

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW
WORKING GROUP**

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCOTTISH
BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
SCHEME REVIEW WORKING GROUP held
via MS Teams on Thursday, 27 May 2021 at
6.00 pm

Present:- SBC Councillor R. Tatler (Chairman) -----
Berwickshire
SBC Councillor H. Laing
Community Councillor L. Inglis
Cheviot
Community Councillor M. Ladds
Eildon
SBC Councillor G. Edgar
Teviot & Liddesdale
SBC Councillor W. McAteer
Community Councillor C. Knox
Tweeddale
SBC Councillor S. Haslam

Apologies:- SBC Councillor E. Robson; Community Councillors P. Kerr, S. Turnbull, and
A. Wilson.

In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Clerk to the Council.

1. **WELCOME**

The Chairman, Councillor Tatler, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would be conducted both through MS Teams and via the livestream, reminding everyone that no recordings of the meeting were allowed.

2. **MINUTE**

2.1 Copies of the Minute of the meeting of the Working Group held on 21 January 2021, had been circulated.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute, subject to the sederunt being amended to show that Community Councillor M. Ladds was in attendance.

2.2 With reference to paragraph 3.1 of the Minute, regarding a substitute Community Council representative for the Tweeddale area, Councillor Tatler advised that the Tweeddale Community Councils had now appointed a substitute member to the Working Group. Unfortunately Community Councillor A. Wilson had been unable to be present at this meeting but looked forward to attending in future.

DECISION

NOTED.

3. **OTHER AUTHORITIES' COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEMES**

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 18 March 2021, Councillor Tatler asked members of the Working Group if they had any further information from other Local Authority Schemes for Community Councils which should be considered for inclusion in the Scheme for the Scottish Borders. Members of the Group highlighted areas for further consideration, including some which had been discussed previously by the Group:

- The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 was referenced in 6 other authorities' schemes and should be included
- The Renfrewshire scheme including a summary of expectations of Community Councils which could be adopted
- The promotion of equality and inclusion in Community Councils to make them more relevant
- Funding for Community Councils
- Term of office to be 3 years, with Councillors eligible for re-election
- Bowden Village Committee to be contacted to check whether they still wished to be included in the Scheme
- Add information regarding a Returning Officer for Community Council elections
- Exclusions from standing for election to a Community Council
- Amend wording for requisitions for special meetings
- Consider fixed and rolling elections
- Consider CGI support for Community Councils' IT and publication of agendas/minutes – the link to such publication to be included on the SBC Website for each Community Council; SBC Digital Strategy may be helpful
- Allocation of seats for each Community Council
- Elections Handbook
- SBC Code of Conduct
- Plain English/easy read version of the Scheme
- Job description and role profile for Community Councillors would be useful to add as an annex to the Scheme
- An annual event/survey by each Community Council to ascertain community views on what were the important issues in the area
- Missing from current Scheme – complaints; sanctions; support; training; Community Council Network.

4. **NEXT STEPS**

The Clerk to the Council suggested that an informal/questionnaire could now be issued to each Community Council, giving details of specific amendments the Working Group had discussed and asking for comment on these, as well as requesting any comments on the current Scheme. The Clerk and the Chief Legal Officer could start to amend the current Scheme and bring a copy of that, along with any responses from Community Councils, to the next meeting of the Working Group. A statutory consultation process for the amended version of the Scheme would be required.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) **the Clerk to the Council would draft an informal consultation letter to go out to all Community Councils asking for comments on amendments to the current Scheme and this would be approved by the Working Group before issue;**
- (b) **copies of all comments received from Community Councils would be considered at the next meeting of the Working Group;**
- (c) **the Clerk to the Council and the Chief Legal Officer would start to amend the current Scheme for consideration at the next meeting of the Working Group; and**
- (d) **the Clerk to the Council would provide details of the statutory consultation process to the next meeting of the Working Group.**

5. **NEXT MEETING**

The Group agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 31 August at 6:00pm, and would be held online via MS Teams with the meeting also being livestreamed.

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 6.20 pm