

MINUTES of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 23 September 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G. Edgar (Chairman), S. Aitchison, E. Jardine, J. Linehan,
H. Scott and E Thornton-Nicol together with 18 representatives of Partner
Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors D. Parker, C. Cochrane, T. Miers

In Attendance:- Locality Development Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Portfolio Manager (J. Lamb),
Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held remotely via Microsoft teams, which included elected Members, guests attending within the meeting and those watching via the Live Stream. The Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 24TH JUNE**

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 24 June 2021 had been circulated and was noted.

3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

It was noted that further consultations had been added relating to ScotRail Services and Social Work Charging Policy.

4. **PLACE MAKING UPDATE**

4.1 Portfolio Manager, James Lamb, gave a slide presentation providing an update on the Place Making Approach. A full report, Place Making - Next Steps had been agreed by Scottish Borders Council at the meeting on 26 August 2021. Mr Lamb explained that following significant consultation with all 5 Area Partnerships, the focus was now on transforming how the council worked with its communities, using consistent methods to provide fair opportunities for development across the region. Each Area Partnership was asked to agree to a proposed joint framework. Mr Lamb outlined some of the proposed Joint Principles and explained that those presented at this meeting were a suggestion, and that feedback on the principles was welcomed. Mr Lamb went on to explain how initial areas for development could be identified using various criteria, such as the Town Centre Index, Existing Locality Plans, Funding-Ready Projects and Economic & Demographic Growth factors. Plans including criteria to promote the development of smaller communities were also being worked on. It was noted that it was highly desirable to draw upon community knowledge rather than purely statistical analysis.

4.2 Regarding the availability of resources, Mr Lamb referred to paragraph 8 of the full report. He drew attention to paragraph 8.6 which outlined that 9 new Scottish Borders Council posts have been created: 2 Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officers, 5 Community Engagement Officers, 1 Climate Change Officer and 1 Green Space

Programme Officer who would support place-making activity. Mr Lamb went on to stress that the speed of action and what would happen was in the hands of the Area Partnership. He asked the Area Partnership to provide feedback on the proposed joint principles, the proposed framework and possible options for Area Partnerships to prioritise where place making activity started and how it could be extended to include all communities as part of a multi-year programme. Mr Lamb would circulate a feedback form via email following the meeting, the responses to which would be analysed and presented at the next appropriate meeting.

- 4.3 The Chairman thanked Mr Lamb for his presentation. It was agreed that a link to the August Council Paper, the draft terms of reference and a copy of the slide presentation would be issued.

5. **AREA PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION**

The Chairman asked Kenny Harrow to provide an update on the Area Partnership Consultation. Mr Harrow advised that the consultation had concluded on 1 August and the results of the consultation were being examined and collated. Mr Harrow would make a presentation on the consultation at the next appropriate meeting.

6. **ANDY'S MAN CLUB**

Alex McClintock, the project development champion from Andy's Man Club gave a talk about his group, who they were and what they were doing in the local area. He explained that they were a peer support group, providing an opportunity for men to talk about any difficulties that they may be facing in life. He went on to explain that they had opened their first group in the Borders in Galashiels, meeting at the in the hospitality suite of Galashiels Rugby Club on Mondays from 7pm to 9pm. The group were continuing to grow and Mr McClintock encouraged any man who was facing challenges in life to attend a meeting to get help and support. The group had developed an extensive social media presence, and enquiries could be directed via Facebook and to info@andysmanclub.co.uk. The Members in attendance spoke highly of the goals of the club and offered their support and encouragement.

7. **COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB**

Oonagh McGarry, the Lead of the Community Assistance Hub gave an update on the work of her group. The hub continued to operate and provide support in the community by delivering emergency food packages, medicine, and Covid-19 support to those who were required to self-isolate. She went on to state that she had continued to chair weekly meetings at the CAH to explore potential areas in Health and Social care that could require attention, for example what issues could arise following the change to Universal Credit. The Chairman thanked Ms McGarry for her presentation and the Community Assistance Hub for its excellent work.

8. **EXPLORER GROUP**

Louise Rawlins, CLDS Worker, gave a presentation on the Muddy Boots and Curious Minds project, which supported young people in the area trying to achieve a John Muir award. The project had identified young people in their final year at secondary school who were at risk of not moving into work, training or further education. They had worked with Borders Forest Trust to deliver life skills training and education on the local countryside to those involved. All of those who had taken part had succeeded in gaining the John Muir Trust "Explorer" award after they demonstrated their leadership skills, knowledge of nature and the ability to lead guided walks. The project had been a great success and promoted further education opportunities, which had helped the young people realise the potential career opportunities available working outdoors or with young people. Mrs Rawlins extended her gratitude to the Borders Children's Charity who had provided £200 to enable the purchase of hiking equipment for the young people. Members congratulated everyone involved on their work and what they had achieved. The Chairman commended all those involved for their excellent work and suggested that

if further funding was required they consider applying to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund.

9. **FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW**

A copy of the Eildon Area Partnership Funding Table had been circulated. Regarding the Community Fund 2021/22, Mr Harrow referred to the table and explained that £53,889.79 had been awarded. He advised that if the pending applications were approved there would be a balance of £9417.04 to last until the new financial year. Mr Harrow went on to explain that The Build Back a Better Borders fund had to date awarded £12,989.33. He advised that if the pending applications were approved there would be a balance of £98,921.81.

10. **COMMUNITY FUND UPDATE / APPLICATIONS**

10.1 A report outlining the recommendations of the Eildon Area Partnership Assessment Panel on five applications to the Eildon Community Fund had been circulated. Mr Harrow explained that the panel had met for the first time, discussed the applications and made recommendations. Jenny Mushlin had been appointed as Chair and she gave an outline of each application before providing comments and an explanation of the reasons for each recommendation. She confirmed that all decisions by the Panel had been unanimous.

10.2 **Selkirk Regeneration**

The application from Selkirk Regeneration was for a grant of £5,220 to help fund the publication of 150 books on the return of fishing rights to their rightful owners. The book described in detail how that was done. The panel was of the opinion that the project didn't clearly evidence the local need or demonstrate wider community access to the resource. Following considerable discussion, the application was denied and funding was not granted.

10.3 **Bird Garden Scotland**

The application under consideration was for a grant of £3,960 to enable the purchase of 10 picnic tables by Bird Garden Scotland to allow visitors to sit and have refreshments at a local greenspace. The grant would also enable those with low mobility and similar challenges to visit the area safely and comfortably. The request for £3,960 was granted in full.

10.4 **St Marys Loch Sailing Club**

St Marys Loch Sailing Club had applied for a grant of £15,000 for the purchase of a new club safety boat. The boat was part of the club's five year strategy, enabling the club to deliver a variety of extra courses and training camps for those of all ages. Members discussed the application and recognised the increased usage of the loch, the importance of safety when engaged in water based activities and the positive impact that the extra courses could have on youths in the area. The request for a grant of £15,000 received unanimous approval.

10.5 **Newstead Village Community Trust**

Newstead Village Community trust had applied for a grant of £13,758 to appoint a professional to help develop a community action plan for Newstead. The application was deferred until the Area Partnership meeting to be held in November to allow time for follow-up questions to be asked and answered.

10.6 **Yoga Frog**

Yoga Frog had applied for a grant of £1,500 to deliver 3 blocks of 5 free yoga sessions to the community, with a focus on stress relief and well-being. The level of community demand and who would be eligible to access the sessions was not clear in the application. The application for a grant of £1,500 was rejected. Mr Harrow informed the meeting that he would follow up with those seeking the grant to work on identifying community need and to create a more structured application.

11. **BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND UPDATE / APPLICATIONS**

11.1 The Chairman asked Mr Harrow to provide an overview of the applications to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund. Mr Harrow drew attention to posts on Flickr, an online photo management and sharing application, of projects that had been funded by the BBBB initiative. Mr Harrow noted that the application from Miracle Woodlands had been withdrawn, whilst the application from Yoga Frog would not be considered at the meeting due to an error on the application and would be brought back at a later date. Mr Harrow proceeded to give an outline of each application.

11.2 **Langlee Community Centre**

Langlee Community Centre Management committee applied for a grant of £2,227 to meet the cost of offering free lets to 10 affiliated groups over a 2 month period. The grant would allow the groups to return to the centre without a financial burden, and aimed to alleviate any concerns about the viability of groups meeting due to low attendance rates. Members discussed the application and raised some concerns regarding the high level of financial reserves held by the centre relative to the grant application as well as a lack of consultation with the affiliated groups involved. Following considerable discussion it was agreed that the application would be deferred to allow the centre some time to conduct user group consultations and provide the results.

11.3 **Stow Community Trust**

The application from Stow Community Trust was for £15,000 to part fund the employment of a manager for 6 months to set up and develop the Stow Cycle Hub based at the Station House. The role of the manager would be to set up the cycle hub with a range of services and to support activities that promote cycling and walking. The Cycle Hub would provide a bike repair and refurbishment service together with personal development opportunities for the local community. Following considerable discussions the application for £15,000 was unanimously granted.

11.4 **Selkirk Baptist Church**

Selkirk Baptist Church was applying for £6796.97 to assist in improving a large garden space on their premises. The funding would allow the area to be made into a safe and comfortable area for the local community to sit and enjoy. It was noted that the garden was overgrown and unsuitable for relaxation. The requested funding would allow the Church to appoint a gardener for 4 hours per week for a 6 month period to work alongside volunteers to maintain the garden. The application included a full price breakdown of other items, such as garden furniture and tools, which the group wished to purchase to improve and manage the garden. Members praised the application and unanimously granted the funding of £6796.97.

12. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr Harrow took the opportunity to demonstrate Menti, a tool designed to allow better participation in online meetings. The tool worked by asking users to scan a QR code with a mobile phone or tablet computer. It then allowed them to provide feedback or ask questions that could be shared on screen. It was also possible to use a standard web-based link. Mr Harrow stated that he hoped to make use of the tool in future Area Partnership meetings.

13. **NEXT EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 11 November 2021. Suggestions for agenda items could be sent to the Locality Development Co-ordinator at kenny.harrowscot@scotborders.gov.uk.

CHAIRMAN

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm