

MINUTES of Meeting of the
BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP
held Via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 17
December 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors J. A. Fullarton (Chairman), J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, H. Laing, D. Moffat and M. Rowley together with 10 representatives from Community Councils and Community Organisations.

In Attendance:- Service Director Customer and Communities, Locality Development Co-ordinator, Communities and Partnership Manager and Clerk to the Council

1. WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the special meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership, which would be considering the applications to the Community Fund which had been assessed. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and the Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted and how those both in the meeting and watching via the Live Stream could take part.

2. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 3 DECEMBER 2020

The Minute of the meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership held on 3 December 2020 had been circulated. The Clerk to the Council advised that there was an amendment to be made to paragraph 4.2(b) of the Minute in that Keith Dickinson (Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth Community Council) and Anne McNeil (A Heart for Duns), had also volunteered to be members of the Sub-Group being set up to examine options for the future working of the Area Partnership and the Community Fund. This amendment was accepted and the Minute noted.

3. BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY FUND 2020/21

3.1 With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 3 December 2020, copies of the assessments for each application, along with additional details of timelines and funding, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Service Director Customer & Communities gave an overview of the purpose of the meeting, the additional funding which had now come into the Community Fund, and the criteria which was applied to applications to the Community Fund. The Clerk to the Council then reminded the meeting of the decision making process. The following points were then made:

- While there was now sufficient funding to cover the applications which had been assessed to date, there was still a shortfall to cover all applications received so far to the Fund, and for those which could come in up until February 2021, so that would need to be taken into account when deciding on the assessed applications
- There were 3 substantial applications to the Fund still to be assessed, and there could be no guarantee of the size of the Community Fund in the next financial year as that would need to be considered as part of the Council budget in February 2021.
- Consideration could be given to fund applications either in full or in part

3.2 The Locality Development Co-ordinator then gave brief details of the assessed applications, the timeline and funding for each and the Area Partnership considered each one:

(a) **Reston & Auchencrow Community Council – Play Park improvements**

The Area Partnership considered the application and agreed that this was very clear, a significant project with successful match funding.

AGREED to award Reston & Auchencrow Community Council £10,000 from the Community Fund for play park improvements.

(b) **Cockburnspath Community Enterprise – Community Shop**

The Area Partnership considered the application. In response to some questions, Jenni Sutton, of Cockburnspath Community Enterprise, confirmed that an additional £5,000 more than anticipated had been received from crowdfunding efforts and it was hoped to use this to stock a broader range of goods in the shop and to pay for staff. The funding generated so far was for the building, training of volunteers and purchase of fridge/chiller cabinets, and did not cover staff costs. It was hoped that the project would be self-sustaining in a year's time. With regard to £10,000 funding from windfarms, this was ring-fenced for site reinstatement and was a condition of funding. The Area Partnership considered the application and whether the amount of funding could be reduced and whether the Community Enterprise could then apply for further funding in the future should this be required. All present agreed that this was a fantastic project, which was well supported by the community, the team had worked extremely hard in their funding efforts, and the project should be supported. However, there was no consensus as to the amount which should be granted, therefore the decision was made by SBC Elected Members. Councillor Rowley, seconded by Councillor Moffat, moved that the amount awarded to the project should be £5,000 to allow the project to get started. Councillor Laing, seconded by Councillor Greenwell, moved as an amendment that the amount awarded should be £10,000.

Vote

Motion (£5,000 award) - 2 votes

Amendment (£10,000 award) 4 votes

The Amendment was carried.

DECIDED to award Cockburnspath Community Enterprise £10,000 from the Community Fund for the Community Shop.

(c) **Duns Playfest – Community Festival**

The Area Partnership considered the application. In response to a question around what would happen if Covid restrictions continued, given the interactive nature of the Festival, Anne McNeil advised that there was superfast broadband throughout the Volunteer Hall so enough to stream performances. Juliana Amaral further advised that, on behalf of BAVs and Berwickshire Housing Association, iPads could be made available for those to watch performances. The application was approved.

AGREED to award Duns Playfest £4,000 from the Community Fund for the Community Festival.

(d) **Abundant Borders – Community Garden, Todlaw, Duns**

The Area Partnership considered the application. All were fully supportive of the project and in response to a question, the Locality Development Co-ordinator confirmed that the balance of funding to meet the total project costs would be met by Abundant Borders. The application was approved.

AGREED to award Abundant Borders £8,000 from the Community Fund for a Community Garden at Todlaw, Duns.

(e) **Coldstream Gateway Association – Floral display**

The Area Partnership considered the application. It was noted that usually the Gateway Association raised their own funding throughout the year with coffee mornings and social events, but these had been cancelled due to Covid19, so this was the first time they had had to apply for funding. All present were supportive of the project and the application was approved.

AGREED to award Coldstream Gateway Association £1,800 from the Community Fund for a floral display.

(f) **Ayton Heritage – Preservation of ruins of St Dionysius**

The Area Partnership considered the application. In response to a question, the Locality Development Co-ordinator confirmed that the original application submitted in February 2020 had not met the criteria for the Fund in place at the time, and had been re-submitted in October 2020 after the criteria had changed. All were supportive of the project. Bill Black, Chairman of the Heritage Group, confirmed that it was the restoration of the Old Kirk at Lennel which had inspired him to start the Ayton project. The Group was working with Historic Scotland and the funding would allow the project to get started. The application was approved.

AGREED to award Ayton Heritage £2,538 from the Community Fund for the preservation of the ruins of St Dionysius.

3.3 The Chairman thank everyone for their input into the discussions and commented on the successful crowdfunding by Cockburnspath Community Enterprise. It should be noted that the Community Fund did not hold a substantial amount, so other sources of funding should also be sought. He wished success to all the projects which had received grants that evening.

4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

4.1 In response to a question around decision making at Area Partnership meetings, the Clerk to the Council explained that as the Area Partnership was a committee of Scottish Borders Council it was governed by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. This in effect restricted the number of non-SBC Elected Members who could have voting rights on the committee. This was why consensus from those present at the meeting was sought in the first instance for decisions of the Area Partnership. Should consensus not be reached, then the decisions would revert to the SBC Elected Members. The Sub-Group established for the review of Area Partnership and the consideration of options for the future would consider whether the Area Partnership should remain as a Council committee. With regard to the Community Fund, a request was made that the scene was set for applicants to the Fund before they submitted their applications as to the assessment and decision making process that would be used. Simon Wright reflected on the experience of Chirside Community Council with their successful bids to the Community Fund the previous year. It was noted that recommendations for the future Community Fund would also be considered by the Sub-Group.

4.2 The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance at the meeting and wished everyone a happy and healthy Christmas.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm