

# Our Scottish Borders

Your community

## MEETING

- Date:** 10 September 2020 from 2.00 to 4:10 p.m.
- Location:** Via MS Teams
- Attendees:** Councillor Mark Rowley (SBC) [Chair], Councillor Sandy Aitchison (SBC), Councillor Stuart Bell (SBC), Ms Angela Cox (Borders College), Mr Stephen Gourlay (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service), Prof. Russel Griggs (South of Scotland Enterprise), Councillor Carol Hamilton (SBC), Inspector Jacqi McGuigan (Police Scotland), Councillor Simon Mountford (RSLs representative), Mr Ralph Roberts (NHS Borders).

- Also in attendance:** Jenni Craig, Rob Dickson, Shona Smith, Jenny Wilkinson (all SBC); Keith Allan (NHS Borders); Andrea Hall (SDS); Nile Istephan (Eildon Housing), Rob McCulloch-Graham (H&SC); Julia Mulloy (SBHA).

## MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies had been received from Ms E Acaster (Borders College); Ms K Hamilton (NHS Borders); Mrs M Hume (Third Sector); and Superintendent A MacInnes (Police Scotland).
2. **MINUTE**
  - 2.1 **Minute**

The Minute of the Meeting of 12 September 2019 had been circulated.
  - DECISION**

**AGREED the Minute.**
  - 2.2 **Action Tracker**

The outstanding actions for the Community Planning Strategic Board had been circulated. All of these were on the agenda.  
**Noted.**
3. **SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ENTERPRISE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP**
  - 3.1 An update report by the SBC Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy, on the Establishment of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP) had been circulated. Both Russel Griggs and Rob Dickson spoke in support of the recommendations. The report provided the background and context to the phased establishment of the REP, and included an overview of the work of the Covid19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group, the forerunner of the REP. The REP had replaced the Scottish Borders Economy and Low Carbon Team, and it was proposed that the REP would deliver the economic development strand of the work of the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership. This proposal was agreed by Scottish Borders Council at its meeting on 31 October 2019 and needed to also be agreed by the Community Planning Partnership. The REP would support the establishment of South of Scotland Enterprise by developing and driving forward a South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy. The remit and composition of the REP was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

- 3.2 With the Covid19 outbreak, to ensure an aligned and rapid response to addressing economic impacts, Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders Councils, along with South of Scotland Enterprise, acted quickly to establish the Covid19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group. This Group provided strategic direction and oversight to the initial economic response to Covid19 in the South of Scotland. Key activities for the Group included understanding the impact of Covid19; supporting business; supporting communities; advocating for the South of Scotland; communication; tackling labour market challenges; aligning response, restart and recovery activity; and setting the groundwork for the REP.
- 3.3 A key task for the fully formed REP, the first meeting of which was due to take place on 18 September 2020, would be to set the strategic direction for the regional economy in the South of Scotland by developing the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy and Action Plan. That Strategy would be long term and build on previous analysis of the opportunities and challenges that had taken place before Covid19. The Action Plan would likely have a shorter (potentially 5-year) timespan and be reviewed annually. However, it was likely that the REP would wish to reflect on the impact of Covid19 on the regional economy, which was being experienced differently across different areas of the economy. Details were provided in the report on the relationship between the various key elements of activity and core elements of the regional activity.
- 3.4 The South of Scotland Regional Skills Investment Plan was launched on 20 June 2019, and since then, Skills Development Scotland had been working closely with partners to support the implementation of the Plan. To oversee this work, it was intended that a South of Scotland Regional Skills Group be established which would report in to the REP. The inter-agency Borders Learning and Skills Partnership (BLSP) would also link in to this Regional Skills Group. The role of the BLSP was very important as it served to link the work on employability and training in the Scottish Borders into the strategic planning work being carried out at South of Scotland level, together with the employment, skills and training work being carried out as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The BLSP's activities included improving the understanding of the issue and the needs for training and other support; looking at how the Scottish Borders could maximise the support and make the best use of monies from the employability and training initiatives being announced by the Scottish and UK governments; and ensuring agencies were working together to support the PACE redundancy support initiative, digital training, and the promotion of apprenticeship training, etc. It was anticipated that a Programme Board would be established for Employability.

**AGREED:**

- (a) that the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership would deliver the economic development strand of the work of the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership;**
- (b) to recognise the work carried out by the Covid19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group;**
- (c) to welcome the progress being made in establishing the South of Scotland Economic Partnership and its work programme; and**
- (d) to note the work of the Borders Learning and Skills Partnership set out in section 6 of the report and its links to the strategic employment, training and skills work at a South of Scotland level.**

**4. COMMUNITY PLAN - PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

- 4.1 Copies of a report by SBC Service Director, Customer & Communities, on the Scottish Borders Community Plan Performance Report 2018/19 had been circulated. Alasdair Collison, SBC Senior Business Services Officer, joined the meeting and presented highlights from the report. It was explained that the Scottish Borders Community Plan had

been created in November 2017 and refreshed in May 2018. The Community Planning Partnership was required to produce an annual report detailing the performance against the Plan and that Annual Report was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Annual Report included data where provided for the remainder of 2017/28 and 2018/19. Performance was set against a suite of indicators intended to evidence achievement against an extensive range of ambitious outcomes, across 4 Community Planning themes: Our Economy, Skills & Learning; Our Health, Care & Wellbeing; Our Quality of Life; and Our Place. Due to the timespan over which the Report had been prepared, some of the actions described and summary content may be more recent. In addition, the range of topics and diverse sources of information had led to time frequencies and periods varying from measure to measure. A further report for 2019/20 would be brought to a future Strategic Board meeting at the earliest opportunity.

4.2 Rob Dickson, SBC Executive Director (Corporate Improvement & Economy), presented updates on the planned outcomes for the theme of Our Economy, Skills and Learning, covering:

- More people working more productively for higher wages
- More highly skilled workers
- More people benefitting from better connectivity
- More business people benefitting from greater investment and better support for their new and existing businesses, particularly in key growth sectors
- More people shopping, visiting and spending in local town centres
- More children, particularly those living in poverty, achieving higher levels of attainment
- More Looked After and Accommodated children and young people (LAC) in positive and sustained destinations

4.3 Rob McCulloch-Graham, IJB Chief Officer, presented updates for the planned outcomes for the theme of Our Health, Care and Wellbeing, covering:

- More people in good health and leading an active lifestyle at every age and stage of life
- More people in good mental health at very age and stage of life; and
- Improved support and care for older people.

4.4 Inspector Jacqui McGuigan, Police Scotland, gave an update on the current situation regarding the outcomes for the theme of Our Quality of Life, which covered:

- Fewer people experiencing violence (including domestic abuse);
- Fewer people experiencing anti-social behaviour; and
- Fewer people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

In response to a question around police attendance/information at Community Council meetings, Inspector McGuigan advised that the reports provided by the local area commander to SBC Elected Members could be shared with Community Councils. Police could not use Zoom as a platform for remote meetings due to security issues, but could use MS Teams. The main links for Community Councils were the community police officers and also the 2 Sergeants in the Community Police Action teams, the latter funded by SBC.

4.5 Nile Istephan, Chief Executive of Eildon Housing, and Julia Mulloy, Chief Executive of SBHA, gave an update on the planned outcomes on the theme, Our Place, covering:

- More people able to afford to heat their homes; and
- More people living independently in affordable and sustainable homes.

Reference was also made to work with the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency and working in collaboration, such as for the proposed Aberlour project at Tweedbank.

**Noted.**

## 5. LOCALITY PLANS

With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of 13 June 2019, copies of the Locality Plan and Action Plan for each of Berwickshire, Cheviot, Eildon, Teviot & Liddesdale and

Tweeddale had been circulated. Jenni Craig, SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, advised that these were the final versions of the Locality Plans which had been developed through Area Partnerships which required to be approved prior to submission to Scottish Government. Although these were potentially out of date, and would need refreshed, they had to be submitted to comply with legislation.

**AGREED to approve the 5 Locality Plans for Berwickshire, Cheviot, Eildon, Teviot & Liddesdale, and Tweeddale for submission to Scottish Government.**

6. **LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION PLAN - 2019/20 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 12 September 2019, copies of the Local Child Poverty Annual Progress Report 2019/20 and appendices had been circulated. The covering report explained that the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 required local authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report and an Annual Progress Report. The Report for 2019/20 was the second Annual Report for the Scottish Borders and provided the Community Planning Partnership and Scottish Government with an update on progress made within the Action Plan as well as an outline of proposed actions for 2020/21. Jenni Craig, SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, gave a brief presentation outlining the background to the Plan; national context; summary of targets; the local context facts and figures; and progress report highlights. A small snapshot was given of the report contents. There was a need to catch up on the Action Plan for this year due to Covid and the aim was to bring that Action Plan to the meeting of the Strategic Board in November. That would allow a focus on the impact of Covid and measures needed to be taken moving forward to alleviate that. Members welcomed the progress report.

**AGREED to endorse the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Annual Progress Report for 2019/20.**

7. **BEST VALUE AUDIT REPORT**

Copies of a report on the Best Value Assurance Report 2019 by the SBC Service Director, Customer & Communities, had been circulated. The report presented the findings of the 2019 Best Value Assurance of Scottish Borders Council, and the findings that related to the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 introduced the statutory duty of Best Value. The Best Value Assurance audit of Scottish Borders Council and the Community Planning Partnership in 2019 had been undertaken by Audit Scotland, with the Controller of Audit presenting the Report to the Accounts Commission as part of the requirement to do so at least once during the five-year audit appointment. The Assurance Report (Appendix 1 to the report) provided a range of findings for the Community Planning Partnership following an intensive process of scrutiny of the governance, Community Plan 2018, Draft Locality Plans, participation and asset transfer requests, engagement, and participatory budgeting. The Community Planning Partnership welcomed the scrutiny of the 2019 Best Value Assurance audit, providing an opportunity to further strengthen its ambitious Community Plan and Draft Locality Plans with valuable external perspectives. In response to the audit findings, Senior Officers had developed an Action Plan and this was detailed in Appendix 2 to the report. Jenni Craig, SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, explained that the timescales had slipped due to Covid, with the original BV audit report in October 2019 and the Action Plan then agreed at Council. However, there was a need for the Community Planning Partnership to be aware of the contents. There had been some criticism of how slowly the Partnership had progressed and implemented the Community Empowerment Act and also the Community Plan and Locality Plans. There were improvements to be made and a review was now in place for Area Partnerships and how there could be closer working with the Third Sector and communities. There were a number of actions within the plan which should take the Partnership forward and strengthen community empowerment and engagement. There was one recommendation for the Community Planning Partnership and 10 actions identified for the Partnership to improve. In order to address this, the review of Area Partnerships would look at how they

could be utilised or changed to progress community empowerment and how the Community Planning Partnership could best support this. What had been flagged up was the level of resource required and the Partnership needed to have a focussed discussion on this challenge. It was pointed out that the Community Planning Partnership was currently disengaged with communities and the process of developing Locality Plans seemed to sit separately from what communities were trying to do and there needed to be a way to bring the two parts together. Rob Dickson advised that the Covid response had demonstrated a much closer connection and the aim was to build on that experience to tighten the connection between the Strategic Board and communities. This lack of connection was not just apparent in the Borders but was being experienced elsewhere. Angela Cox added that it had been a struggle to pull everything together to have a coherent voice as a Partnership but work on that would continue. A change was potentially needed to the Community Planning structure to make this happen.

**AGREED:**

- (a) to note the findings contained within the Scottish Borders Council Best Value Assurance Report dated October 2019 (Appendix 1 to the report, page 40, paragraphs 129 0 145) which related to the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership;**
- (b) to accept the recommendation detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, page 51, within the Best Value Assurance Report for the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership;**
- (c) to note the Best Value Audit Action Plan (Appendix 2 to the report), which contained 10 proposed actions for the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership;**
- (d) that whilst there had been an impact on the timescales within the Best Value Action Plan due to Covid19, these 10 actions were now being progressed by the CPP Joint Programme Board, and that progress on these actions would be reported to the CPP Strategic Board for scrutiny on a 6 month basis; and**
- (e) to also ensure that progress and performance reports to the Community Planning Partnership and the public would be more comprehensive and accessible.**

**8. COVID19 RESPONSE**

8.1 Rob Dickson, SBC Executive Director (Corporate Improvement & Economy), gave a presentation to the Strategic Board on the Community Planning Partnership's Covid19 response, preparedness and emerging priorities. The last 6 months had seen a very different experience in how effective and well the Partnership had operated, with all partners working together for a single, unifying purpose to provide support to communities. There were daily meetings with partners to understand the environment, gather intelligence and take action, and 5 Community Assistance Hubs were set up in mid-March to respond to the emerging pandemic. The remit of these Hubs was driven by local need and demand – with solution and a person centred approach. Details were given of the collective aspects of organisational response; and the strengths of the Community Planning Partnership. The suggested emerging priorities were:

- Locality model/Hubs that had a solution based/person centred approach
- Poverty (with a focus on child poverty and food security)
- Digital access and skills
- Education, skills and opportunities for young people
- Health & wellbeing for all within our community
- Economic investment and support
- Continued collaboration and partnership working to develop new models and service delivery in response to Covid19

- 8.2 The next steps were to confirm whether these were the right priorities; continuing to work in partnership and collaboration to deliver them; and whether a 1 year action plan should be developed to address these priorities. Further slides gave details of how the partners had responded to the Covid19 emergency. Members of the Board discussed the priorities and next steps, and that the preference was not to have a separate action plan for the priorities but to include actions within the Community Plan/Locality Plans action plans and re-prioritise as necessary. The priorities were really strong and reflected the experience over the previous 6 months, with education, skills and training being for all, not just young people.

**AGREED the priorities for the Community Planning Partnership in response to Covid19 and that an update would be brought to the next meeting of the Strategic Board.**

9. **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY**

Copies of the draft Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) Strategic Plan refresh by the Director of Public Health had been circulated. The ADP was required to provide an updated strategic plan from April 2020 and that draft plan was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report for information and approval by the Community Planning Partnership. Fiona Doig, Head of Health Improvement/Strategic Lead for ADP, joined the meeting and explained that the Strategic Plan set out the long-term measurable outcomes and priority actions for the local area, focussing on preventing and reducing the use of and harm from alcohol and drugs and the associated health inequalities. It was expected that those with experience of alcohol/drug use and those affected were involved in the planning, development and delivery of services. The Strategy had been reviewed in light of Covid and what was known at the time of the impact of Covid. Some of the actions in the associated delivery plan had had to be slipped however. Changing patterns of consumption of drugs and alcohol were beginning to emerge. Work was ongoing to address this through reviews, supervision and maintaining contact.

**Noted.**

10. **WHOLE SYSTEMS PILOT - EYEMOUTH**

Jenni Craig, SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, presented the briefing paper which gave details of a grant application to the East Region Diabetes Prevention Partnership to progress phases 1 & 2 of an Eyemouth Whole Systems community-led approach to improve diet and healthy weight within a post Covid19 community context. Phase 1 would include two stakeholder engagement and workshop sessions to map the local barriers and co-create an action and implementation plan. Phase 2 would then deliver on diet and healthy weight priorities across Eyemouth which would assist in the prevention of diabetes. This work would be led, at locality level, by the Joint Health Improvement Team Health Improvement Specialist, Nicola Sewell, who would report into the SBC Whole Systems Partnership governance group. This would build on current excellent community work in Eyemouth at grass roots level.

**Noted.**

11. **REVIEW OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS**

Copies of a report by the Service Director Customer & Communities to Scottish Borders Council on Fit for 2024 – Review of Area Partnerships – Next Steps had been circulated. This report outlined the next steps in evolving the Area Partnerships and community capacity building arrangements, taking into account the recommendations of the report which had been commissioned from the Scottish Community Development Centre. The aim was to involve and hold conversations at Area Partnerships on how best to engage and work with communities in each of the 5 localities. Area Partnership meetings would start up remotely via MS Teams from the beginning of November and these meetings would be used to help shape the review of the Area Partnerships.

**Noted.**

12. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (ALL AT 2PM)**

The Strategic Board noted the dates of the next meetings:

- 19 November 2020
- 4 March 2021
- 10 June 2021

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No items of business were raised.