

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft
Teams on Tuesday, 24 August 2021 at 7.00
pm

- Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), H. Anderson, S. Bell, S. Haslam, E. Small together with 18 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community Councils and members of the public.
- Absent:- Councillor K. Chapman
- In Attendance:- Service Director Customer & Communities, Communities & Partnership Manager, Locality Development Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Portfolio Manager (J. Lamb), Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)
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1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership being held via Microsoft Teams and 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 PREVIOUS MEETINGS.**

The Minute of the meetings of the Tweeddale Area Partnership held on 15 June 2021 had been circulated and this was noted. The Minute of the special meetings of the Tweeddale Area Partnership held on 13 July 2021 and 4 August 2021 had been circulated and these were noted.

3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

The Chairman explained that the additional information document included reference to a wide range of information that would be referred to during the meeting.

4. **PLACE MAKING UPDATE**

4.1 Portfolio Manager, James Lamb, gave a presentation providing an update of the Place Making Approach. The aim of this initiative was to facilitate a more joined-up, collaborative and participative approach to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within areas. This aimed to enable better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives. The intention was to build on learning from the operation of the Community Assistance Hubs and Resilience Teams which had worked effectively during the Covid-19 pandemic. The presentation detailed the progress being made on the Place Making approach. Phase 3 would focus on agreeing and developing Place Programme workstreams with delivery being started in Phase 4 at the end of the year and on into 2022. James Lamb outlined the role of the Area Partnership.

4.2 Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer & Communities provided an update on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Place Making report. It had proposed a framework, based on initial engagement with Area Partnerships and partner organisations, for transforming joint working with Communities across the Borders. The

proposed framework aimed to draw on the ambitions of local communities. The approach would be consistent across all 5 of the Area Partnerships. A town centre index would be used to identify areas that required investment. The proposals aimed to transform the working relationship between the Council and the communities it served. The proposals also built on the Place Principle agreed between CoSLA and the Scottish Government. In response to questions, James Lamb stated that from their work it was clear that when action happened at community level it was most likely to flourish. He further stated that they had concluded it was prudent to provide support and examples of best practice to all those involved. The Chairman thanked those involved for their presentation. It was agreed that a link to the Council report and a copy of the slide presentation would be issued.

Councillor H. Anderson joined during the discussion of the above item.

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. However, further feedback on the area partnership was welcomed and any comments should be emailed to him.

6. **TWEEDDALE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB**

Margaret Smail, Tweeddale Community Hub lead gave an update on the work of the Community Assistance Hub. They had fostered a great sense of belonging amongst the community. They had worked very hard to build on their previous work, the largest part of which was food assistance requests and help with Covid-19 recovery. Margaret Smail extended an invite to all those who wished to attend the weekly meetings of the hub.

7. **R-EVOLVE PROJECT & YOUTH DISCUSSION**

Richard McDowell from Community Learning & Development reported on his work with R-evolve, a local social enterprise that aimed to engage with young people to improve their attendance rate at school. He provided a breakdown of the positive youth work that had taken place. Together with Aegar Maclver, he gave a presentation of a grass roots project to create a bespoke garden arch using recycled bicycles that had taken place under the umbrella of the R-Evolve project. The project had been a success and had made a positive impact on the school attendance rates of those involved. Mr McDowell stated that plans were being made to make a bench using similar bike parts. Dave Hodson gave a Youth Update. The drop-ins for Youth Clubs in Peebles were opening up on a Wednesday and Friday, Innerleithen was to come. The Chairman and others in attendance voiced their support for this type of work in the local community. Regarding Community Funding, the R-Evolve group was invited to make an application for support.

8. **OUTSIDE THE BOX - BUDDIES PROJECT**

Ruth Noble from Outside the Box gave a brief update on the work being undertaken by Outside the Box. She explained that the Buddies Project tried to help those with anxiety about meeting up with other people take steps in a positive direction. A wide variety of assistance was available, from risk assessments to helping people “get back to normal” with the help of a buddy. Given the state of the pandemic, the assistance could be offered digitally. However, physical signposting had also been undertaken to try and reach those in the community who were not necessarily active in the digital world. Ms Noble also noted that they had worked well with other organisations, such as the Community Assistance Hub. Councillor Tatler commended them for their excellent work and suggested that if further funding was required they consider applying to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund. In response to a question, Ms Noble advised that she was happy for anyone to make a referral to her.

9. **BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY GROUP**

Neil McIntyre gave an update on a project that had taken place at Peebles Golf club. They had begun work on a long-term project to increase the biodiversity of the area, with a

particular focus on bees and other pollinators. They had converted close to 2500 square metres of land into a wild flower meadow. They had hired a contractor and sown the meadow with wild flower seeds which had bloomed. Mr McIntyre displayed an image of the meadow in bloom. The Councillors in attendance were impressed with the beauty of the meadow and the overall success of the project. In particular, attention was drawn to the sustainability of the project, with perennial plants being used. Councillor Anderson recommended that the experiences of Mr McIntyre were fed into the Sustainable Development Committee and shared with community councils. Mr McIntyre was happy to share his experience with any party who would like to try and begin a similar project of their own and advised that they had a Facebook page that gave details of how to get in touch.

10. **COMMUNITY FUND UPDATE/ APPLICATIONS**

Kenny Harrow gave an update on community fund applications. He explained that he would soon be meeting with the assessment panel members to begin looking at applications. He hoped that a special meeting to consider applications would be take place in mid to late September. In response to a question from Councillor Tatler, Mr Harrow explained that none of the outstanding applications were time sensitive. Mr Harrow further outlined that the UK Government had launched further funding initiatives and stated that he was happy to help and support those interested in making an application.

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

11.1 Kenny Harrow provided an update on a Build Back a Better Borders (BBBB) Recovery fund application received from Peebles Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The application was for £13410 to allow Peebles CAB the additional staffing hours to support the development of an effective training programme to get new trainees ready to start work in an advisor role. The additional staff hours would allow the CAB to develop in house training which could be used repeatedly. £1400 of the grant would be used to buy laptop computers for new trainees. Some concerns were raised about whether BBBB funds should be spent on salaries. The manager of the Peebles CAB clarified that the funding would allow those involved to prepare a training programme that would be a useful ongoing resource. Members spoke in favour of the application, highlighting the good work of the CAB in difficult times. Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Bell moved approval of £13410 and this was unanimously approved.

11.2 Mr Harrow then provided an update on the budget. He stated that the fund was left with £49050 at the end of May 2021. The Chairman invited more applications.

12. **PEEBLES PARKING SUB GROUP**

The Chairman gave an update on the work of the group. A meeting was held in July, the minutes of which would be published soon. The timeframe of the work was explained, with meetings due to be held in September, November, February and April. A report was expected October 2022. In response to a question on the timescale of the work, the Chairman explained that due to COVID-19 restrictions the group was unable function, and that they would work to the new planned timescale.

13. **DATE OF NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING**

The next full meeting of the Area Partnership was scheduled for 2 November 2021 and the Chairman asked for agenda item suggestions to be submitted.

14. **OPEN FORUM**

14.1 The Chairman opened the Open Forum section of the meeting. The following items were discussed:

14.2 **Afghanistan Humanitarian Crisis**

In response to a question regarding local initiatives to coordinate donations for the refugee situation triggered by events in Afghanistan, Councillor Haslam outlined the work that she was aware of. Work was underway by various charities to co-ordinate the

collection of donations of household goods. Potential housing was being identified for families across the Borders. She was also aware of a previously successful project by the Volunteer Centre Borders in helping Syrian refugees adjust and get involved with their local communities by volunteering, and explained that she would look to encourage this approach to help any new arrivals integrate with their local community.

14.3 **Speed Limits**

Regarding the imposition of a 20mph speed limit across the borders towns and villages there was a discussion about whether a consultation would take place with Community Councils. Councillor Anderson explained that specific meetings had been set up to discuss these matters and she would raise this point.

14.4 Mr Harrow advised that his team were looking as the use of “Mentee” and “Slido” which were tools to allow better participation at meetings. He hoped to be able to offer a demonstration at the next meeting.

15. **MEETING EVALUATION**

Mr Harrow reminded everyone to provide their feedback via the link on the agenda.

The meeting concluded at 9.09 pm