand will be the first year that this has been instigated. I understand the stated reason is to make the fees more fair. Whilst I acknowledge that there are a variety of sizes of plots on the Gytes site, the majority of allotment holders were not given a choice of plot when they took on their allotment. Therefore it does not seem fair to now implement a fee based on size of plot. Furthermore, it certainly does not appear fair to implement this on top of another fixed management fee. For my plot, I estimate that I will pay an additional £40 which is almost double what I currently pay. I believe this to be anything but fair.</li> <li>2. A lack of consultation regarding the increases in fees. I would argue that for the most, if not all of the allotment holders, the biggest or most important issue would be the cost of renting their allotment, or a proposal to increase this significantly. I would have thought that an open, transparent, honest, person-centred administration would therefore wish to consult with their allotment holders about any proposed change to how fees are calculated, especially when this is going to incur vastly increased costs to what they would normally pay. Is that not what consultations are for? From what I understand, the fee changes were agreed by the council earlier this year with no consultation and the other changes that are in the consultation document are minimal changes to the previous ones. I thought councils were obliged to consult the public that they serve? But it seems they can choose when to do this when and when not to?</li> <li>3. There appears to be no provision in the proposed fee changes for those with low incomes, e.g. retired people, low income plot holders. Given that a significant proportion of allotment holders are on low incomes, surely this should have been considered as a fundamental part of any decision regarding fee changes?</li> <li>4. The proposed regulations etc do appear to focus heavily on the responsibilities of the plot holders, however they are very light on the responsibilities of the council and the what is provided by them. Have any members of the council visited the Gytes allotments recently? The perimeter fences and internal fences are in a shocking state of disrepair. This site is overrun with rabbits whom destroy a vast amount of the crops grown. The perimeter security gates have long since gone and never been replaced. The paths are basically a mud bath. The water supply is extremely limited with a number of plots having to share one tap with very low water pressure. Whilst I appreciate that council budgets are extremely restricted at present, I think it is a bit of a joke increasing the fees drastically</li> </ol> | <p>Gytes,<br/>Peebles</p>     |

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| <p>when the services provided and the maintenance of the site is in such neglect.</p> <p>5. As part of this consultation, my views are that the council should be encouraging as many people to be able to rent an allotment and grow their own food. I think there should be proper investment in the sites they do have and more land dedicated to new sites. The health and social benefits of gardening and tending to allotments are undeniable and surely the council should be encouraging this and making it easier as opposed to making it more difficult by introducing fee increases by stealth. To realise the health and social benefits, I think they should be considering reducing or even removing the fees.</p> <p>6. I would suggest one way the council could proceed is to consider and actively encourage local community ownership of the Gytes site. This would demonstrate true public partnership and encourage the allotment holders to become more involved, take some responsibility and improve the site.</p> |                    |
| <p>The price increase of £43.50 plus 25p/sqm is significant within a single year. Would SBC consider a staggered increase over five years? Enabling allotment holders to plan for the increase. 2020 has been a difficult year for many.</p> <p>How has the 25p/sqm charge been calculated? Could this be lower?</p> <p>Will SBC provide a plan showing the sqm of the individual allotment to the holder prior to invoice so it can be assessed against holder's own understanding of the space?</p> <p>Will the £43.50 management fee be increased yearly?</p> <p>Will SBC provide a breakdown of costs associated with the fee ? An article in the Peeblesshire News stated SBC heavily subsidised the allotments. Please provide clarification.</p> <p>The increased fee could lead to individuals/families on lower or fixed incomes being unable to afford the plot. This would be a great shame and not in the spirit of sustainable growing, support for positive mental health or the Green Recovery post Covid-19.</p>            | None.              |
| <p>When an allotment has been allowed to get overgrown it can take more than one year to get it clear again as many weeds will keep seeds potent for many seasons. The current state of an allotment can be the result of a previous tenant.</p>  |                    |
| <p>I would like to object to the excessive rent rise for the allotments.</p> <p>I feel it is especially unfair for people who are on universal or pension credit to pay the full price when the allotment provides exercise, fresh produce and aids mental health — essential to those on lower incomes.</p> <p>I would propose 2 levels of increase. For those able to pay — accept the full amount but if on any credit— a hardship rent should be available.</p> <p>I would also like you to produce a list of the Gytes allotments(they are all numbered) with the size /square metre indicated so we all know the official size and what extra cost it will entail.</p>  | The Gytes, Peebles |
| <p>the regulations have to be fair to everybody</p>   | gytes peebles      |
| <p>I believe that the current increase in price conflicts with the Community Empowerment Act 2-15 Allotments. It is also ill timed in view of the current pandemic, increased unemployment, stress and the problems of importing food that will be associated after Brexit.</p>   |                    |
| <p>i am unhappy about the proposed rent increase</p> <p>besides the ground and a tap (very low pressure) shared among approx ten plots, what is the rent for?</p>   | gytes peebles      |

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| <p>The proposed increases are prohibitive and will mean it is no longer viable economically to many allotment holders.</p> <p>During the pandemic restrictions the allotment has been the only safe environment for us helping to combat mental health besides producing nutritious safe produce for many holders, families and elderly neighbours.</p> <p>I am over 80 and depend on my allotment to stay fit and healthy while growing good produce.</p> <p>There are other holders in the same position also with limited means who will be not be able to afford the increased charges and will be forced to give up their allotments.</p> <p>It would appear counterproductive to bring this kind of extortionate payment strategy into operation when the situation for any allotment holders is less income, the need to produce their own food and peace of mind. A place that all the family can visit and stay safe.</p> <p>Within 10 years the rental has increased 300% and now the proposed charges per square metre .</p>  |              |
| <p>I object to what appears to be a major step change in pricing with the fixed charge AND a per square meter charge. This for myself will equate to a second major 'step-change' price increase and as a retired person, possibly prohibitive. This increase will negate many of the advantages of 'growing our own' vegetables.</p> <p>Whilst I do not object in principle to what appears to be a management structure - I suspect that this might just be another layer of bureaucracy.</p> <p>Over the last few years I have been underwhelmed by SBC's inability to take any responsibility for the Innerleithen allotments paths and boundaries. I have requested a section of Beech Hedge which is not my responsibility to be cut which was ignored, There has been no path maintenance and finally, I have complained about a neighbouring plot which has been abandoned to all extent and purpose for at least the last 3 growing seasons. So, please, lets have a values statement enshrining a commitment to facilitating and enabling rather than and control.</p>   | Innerleithen |
| <p>While most of the proposed allotment rules, regulations and conditions of let are sensible and uncontroversial, the proposal to more than double the annual rental fee, raising it from £43.50 to £106 by adding a charge of 25p per square metre (based on the standard size of 250 sq m) cannot be justified any more than charging the full allotment fee for those who have voluntarily divided their allotment in half.</p> <p>Renters are by definition people who cannot afford their own gardens, but they still devote considerable effort to maintaining and improving their allotments, as well as making the financial commitment to buy equipment and make and renew infrastructure such as raised beds and paths. The meagre financial benefit to the Council of the rent increase is out of all proportion to the financial hit to the allotment holders: surely there can be a fairer way forward?</p> <p>It should be noted that the neglected condition of many of the Guthrie Drive allotments when they were allocated means it has taken some allotment holders 2 to 3 years to bring them fully under cultivation, while others have just given up and left the problem to the next applicant.</p> <p>Lastly, many if not most of the renters are, like ourselves, pensioners whose health and wellbeing greatly benefit from the exercise, fresh air and contact with the natural world which come from working an allotment. For these and the above reasons I believe we deserve to be encouraged rather than penalised.</p> |              |

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| <p>Allotment Rules and Regulations - My comments/questions are as follows:<br/> 2 (a) and 2 (b) Is the management fee the current charge of £43.50 per annum?<br/> 2 (e) What criteria will be used to decide on any increase on an annual basis?<br/> 3 (d) Will SBC staff be maintaining the boundary fences, communal gate and path areas that are not part of the allotment plots?<br/> 4 (c) If SBC staff are responsible for agreeing, checking and permitting a shed/greenhouse etc construction, why does a tenant require to approach the SBC planning department?<br/> 4 (h) Is it essential that each tenant secure their own personal insurance. Can a tenant decide not to insure and take the consequences if anything happened to their property/contents?</p> <p>There is no mention of a 'pond' - please can you advise and include rules relating to a pond.</p> <p>Conditions of Let<br/> I totally agree that someone who has a half plot should not pay the same as a tenant with a full plot. However, I consider the starting cost of £0.25p per square metre to be excessive for the first year as this will increase the annual cost considerably. There is no account taken for the condition of each plot and the expense that a tenant has to pay in order to make the plot viable to be able to grow produce.</p>  | <p>I have an allotment at Guthrie Drive, Hawick</p>                |
| <p>While I appreciate that an overhaul of the service may have been needed, including rentals for allotments, I'm not very happy at how it has been presented to allotment holders, and I'm not happy at rentals that are proposed (the big rise in rental costs, or the system for costing the rentals).</p> <p>Notification by the council to allotment holders of the proposed changes was done by hanging a copy of the new rules and contract on the back of our allotment door in late October 2020. Info was given on this form about accessing the info online. Feedback was sought, but has to be in by 8 Dec. In late autumn, activity at the allotments is really low, so this notice could easily have been missed or not seen at all by some of the allotment holders. This did not feel like a good way for the council to be consulting with their service users. I was recently billed by the council for my annual fee...could they not have sent a letter out with these invoices?</p> <p>The council has given no context or background to these proposed changes...why these changes, why now, what benefit or purpose do they serve? I think this is a serious omission...it's difficult to give considered feedback without a full context for the changes.</p> <p>A major concern in the proposed changes is over rental costs.<br/> I currently pay a flat fee of £43.50 a year.<br/> The new proposals are for this same flat fee plus 25pence per square metre. I have 196 sq metres, so would be charged an additional £49 pounds, so more than doubling my rent. I appreciate that rents might have to increase, but this price rise seems far too steep. And with no justification given.<br/> (Again, in this consultation with us, the council has not provided us with upfront info on our allotment sizes...I was given mine when I requested it, but it was not provided as part of the consultation).<br/> I also believe the flat fee plus sq metre charge is not a fair one, or well thought out. The allotments are all of differing sizes, and this system would mean that holders of smaller allotments would pay proportionately more than holders of larger ones.<br/> I've tried to do research on what other local authorities charge: from the info readily available online, whilst charges vary enormously, most LAs do not charge a flat fee but charge only by the sq metre. This seems very fair and equitable: the bigger the allotment, the more you pay.</p> | <p>I am an allotment holder at the Burgh Hall site in Peebles.</p> |

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| <p>SBC does not mention anything about concessions: again other authorities offer concessions for those on low incomes. I believe it would only be reasonable and fair for SBC to do the same. For single parent families as well.</p> <p>I object to these changes due to:<br/> the very poor way the consultation has been carried out<br/> the very steep and unjustified rent increase that is proposed<br/> the need for a fairer and more equitable rental system to be introduced (sq metre charging only, with concessions for low income households and single parent families).</p>   |   |
| <p>The Consultation process: On the 21st Oct 2020 Scottish Borders Council (SBC) opened a consultation on the Proposed allotment rules and regulations 2020. A notice of the Consultation was posted on some gates at the Gytes Allotment site. Posting a notice on gates in the winter, with allotments dormant, is clearly not an effective way to engage plot holders in a consultation. There was no mention of the consultation in the council publication SBConnect distributed in November 2020 or the invoice for 2020-21 allotment rental, received on the 18th Nov 2020. The Council has contact details for all allotment holders yet failed to notify us of the proposed changes.</p> <p>In the Council response to Christine Grahame MSP it states that the change in charging structure was agreed by councillors in February 2020. I believe a survey of plot sizes, was undertaken in 2019. It is clear that SBC has agreed and planned the changes in charging well in advance of informing and engaging with allotment holders and Borders residents. Consultation should have taken place at the beginning of the process rather than at the end. This demonstrates a contempt for the views of Borders residents</p> <p>The proposed charging structure: The only substantive change in the proposed allotment Conditions of Let is an increase in rent from the current £43.50 per year to a system of fixed £43.50 charge plus £0.25 per square metre plot size. I agree that it is much fairer to base allotment rent on plot size. However, by adding a flat rate fee to the charge per square metre, smaller plot holders pay proportionately more than those with bigger plots. Many Scottish councils base rental on allotment size but without an additional flat rate fee.</p> <p>Transparency: There is a lack of transparency in the method used to calculate a fair rent with no indication of the costs to the council of administration and other services, other than to state allotments are heavily subsidised. Of course, most Council services are heavily subsidised. That is why I pay Council Tax to subsidise the Council! In SBC communications with Christine Grahame MSP and the Peebleshire News the fixed £43.50 has been called an 'administration charge'. Is it a coincidence that the cost of administration exactly matches the old rental charge?</p> <p>Concessionary rates: There is little provision in the Regulations made for those less able to afford the full rent for an allotment. The leader of the council, Shona Haslam has stated recently that it was always the intention to have concessions. This does not feature in the current consultation other than Paragraph 2d in the Rules and Regulations which advises tenants to contact SBC if they have difficulties in ability to pay. This is of no use to prospective tenants and it is unclear what concessions might be made for existing tenants. A survey of some Scottish councils showed all to have a concessionary rate for those on low income, typically 50% of the full charge.</p> <p>Step increase in rental: The change will double or treble the rent for many plot holders from April 2021. It is unreasonable to impose such a large step increase in rents. Those who may struggle with the new rent now have a matter of months to consider whether to abandon cultivation. Any sizeable increase in the 'fair rent' should be phased over a period of years.</p> <p>Engagement with the community: The Consultation specifies the Council's expectations of allotment holders but fails to give any indication of the services that they, in return, can expect from the Council. In fact, the services provided for the Gytes allotments are</p> | <p>Gytes<br/>allotments<br/>Peebles</p> |

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| <p>minimal. Vacant plots are not promptly re-let. Water supply is variable or inaccessible. Trees have been allowed to grow in the boundary and overshadow plots. Rabbits infest the site. Access to plots near the Tweed has been compromised by the rugby pitch. Over the years the site has been allowed to deteriorate. In the longer term the Council should form a partnership with the local community and allow allotments to be managed locally rather than centrally. Local management will allow bidding for capital grants for the expansion and improvement of the facility. In turn this will help the Council develop its Food Growing Strategy.</p> <p>Community Empowerment Act: In failing to consider the points noted above, the Council is not meeting</p> <p>the obligations placed on it by the Scottish Government in the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015, Part 9.</p> <p>Summary: It is fair to base allotment rent on plot size, but without a flat rate component. In accord with the Community Empowerment Act, there should be transparency about the method used by SBC to determine a fair rent. A clearly stated concession rate is needed for those on lower incomes. Any substantial increase in rental for existing plot holders should be phased. In the longer term a move should be made to local rather than centralised management, development and improvement of allotment sites.</p>   |                      |
| <p>I am an allotment tenant at the Gytes in Peebles and I wish to comment on the proposed rent increases.</p> <p>Firstly, the consultation on this matter has been most unsatisfactory and anyone could be forgiven for thinking that SBC is applying these increases on the sly, giving very little chance for tenants or any interested parties to comment. I only learned of these proposed increases by chance. I understand SBC put notices down at the allotment entrances but I have never seen them. The consultation period is very short (21 October to 8 December) and is being done at a time when the growing season is over and very few tenants are likely to be down at the allotments and see the notices I refer to above. To compound matters, SBC have sent out invoices for next year and have not mentioned any price increases. This is very odd and all smacks of underhand tactics by SBC.</p> <p>It is my understanding that the proposed increases have already been agreed at some previous Council meeting. How is it then that the Rules on the Council website, outlining among other things the price increases, are open for comment? Is this some form of retrospective consultation that should have been done before the price increases were agreed?</p> <p>Could you please let me know how you (SBC) have calculated the cost of an allotment. I have had my allotment for about seven years. For the first few years it cost me £10, then it was increased to £40 (I can't remember any consultation that time) and now it is going to have a fixed element of £43.50 and an additional charge based on square meterage. In principal I do not have any objection to the structure of these charges but I would be grateful if you could explain how you have determined what the actual charges should be. SBC appear to be applying market principles to allotment charges, ie, there is a fixed number of allotments, there are lots of people on the waiting list for an allotment, therefore they are increasing charges to raise some additional revenue. This is unfair, especially on (both existing and prospective) less well-off allotment tenants, in particular those on low incomes, the unemployed and pensioners. SBC should not be discriminating like this.</p> <p>Working an allotment to grow food is only marginally economical and raising the cost of rents may make it uneconomic for many people. In effect, allotments would just be a hobby for the more well-off, and low income tenants will suffer. This is unacceptable and SBC should not be introducing these increases. If they do insist on these increases they should be made fairer so that working an allotment is affordable to all.</p> <p>Finally, it is well known that growing food, gardening and working an allotment is of great</p> | <p>Gytes Peebles</p> |

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| benefit to the mental health and well-being of people. There are numerous studies that show this and I have even read recently that in some places it is being prescribed by GPs to improve the mental health of patients. SBC should be encouraging and facilitating residents in the Borders to get an allotment and improve their physical and mental health. It is about time the Council showed a bit of leadership and vision and moved away from the bean counting that has resulted in these proposed rent increases. |  |
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| <b>EMAILS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO LETTERS ISSUED TO ALLOTMENT HOLDERS/WAITING LIST MEMBERS</b> |                 |  |
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| <b>Relevant Site</b>   | <b>New Cost</b> | <b>Details of communication</b>  |
| The Gytes  | £67.20          | Customer shocked at price increase. Wanted to know why the costs have been increased, when the council do little to assist. Allotment is 1/3 and unfair she pay's the same as others.  |
| The Gytes  | £97.50          | Register my strongest protest against the proposed increase to the allotment by adding a meter square charge to the existing fee, as origionally £10, now over 300% higher at £43.50   |
| The Gytes  | £88.93          | Customer would like to know the cost of his allotment, as the website quotes £43.50 but his charges say £43.50 plus 0.25p per square meter.  |
| The Gytes  | £76.85          | Over 10 points made on why the costs should not be increased. Has cultivated the allotment for some time, however unhappy at the services we have provided and managed, along with details regarding the condition of the allotment when it was taken on. Further information attached in comments of entire communication |

### APPENDIX 3 – CONCESSION SCENARIOS

|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|--------------------------|-------|---|------------|------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                          |       | Total No. of plots                      | 86         |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | Total Income (New Price & No discounts) | £ 7,381.12 |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | Avg plot price                          | £ 85.83    |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | <b><u>10% take up discount</u></b>      |            | <b><u>20% take up discount</u></b> |      | <b><u>30% take up discount</u></b> | <b><u>50% take up discount</u></b> |
| Discounted Plots         | 9     | Discounted Plots                        | 17         | Discounted Plots                   | 26   | Discounted Plots                   | 43                                 |
| Full Paying Plots        | 77    | Full Paying Plots                       | 69         | Full Paying Plots                  | 60   | Full Paying Plots                  | 43                                 |
|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | <b><u>10% Discount</u></b>              |            | <b><u>10% Discount</u></b>         |      | <b><u>10% Discount</u></b>         | <b><u>10% Discount</u></b>         |
| Full paying Plots Income | 6,609 | Full paying Plots Income                | 5,922      | Full paying Plots Income           | 5150 | Full paying Plots Income           | 3691                               |
| Discounted Plots Income  | 695   | Discounted Plots Income                 | 1,313      | Discounted Plots Income            | 2008 | Discounted Plots Income            | 3322                               |
| Total Income             | 7,304 | Total Income                            | 7,235      | Total Income                       | 7158 | Total Income                       | 7012                               |
|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | <b><u>20% Discount</u></b>              |            | <b><u>20% Discount</u></b>         |      | <b><u>20% Discount</u></b>         | <b><u>20% Discount</u></b>         |
| Full paying Plots Income | 6,609 | Full paying Plots Income                | 5,922      | Full paying Plots Income           | 5150 | Full paying Plots Income           | 3691                               |
| Discounted Plots Income  | 618   | Discounted Plots Income                 | 1,167      | Discounted Plots Income            | 1785 | Discounted Plots Income            | 2952                               |
| Total Income             | 7,227 | Total Income                            | 7,089      | Total Income                       | 6935 | Total Income                       | 6643                               |
|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | <b><u>30% Discount</u></b>              |            | <b><u>30% Discount</u></b>         |      | <b><u>30% Discount</u></b>         | <b><u>30% Discount</u></b>         |
| Full paying Plots Income | 6,609 | Full paying Plots Income                | 5,922      | Full paying Plots Income           | 5150 | Full paying Plots Income           | 3691                               |
| Discounted Plots Income  | 541   | Discounted Plots Income                 | 1,021      | Discounted Plots Income            | 1562 | Discounted Plots Income            | 2583                               |
| Total Income             | 7,149 | Total Income                            | 6,943      | Total Income                       | 6712 | Total Income                       | 6274                               |
|                          |       |   |            |                                    |      |                                    |                                    |
|                          |       | <b><u>40% Discount</u></b>              |            | <b><u>40% Discount</u></b>         |      | <b><u>40% Discount</u></b>         | <b><u>40% Discount</u></b>         |
| Full paying Plots Income | 6,609 | Full paying Plots Income                | 5,922      | Full paying Plots Income           | 5150 | Full paying Plots Income           | 3691                               |
| Discounted Plots Income  | 463   | Discounted Plots Income                 | 875        | Discounted Plots Income            | 1339 | Discounted Plots Income            | 2214                               |
| Total Income             | 7,072 | Total Income                            | 6,797      | Total Income                       | 6489 | Total Income                       | 5905                               |

|                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
|                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |
| <b>50% Discount</b>          |       | <b>50% Discount</b>          |       | <b>50% Discount</b>          |       | <b>50% Discount</b>          |       |
| Full paying Plots Income     | 6,609 | Full paying Plots Income     | 5,922 | Full paying Plots Income     | 5150  | Full paying Plots Income     | 3691  |
| Discounted Plots Income      | 386   | Discounted Plots Income      | 730   | Discounted Plots Income      | 1116  | Discounted Plots Income      | 1845  |
| Total Income                 | 6,995 | Total Income                 | 6,652 | Total Income                 | 6265  | Total Income                 | 5536  |
|                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |                              |       |
| Budget                       | 7,381 | Budget                       | 7,381 | Budget                       | 7,381 | Budget                       | 7,381 |
| Budget Pressure 10% Discount | 77    | Budget Pressure 10% Discount | 146   | Budget Pressure 10% Discount | 223   | Budget Pressure 10% Discount | 369   |
| Budget Pressure 20% Discount | 154   | Budget Pressure 20% Discount | 292   | Budget Pressure 20% Discount | 446   | Budget Pressure 20% Discount | 738   |
| Budget Pressure 30% Discount | 232   | Budget Pressure 30% Discount | 438   | Budget Pressure 30% Discount | 669   | Budget Pressure 30% Discount | 1,107 |
| Budget Pressure 40% Discount | 309   | Budget Pressure 40% Discount | 584   | Budget Pressure 40% Discount | 893   | Budget Pressure 40% Discount | 1,476 |
| Budget Pressure 50% Discount | 386   | Budget Pressure 50% Discount | 730   | Budget Pressure 50% Discount | 1,116 | Budget Pressure 50% Discount | 1,845 |

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Conor Price,  
Project Director  
Hawick Flood Protection Scheme  
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters  
Newtown St. Boswells, Melrose  
TD6 0SA

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020

Dear Scottish Borders Council,

### **Hawick Flood Protection Active Travel Network, Scottish Borders Council**

Thank you for your recent presentation at our Category 4 Panel Day.

Following September's panel meeting, we are delighted to inform you that Hawick Flood Protection Active Travel Network has been chosen by the panel to receive multi-year funding and support through Places for Everyone.

Please note that our multi-year support is dependent on the conditions outlined overleaf, and on the panel feedback being adhered to and considered as designs progress.

We will be in touch shortly to arrange an initial meeting to discuss the panel's comments and how you intend to address them going forward. We will also outline the partnership support offered by Sustrans and our expectations for the years ahead.

#### **Please note - Press**

Please note that **the results of the Panel are embargoed until a formal announcement has been made by Sustrans and Transport Scotland**. We will be in touch with further details as soon as these have been finalised. Following the announcement, you will be welcome to share the news with your wider team and networks.

One of the conditions of funding for projects is that all publicity materials, websites, social media and publications from partners acknowledge that financial assistance and support has been received from the Scottish Government, via Places for Everyone. If you require additional support for this, please contact myself and the Sustrans Scotland Communications Team.

Partners should share all press relating to Places for Everyone funded projects with Sustrans Scotland's Communications team at least five working days prior to release, for approval. Please notify and share press releases with the following contacts:

1. [Seumas.Skinner@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:Seumas.Skinner@sustrans.org.uk) (Senior Communications Officer, Infrastructure)
2. [Sarah.Cockburn@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.Cockburn@sustrans.org.uk) (Communications Manager)
3. Your Places for Everyone Infrastructure contacts (if unsure, please use: [placesforeveryone@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:placesforeveryone@sustrans.org.uk))

Should you have any questions in the interim, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Many congratulations to you and your team again.

We look forward to working with you,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chiquita Elvin', with a stylized, cursive style.

**Chiquita Elvin**

Interim Head of Infrastructure & Delivery

Places for Everyone

Encl. Panel feedback: Hawick Flood Protection Active Travel Network

## **Hawick Flood Protection Active Travel Network, Scottish Borders Council**

**Total Project Cost:** £12,642,481 (includes funding that has already been drawn down)

**Amount Awarded:** £11,813,508

### **Panel recommendation:**

Five year (maximum) multi-year funding with conditions outlined below.

### **Overall comments:**

The project has the potential to make a huge difference for the local area and young people particularly. The Panel are keen to support Scottish Borders Council in their journey to develop active travel in Hawick.

Whilst the project has many strengths, for a Category 4 Places for Everyone project, the project could be more ambitious in its designs for active travel across Hawick. However, the project nonetheless appears to be 'shovel-ready', and could be delivered relatively quickly, which is a major strength. The project presents excellent opportunities for multi-modal links (particularly to public transport), and this should be a particular focus for the project. While multi-year funding has been awarded, the project will be required to be presented for a brief review by the Panel within 1 year, to demonstrate that the most ambitious possible design solutions (particularly in relation to the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods) are being taken forward.

- It was questioned whether a one way system as proposed will achieve the stated outcomes. To be effective, the project will need to include substantial further road space reallocation. Within this, the project should be carefully engineered to ensure that congestion doesn't reoccur further down the line
- Hawick is complex in terms of historical traffic patterns and interactions; it was noted that impacts on travel flow around North Bridge will be key to the project's success.
- The project goes some way to mitigate risk of the flood defences causing disconnection between Hawick's streets and the river. However, the project should go further to enable positive re-engagement of the community and with the river (beyond the use of glass panels where the wall is particularly high).
- While the Panel supports many aspects of the project as it stands, there was an assertion from the Panel that there is still significant scope for the project to develop further if it is to fully demonstrate best practice. Please see funding conditions below which outline how best this could be achieved.

### **Funding conditions:**

- The project must include substantial road space reallocation as part of a network of ambitious Low Traffic Neighbourhoods across the area. The current proposals are not substantiated sufficiently in this regard. More evidence of road space reallocation will need to be provided for review at the Panel at a later date. The scope will need to be broadened to ensure this is fully included to its maximum potential, and budgets and programmes revised accordingly. The project must continue to address the severance caused by the river, as well as strengthen the connectivity between the town and the river. Once design options are further developed, and final options selected, the proposals will need to be sent to the Panel within 1 year for further comment.
- The project must continue to focus on the journey to school as well as SIMD-related issues. The neighbourhood proposals, as well as behaviour change and community engagement work, must focus particularly on these aspects. It is

suggested that the project could make stronger links between schools and neighbourhoods and the new amenity space and pump track for all.

- The project must include facilities for accessible bikes at the cycle storage provision. Accessible cycle storage near to bus stations should also be provided.
- The project should focus more strongly on inclusion of green infrastructure and public realm improvements through its design development.
- Signage for longer distance through routes should continue to be developed.
- The project team must submit a revised budget and programme in light of the Panel's suggestions. Please note increased grant requests are subject to the availability of funds and Panel approval.



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## **LOCAL FESTIVAL GRANT SCHEME – PAYMENTS FOR 2021/22**

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### **Report by Service Director – Customer & Communities**

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## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 March 2021**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present recommendations in relation to Local Festival Grant Scheme payments for 2021/22.**
- 1.2 It is proposed that an allocation of 50% of the fund is made available to the 29 festivals within the Scheme to support public liability insurance and public protection measures, and to support those who are adapting their arrangements in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.3 The Local Festival Grant Scheme is currently ring-fenced within each Area Partnership Community Fund, as agreed at Council on 27 August 2020.
- 1.4 This report is not a review of the Local Festival Grant Scheme, this will take place once the Fit For 2024 Review of Area Partnerships and the Review of the Community Fund are completed as per the report approved by Council on 27 August 2020.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee is asked to:-**

- (a) Agree that 50% of the Festival Grant (approx. £42.5k) is awarded for 2021/22 in respect of public liability insurance and public protection measures, and to make a contribution to those festivals who are adapting or making alternative arrangements in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.**
- (b) The remaining 50% of the Festival Grant for 2021/22 (approx. £42.5k), will be retained within each Area Partnership Community Fund for community led projects.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Further to the review of the Community Fund, at its meeting on 25 June 2020, the Council discussed and agreed to note the results, findings and subsequent recommendations of the report produced by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) on the review of the Community Fund.
- 3.2 The recommendation made by SCDC in regards to Festival Grants was that there was a desire to see the local festival grants to remain ring-fenced within the overall Community Fund.
- 3.3 On 27 August 2020, Council agreed to continue to ring fence grants made to Festival Grants within the Community Fund for 2020/21, with payments to Festival Grants only made to cover actual expenditure on public liability insurance and public protection measures incurred. A total of £13,599 was claimed and awarded as follows:
  - Berwickshire - £560
  - Cheviot - £4,425
  - Eildon - £5,633
  - Teviot & Liddesdale - £0
  - Tweeddale - £2,981

The unspent balances were returned to each Area Partnership Community Fund for community led projects.

- 3.4 Previous analysis of the Festival Grant Scheme has shown that approx. £49,000 of the £85,000 is used for the primary purpose of the grant. Other expenditure includes programmes/leaflets, festival activities, halls hire, publicity and entertainment.
- 3.5 Due to the current pandemic, festival committees have been forced to cancel their arrangements but some may still be incurring expenditure. A number of Festivals are looking to make alternative arrangements to allow recognition of their festivals (as current Covid-19 pandemic restrictions allow), and some are developing online events.
- 3.6 It is recognised that due to the cancellation of arrangements, many festivals will have lost vital income generating opportunities and are therefore requiring financial assistance to enable expenditure to be met.
- 3.7 There are no changes proposed to the process of the current Scheme, and festival committees will be asked to follow the normal process in order to claim the grant payment.
- 3.8 This report is not a review of the Local Festival Grant Scheme which is overdue, the review of the Scheme will take place once the Fit For 2024 Review of Area Partnerships and the Review of the Community Fund are completed as per the report approved by Council on 27 August 2020.

## 4 IMPLICATIONS

### 4.1 Financial

There are no further financial implications other than those detailed in the report.

### 4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There are no risks associated with these proposed recommendations

### 4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

There are no direct equalities issues within the proposed recommendations.

### 4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no direct economic, social or environmental issues within this report which would affect the Council's sustainability policy.

### 4.5 Carbon Management

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report.

### 4.6 Rural Proofing

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

### 4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation are required as a result of this report.

## 5 CONSULTATION

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

### Approved by

**Jenni Craig**

**Service Director, Customer & Communities Signature .....**

### Author(s)

| Name        | Designation and Contact Number            |
|-------------|---|
| Jenni Craig | Service Director Customer and Communities |
| Shona Smith | Communities & Partnership Manager         |

**Background Papers:** Council Report 27 August 2020  
**Previous Minute Reference:**

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

Contact us at: Communities & Partnerships Team, Scottish Borders Council, Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 OSA

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