

Public Document Pack



COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD THURSDAY, 19 NOVEMBER, 2020

Date: 19 November 2020
Time: 2.00 p.m.
Location: Online via MS Teams

BUSINESS		
1.	Introductions and Apologies	
2.	Minute (Pages 3 - 10) Consider Minute of Meeting of Community Planning Strategic Board held on 10 September 2020 (Copy attached.)	2 mins
3.	Community Planning Partnership - Key priorities/Action Plan 2020/21 (Pages 11 - 26) Draft 2020/21 Key Priorities/Action Plan for approval. (Report and Draft Plan attached)	15 mins
4.	TSI - Review and Expansion of the Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan in the Borders (Pages 27 - 54) (Copy Plan attached.)	15 mins
5.	Anti-Poverty Strategy - update (Jenni Craig)	10 mins
6.	Draft Child Poverty Action Plan 2020/2020 (Pages 55 - 88) Key priorities for the next 12 months. (Report and Draft Action Plan attached)	20 mins
7.	Children and Young People's Leadership Group Review - update (Lesley Munro)	15 mins
8.	Any Other Business	10 mins
9.	Future Agenda Items	5 mins
10.	Dates of Future Meetings (all at 2 pm) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 March 2021• 10 June 2021	

NOTES

1. Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.
2. Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

Note: Members are reminded that should they have a Declaration of Interest to make on an item of business, they should do so at the appropriate time.

Members of the Strategic Board:

Name	Organisation
Councillor Mark Rowley* (Chair)	Scottish Borders Council
Ms Elaine Acaster	Borders College
Councillor Stuart Bell*	Scottish Borders Council
Mr Malcolm Dickson	NHS Borders
LSO Stephen Gourlay	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Professor Russel Griggs	South of Scotland Enterprise
Councillor Carol Hamilton*	Scottish Borders Council
Ms Karen Hamilton	NHS Borders
Mrs Marjorie Hume	Third Sector representative
Superintendent Angus MacInnes	Police Scotland
Mr Simon Mountford	Registered Social Landlords representative (SBHA)
Councillor Robin Tatler*	Scottish Borders Council
Councillor George Turnbull*	Scottish Borders Council

Copies for Information sent to:

Name	Organisation
Mr David Alexander	Eildon Housing
Mr Jamie McDougall	Scottish Government
Ms Anna Griffin	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Mr Niall Corbet	Scottish Natural Heritage
Councillor Gordon Edgar	SESTRAN
Mr David Gordon	Waverley Housing
Ms Andrea Hall	Skills Development Scotland
Mr Colin McGrath	Community Council Network representative
Mr Bill White	Live Borders

Please direct any enquiries to Jenny Wilkinson, Clerk to the Council
Tel: 01835 825004 Email: jjwilkinson@scotborders.gov.uk



**SCOTTISH BORDERS
COMMUNITY PLANNING
STRATEGIC BOARD**

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

Plans 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.

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Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership: Key Priorities & Action Plan for 2020/2021

Report by Director of Customer & Communities

Scottish Borders Community Planning Strategic Board

19 November 2020

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the CPP Key Priorities and Action Plan that will be the main focus of the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) work for the next 12 months.**
- 1.2 The existing Community Plan and Locality Plan already contain some of these key priorities and actions, but in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed by the CPP Programme Board that a Key Priorities and Action Plan (Appendix 1) would urgently be developed for approval by the Strategic Board, would bring these key priorities and actions to the fore, and be the immediate and main focus of CPP partnership working for the next year.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 I recommend that the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership agrees:**
 - (a) To approve the draft Key Priorities and Action Plan as at Appendix 1,**
 - (b) That the Plan continues to be developed as the response to the ongoing pandemic continues, and actions are added as required,**
 - (c) The Plan is progressed by the CPP Programme Board, and that progress is reported on a six monthly basis to the CPP Strategic Board for scrutiny.**

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires the Scottish Borders CPP to prepare and publish a Community Plan, which focuses on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for all of our residents and communities. The Community Plan was developed with partners and communities – the latest version was approved by the CPP Strategic Board in May 2018.
- 4.2 The Act also requires the CPP to prepare and publish more localised plans addressing local challenges and to improve local outcomes. After an 18 month period of engagement with partners and communities, a Locality Plan and Action Plan for each of our five areas within the Scottish Borders was approved by the CPP Strategic Board in October 2020. The Community Plan and Locality Plans can be found at: <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/yourcommunityplan>
- 4.3 The existing Community Plan and Locality Plan already contain some of these key priorities and actions, but in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was agreed by the CPP Programme Board that a Key Priorities and Action Plan (Appendix 1) urgently be developed for approval by the Strategic Board which would bring these key priorities and actions to the fore, respond to community need, and be the immediate and main focus of CPP partnership working for the next year.
- 4.4 The Key Priorities and Action Plan is themed around the following – Structure, Digital, Employment & Economy, Education & Skills, Built Estate, Early Intervention & Prevention, Health & Wellbeing and Poverty, and provides the following opportunities:
- To deliver re-imagined services in partnership
 - Minimise the impact on communities
 - More efficient decision making
 - Alignment to renewal priorities
 - Enable a focussed, targeted approach
- 4.5 The Plan will continue to be developed as the response to the ongoing pandemic continues and new actions are required.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

- (a) Costs in relation to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic are still being established.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

It is clear that some of the existing actions within the Community Plan and Locality Plans cannot be progressed at this point in time due to the pandemic and current SG guidance. By developing this Key Priorities and Action Plan from the existing Community Plan and Locality Plans, the CPP

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**Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership – Key Priorities and Action Plan
2020/21**

- Opportunities to deliver re-imagined services in partnership
- Minimise the impact on communities
- More efficient decision making
- Alignment to renewal priorities
- Enable a focussed, targeted approach

DRAFT

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Theme	Impacted	Project/Action	Lead <small>* key at bottom of table</small>	What is already in place ?	Update/Timescales
Structure:					
		Develop Locality Model & Hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare calls to individuals within our communities • Developing fast/efficient solutions to local issues in partnership • Linking up services/people more efficiently • Continue to build on locality model – improving process/redesign services & set foundations for the future • Adopting new technology • Emergency funding in place & being distributed as appropriate 	CPP members	Community Assistance Hubs have been set up in each locality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole system & person centred approach has been provided during Covid-19 response without complex systems 	Model Framework to be developed and ready for wider consultation by end of Dec 2020
Digital:					

	Young people	Digital access for young people – Inspire Learning	SBC	Inspire Learning programme: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/2/0009/schools_and_learning/913/inspire_learning	Currently being rolled out to P4/5 across the Borders
	Vulnerable older people	Connecting Scotland Digital Project – Phase 1	SBC/TSI/RSL's /Live Borders	https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/2/0027/working_for_us/918/latest_news/2	Approx. 300 devices delivered in Phase 1 and support now in place for next 6 months
	Families	Connecting Scotland Digital Project – Phase 2	SBC/TSI/RSL's /Live Borders		409 devices being awarded to Scottish Borders in Phase 2. These will support 321 families, 63 care leavers and 25 other vulnerable people
	TBA	Connecting Scotland Digital Project - Phase 3. Criteria still being discussed	SBC/TSI/RSL's /Live Borders		TBA
	Student's	450 digital devices & data packages distributed Joint working partnership with Eildon Housing and Borders College	Borders College Borders College/Eildon Housing	http://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/current-students/ https://www.eildon.org.uk/2020/02/borders-college-and-eildon-ha-commit-to-future-joint-working-partnership/	Student Portal continuously being updated with resources, guidance & information
	Community	Digital Access Programme	BAVS/BHA	https://www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk/news/berwickshire-housing-	Now being delivered:

				association-secures-78k-funding-from-the-supporting-communities-fund/	https://www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk/news/helping-tenants-to-get-digitally-connected/
Employment, Education and Skills:					
	Young People	Young Person Guarantee – No-one left behind	Borders College/SDS/PACE/ Third Sector	https://www.gov.scot/news/delivering-the-youth-guarantee/	Being delivered 2020/21
	Young people	Community Transport	Borders College/SBC Community Transport Officer/Third Sector (Berwickshire)		
	Young people	DWP Flexible Support Fund Bid (18-24yr olds – digital training and work trials)	Third Sector	https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation/Looking-for-work/Flexible-Support-Fund	Has the bid for funding been successful ?
	All	Jobs hub portal, dedicated helpline, secondary education programme, webinars & online learning portal (My World of Work)	SDS/PACE	https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/	Free online courses for those furloughed: https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/learn-and-

					train/find-free-online-courses
	All	Blended core curriculum offer, specific provision to support economic recovery (Pathway to employment, green energy, sustainable construction, Health & Care, Agriculture etc)	Borders College/SDS/PACE	http://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/find-a-course/	
	All	Online Guidance, Information & Resources	TSI	http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/thebridge/coronavirus-information-and-resources http://www.vcborders.org.uk/ https://sbsec.org.uk/ https://youthborders.org.uk/ https://www.bavs.org.uk/covid-19-information-for-the-community-in-berwickshire	
Built estate:					
	All	Output from the Strategic Property Group to be brought to CPP	SBC Strategic Property Group		
	All	Support to Village Halls - Scottish Government Guidance for re-opening village halls and community buildings	Third Sector	http://onlineborders.org.uk/search/atchesolr_search/Federation%20of%20Village%20Halls	http://onlineborders.org.uk/news/guidance-for-re-opening-community-buildings-issue-3

Early Intervention & Prevention:					
	All	Whole System Approach in Eyemouth	Joint Health Improvement Team	https://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/healthimprovement	
	Vulnerable older people	Community Transport Review	BAVS: Community Transport Development Officer/SBC Community Transport Officer		By Dec 2020
	Funding	Supporting & distribution of funding programmes & microgrants	Third Sector	http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/thebridge/fallago-environment-fund-covid-19-recovery-grant-scheme	
	Support	Support, advice & guidance to individuals and organisations	Third Sector		
	Support	Furlough and Job Retention Schemes implemented	All CPP partners as required/appropriate		
Health & Wellbeing (including Mental Health):					
	All	Promotion of the Wellbeing Service. Active/Mental Health/ Wellbeing Strategy	Live Borders/ Joint Health Improvement Team/LAC Team	http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services/general-services/wellbeing-service/	

	All	Personalised packages of support to individual volunteers	Third Sector		
	All	Flu Vaccination Programme	NHS Borders	https://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/latest-news/2020/september/24/flu-vaccination-programme/	From Sept 2020
	All	Health & Safety measures being put in place re office accommodation etc	All CPP partners	https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20014/social_care_and_health/1018/COVID-19_business_information/5	SBC Property Recovery Board meeting weekly re access to properties
Poverty:					
	Child Poverty	Child Poverty Action Plan 2020/21	All	Child Poverty Action Plan & Annual Report 2019/20: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s36851/Item%20No.%2004%20-%20CPP%20Draft%20Child%20Poverty%20Action%20Plan.pdf https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7569/child_poverty_annual_report_2019-20	
	Families	Child Payment for under 6's –	Social Security Local	https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-security/scottish-child-payment/	Child Payment: Applications open

		Child Heating Allowance – for those with children who have a high rate care requirement	Delivery Service	https://www.gov.scot/news/new-benefit-help-with-heating-costs/	Nov 2020, payment Feb 2021 Child Heating Allowance: Dec 2020
	Foodbanks/FareShare	Developing sustainable, local approaches to food security and to further develop FareShare network	Eildon Housing supported by CPP	https://fareshare.org.uk/what-we-do/	FareShare Borders depot opened in April 2020 plus 22 FareShare outlets in the Scottish Borders
	All	Financial inclusion - Money Worries App	Health Improvement Team/SBC/C A/RSL's		Jan 2021
Employment & Economy:					
	All	SOSE/REP - Furthering the sustainable economic and social development of the South of Scotland & improving the amenity and environment of the South of Scotland: SOSE Operating Plan now published which focusses on: Adaption and Diversification, Economic Recovery Loan Fund, Crisis, Community Ideas & Community Asset Development		https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/	

		<p>REP Economic Strategy & Action Plan being developed: Emphasis on place, Children & poverty, business & wider community support, tourism & blue health</p> <p>£2.7m invested in South of Scotland Destination Alliance</p> <p>Significant SOSE Covid-19 Business Support measures plus 2 Support Programmes which include – Enterprises & hospitality/events/leisure</p> <p>SOSE Consultation Strategy being developed which will lead to SOSE Action Plan & key priorities longer term priorities for SOSE</p>			
Data/supporting evidence:					
		Develop a Covid-19 Vulnerability Assessment to identify those most in need at Ward level.	SBC to produce initial draft with partner input	<p>Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/211/strategic_assessment</p> <p>Scottish Borders ScotPHO Vulnerability Index 2020</p> <p>SBHA Tenant Analysis</p> <p>BHA Welfare Calls</p>	Draft completed for 2020

				Shielding Lists	
				Child Poverty Index	
				Third Sector Surveys to establish needs	

*Key

BAVS	Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service
BHA	Berwickshire Housing Association
CA	Citizen's Advice
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
LAC	Locality Area Co-ordinators
PACE	Partner Action for Continuing Employment
REP	Regional Economic Partnership
RSL's	Registered Social Landlord's
SBC	Scottish Borders Council
SBHA	Scottish Borders Housing Association
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SoSE	South of Scotland Enterprise
TSI	Third Sector Interface

Best Value Action Plan:

	Actions:	Timescales	Update
1	Work with the Improvement Service and Scottish Gov't to provide guidance and	30 April 2020	Initial discussions have taken place with both the Improvement Service and Scottish Gov't.

	support to gain insight into best practice in the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act		
2	Conduct a review of the operation of local area partnerships to inform the development of enhanced local decision making service provision and the allocation of resources	31 Jan 2020	Complete - Report to Council 27 08 20 – Area Partnerships can now make recommendations on how both the Area Partnerships and Community Fund are developed in future: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=5138&Ver=4
3a	Use the experience of the budget consultation process 2020/21 to develop the approach to mainstreaming participatory budgeting. Work with communities to identify priority areas within current budgets.	31 Oct 2020	Participatory Budgeting approach being developed as part of budget process.
3b	Evaluation of Localities Bid Fund to be undertaken	31 Oct 2020	Complete - Report to Council 27 08 20 - Evaluation of Localities Bid Fund: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=5138&Ver=4
4	Promote the #your part campaign to recognise the contribution of communities	31 Dec 2020	
5	Undertake an organisational review under Fit for 2024 of how to best develop community capacity in the 3 rd sector and localities	TBC	Ongoing
6a	Review Community Plan and Action Plan to ensure actions align to 2020 Strategic Assessment.	30 June 2020	Development of CPP Key Priorities Plan will inform refreshed Community Plan and Action Plan
6b	Agree Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Performance Management Framework through CPP Joint	31 Mar 2020	Complete - 2017/2019 Performance Report has been approved by CPP Strategic Board: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=185&MId=5235&Ver=4

	Programme Board and CPP Strategic Board		2019/2020 Performance Report now needs to be progressed.
7	Completion and publication of Locality Plans and Action Plans	31 Mar 2020	Complete - approved by CPP Strategic Board 10 September 2020: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=185&MIId=5235&Ver=4
8	Promote stakeholder engagement through Area Partnerships and community engagement events, with training around leadership/national standards of engagement.	31 Dec 20	Area Partnerships will resume virtually in Nov 2020: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=421&MIId=5295&Ver=4
9a	Community Empowerment Act to become standing agenda item at Area Partnerships with information to raise awareness and provide support to communities.	31 Dec 20	Standing item on AP's agenda & support ongoing: https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=421&MIId=5295&Ver=4
9b	Research to be undertaken on SBC performance relative to other local authorities	31 Dec 20	This has been concluded, SBC are in alignment with other local authorities similar to size and geography.
10	Develop regular reporting of progress of community engagement across the whole council, for inclusion in reports to members and CPP Strategic Board	30 Jun 20	Reporting of Citizen Space surveys and consultations is being developed.

Key:

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SOUTH OF SCOTLAND THIRD SECTOR: A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PLANNING

AUGUST 2020

REPORT BY LAURA DOUGLAS WITH
NORMA AUSTIN HART, THIRD SECTOR DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY , KATHY CREMIN, SCOTTISH BORDERS
THIRD SECTOR INTERFACE, ANDREW WARD, CREETOWN INITIATIVE AND PIP TABOR, SOUTHERN
UPLANDS PARTNERSHIP

"I have never been as proud of communities as now, the way people have stepped up, communities and localness have been invaluable during this crisis, and I want that network of support to continue and grow."

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Introduction

This report is the result of analysis of a series of interviews with third sector organisations (TSOs) across the South of Scotland throughout May and June 2020, and a wider perspective gleaned through discussions with the sector and partners throughout the same period. The third sector interfaces (TSIs) across Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders worked together to host the interviews with the purpose of identifying common themes and lessons learned from the Covid-19 crisis.

These themes have been translated into seven key principles and recommendations to inform the collective approach of Scottish Government, local statutory partners and the sector itself as we move forward together in this era of 'new normal'. The principles and recommendations aim to support and empower the third sector across the South of Scotland as it emerges from the immediate crisis, begins its recovery, and plays its key role in helping to build the South of Scotland's wellbeing economy.

Two comments were made several times during our interviews:

- There has been very positive partnership working during the Covid-19 crisis.
- There is a hope that the positive partnership working will be sustained during the recovery period and beyond.

These comments underpin the principles and recommendations in our report.

Based on our research, we know that the third sector across the South of Scotland has demonstrated their agility and resilience admirably throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Whether 'hibernating' and resetting their organisation to be purposeful in the future, or whether operating throughout the crisis to serve the immediate needs of communities, Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) across the South of Scotland reacted quickly and took a **leading role in community resilience**. In this time of crisis, the TSOs across South of Scotland have been a lifeline for many, and their drive and ambition to build a better future is clear, firmly cementing their **key role in Scotland achieving its wellbeing economy**. The third sector is the key to releasing the energy and strength within communities in the South of Scotland.

Principles and Recommendations

The Covid-19 pandemic has provided an unprecedented opportunity to create lasting partnerships between the third sector, local communities, the statutory agencies and funders. Moving forward, our research suggests that **the third sector has the ambition to be a vital person-centred service provider and a powerful partner in a recovering economy**. The following proposed principles and recommendations will support the third sector to further build on its strengths and play its key role in building a robust wellbeing economy for the South of Scotland.

PRINCIPLE 1: Nothing About Us Without Us

We recommend:

- Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) **maximise their role as the voice of the sector in all forums - community planning, health and social care, enterprise agencies and government**, by championing the recommendations in this report and driving forward partnership working.
- All agencies invested in the economy of the South of Scotland **sign up to a joint communications approach via the Regional Economic Partnership** to ensure that the right information gets to the right people at the right time.
- The third sector and statutory bodies build on the successful joint work during the crisis to **create balanced, genuine relationships with the TSIs as strategic, equal partners in decision making**.
- Where the third sector is expected to be a provider of service, **the commissioning agencies involve the regional third sector (or the TSIs) in the design, development and procurement** of that service.

PRINCIPLE 2: Keep it Local, Keep it Place-Based

We recommend:

- Multiagency locality hubs are a proven success for joint working at community level. Local authorities, health and social care partnerships and South of Scotland Enterprise **invest money and people in locality hubs**.
- South of Scotland Enterprise **fund posts based in the TSIs to work with the locality hubs** and the emerging agenda for the recovery of communities.
- Statutory agencies recognise that **people in communities are key to driving positive change and benefits** within those communities. Existing and potential anchor organisations and communities are identified and **supported by the locality hubs to address needs**.
- Statutory bodies **acknowledge that the third sector has a unique ability to connect with the most vulnerable people in our communities, and should enable the third sector, via joint projects and funding** in key areas such as community transport, employability, digital inclusion and community development.

PRINCIPLE 3: Beneficiaries Are at The Heart of Everything We Do

We recommend:

- South of Scotland needs a **vision-led economic strategy which empowers communities. The third sector should be front and centre of the development of this strategy led by South of Scotland Enterprise.** Adoption of an agreed model for measuring social return on investment should be included in the strategy.
- The Regional Economic Partnership, through third sector representation, **enables communities to make the most of their infrastructure and assets** by influencing policies. For example on land planning, rates relief and asset transfer.
- Anchor organisations and communities are **supported by the locality hubs to assess assets for potential community gain.** Fully-resourced locality hubs could facilitate a **streamlined advisory service** which allows communities to bring forward proposals in a development project. This service would provide support at all points of project development, including feasibility, project management and financing.
- Statutory bodies **move to a person-centred procurement model**, as recommended by SCVO, that puts the needs of beneficiaries ahead of low costs.
- TSIs and other third sector organisations reinvigorate their social enterprise strategies to **increase the level of social enterprise participation in regional and local economies**, in partnership with other agencies.

PRINCIPLE 4: Financial Sustainability is Vital

We recommend:

- Scottish Government and other statutory bodies **explore new funding models that enable the sustainability** of third sector organisations and support the third sector to deliver its part in a robust wellbeing economy for the South of Scotland.
- By taking a **co-ordinated and strategic approach to the available national and regional funding regimes** and there is more efficient use of funds with better outcomes for communities and the third sector.
- South of Scotland Enterprise introduces a **funding programme for community-based projects** using the LEADER model.
- In the current challenging economic climate, a **strategic approach to the impact of windfarm community benefit funding becomes a priority** for the statutory agencies including South of Scotland Enterprise.
- Statutory bodies **commit to longer term funding** i.e. commission services from the third sector for multiple years rather than one year at a time.
- Statutory bodies across the South of Scotland have targets of **higher levels of inclusion of the third sector as key providers in a well-being economy.**
- TSIs and other third sector organisations **initially focus on supporting third sector organisations to avoid a financial cliff edge** by providing an enhanced advisory service.
- TSIs **provide innovation and business model development support** to the sector in partnership with South of Scotland Enterprise.

PRINCIPLE 5: Volunteers are the Lifeblood of Communities

We recommend:

- South of Scotland Enterprise and other statutory bodies **ensure that volunteering and volunteering support mechanisms are emphasised as component parts of the economic strategy, especially for young people.**
- TSIs **ensure solid volunteering strategies are in place** which define the role of volunteering as an employment pathway and enable a vibrant, supported volunteering community across the South of Scotland.

PRINCIPLE 6: Digital Working is our Default

We recommend:

- South of Scotland Enterprise prioritises **improvements to the digital infrastructure** across the South of Scotland, in partnership with Borderlands. Social enterprises can be created with support from the TSIs to ensure the maximum community benefit from improved connectivity, including youth employment and skills development.
- Statutory bodies **develop a co-ordinated approach and strategy in partnership with TSIs for enhancing digital skills** across the South of Scotland, involving third sector providers. In particular, development is required for building and nurturing contacts and networks digitally vs. in person.
- TSIs **strengthen the third sector via support activities**, including how to improve digital skills and infrastructure, and health and safety for home working.
- TSIs **develop strategies and plans to support third sector organisations to keep their digital hardware, software and systems as up to date as possible**, and their teams as digitally savvy as possible.

PRINCIPLE 7: The Third Sector Are a Key Employer

We recommend:

- With approximately 5,000 people in employment (pre-Covid) in the third sector across the South of Scotland, statutory bodies **recognise it as a key employer and provider of experience** covering a diverse business spectrum including tourism, arts, hospitality and services including training, employability, health and transport.
- South of Scotland Enterprise and the TSIs **connect with the work of Scottish Government to understand and influence the role they can play in the design and implementation of a post-Covid youth guarantee scheme.**
- TSIs **put in place a third sector employability forum for the South of Scotland** to further enhance employment opportunities across the sector and help coordinate the targeted resources of national, regional and local agencies.

Summary of Key Actions

No	Action	Lead Agency/Agencies
1	Create a multi-agency joint communications approach via the Regional Economic Partnership	REP
2	Develop and invest in multi-agency locality hubs	DGC SBC TSIs H&SCPs
3	Create dedicated TSI posts to support the multi-agency approach to economic and community development by locality hubs	SoSE TSIs
4	Develop an economic strategy which empowers communities and builds on the work of community anchor organisations	REP SoSE
5	Adopt an agreed model to measure social return on investment	SoSE REP TSIs
6	Develop and invest in joint projects to tackle priority needs - community transport, employability, digital inclusion, community empowerment	CPPBs SoSE
7	Refine current procurement practices to a person-centred model and include third sector input at all points	DGC SBC H&SCPs
8	Commit to a review of all local authority policies that impact on economic development such as planning and licensing to ensure maximum community impact	DGC SBC
9	Explore new funding models that enable the sustainability of the third sector	SG DGC SBC H&SCPs
10	Create a streamlined process for realising community aspirations from concept to delivery	TSIs
11	Create fresh, reinvigorated social enterprise strategies	TSIs SoSE
12	Adopt ambitious targets for inclusion of third sector agencies as real partners in service design and delivery	DGC SBC H&SCPs
13	Enhance the TSI funding advisory services	TSIs
14	Adopt a co-ordinated and strategic approach to available funds for priority areas such as digital inclusion or skills development	DGC SBC SoSE

Summary of Key Actions

15	Create a grassroots funding programme based on LEADER model	SoSE TSIs
16	Drive improvements to digital infrastructure and skills via a partnership approach with the third sector as enabler and provider	REP SoSE TSIs Borderlands
17	Support initiatives to strengthen third sector participation in the Youth Guarantee Scheme	TSIs SoSE
18	Include volunteering as a critical path to employment in regional strategies and skills development plans and third sector capacity building to support this.	SDS SoSE TSIs
19	Create a South of Scotland employability forum which recognises the third sector as a key employer and provider of work experience	SoSE DGC SBC TSIs

Key Messages from the Covid-19 Crisis

1. Third sector organisations (TSOs) across the South of Scotland **responded quickly and with impressive agility** to the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and nationwide lockdown. Both established and new TSOs have been key to the resilience efforts in communities, **enabled by excellent community spirit and volunteering** across the regions. **Multi-agency partnership working** enabled optimum responses, although our research suggests that such working was not in place across the entirety of the South of Scotland.
2. In a number of communities, **the lines between private, community and third sectors were blurred as some businesses started to provide free and/or adapted services to support their communities**.
3. Third sector organisations were **enabled by their funders** during the Covid-19 crisis and nationwide lockdown. Funders were quick to communicate to TSOs and let them know that pre-agreed funds could be used throughout the crisis even if that meant that funds would not be used in exactly the way that was previously planned. In addition, Government-funded grants have been key, and the nationwide furlough scheme has helped TSOs manage cash flow throughout the pandemic.
4. **Volunteers were key** to the resilience efforts. Numerous third sector organisations had to furlough most, if not all, of their paid members of staff to manage cash flow throughout lockdown. Volunteers, often trustees, took on more active leadership roles to 'keep the wheels turning' and/or drive the resilience efforts. Thousands of local people across the South of Scotland volunteered their time, expertise and energies to work with their local community councils and TSOs to help support their communities throughout lockdown.
5. Lockdown forced **new ways of working for most**, centred on digital capability and home working. However, not all TSOs across the South of Scotland had the skills, the hardware or the software in place to enable an easy transition. Many TSOs use 'old' hardware that doesn't support all modern connectivity tools, and organisations' digital systems are not all seamlessly networked for easy access from home. Digital skills across the sector are varied, and each of these challenges is compounded by the inconsistent and often temperamental digital network across the South of Scotland.
6. There is a **wealth of ambition** across the third sector in the South of Scotland. Third sector organisations, inherently driven by their desire to do good for their communities, have already been thinking about, and planning their next steps to deliver benefits in the future.

Responding to the Covid-19 Crisis –

Our Findings In Detail

When considering their response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent country-wide lockdown, TSOs across South of Scotland had to address three key questions.

1. Can we deliver projects or offer services that are **needed** during lockdown?
2. Can we deliver projects or offer services in a way that is **legal** during lockdown?
3. Can we deliver projects or offer services in a way that is **feasible and safe** during lockdown?

For some organisations, the answer to one or more of these questions was ‘no’, meaning that they had to effectively put their organisation and its goals into some form of ‘hibernation’ for an unknown period of time, whereas for others the answers were yes, albeit they knew they would need to figure out how to deliver safely and in line with Government guidance.

Based on our research, TSOs across the South of Scotland can be categorised in one of four ways according to their situation at the start of lockdown and their subsequent response to the crisis.

	1 HIBERNATE	2 ADAPT AND DELIVER	3 UPSCALE AND DELIVER	4 RESILIENCE GROUPS
SITUATION AT START OF LOCKDOWN	Services not required during lockdown And/or no way to deliver current services legally or safely during lockdown.	Some or all services required to ENABLE Covid-related community resilience.	Services required for DIRECT Covid-related community resilience. Surge in demand for services.	Services required but need adapted and/or created for DIRECT Covid-related community resilience.
CRISIS RESPONSE	Hibernate and optimise cash flow for business survival	Partial service / project delivery	Full service delivery and more	Adapt and create services for community resilience
IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES	1. Need to manage cash flow	1. Services must be adapted to be feasible and safe during lockdown 2. Need to manage cash flow	1. Need people 2. Services must be adapted to be feasible and safe during lockdown 3. Need money	1. Need people 2. Need money 3. Services must be designed to be feasible and safe during lockdown

Those organisations who needed to ‘Hibernate’ tended to be those whose social aims were not immediately required for sustaining life. Some community centres and community trusts fell into this category e.g. Castle Douglas Community Centre Development Trust.

Those organisations who needed to ‘Adapt and Deliver’ tended to have social aims that if not delivered would have a profound detrimental impact on service users’ lives. Organisations like

Loreburn Housing and The Dumfries and Galloway Befriending Project fell into this category, and while both of these organisations have delivered solid services throughout lockdown, neither felt that they were able to deliver all of the services that they really wanted to deliver.

Those organisations who needed to ‘Upscale and Deliver’, like The Food Train, have been involved in delivering services that have been required for sustaining life. The Food Train in Dumfries and Galloway saw demand for their food shopping service increase by around 60% as the crisis hit.

‘Resilience Groups’ have co-ordinated and/or delivered and/or enabled life-sustaining services such as food shopping, meal deliveries, medication collections and social connections for large numbers of, often vulnerable, people in their communities. A number of ‘Resilience Groups’ across the South of Scotland are either Development Trusts such as Moffat Town Hall Development Trust or A Heart for Duns, or Community Councils who were already in existence and had resilience plans in place. However, it should also be noted that a number of ‘Resilience Groups’ did not exist before the crisis. Such groups set themselves up in response to their community’s needs, again demonstrating the speed and agility with which the third sector can operate to enable positive outcomes for beneficiaries.

Looking at each of these four categories we start to build a picture of the realities that were faced by the third sector across the South of Scotland at the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and while the specific situations and responses may have been different, we see that **there are four common themes that affected all and will continue to affect all third sector organisations into the future.**

The themes are:





Dynamic Partnership Working

Those organisations who chose to ‘Hibernate’ or ‘Adapt and Deliver’ their services throughout lockdown have largely relied on their own organisations, the various support information from TSIs, their funders, and the Government-funded grants that were made available to the sector. Those who urgently needed to ‘Upscale and Deliver’ or to become a ‘Resilience Group’, however, relied on much wider partnership working to enable their best responses.

Partnership working across Dumfries and Galloway has been well regarded throughout the crisis. Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway was well connected into the local resilience planning across Dumfries and Galloway and worked as part of the Covid-19 Community Cohesion Cell that was led by Dumfries and Galloway Council. Ward workers connected well to the various TSOs and were praised by many for their efforts to aid in the crisis response. TSDG created a bank of over 1000 volunteers in the early stages of the crisis, meaning that these volunteers could be matched to areas of need with partner organisations across the region in a timely fashion. Organisations such as The Food Train, The River of Life Church, The Heathhall and Locharbriggs Resilience Group and Dumfries and Galloway Council all benefited from the addition of volunteers via TSDG.

It is important to note that partnership working didn’t just involve the third sector and the statutory bodies – local businesses and other third sector organisations also partnered with TSOs to help with the resilience efforts where possible. Lines became blurred between the public, private and third sectors as communities knew that they needed to work together in such unprecedented times.

“What went well? Support from local business e.g. Magnox and The Crichton Trust who have given us their staff time and vehicles to help with increased service delivery.”

The picture across the Scottish Borders with regards to partnership working appears to be quite different from that of Dumfries and Galloway, which highlights a key diversity in the South of Scotland. The third sector across Dumfries and Galloway and The Scottish Borders each look and operate differently in terms of Community Planning Partnership, TSIs and the commissioning of third sector partners. While informal, micro-local and volunteer-led resilience responses on the ground were strong and effective in the Scottish Borders, the structural connection and communication between the TSI, statutory bodies and local TSOs appears more fragmented compared to Dumfries and Galloway. Some of the TSOs in the Scottish Borders strongly expressed that the resources of the third sector could have been more strategically deployed in the Scottish Borders, and would have welcomed a more coordinated planning and communication approach to supporting localised response.



Dynamic Partnership Working

"There have been missed opportunities for greater partnership design and delivery of a multi-partner response. The third sector is probably not being used to its full capacity to respond and contribute in a coordinated way. Normal business stopped in March, and there has been limited opportunities for the usual forums to take place for planning and strategic conversation between third sector and statutory partners. Without these forums there is not the opportunity for sharing of information, ideas and developing a joint vision and ambition for both response and recovery."

Moving forwards, as the South of Scotland emerges from the immediate Covid-19 crisis, those third sector organisations, community groups and statutory bodies who have worked well together in partnership must continue to do so, holding beneficiaries at the heart of their work. Attention should be given by all parties to the areas where partnership working has been less successful, and steps must be taken to understand and address any key issues so that best outcomes can be achieved for communities and the economy consistently across the South of Scotland.

See Principles 1, 2 and 3 and associated recommendations.



Financial Viability

In many cases, the **loss of ability to trade** meant that monies were required to manage cash flow and enable TSOs to do what they could do in the immediate term, and to survive in the longer term. **Cost reduction and cash flow management became a focus for many.** Findings from our research tell us that the Government's furlough scheme was key to helping TSOs remove the burden of staff costs.

"The job retention scheme and the weather saved us initially. We called a full emergency Board meeting before lockdown which in hindsight was the best decision we made. We focused on cash flow and cost reduction rather than panic. So, we closed the week before lockdown, turned the heating right down... and met staff to talk to them about redundancy and paying them for at least the next month. Thankfully, we were able to furlough the staff before this point. Heating and staff costs are the biggest burners so we were able to turn them both down! The Corra Foundation funding scheme also helped at this stage as £3000 bought us another month."

For other organisations, the continued honouring of contracts from public bodies was essential to their ability to survive the lockdown and be in a good place to reset and recover in the long term.

"Survivability has been down to DG Council and Transport Scotland being supportive (financially and in other ways). Had they decided to stop honouring contracts to e.g. deliver school bus services (even though we weren't delivering the services) then we would have been in trouble. We needed this revenue to still be here."

In general, the TSOs who took part in our research have praised funders for their quick action to communicate with organisations and to let them know that pre-agreed funds could be used by the TSO to keep things moving, even though it was recognised that the funds almost certainly wouldn't be used exactly as planned.

"Our funding is ok. The charities have been very good about coming forward at the beginning to say that they understand that we might not be using the monies as originally planned but that's ok."

"Our relationships with our main funders have gone well... We have been able to pay 30% of fees to the artists that we would have exhibited – as agreed with our funders."



Financial Viability

Our research also tells us that the eventual injection of funds into the sector via the Third Sector Resilience Fund (TSRF) and other grants, such as the Small Business Support Grant and Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund, ultimately became lifelines for many.

“Work by TSDG alerted us to the possibility of claiming additional grant monies. Whilst we were not eligible for the Small Business Grant we realised we may qualify for the £25,000 for leisure and hospitality businesses. We have become one of the first groups to be awarded this money and so we now know we will survive and this will help us to focus entirely on the future.”

For those TSOs leading the way on resilience within their local communities, **being recognised officially from a funding point of view as an “anchor” organisation became key to opening up options to access financial support** from local and national government, and while there could be room for improvement in the future, the processes for achieving funding have generally gone well.

“We were approached by DTAS to be an anchor organisation for the crisis, and it went through very quickly, which then meant we could get funding for groups delivering the resilience efforts.”

“We needed to tap into funding which has been fairly successful but has been time consuming. We were impressed with the Scottish Government funding via DTAS, it was a simple form with one report required. We have a great relationship with our ward officer, but the council want to know weekly what the money has been spent on, which has frankly been a burden. It would be good to streamline and simplify all of the funding options and reduce the number of returns to the funders to ease pressures.”

Moving forward, financial viability is top of mind for all TSOs and there are genuine concerns that certain organisations will not survive in the long term. In the short term, organisations delivering commissioned services need their commissioning bodies to be supportive by way of additional funding where necessary to enable them to sustain any increased demand that the Covid-19 crisis has generated. Grant-reliant organisations need granting bodies to be operational and considerate of new grants as fast as possible. There is a clear sense that now could be a moment for structural and cultural change in how resources and budgets are deployed in the short to medium term at locality level to support resilient communities. New models of funding must be considered to genuinely enable sustainable, inclusive local economies.

“The public response to COVID has been dependant on the voluntary sector. On-the-ground work from statutory agencies could be more robust. There needs to be much more engagement and more capacity building in communities. Cllrs and other politicians have been very quiet, we’re not hearing from them, and this is a gap to people who offer services. We have this strange situation where national politicians dominate the strategy, on-the-ground grass roots and neighbourhood responses, but where is the regional and locality leadership? We need a genuine will to restructure society to work at the level of communities and localities – public bodies have huge resources but they’re not deploying them in co-ordination . . . we need co-ordination, engagement & planning with communities.”

Many organisations look forward to a return to business in some form, although it is recognised that previous trading models (many of which are service models) will almost certainly require to be reset for the foreseeable future, leaving uncertainty about whether generated revenue will be enough to enable survival in the longer term. **Support from Government and Statutory Bodies across the South of Scotland by way of a person-centred approach to procurement will be more important than ever to enable the third sector to build back better, minimise losses and secure the gains from the past months.**

See Principles 3 and 4 and associated recommendations.



Volunteering and Community Spirit

With many members of staff furloughed from TSOs, organisations knew that they would require volunteers to help them deliver vital service offerings throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Large numbers of regular volunteers were older members of communities and so in the high-risk category for contracting Covid-19, which meant that TSOs had to put out a call for help more widely. Organisations advertised for volunteers using social media, and TSDG set about recruiting a bank of volunteers across Dumfries and Galloway who could be matched with areas of need as they emerged. No one knew what kind of response to expect from their calls for volunteers in such an uncertain time, but the people of the South of Scotland came forward in their droves, keen to help in whatever way they could.

The willingness of people to volunteer spoke volumes about the true community spirit that exists across the South of Scotland – a sometimes untapped resource of passion, skill and drive to ensure their communities thrive.

“One thing that has emerged (throughout the crisis) is that we live in a supportive community. People have responded quickly to offer services – we have a zoom cafe, zoom book club, zoom quiz, people have put up challenges and found support e.g. looking for potato seeds and so on. There is a community here - that’s important.”

“The volunteers have been great, they have been building up good relationships with local residents.”

“I have never been as proud of communities as now, the way people have stepped up, communities and localness have been invaluable during this crisis, and I want that network of support to continue and grow.”

Moving forward, the third sector across the South of Scotland must ensure that they harness this new volunteering energy that has emerged. It is hoped that many of the regular volunteers from the pre-Covid period will feel able to return to their roles. However, it is understood that this may not feel right for all, and a potential second spike of Covid-19 cases may keep some volunteers away. Realities dictate that not all new volunteers will be willing or able to continue in the roles that they have held throughout the crisis as many of them return to work, and some organisations told us that they are anticipating that some of their trustees may start to opt out of their roles in the coming months, meaning that gaps are anticipated for strategic volunteering roles as well as operational roles.

“Most of our regular volunteers are shielding and many of the new volunteers are furloughed from work so we may have a period of time where people need to restart work before our regular volunteers are able to restart volunteering with us – we are keeping a close eye on this and trying to work towards addressing this as new volunteers come forward.”

See Principle 5 and associated recommendations.

New Ways of Working

The Covid-19 crisis required people to embrace new ways of working, and it required them to embrace these new ways fast. In ‘normal’ times, when an organisation embarks upon a change programme, it often does so gently, ensuring that it brings their people along with them at an appropriate pace to ensure the change is embraced and embedded as smoothly and successfully as possible. The Covid-19 crisis did not allow for any gentle, smooth transitions into new ways of working. Organisations literally had to change their ways of working overnight. Digital home working, and enhanced health and safety measures had to be put in place with immediate effect.

4.1 Digital Home Working

For those TSOs who were able to keep working throughout the Covid-19 crisis, digital home working became the instant norm. The move has generally gone well where good working relationships, digital skills and infrastructure have been in place, and some TSOs are seeing the benefit of this model for the future. However, where digital skills and/or infrastructure have not been in place, the move has been more clunky and has required considerably more effort.

The core challenges experienced by TSOs across the South of Scotland in making the overnight leap to ‘full scale’ digital home working were-

Challenge 1: TSOs are often working with older hardware and software, meaning that systems were not optimised for best performance as lockdown was announced.

“We weren’t fully kitted up to do the digital working from home. We’re still not fully kitted up. We’re ‘winging it’ on old equipment.”

Challenge 2: A number of organisations had outdated data management systems e.g. physical storage of databases vs. cloud storage, meaning that accessing data from home has been more of an issue.

“Technology has been challenging. Our service management system is not in the cloud so it has been a challenge. We are still struggling with this. To get into the database you have to go through a VPN and then into the software, which unfortunately is very clunky so causing frustrations. We’re currently doing a data cleanse but we can’t do it in real time because our software runs so slow – it has made our data cleanse really inefficient. The system isn’t fit for purpose anymore. We’re planning now for how to address the system, however it will take time to move it.”

New Ways of Working

Challenge 3: Digital platforms for engaging with service users and communities were not all optimised since ‘old ways’ of working had relied more heavily on face to face contact.

“Our website is not up to scratch for disseminating info, doing consultations etc. We’re not fully linking things to social media. i.e. our digital platform is not fit for purpose.”

Challenge 4: Not all members of TSOs had digital hardware that they could use from home, meaning that those members of the organisation were less connected until solutions could be found.

Challenge 5: Not all members of TSOs had the digital skills they needed to seamlessly adjust to a digital home working environment. It is believed that a large number of trustees, many of who are older adults, have been particularly affected by this skills gap.

“Most Board members had not used Teams so we had to help out there (laptops for some) but we’ve made it work.”

Challenge 6: The digital infrastructure across the South of Scotland is varied, with many places experiencing poor digital connections meaning that virtual meetings do not always run smoothly and general digital productivity is not optimised.

Challenge 7: Employees and volunteers can feel less engaged when working from home, and in some cases may feel somewhat isolated. In order to mitigate these issues, TSOs introduced ways of keeping everyone connected as best as they could. There is however a real risk here that leadership could become overloaded as internal communications and relationship management takes more time due to the loss of ad hoc connections in the office.

“We have a Zoom staff meeting every 2 weeks which we minute. On the in-between weeks we have a zoom coffee break together”

Overall, the move to digital home working has gone fairly well for the third sector across the South of Scotland. There have been challenges aplenty, but TSOs have pushed through and found ways to make things work. Many of our interviewees mentioned that this shift in how they worked ultimately had a positive effect on communications and service delivery, though it should be noted that these comments were made in reference to pre-existing teams of people who largely all knew each other. In some cases, the move has led to TSO leaders starting to question optimum working models for the future.

Moving forward, digital skills and digital infrastructure must continue to be improved across the South of Scotland to enable all partners to play their role in a robust wellbeing economy.

See Principle 6 and associated recommendations.

4.2 Enhanced Health and Safety Measures

The Covid-19 crisis brought about immediate need for extreme infection control measures. TSOs working on resilience efforts had to have personal protective equipment (PPE) and had to adhere to 2m physical distancing (“social distancing”) from others.

Acquisition of PPE was a challenge for TSOs in the early days of lockdown. As national efforts were understandably focussed on ensuring that our statutory health and social care staff had the PPE that they required for the frontline response to Covid-19, the third sector was initially the ‘forgotten army’ on the home front who had to find their own way forward.

“We had issues sourcing PPE. We had to fight very hard for that. We do know that everyone was in this boat. Volunteers and family members of trustees made masks. Our Ward Officer was very supportive and everyone did what they could, but it was an issue...”

Sourcing PPE has thankfully become less of an issue over time as global supplies have increased and guidance on face coverings has become clearer.

Social distancing has become ‘the new normal’ for real life interactions and TSOs had to quickly adapt their resilience services to adhere with the Government’s distancing guidelines. In some cases, TSOs had to go one step further to ensure the safety of all.

“We worked closely with the community council to start a home delivery service for those people in the community who were isolating, and those in remote places. This was on top of us being open as a walk-in shop. However, it felt like it all began to implode – there was great pressure on a tiny shop, with some people not abiding by the government’s restrictions and guidance for social distancing. We ultimately closed the shop and moved to a delivery-only model as a volunteer service. For everyone’s safety, we had to get people off the doorstep of the shop.”

Social distancing guidelines have also meant that large sized physical spaces have been key to enabling people to work together on resilience efforts. Community centres and Town Halls- where open- have been key to enabling the ‘Resilience Groups’ to lead resilience efforts, both virtual and real for their communities.

Moving forward TSOs are now carefully considering how they can make their physical spaces (outdoors and indoors) safely available for their communities in a way that generates revenue to sustain their organisation for the future. TSOs will need to ensure that they have appropriate infection control policies in place for their organisations, and that they can provide a safe working environment for their staff and volunteers.

Looking to the Future

The Covid-19 crisis presented an unprecedented challenge for the third sector across the South of Scotland, but the third sector across the South of Scotland delivered an unprecedented response. The drive to do good and improve lives in communities has shone from the sector throughout the crisis, and now that lockdown restrictions are starting to ease the sector is moving from the response phase into reset and recovery with renewed ambition and focus.

As organisations consider resetting their aims and services to best meet the needs of communities living in a Covid world, they are now considering what they need to stop doing, what they need to do more of, and what they need to start doing. Many business models will need to change, and there is real concern that a funding 'cliff edge' will result in numerous organisations not being viable beyond the short term. However, with the right support and partnership working, the third sector across the South of Scotland, with beneficiaries at the heart of their work, are set up to be a key employer and powerful partner in the recovering economy. See Principle 7 and associated recommendations.

The four themes that have been discussed in this report: (1) dynamic partnership working, (2) financial viability, (3) volunteering and community spirit and (4) new ways of working, must continue to be nurtured in partnership with Scottish Government, South of Scotland Statutory Bodies, regional Councils and statutory agencies and TSIs to enable the sector to flourish and play its role fully in a robust wellbeing economy.

Glossary

TSO	Third Sector Organisation
TSI	Third Sector Interface
TSDG	Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway
DTAS	Development Trusts Association Scotland
TSRF	Third Sector Resilience Fund
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SG.	Scottish Government

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APPENDIX 1: Research Methodology

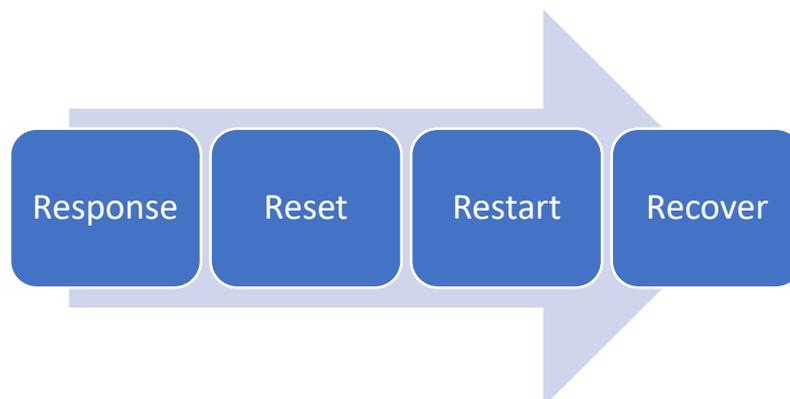
A series of 1:1 interviews were held (via virtual means) between representatives of Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway (TSDG) and Scottish Borders TSI, and representatives of TSOs across Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders.

Each interviewee was asked a series of questions, focussed on -

- Lessons learned throughout the first couple of months of lockdown
- The TSO's plan for the short term (to approximately end of June 2020)
- The TSO's plan for the medium term (up to 31 December 2020)

Each interview was summarised and analysed, and the findings used to inform this report.

At the time of conducting this research, most TSOs were in the response phase of crisis management, with some starting to reset their position in preparation for an eventual recovery.



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LOCAL CHILD POVERTY REPORT AND ACTION PLAN 2020/21

Report by Service Director, Customer & Communities

COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD

19 November 2020

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 **This report presents the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report and Action Plan for 2020/21 for endorsement before submission to Scottish Government.**

1.2 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires Local Authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report. This Report for 2020/21 provides the Community Planning Partnership and Scottish Government with a Report on Local Child Poverty Actions proposed for 2020/21.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **I recommend that the Community Planning Strategic Board endorse the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report and Action Plan for 2020/21.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 sets out the Scottish Government's statement of intent to eradicate child poverty in Scotland by 2030. Local Authorities and Health Boards are required to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Report (including an Action Plan) and subsequently an Annual Progress Report by the end of June each year.
- 3.2 Following implementation of the Act, the first Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report and Action Plan was submitted to Scottish Government in June 2019 for 2019/20. This Report and Action Plan for 2020/21 is the second such report and is due to be submitted to Scottish Government following endorsement.

4 SCOTTISH BORDERS LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION REPORT FOR 2020/21 (Appendix 1)

4.1 National Context

- (a) According to the Scottish Government publication "Persistent poverty in Scotland 2010-2018", **17%** of children in Scotland were in persistent poverty after housing costs between 2014 and 2018. This compares to **15%** in 2013-2017, so the national position is getting worse.
- (b) The most recent national child poverty statistics, published in March 2020, relate to the period from April 2018 to March 2019 and show that there is still a lot to do to achieve the ambitious targets set for 2030.

4.2 Covid-19 and implications for Child Poverty

- (a) It is likely that some children and families will experience poverty for the first time due to a loss of income caused by temporary or permanent job losses as a result of the pandemic, whilst families already living in poverty may see their issues deepening.
- (b) As a direct consequence of Covid-19, there will be an impact on the drivers of child poverty such as a rise in the number of children in workless households, delays to claiming benefits if families do not own digital devices, increased costs of heating and electricity causing fuel poverty, and food insecurity if there is no income to buy food.
- (c) Key issues identified as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic have been translated into priority actions in the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Action Plan for 2020/21 and are shown in Appendix 1(a).

4.3 Local Context

- (a) In 2018/19, the percentage of children in the Scottish Borders living in poverty below 60% median income after housing costs was **23.9%**. The figure for 2014/15 was **21.6%** so the percentage

point change (2015-19) is **2.3%** which shows a deteriorating position. This is before the impact of Covid-19 is taken into account, and this is likely to make the situation worse.

- (b) Scottish Borders average earnings in 2019 for full time workers only are £462.30 a week. This is lower than the Scottish average of £543.30 and is the 7th lowest out of the 32 Scottish Local Authority areas.
- (c) 31.4% of households lived in 'Fuel Poverty' in the Scottish Borders, compared with 27.3% in Scotland in 2019.
- (d) 7.8% of households are in 'Extreme fuel poverty' in the Scottish Borders, compared with 7.6% in Scotland.
- (e) Specific themes are highlighted to show the multi-agency approach taken in the Scottish Borders, including priority actions in Housing, tackling digital exclusion, fuel poverty and food poverty. Further details are shown in the Action Plan in Appendix 1(a).

5 2020/21 ACTION PLAN - Appendix 1(a)

5.1 Contributions have been made to the Scottish Borders Child Poverty Action Plan 2020/21 by Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and a range of partners. The Plan is organised into categories and indicates the partners involved, the poverty driver, how the impact of the action will be assessed and the intended beneficiary and/or target group of the action. A broad range of activity is shown in the Action Plan which is designed to help alleviate child poverty in different ways through various services and organisations.

Highlights of the Action Plan include:

- (i) The launch of an intensive family support service through the City Region Deal for families who are geographically isolated from existing services.
- (ii) Supporting the reduction of costs of the school day by facilitating and contributing to school uniform swaps and clothing banks
- (iii) Participating in Scottish Government's Youth Guarantee by the offer of an opportunity of an appropriate study programme for all school leavers who apply to Borders College
- (iv) Launch a Money Worries App designed to signpost people to appropriate supports and benefits
- (v) Deliver the Early Years Pathway Project to improve access to benefits information, advice and support for early years families
- (vi) Continue to deliver the Housing needs and aspirations of young people five year action plan
- (vii) Provide holiday programmes and clubs for children and young people (including those with additional special needs) which include the provision of food
- (viii) Work with Scottish Government on the Connecting Scotland Programme to deliver digital devices to help families get online

- (ix) Address food insecurity for individuals and families through fareshare and other food distribution schemes
- (x) Continue to establish breakfast clubs in schools to ensure that children and young people start the school day having had something to eat

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

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

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) Risks associated with this report relate to the deepening problem of child poverty as a result of COVID-19. Families already experiencing poverty before COVID-19 are likely to face further difficulties and new families will be identified as in poverty.
- (b) The 2020/21 Action Plan and Report focus on the impact of COVID-19 to ensure that an appropriate response is made to the unprecedented challenge facing the Local Authority and Health Board.

6.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

6.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects of this proposal.

6.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions as a result of this proposal.

6.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

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

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications are being consulted and any comments will be reported at the Community Planning Strategic Board.

Approved by

Jenni Craig
Service Director, Customer & Communities Signature.....

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Janice Robertson	Strategic Planning & Policy Manager

Background Papers:**Previous Minute Reference:**

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

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Scottish Borders
Local Child Poverty Action Report
2020/21

DRAFT

Introduction

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 sets out the Scottish Government's statement of intent to eradicate child poverty in Scotland by 2030.

Although the greatest impact on child poverty will occur through nationally set policies and strategies, it is recognised that local agencies and communities have much to contribute to achieving the outcomes desired. As a result, the Act requires Local Authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report describing activities planned locally to contribute towards the child poverty targets set out in the Act.

The national Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-2022, 'Every Child, Every Chance', recognises that poverty comes about as a result of three main drivers: household income, living costs, and social security arrangements. The national Delivery Plan uses these three drivers as the focus for action. It also recognizes the importance of preventative measures to improve children's quality of life and help families manage the impacts of poverty. Even if these actions have no immediate impact on the targets, building children's resilience in the face of poverty and other adversity is expected to boost their long-term outcomes.

Building on the first Scottish Borders Local Child Action Report published in June 2019, and the subsequent Annual Progress Report published in September 2020, this Action Report sets out planned activities to help alleviate Child Poverty in the Scottish Borders, and in particular, provides specific actions in relation to the impact of COVID-19.

We recognise that partnerships are key to the achievement of the outcomes we plan for our children, young people and families in the Scottish Borders and thank the Child Poverty Planning Group and the Community Planning Partnership for their contribution to the Plan.

National context and targets

According to the Scottish Household Survey, **17.3%** of Scottish children live in families that had low income in 2017 and could not afford at least 3 out of a prescribed list of “basic necessities”, such as a new refrigerator or a new coat for school. This is before housing costs (BHC), such as rent or mortgage payments, are taken out. After housing costs (AHC), the figure is understandably worse, at **20.7%** of Scottish children, or **one in five**.

According to the Scottish Government publication “Persistent poverty in Scotland 2010-2018”, **17%** of children in Scotland were in persistent poverty after housing costs between 2014 and 2018. This compares to **15%** in 2013-2017.

The Scottish Government has set itself ambitious targets to reduce child poverty by 2030. The four key measurements, after housing costs (AHC) are as follows:

- less than 10% of children live in relative poverty (relative poverty is less than 60% of average UK household income for the year taking account of the size and composition of the household)
- less than 5% of children live in absolute poverty (absolute poverty is less than 60% of average UK household income for the financial year beginning 1 April 2010)
- less than 5% of children live in combined low income and material deprivation (low income is defined as less than 70% of average UK household income for the year, material deprivation is when families are unable to afford three or more items out of a list of basic necessities)
- less than 5% of children live in persistent poverty (persistent poverty is where a child has lived in relative poverty for three out of the last four years).

The most recent child poverty statistics, published in March 2020, relate to the period from April 2018 to March 2019.

	Latest statistics	2023 target	2030 target
% of children in relative poverty	23% (2018-19)	18%	10%
% of children in absolute poverty	20% (2018-19)	14%	5%
% of children in low income + material deprivation	12% (2018-19)	8%	5%
% of children in persistent poverty	17% (2014-18)	8%	5%

Source: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-second-year-progress-report-2019-20/pages/5/>

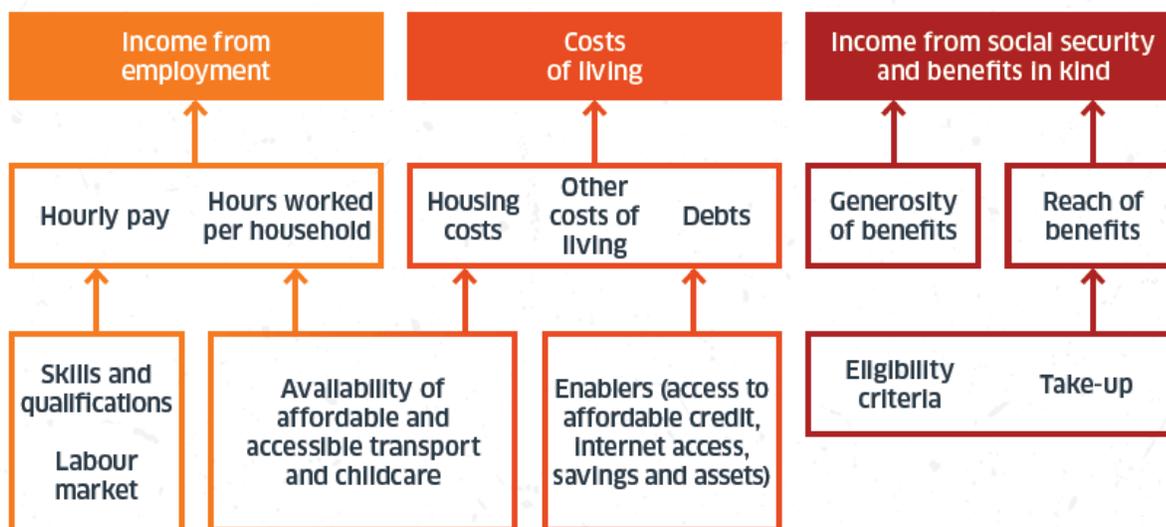
Public Health Scotland was formed in April 2020 and promotes the six national Public Health Priorities agreed by Scottish Government and COSLA in June 2018. These priorities are intended to support national and local partners across Scotland to work together to improve healthy life expectancy and reduce health inequalities in our communities.

- Priority 1 - A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities
- Priority 2 - A Scotland where we flourish in our early years
- Priority 3 - A Scotland where we have good mental wellbeing
- Priority 4 - A Scotland where we reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs
- Priority 5 - A Scotland where we have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all
- Priority 6 - A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active

Drivers of Child Poverty

The direct drivers of poverty fall in to three main categories – income from employment, costs of living and income from social security. The relationship of those drivers to wider thematic areas is summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Direct drivers of poverty



Key risk groups and targeted interventions

Child poverty action reports are expected to describe measures taken in relation to children living in households where income and/or expenditure are adversely affected as a consequence of a member or members in a household having one or more protected characteristics. The national Child Poverty Delivery Plan also identifies certain priority groups to be targeted as beneficiaries (see Figure 2 below), and notes the need to take account of local geography and demographic profile. For the Scottish Borders, rurality is a key factor. There is also a requirement to report on income maximisation measures taken in the area to provide pregnant women and families with children with information, advice and assistance about eligibility for financial support; and assistance to apply for financial support. This includes work by the NHS Borders and partners to embed financial inclusion referral pathways in health care settings, as well as other settings.

Figure 2 - Nationally identified priority groups at high risk of poverty



COVID-19 and implications for Child Poverty

For children and families already living in poverty, the impact of COVID-19 is likely to exacerbate their issues and potentially cause family stress and trauma. There is also likely to be an increase in the number of children and families experiencing poverty for the first time due to a loss of income caused by temporary or permanent job losses as a result of the pandemic. Digital exclusion is likely to deepen further too if actions are not considered to alleviate this growing problem.

The following table gives an indication of how COVID-19 may impact on the drivers of child poverty:

Driver		
Income from Employment	Job Loss	A direct consequence of COVID-19. A rise in the number of children in workless households.
Income from Employment	Loss of income	If people need to self-isolate, many employers only award sick pay Some may not work enough hours to qualify for sick pay Women in lower paid jobs may need to give up work to care for children if no child care is available.
Income from Benefits	Benefits	Difficulties in navigating a complex social security system can result in delays to payments of benefits Families who do not have digital devices may be disadvantaged from claiming benefits as face to face support became limited
Costs of living	Impact on families	Actions such as borrowing, using high cost credit, selling assets and gambling all impact on a families' ability to cope with initial hurdles of the pandemic
Costs of living	Housing and household costs	People spending more time at home is likely to increase costs of heating and electricity, causing fuel poverty.
Costs of living	Food insecurity	Food insecurity may arise as a result of loss of income to buy food Self-isolation or shielding may have caused problems with accessing food
Costs of living	Digital exclusion	Limited or no access to the internet has caused problems for families to access advice, information and benefits Mental health could be compromised Access to learning resources for children is an issue

Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and other partners are committed to undertaking actions in the short term to mitigate issues that children and families are experiencing. Additional demands have arisen on a range of public services as a result of the key issues arising from Covid-19 identified above. The key issues are translated into priority actions for the Scottish Borders, and Appendix 1(a) sets out how partners plan to tackle these.

Plans for longer term recovery, including prioritising child poverty and allocating resources to support this are also under consideration.

Local context

Research recently published by the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that levels of child poverty have risen in nearly every Scottish Local Authority since 2014/15 once housing costs are taken into account. This is before the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic is taken into account which is likely to make the situation worse.

The following table illustrates the % of children in the Scottish Borders living in poverty, below 60% median income after housing costs. The table includes other local authorities which are part of the same Local Government Benchmarking Framework family as a comparison. The Scottish Borders percentage point change from 2015 to 2019 is the second highest in the family.

Local Authority	2014/15	2018/19	% point change (2015-19)
Scottish Borders	21.6%	23.9%	2.3%
Moray	21%	22.4%	1.5%
Stirling	20.5%	21.3%	0.8%
East Lothian	22.3%	23.3%	1.0%
Angus	21.6%	24.0%	2.4%
Highland	21.5%	23.0%	1.6%
Argyll and Bute	21.2%	23.4%	2.2%
Midlothian	22.8%	23.2%	0.4%

Source: www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

Other local management information which adds further detail to the picture of child poverty in the Scottish Borders:

Earnings

- Scottish Borders average earnings in 2019 for full time workers only are **£462.30** a week.
- This is **lower** than the Scottish average of **£543.30** and is the 7th lowest out of the 32 Scottish Local Authority areas.

Accessible transport

- **47.6%** of children in Scottish Borders live in areas classified as “Rural” (Accessible-rural or Remote-rural) by the Urban-rural Classification system in 2018

Food insecurity and food costs

- The January 2020 Independent Food Aid network reported six participating independent food banks in the Scottish Borders between April 2018 and September 2019. They gave out **3,915** food parcels, an **8%** increase on the previous year. This shows that there is sustained and increasing food insecurity in the Scottish Borders, which is certain to get worse in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Internet access

- The Scottish Household Survey estimates that **85%** of households in Scotland had home internet access in 2017. Scottish Borders is slightly behind the Scottish average with **81.3%**.

Debt, savings and assets

- **31.4%** of households lived in 'Fuel Poverty' in the Scottish Borders, compared with **27.3%** in Scotland.
- **7.8%** of households are in 'Extreme fuel poverty' in the Scottish Borders, compared with **7.6%** in Scotland.

Other

- **8.1%** (or 4,241) of Scottish Borders households in the 2011 Census were a lone-parent family.
- **6.5%** of first time mothers in the Scottish Borders were aged 19 and under in the 3-year rolling average period up to 2018/19 – this is 76 births.
- There were 205 children in the Scottish Borders in 2018 who were Looked After by the Local Authority in a variety of settings, which is a rate of 9.6 per 1,000 children
- In 2018, in the Scottish Borders, **21.8%** of adults reporting a limiting long-term physical or mental health problem lived in a household with children, compared with **14.9%** in Scotland.

The Scottish Borders Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2021

The Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2018-21 sets out the strategic direction for the planning and delivery of services for children and young people in the Scottish Borders from 2018-21. The Plan expresses the commitment of the Children and Young People's Leadership Group to use its combined resources and to work in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for all our children and families.

Priority 2 of the plan reflects the actions required to support the Local Child Poverty Action Plan and comply with the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. An extract is shown below.

Improving health and well-being and reducing inequalities

What we will do

1. **Play a key part in the development of the Scottish Borders Child Poverty action plan - leading to changes in practice across all partners that impact on the drivers of child poverty**

How will we know

A range of measures will be developed by the Leadership Group eg.

- **Progress in implementing the Child Poverty Action Plan**

The Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index

Poverty and low income remain an issue in an area with one of the lowest wages in Scotland, with many families "just getting by". This has led to "poverty proofing" in all schools, supported by the development of the Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index (CPI), which provides schools and other partners with a more detailed understanding of child poverty as it affects communities locally.

These are experimental statistics using HMRC Children in low income families, free school meals, clothing grants and educational maintenance allowance. The index shows that there are unexpected areas of child poverty. The Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index has 3 years of data and over time, the areas of high or higher levels of child poverty has reduced, however there are areas that consistently have high levels of child poverty.

The Scottish Borders COVID-19 Vulnerability Index

The Scottish Borders Covid-19 Vulnerability Index has been developed to provide a way to identify areas within the Scottish Borders that may need support to recover from the wider impact of Covid-19. There are several publicly available resources which provide a context but it was felt that a Scottish Borders specific tool would be useful and the matrix developed may inform decisions that will help the Scottish Borders recover from Covid-19. The matrix will be used in conjunction with the Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index to pinpoint areas where children and families are in specific need of support.

Money Worries App

NHS Borders and Partners (Scottish Borders Council, CAB, and a Local Youth Project) are developing a Money Worries App. The App will be available for iPhone and Android devices and is designed to help people find services that can help with issues such as money/debt advice, benefits, housing and homelessness, home energy/bills and some mental health and wellbeing services at both a local and national level.

There will be four main categories: Money, Housing, Health, and Work. Each of the categories will have sub categories and these will lead to information and contacts for people to use depending on their query.

The App also analyses how people use it and will report on what information is looked up so that services and resources can be planned to meet requirements.

It is planned to launch the Scottish Borders Money Worries App in January 2021.

Specific Themes

Appendix 1 sets out current actions underway in Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and with Community Planning Partners. The Action Plan shows a wide range of activities which all contribute to the aim of eradicating Child Poverty. Specific examples to highlight the multi-agency approach are:

Housing	<p>Housing plays an important role in poverty, housing can mitigate or exacerbate the impact of poverty on people's lives.</p> <p>Increasing the supply of affordable housing increases the number of housing available for social rent. An increase in supply means an increase in access to the sector, especially at a time when owning a house or renting privately isn't an option for some households. The Local Housing Strategy monitors the level of affordable housing being built and through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) strategic investment priorities for affordable housing are set out over a five year period.</p> <p>The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) sets out how the Local Authority and partners plan to shift towards a rapid rehousing approach. This means stepping up activities to prevent homelessness, maximising supply of and access to a wide range of settled housing options, reducing the time people spend as homeless, especially in temporary accommodation, and ensuring tailored support is available as and when people need it.</p>
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	<p>Providing housing options is a person centred, holistic approach that provides housing support at an early stage to provide information on housing solutions, this can also include information on money advice, employment and health. One of the key aims is to avoid a housing crisis. This is monitored through the LHS and RRTP.</p>
<p>Tackling Digital Exclusion</p>	<p>The Connecting Scotland Programme is a national initiative which is working to provide digitally excluded households with devices, skills training and technical support so they can get online. The first phase saw £5 million worth of devices, data, skills training and technical support reach 9,000 people on low incomes who were without an internet connection and shielding from COVID-19.</p> <p>Recipients were gifted an appropriate internet enabled device, access to connectivity, and paired with a digital champion to develop their skills and confidence online.</p> <p>Of the Borders 217 allocation, SBC were awarded 48 devices, with the remaining allocation distributed to Registered Social Landlords, Live Borders and a number of third sector organisations.</p> <p>Following the successful pilot, Connecting Scotland has launched a 2nd phase. With £15 million in funding, phase 2 aims to reach around 22,000 households across Scotland with pre-school and school age children and young care leavers on low incomes.</p> <p>The eligibility criteria for this phase aims to provide iPads, Chromebooks and support to develop digital skills for individuals who are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. digitally excluded – do not have an appropriate device and/or are not connected to the internet at home; AND 2. on low incomes so cannot afford to buy a device or pay for internet access. <p>The two target groups for Phase 2 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • households with children, or where a child is normally resident (this includes pregnant women with no child in the household) • care leavers up to the age of 26 (in line with eligibility for aftercare support)
<p>Fuel Poverty</p>	<p>Providing energy efficient homes means households can heat their homes properly and reduce their fuel bills – helping to reduce fuel poverty. Living in a warm home that is affordable to heat has many benefits for everyone including children. Providing households with information and advice is an important part of reducing fuel poverty. This is monitored through the Local Housing Strategy and through the Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy.</p> <p>Partners work with Home Energy Scotland who give free and impartial advice and support on fuel poverty and energy efficiency. During COVID-19 NHS Borders have promoted Home Energy Scotland information to prevent/tackle fuel poverty. This included a series of DVD's aimed at householders with practical advice and support links and information about</p>

	crisis support in the form of energy vouchers.
Food Poverty	<p>Food poverty is a growing concern in the Scottish Borders and there are many food distribution schemes being used to assist families who are struggling to provide food for their children eg. Fareshare, Foodbanks.</p> <p>A Scottish Government Food Fund was made available during COVID-19 to enable Partners to assist Scottish Borders residents in need. Scottish Borders Council has been able to provide supermarket gift cards through this scheme where needed.</p> <p>Youth Work Services in the Scottish Borders are able to help alleviate food poverty for young people and this has been welcomed by many families during lockdown with the provision of food parcels delivered to their homes. In normal circumstances, the youth group settings provide free meals to young people and teach them to cook for themselves.</p> <p>Community Assistance Hubs were formed to assist in localities in lockdown for those most vulnerable and in need. The hubs were able to build up a vast knowledge of what food offerings are available in the Scottish Borders. With so many activities relating to food available, it is hoped to set up a Food Network in the Scottish Borders to raise awareness of, and promote opportunities for children and families.</p>

Case Study

The following case study illustrates how poverty issues can arise, and how one of the Local Authority's Community Assistance Hubs were able to help during the Coronavirus Lockdown.

Food and Finance – Father got in touch to say due to a move in household at beginning of lockdown, they were struggling with money – there had been a mix up with universal credit payments, found himself with no money and lots of mouths to feed. Also, some of their kitchen appliances had broken down.

The family were not able to apply for a crisis grant as they still had a little money in the bank to cover some bills. A community care grant was an option but this would take a number of weeks. The Financial Inclusion Team confirmed that there were no further benefits he was entitled to. Our local Home Start Service was closed due to Covid and local funding pots were closed as they had ran out of money and could not fundraise at this time.

A charity bought the family what they needed to replace broken down equipment, and the local Resilience Team also contributed from their Covid fund.

The Community Assistance Hub gifted them food vouchers and another charity also gifted them vouchers.

Free school meals options were explored further with the family too and they benefitted from picking these up on a regular basis.

There is no specific plan for this family for ongoing assistance, but awareness of local funds is helpful and links to partner agencies who can assist and inform in wider funding areas is very supportive.

Monitoring and reporting

The Child Poverty Action Planning process relates directly to the work of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). Progress of the Local Child Poverty Action Plan is monitored through a multi-agency planning group and reported through the CPP. A review of how data and evidence is used to measure progress and ensure effective evaluation and monitoring methods is currently being undertaken.

Current and planned actions to address child poverty in Scottish Borders

In developing this plan we recognise that partners are already undertaking a wide range of activities and delivering projects to prevent or mitigate the impact of child poverty.

Appendix 1 sets out the actions that services and partners are carrying out in 2020/21. Local Authorities and NHS Boards are specifically required to report on income maximisation measures taken in the area to provide pregnant women and families with children with information, advice and assistance about eligibility for financial support; and assistance to apply for financial support. This includes work to embed financial inclusion referral pathways in health care settings, as well as other settings, and is reflected in the actions set out.

Planning ahead, Scottish Borders Council have formed a Member/Officer working group who are working on the production of an Anti-Poverty Strategy for the Scottish Borders. This Strategy is likely to encompass the Child Poverty work that is underway and planned for future years.

One of the early tasks of this group is to agree an approach to working with people who have direct lived experience of poverty and child poverty. It is important that we listen to families, children and young people with first-hand experience to get their views so that we can agree actions which will help to alleviate poverty and agree how we can measure the impact of such actions. The Poverty and Inequality Commission highlights this in their review of Local Child Poverty Action Reports published in November 2019.

Other challenges and future focus will be around Brexit and how that may impact on Child Poverty as well as implications arising from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill to ensure that children's rights are respected and protected in the law in Scotland.

Finally as we progress through 2020/21, the impact of COVID-19 will become clearer in terms of job losses and loss of income from employment, and whilst we are taking steps to alleviate this for children and families in our Action Plan, it will be necessary to carry out further focused work in the future.

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Action	Poverty Driver*	Partners Involved	How will impact be assessed?	Intended beneficiaries/target group
Employability				
Launch Intensive family support service	1	City Region Deal SBC	Number of participants Number of employment opportunities	Families who are geographically isolated from existing services Young parent families Families where parents are aged 30-39
Engage with the Job Centre to support and advise individuals affected by COVID-19 or facing redundancy	1	VCB	Number of participants	Young People and families
Work experience opportunities promoted via networks for young people	1	Live Borders	Number of work experience opportunities available and taken up	Young People
Promote the Youth Volunteering Ambassadors Project and the Saltire Awards Scheme to all young people under the age of 25.	1	Volunteer Centre Borders (VCB)	Number of participants	Young People under the age of 25
Support Skills Development Scotland and Activity Agreements to find opportunities for young people who may be vulnerable or lacking in confidence	1	VCB	Number of participants	Vulnerable young people

Encourage participation in the Borders College Youth Pathway Project	1	VCB YouthBorders	Number of participants	Young People
Engagement with Community Job Scotland opportunities for young people's employment	1	Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders)	Number of opportunities	Young People
Provide a weekly ASN Youth Group for 14-19 year olds to support the transition out of education and enhancing employability of ASN young people	1	Borders Additional Needs Group	Number of opportunities	ASN young people
Work with local partners to address the impact of Covid-19 on the local economy to deliver a range of support measures to sustain businesses and jobs and address growth opportunities.	1	South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE)	Number of opportunities Sustained employment	ALL
Promote the principles of 'Fair Work', encouraging organisations to meet the expectations of the living wage	1	SOSE	Number of jobs paying the living wage	ALL
Education				
Run family learning programmes targeted at 18 of our primary schools where there are the highest levels of poverty	1,3	SBC CLD	Maximised income for families, enhanced financial capabilities and increasing their income levels through improved employment	Families, children and young people
Provide telephone/online support to parents/carers. This includes support/signposting and learning	1	SBC Adult Learning Team	Number of participants	Parents and carers

around financial inclusion and delivering programmes to develop employability skills				
Recruit 2 Parental Employability Support Workers (Government Funded) aiming to increase parental income through employment	1	SBC	Increased parental income and employment	Parents
Support the reduction of costs of the school day by facilitating and contributing to school uniform swaps and clothing banks	2	Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders) Early Years Centres	Reduced cost to families	Children and families
Draw up individual school plans for targeted intervention to close the poverty related attainment gap	2	SBC Education Scotland	Indicators on attainment	School children
Roll out poverty related training to all staff in Education Service	2	SBC	Indicators on attainment	School children
Create an equity network and link to other Local Authorities to share best practice in education for children and young people affected by poverty	2	SBC Other Local Authorities	Uptake to sharing best practice	School children
The CLD service and third sector partners provide targeted programmes to support disadvantaged young people to succeed and achieve.	1	SBC Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders)	Success in obtaining non-formal qualifications and becoming employable	Disadvantaged young people

Participate in Scottish Government's Youth Guarantee by the offer of an appropriate study programme for all school leavers who apply	1	Borders College	Uptake Numbers enrolled Numbers successfully completing	All school leavers
Information & Advice				
Provide benefits advice and support to children with families. This service is aimed at Pre-natal through to secondary school and is carried out by a dedicated Early Years Welfare Benefits Assistant. Continue to deliver the Early years Pathway Project – improving access to benefits information, advice and support for early years families.	3	SBC Financial Inclusion Team	Increased awareness of the benefits available Assistance to claim, including challenging negative benefit application decisions where appropriate	Early Years Families
Continue to ensure that the Welfare Benefits Assistant builds up networks within the Early Years Centres, local primary & secondary schools, NHS health visitors, GP surgeries, dental services etc to ensure that access to benefits advice is readily available across a range of services who are already supporting vulnerable families.	3	NHS Midwifery NHS GP Surgeries NHS Health Visitors NHS Dental Services Education Services RSL's Social Work	Quarterly statistical reporting on referral numbers and monetary gains Number of referrals from Partners	Vulnerable families
Deliver the Financial Inclusion Pilot in Galashiels Health centre where money advisor support is provided during midwifery clinic. Covid-19 restrictions caused this to be put on hold. This will re-start when the situation allows.	3	SBC NHS Borders	Increase take up	Pregnant women

Continue to promote Take up campaigns for Scottish Government benefits eg Best Start Grants in schools, health centres and early years centres.	3	SBC NHS Borders	Increased take up Number of grants authorised and total income paid out	Families
Continue to promote the SBC website pages on Welfare Benefits for Families with children.	3	SBC	Increased income into the poorest households	Families
Finalise and launch a Money Worries app to provide information on benefits/support available. (Supported by Scottish Government Financial Inclusion Funding) Money worries resources made available for midwives and health visitors. Continue to develop systems to record conversations/response to money worries enquiries	3	SBC NHS Health Improvement Team	Number of downloads of the Money Worries App	Families
Introduce e-form for referrals to Financial Inclusion	3	SBC NHS Borders	Uptake of use of e-form	Families
Commitment to free access to family days out in museums service and outdoor play area (Harestanes Park) and active promotion of low/no-cost access to family days out	2	Live Borders	Number of participants	Families
Accessing emergency funds for families in crisis via routes such as Borders Children's Charity, Cash for Kids, or organisation specific crisis funds	2	Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders) NHS Borders	Number of awards applied for	All families in crisis
Raise awareness of specific information on welfare benefits, social security Scotland and all relevant	3	Borders Additional Needs Group	Increased benefits	ASN families

information regarding finances, hearing and carers allowances to ASN families				
Create a dedicated website for ASN parents and carers to improve access to specific information	3	Borders Additional Needs Group	Increased benefits	ASN families
Promote Challenge Poverty Week 5 th -11 th October 2020	1,2,3	SBC NHS Partners	Uptake of various promoted schemes	All
Continue to raise awareness of Child Poverty by holding a Child Poverty Partnership Event	1,2,3	All Partners	Creation of effective Action Plan with input from Partners	All
Improve the use of the Neglect Toolkit by the Child Protection Delivery Group in relation to income maximisation support for families. Collation of what income maximisation support is being offered to families and when, as well as following up on what difference the support has made	3	SBC Child Protection Delivery Group	Audit activity Child Protection Indicators	Children and young people most at risk of needing the Child Protection System
Award discretionary funding to students in financial hardship as a result of family circumstances for housing and food costs	3	Borders College	Number of awards	Students in financial hardship
Housing & Energy				
New Affordable Housing: Deliver an estimated 122 new homes during 2020-2021	2	SBC and all RSL's	Number of affordable homes completed	All families and young people in housing need
Through the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), continue to monitor the level of affordable housing being built	2		Number of people receiving housing support	

Through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), set out the strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a 5 year period.	2			
Delivery of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Young People five year Action Plan	2	Local Housing Strategy	LHS Annual Progress and Monitoring Report	All young people aged between 16-34
Implement the Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan SBHA continue to increase lets to homeless people. (60% year to date for 2020/21 compared to 43% for 2019/20)	2 2	Borders Homelessness and Health Strategic Partnership & LHS Partnership Group CAB Healthy Living Network SBHA	Number accessing Housing Options service % of unintentionally homeless household accessing settled accommodation Annual reporting against KPI's established in the Action Plan Increased % of lets to homeless people	All, particularly those at risk of homelessness
The Regeneration of Beech Avenue, Galashiels	2	Waverly Housing/SBC	More people living independently in affordable and sustainable homes More people able to afford to heat their homes	Waverley Housing tenants and families (existing and future)

Deliver the New home development programme	2	Berwickshire Housing Association (BHA)	Statutory compliance measures relating to improved energy efficiency and performance of homes	BHA tenants
Planned major improvement to existing homes	2	BHA	Statutory compliance measures relating to improved energy efficiency and performance of homes	BHA tenants
Provide financial support to third sector partners and social enterprises on community capacity building	2	BHA	Increased local and accessible opportunities to grow and develop – building confidence and capacity across our communities	BHA tenants
Provide funding and sponsorship of specific projects including school food events, access to recreational activities, intergenerational initiatives and tenant run pilot projects eg. Berwickshire Swap	2	BHA	Number of participants	BHA tenants
Provide funding and support to existing local projects that engage directly with children impacted by poverty and low income	2	BHA	Parents and guardians are reliably supported to improve their prospects and the environment they nurture children within	BHA tenants
Deliver full EESSH (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) compliance.	2	Scottish Borders Housing	Full compliance (100%)	SBHA Tenants

Current compliance is 96.2% from under 30% in 2016.		Association (SBHA)		
Develop a vulnerability assessment toolkit to identify the most at risk households. This will support plans to be put in place to enhance tenancy sustainment and improve life choices.	2	SBHA	Number of tenants managing to sustain tenancies	SBHA tenants at risk
Implement a toolkit to measure the impact of social housing in Scotland with a specific aim of supporting Scottish Government's child poverty targets.	2	SBHA	Additional social housing	SBHA tenants
Health & Wellbeing				
Explore options for early intervention models, including an intensive family support service (via Citydeal), and family group decision making to support families to become more resilient and determine their own solutions to issues.	1,2,3	SBC Children & Families Social Work	No of participants New employment	Families in need of support from Children & Families Social Work services
Children & Families Social Work are focussing on the impact that COVID-19 is having on children and families struggling through the Pandemic. The service is exploring opportunities for collaboration focused on outcomes. This involves listening to, and involving children, young people and their families with lived experience of poverty in shaping their response.	1,2,3	SBC Children & Families Social Work	Opportunities taken up	Families in need of support from Children & Families Social Work services
Provide Holiday clubs for Additional Special Needs (ASN) families with free lunches (funded by Scottish Government School Hunger Programme)	2	Borders Additional Needs Group	Number of lunches provided	ASN families

Provide sensory toys and cleaning materials for families with an ASN child who may be sensory seeking/bed wetting	2	Borders Additional Needs Group	Number of items bought and given out	ASN families
Continue to promote online videos to mothers on support for weaning through the Early Years Centres.	2	SBC NHS Borders	Uptake of scheme	Mothers with babies
Issue wellbeing packs to young people identified by CLD Youth Learning Staff	2	CLD Youth Learning Staff	Number of packs issued	Targeted children and young people
Co-ordination and development of Holiday Programmes for children and young people which include provision of positive and engaging activities and food	2	Community Learning & Development Health Improvement Live Borders YouthBorders	No of programmes No of participants Evaluation of Programmes	Targeted communities
Specific Project in Burnfoot to encourage greater participation in sport/physical activity for the whole family group	2	Live Borders SBC	Evaluation framework of participants	Targeted communities
Active Schools Holiday Camps Programme to actively support children and families to have affordable child care options during school holidays	2	Live Borders SBC	Number of participants Number of programmes Healthier, Happier, Stronger in-house evaluation methodology	All
Provide free or low cost access to activities, experiences and trips during evenings, weekends and school holiday periods	2	Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders)	Number of participants Service user feedback	Young People (8+)

Deliver an outdoor activity/nurture summer holiday programme to young people entitled to free school meals or LAC.	2	CLD Youth Workers Cashback for Communities	Number of participants	Young people entitled to free school meals or looked after children
Promote the development of Young Scot membership and rewards which support wellbeing, provision of trusted information, and provide opportunities and experiences to young people	2	CLD Youth Learning YouthBorders JHIT	Uptake	Anyone aged 11-25
Undertake a mentoring initiative to support those most at risk of disengagement to successfully transition through senior phase of school to college	2	Borders College	Uptake	Care experienced young people, those in rural areas, social isolation, young carers and school refusers
Undertake 'Care Aware' initiative to provide support and a named person for care experienced young people and student carers. The initiative works to address barriers and provide information to maximise funding, access learning support and nurture.	2	Borders College	Number of participants Successful income maximisation	Care experienced young people and student carers
Continue to provide free sanitary products to students in need through a sustainable partnership whereby products are delivered to students rather than them collecting them	3	Borders College	Uptake	Students in need of sanitary products
Communities & Partnerships				
Launch Capital Credit Union schools programme pilot at Burnfoot Community School		Capital Credit Union SBC	Uptake of pilot	Children (and families) associated with Burnfoot Community School

		Burnfoot Community School		
Tackling Digital Exclusion				
Connecting Scotland Programme - £15M funding - national investment to help 22,000 households get online. SBHA have distributed 46 devices and a further 45 are pending delivery – (phase 1 shielding and older people)	2	SBC NHS Borders SBHA		Households with children including pregnant women with no child in the household Care leavers up to the age of 26 eligible for aftercare support
Device lending library of ipad/chromebook devices for excluded families	2	Live Borders	Uptake	Families with no access to electronic devices
Free access to digital content for children and families as part of library offer	2	Live Borders	Uptake	Children and families
Help Early years clients with digital inclusion by providing them with a voucher to purchase a mobile phone to enable them to claim grants.	2	NHS Borders	Number of vouchers given out	Early Years families
Provide devices to Parent carers and Youth carers to enable them to access information	3	Borders Additional Needs Group	Number of devices provided	ASN families
Inspire Learning Programme – roll out of iPads to Primary 4 and 5 pupils	2,3	SBC	Number of iPads distributed	All
Provide laptop loans and wifi provision to all students who require to engage in online studies	3	Borders College	Number of laptop loans	Students who do not own a laptop

Fuel related activity				
Deliver the Warm and Well Project to tackle fuel poverty		SBC Home Energy Scotland SBHA Healthy Living Network Scottish Government	More people able to afford to heat their homes	Families with young children
Continue to engage with the Scottish Borders Home Energy Forum.	2	NHS Borders Home Energy Scotland	Number of vouchers given out	Early years families
Deliver the Home Energy Efficiency Programme	2	SBC Home Energy Scotland Changeworks	Households living in fuel poverty Number of private sector energy efficiency measures installed Number of households provided with energy advice/information	Tenants
Food related activity				
Continue to support Third Sector partners financially to provide community based food schemes and support groups	2	SBC CLD	Reviews and evaluations of schemes	Children and families

			Participation, achievement and attainment	
Provide recipes to align with available produce and food distributed to Early Years Centres	2	NHS Joint Health Improvement Team	Review and evaluation	Families with young children attending Early Years Centres
Address food insecurity through the provision of food to individuals and families via Fareshare and other food distribution schemes including food growing and community cafes	2	Third Sector Youth Organisations (YouthBorders)	Number of referrals Number of food parcels Sustained engagement	Young People (8+)
Promote Free school meals and increase uptake	2	SBC	Increased % uptake of free school meals	Eligible children
Deliver a breakfast programme for S1-S4 young people entitled to free school meals.	2	CLD Youth Workers	Uptake of programme	S1-S4 young people entitled to free school meals
Continue to establish breakfast clubs in schools. Breakfast clubs are established in a number of schools in areas of greatest need but the aim is to have one in every school.	2	SBC Schools	Children from poorer households will have had at least two nutritional meals per day whilst at school.	All children and young people
Provide recipes and information to community assistance hubs for people in receipt of food boxes, contributing to food security.	2	NHS Joint Health Improvement Team	Review and evaluation	All
Support extended food distribution schemes in partnership with Criminal Justice Services Social Work	2	NHS Joint Health Improvement Team	Review and evaluation	All

Support food distribution work in communities with funding, recipes and practical support to provide meal bags for children and families	2	NHS Joint Health Improvement Team	Review and evaluation	All
Enhance community food support available via Burnfoot Community Futures	2	NHS Joint Health Improvement Team	Review and evaluation	All
Set up a Scottish Borders Food Network to promote and raise awareness of opportunities for children and families	2	SBC NHS Borders	Uptake to network Number of participants	All
Continue with 'Food Friday' to provide students with food bags to make a dinner. Tesco and Asda contribute to this initiative run by the Students Association at Borders College	3	Borders College Students Association	Number of food bags provided	Students in need of food

***Poverty Drivers**

- 1 – Income from Employment
- 2 – Costs of living
- 3 – Income from Social Security and benefits in kind

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