

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 1 February 2022 at 6.00 pm

- Present:- SBC Councillors: N. Richards (Chair), W. McAteer, C. Ramage, G. Turnbull.
Other organisations attendees: Ms H. Batsch (The Bridge), Ms B. Elborn (Newcastleton CC), Mr P. Kerr (Southdean CC), Ms C. Knight, Mr C. Knox (Hawick CC), Ms J. Somers (Cheviot Togs), Mr A. Warburton (Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage CC), Mr F. Wight (Hawick CC), Ms R. Woods (Southdean CC).
- Apologies:- Councillors S. Marshall, D. Paterson.
- In Attendance:- Locality Development Coordinator (G. Jardine), Principal Solicitor (H. Macleod), Community Engagement Officer (S. McKail), Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer (S. Renwick), Youth Engagement Worker (P. Rigby), Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership. 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 OF 16 NOVEMBER AND 7 DECEMBER**

Copies of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 16 November and 7 December 2021 had been circulated. With reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 16 November 2021, the Chairman advised that information including details of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Fund for community groups to organise celebratory events had been circulated and the fund was open for application. With reference to paragraph 14 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 16 November 2021, the Chairman further advised that Officers had noted suggestions made during the Menti evaluation and would factor those suggestion for the agenda of the Meeting of the Area Partnership on 22 March 2022.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minutes of 16 November and 7 December 2021 for signature by the Chairman.

3. **IMPACT OF STORM ARWEN ON COMMUNITIES**

- 3.1 There had been a request for a discussion at the Area Partnership on the impact of Storm Arwen on communities. Mr Philip Kerr of Southdean Community Council introduced the discussion with a verbal update noting there was a need to assess progress with the electricity and telecommunications networks. There had been further issues with the electricity network following Storm Malik which communities were using opportunities to share updates across social media networks. Mr Kerr suggested that communities should have access to mapping of electricity and telecommunications network lines to readily identify sources. Mr Kerr advised that forestry had been having a difficult time with recent storm events. After speaking with Forestry and Land Scotland, Mr Kerr advised they were

still aware of the wheel causeway path issue of needing its path however the recent storms had meant that there were other priorities for the agency to address as matter of priority. The damage assessment from the storms may affect Forestry and Land Scotland's five and ten year plans. Mr Kerr advised he wished to understand how electricity and telecommunications companies were making their lines more resilient and whether lines would be buried underground. With regards to blocked roads, Mr Kerr suggested that Scottish Borders Council could publish a list of affected locations. Mr Kerr further suggested that a Teviot and Liddesdale resilience webpage may help to capture infrastructure incidents in the area. Mr Kerr advised that telecommunications had been in a better status and that he raised the possibility of 'not spots' being covered with more than one source of power. Tree clearing had been taking place at Windhope where it had been suggested that clearing of trees may help strengthen other trees. In response to a question from the Chairman on fibre optic cables shattering when strung along poles, Mr Kerr advised that a 22-day broadband outage had been caused by a similar incident. Mr Kerr further advised that BT had rolled out fibre optic technology by stringing cables between poles and that fibre optic cables were strung tighter than copper lines making them more resilient however they were still vulnerable to trees falling.

- 3.2 Ms Barbara Elborn of Newcastleton Community Council gave a verbal update on the impact of storm incidents in Newcastleton. Electricity had been off in Newcastleton for between 24 – 36 hours, while some properties were without electricity for five or six days. There had been concerns regarding levels of response with questions raised around resilience measures for vulnerable and elderly people requiring generators. Future communications resilience was also raised where there had been experience of digital services failing while analogue services were still live during the incident. Ms Elborn reported that an Executive Officer for Openreach had advised that a deal had been done to supply a 24-hour generator pack which was to be used sparingly. Path clearing had been requested to take place. Ms Elborn advised that there needed to be better understanding of road closures outside of the local authority area so that there was awareness of incidents to the north and south of Newcastleton. Mr Kerr added that he had a digitised telephone service which had lost service while others in Southdean had a copper line and had lost service for 10 to 15 hours. BT provided Mr Kerr with a mini-hub with a 25 megabyte broadband internet connection.
- 3.3 Councillor McAteer advised that conversations had taken place with the Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council for information and advice on incident response. Scottish Borders Council could provide quick assurances where there were problems in places. The experience of providing information following the Storm Arwen incident was being investigated. Councillor McAteer advised Councillors would get read only access to an incident log. Mr Kerr added that the response from BT Openreach was received poorly which may have been caused by overwhelming numbers of calls. SP Energy Networks also provided an essential service however, Mr Kerr advised, they had large numbers of staff dealing with incidents.
- 3.4 Councillor Ramage advised she had been dealing with the situation at Lyndon Park where there were elderly people. Councillor Ramage reported that when the power cut affecting Lyndon Park had taken place, she called SBC to have a generator supplied. This was initially granted but nothing had arrived due to a breakdown. Councillor Ramage tried to call out Scottish Power however they didn't show for a 4.00 pm appointment and also failed to show the next day for a 3.00 pm appointment. Scottish Power then arrived the following day when a live electrical cable had been identified. Councillor Ramage added that when there was more recent stormy weather, she had been checking social media for community updates which may not have been available if communication networks failed. Mr Kerr added that BT Openreach had different engineers for copper and fibre cabling and different jobs associated with linking cabling.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

4. **PLACE MAKING UPDATE**

- 4.1 Councillor Richards introduced Sharon Renwick, Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer, to give an update on Place Making. Ms Renwick began her role before Christmas 2021, had been involved in place plans and place making and the role had come about from the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer advised that place plans were to be prepared in a bottom-up approach and be representative of the community. Place making workshops were to be held across Area Partnerships in February and March with dates to be confirmed. A facilitator was to be appointed to lead workshops so they were not led by Scottish Borders Council. A procurement brief was published on 21 January 2022 with responses invited and due by 4 February. Responses were to be evaluated by 11 February when a facilitator would be appointed.
- 4.2 In response to a question from Ms Elborn, the Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer advised that climate change and net zero may be part of place plans and had been included as part of place plans guidance circulated by the Scottish Government. Mr Kerr added that he had attended a South of Scotland Enterprise talk on net zero and that the organisation was educating their own staff in the issue. It was hoped that the training for staff would be rolled out to companies and hopefully communities and this would contain useful information. The Locality Development Coordinator advised that the place making workshops were platforms at which net zero may be raised.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. **SBC COMMON GOOD CONSULTATION**

Ms Hannah Macleod, Senior Solicitor, explained to the Area Partnership that under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 the Council was required to establish and maintain a register of property which was held by the authority as part of the Common Good (“a Common Good Register”) - which included the Hawick Common Good. The Council was currently undertaking a consultation on what should be included on the Register. Common Good property was owned by the former burghs in Scotland and when the burgh system was abolished in 1975, everything transferred to a Common Good account which was managed by the Trustees of the Common Good (SBC Councillors) who were responsible for managing these assets and making grants as appropriate. In their efforts to establish what should be included in the Common Good account, officers were finding it trickier to identify arts and artefacts than it was to identify buildings and land. In recognising the community interest in this, the Community Empowerment Act required the Council to consult with communities on draft lists and that consultation which would run until 31 March 2022 was being undertaken online through Citizen Space ([Common Good Consultation 2022 - Scottish Borders Council - Citizen Space](#)), with paper copies of the consultation also available. Everyone was encouraged to check the lists and provide information either on something that was there and should not be, or which was missing. Mrs Macleod further advised that once the consultation closed, all representations would be brought to individual Common Good Sub-Committees as well as being published along with officer’ comments. There were a number of legal tests which had to be carried out before assets could be added to a Common Good. The final register would then be published but if any information came to light after that, then assets could still be added.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

6. **COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB UPDATE**

- 6.1 Scott McKail, Community Engagement Officer, gave a brief overview of the areas of discussion at community hub meetings which were taking place weekly. A range of topics

were discussed which included the impact of Storm Arwen, new fire alarm legislation, rising utility costs and specific input from the place making team. Naomi Sweeney, Project Manager, and Sharon Renwick, Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer, introduced themselves and Place Making at the community assistance hub. There was also attendance from Colin Henderson of Skills Development Scotland (SDS) who gave an insight into statistical information used by SDS and how partners could access the same data. Jill McCoy of Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) gave an update on calls that CAB had been receiving which allowed partners to have an insight into the types of issues for which people were seeking support as well as the numbers of people getting in touch with CAB. Ruth Dickinson of Changeworks and Caroline Hamilton of the NHS introduced the Low and Slow project which aimed to reduce the impact of rising utility costs by giving out slow-cooker recipes and ingredients, and information on energy usage and winter warmer packs and draft excluders to 15 families in the TD9 postcode area.

- 6.2 In response to a question from Members, on the effectiveness of awareness raising on integrated fire alarms, Mr Mckail advised that the discussion held on the matter at the community hub worked well and that there would be potential to work with partners in Changeworks and the NHS that may help in reaching vulnerable people. The Locality Development Coordinator suggested that communications may need to improve as some householders had reported that insurers had said they did not need to do anything to be compliant. With regards to remote outreach in Newcastleton, the Locality Development Coordinator advised that there was help provided through Link with a laptop installed at the Tower Cafe where information was shared.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7. BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND APPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Locality Development Coordinator, Ms Jardine, presented the funding table for the Community Fund. If the tabled application was successful, there would be £378 remaining in the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund. An application for the Community Pot A had been received for £2,300 and if it was successful there would be £16,670 remaining. Two further applications had been received which were due to be assessed and if these were included this would leave £13,775 to be awarded.
- 7.2 The Community Engagement Officer, Mr McKail, presented the summary of an application to the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund:

Cheviot Togs

An application had been received for £2,722.50 from Cheviot Togs to create a clothing bank for children and young people in the style of a boutique shop, in Teviot Crescent in Hawick. The project would operate across both Cheviot and Teviot & Liddesdale; the application for funding had been split pro rata across the two community funds. The application was assessed as high as it would support families in need via the provision of clothing for children and young people.

DECISION

AGREED to award a grant of £2,722.50 to Cheviot Togs, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) The applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance when delivering the service.**
- (ii) Moveable equipment to be passed to another community group/organisation should this project cease to operate.**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ramage declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Teams meeting during the discussion, returning once the item had been finalised.

8. **COMMUNITY FUND POT A APPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT**

Mr Cameron Knox of Hawick Community Council presented the summary of recommendations by the Hawick Community Council Fund Pot A Assessment Panel. The panel met to consider an application of £2,300 from Hornshole Greenway Development Group for a ground engineering survey for the Border Queen River Sculpture. The Assessment Panel recommended the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership award a grant of £2,300 to the applicant.

DECISION

AGREED to award Hornshole Greenway Development Group a grant of £2,300.

MEMBER

Councillor Ramage re-joined the Meeting.

9. **PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING UPDATE**

Copies of the slides from the Participatory Budget workshop sessions held at the end of 2021 had been circulated. Ms Jardine thanked all who contributed to the sessions which covered the potential of participatory budgeting. Discussions on participatory budgeting were to continue and attendees were encouraged to contact Ms Jardine or Mr McKail if they wished to participate.

10. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PACK**

The Chair advised that additional information was included in the agenda pack on current consultations, community empowerment requests and the 20mph trial evaluation.

11. **NEXT MEETING OF THE TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP**

It was noted the next Meeting of the Area Partnership was 22 March 2022 and the agenda would be issued on 8 March 2022. It was noted that equality and diversity may be an item on the next meeting informed by feedback collected on Menti. Mr Kerr added that he could engage with South of Scotland Enterprise on environment social governance and net zero and approach Colin Banks to give a presentation.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

12.1 Ms Heather Batsch asked whether funds from Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership Community Fund Pot A and Pot B would rollover to the next financial year after 31 March as discussed at the Cheviot Area Partnership. Ms Jardine advised that this was a Scottish Borders-wide agreement and she would check whether funds would be rolled over after 31 March. Mr Kerr asked whether confirmation would be sought for the closing of round 3 for Pot A of the Community Fund for 21 February for recommendations to be completed for the 22 March meeting of the Area Partnership.

12.2 Mr Kerr advised that Muir Hall wind farm application was due for the end of February to early March and there may be a four-month consultation period.

13. **MEETING EVALUATION VIA MENTI**

Attendees concluded the meeting with submission of meeting evaluations using the software Menti.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.