

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held via MS Teams
on Tuesday, 18 January 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), H. Anderson, S. Bell, S. Haslam, E. Small
together with 20 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community
Councils and members of the public.

Absent:- Councillor K. Chapman

In Attendance:- Principal Solicitor, Locality Development Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Community
Engagement Officer (H. Lacon), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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 Minutes of the meetings of the Tweeddale Area Partnership held on 27 September and 2 November 2021 were noted. Mr Harrow advised the meeting that interest had been registered in having a discussion on dementia services, which would be included as an item on the agenda at the meeting in March. Furthermore, the place-making workshop, planned for early January, had been postponed due to the required procurement process taking longer than expected, with the workshop expected to take place at the end of February.

3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR NOTING

3.1 The Chairman explained that the additional information document included reference to a wide range of information that would be referred to during the meeting. The Chairman also raised the issue that the amount of material being sent out with the agenda was too high. Mr Harrow undertook to try to reduce the volume of materials and summarise as much of the content as possible ahead of meetings.

3.2 Common Good Consultation

The Principal Solicitor, Mrs Hannah Macleod joined the meeting to explain what was happening within Scottish Borders Council with regard to Common Good Fund owned property and assets. Common Good Funds were created from the former Burghs of Scotland, managed by local Councillors who acted as trustees. Councillors also met to provide grants. Under the Community Empowerment Act, the Council was obligated to publish and maintain a list of assets, land and art/artefacts, owned by the Common Goods. The consultation on the aforementioned list of assets had opened and would run until at least 31 March 2021. Mrs Macleod invited members of the public to suggest any item or area of land that they thought may be owned by the Common Goods in the area – Innerleithen and Peebles. Mrs Macleod advised the meeting that should there be a large number of responses then the consultation would be extended to allow the full consideration of any item suggested to be Common Good owned. Following the consultation, the representations received would be brought back to each specific Sub-Committee to discuss the comments and evidence received. It was stressed that legal tests would be used to verify ownership. Mrs Macleod advised everyone in attendance that the list would be published once the process was completed, but that it would be open to review – new items could be considered and added. Mrs Macleod circulated her

email address and advised attendees that she was happy to send out paper copies to any interested party wishing to make a representation.

4. PLACE MAKING UPDATE

Ms Hannah Lacon, Community Engagement Officer, gave a presentation on Place Making conversations that she had engaged in with young people in the area. Working with Dave Hodson at Tweeddale Youth Action, she had held discussions with 4 young people to get their views on the place that they lived. Those interviewed had been asked what they thought were the positives and negatives of Peebles. The most cited positives of Peebles were: Community Groups were active; public transport within Peebles was accessible; and there was perceived to be less of a drug culture in comparison to other towns within the Scottish Borders. The interviews had also highlighted the perceived negative aspects of the town: public transport to other towns was poor; young people in the town felt demonised due to the actions of small anti-social groups; the support for school leavers was limited; and housing was inadequate and unaffordable. Those in attendance discussed Ms Lacon's work, highlighted the welcome insight into how young people in the area felt and recognised the need to highlight the good work young people across the region were doing within society. Michelle Scott, of Scottish Borders Housing Association, shared her details and welcomed the idea of establishing a working group to assist in future planning of housing provision in the area.

5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Mr Malcolm Bruce gave an explanation of work that had been going on to address anti-social behaviour in Peebles. Mr Bruce explained that persistent reports of anti-social behaviour and vandalism had been received by Community Councillors in the area and that the Peebles Community Council had liaised with Peebles community police teams to try and engage with young people in the area. They had also subsequently partnered with Peebles Youth Action, Ms Lacon and Lori Lee at LiveBorders on various initiatives to try and open dialogue with young people in the area. These efforts had not met with a high degree of success, with those involved deciding that a lack of data was hindering their efforts. A survey of the school roll of Peebles High School was planned, and following discussions with, and input from, the Deputy Head of the school, had gone live. The survey was being conducted on school provided iPads, with all data anonymous. Mr Bruce explained that discussions had been held regarding the prospects of engaging a "street pastor" to work with young people in the area, with Tweeddale Youth Action willing to host the post if funding could be found. Mr Bruce suggested that the person who filled that role could help move discussions away from negative social media rhetoric, the prejudgement of young people and help promote meaningful interactions that could improve the local community.

5.2 Those in attendance discussed the survey, expressed some reservations about the nature of the questions asked and what level of honest feedback would be received whilst also recognising the efforts of the Community Council in trying to resolve anti-social related issues in the local area. CLD worker Mr Richard McDowell, Youth Engagement Worker, Ms Pam Rigby and MSYP representative Ally Turnbull agreed to support the group by providing a youth perspective. Members in attendance suggested that engaging with young people in the area by asking for them to be involved in proposing solutions to problems was an avenue that ought to be considered.

6. PARTICIPATORY BUDGET UPDATE FROM SCDC TRAINING

The Chairman advised the meeting that there had been a useful series of workshops with SCDC and that he was keen to build on the conversations that arose from those workshops.

7. FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW

A copy of the Tweeddale Area Partnership Funding Table had been circulated. The Chairman asked Mr Harrow to provide an update on funding levels. Regarding the Community Fund 2021/22, Mr Harrow referred to the table and explained that £40,846.90

remained in the fund prior to the meeting. The value of active applications was £37,190, with £3650.50 remaining if all of the applications were successful. In response to a question from the Chairman, Mr Harrow advised that the lawn tennis club had been unable to secure a funding package for their project and had subsequently returned previously awarded grant money. Mr Harrow undertook to investigate with the finance department the ramifications of that. This had not been reflected in the funding table. Mr Harrow drew attention to the Welfare Trust, which had £2,500 available to help support those facing poverty. Two other funds, in Tweeddale East and West had £272.40 and £27.80 in another pot. Regarding the Build Back a Better Borders (BBBB) fund, £23,462.41 remained in the fund prior to the meeting. The value of active applications was £41,976.85, leaving the fund oversubscribed by £18,514.44.

8. COMMUNITY FUND

The recommendations of the Tweeddale Area Partnership Assessment Panel on seven applications the Tweeddale Community Fund had been circulated. Esther Daborn referred to the recommendations and advised that she was willing to answer questions or give clarity if required.

8.1 Peebles Burgh Silver Band

The application was for a grant to allow the purchase of locally sourced branded polo shirts and hoodies, and free tuition for one year at a revised total of £3,640. The application was unanimously approved.

8.2 Peebles CAN

A revised application for a specific project had been submitted to cover the costs of growing herbs sustainably. Members of the Assessment Panel requested more information on the costs of materials and salary for the one year project. Further details were required to allow a decision to be made. Consideration of the application was deferred to allow the aforementioned concerns to be addressed. Ms Lacon undertook to engage and support the group with future applications.

8.3 Peeblesshire Food Bank

The application was for a grant of £6,250 to assist in the purchase of a new van. The Assessment Panel noted that the application was well received but concerns remained over monetary reserves, whether purchasing a vehicle was the best option, and the monitoring of usage of the vehicle to ensure it was not used for private purposes. The Panel recommended that a discretionary fund for the running costs of the van was set up; a cost analysis comparing the cost of leasing versus purchasing a vehicle was carried out; and a monitoring system put in place to ensure the van was used solely for Food Bank purposes. The Panel recommended that £5,000 was granted towards either the first year's lease or cost of purchase. The application was unanimously approved.

8.4 Peebles Community Centre - Craft Box

The application was for materials, tuition fees and expenses to run 45 classes for 60 elderly/vulnerable adults. The Panel recommended approval subject to confirmation of the number of classes and target number of participants against the actual numbers recorded for the end of year report. The revised grant of £5,000 was unanimously approved.

8.5 Peebles High School Student Parliament

The application for a grant of £4000 was to help develop a student voice and life skills through dealing with applications for school projects managed by the Student Parliament. The Panel recommended approval on the basis that projects did not cover areas where Scottish Borders Council Estates had responsibility and that there would be sufficient reports available at the end of the year. The grant was unanimously approved.

8.6 Innerleithen Lawn Tennis Club

The application from Innerleithen Tennis Club was for £7,500 as part of a £60,000 project for construction of 2 mini courts and a practice wall for juniors. Further information had

been provided on the value of the mini courts to release main courts for adults and the value of a practise wall for older children to practise ground strokes. The application was unanimously approved.

8.7 Tweeddale Rideability Group

The application was for a grant of £6,300 to purchase a new horse so that the group could offer additional sessions. This would allow the group to offer a valuable service to young people in Tweeddale. The application was unanimously approved.

9. BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND APPLICATIONS

9.1 The Chairman asked Mr Harrow to give an outline of each of the applications to the BBBB fund.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Haslam declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

9.2 St Ronans Bowling Club

The St Ronans Bowling Club were applying for £12,662.23 to construct a wooden framed gazebo to add an outside element to their facility. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Anderson moved approval of £12,662.23 and this was unanimously agreed.

MEMBER

Councillor Haslam re-joined the meeting following the discussion of the above item.

9.3 Kingsland Primary School Pupil Council

The group had applied for £2,224.62 to create a community shed on school grounds. The shed would provide basic supplies with the aim of improving well-being and attainment in education. The pupil council would provide a free breakfast to pupils, and work with the Peeblesshire foodbank and the school's garden and Food Growing Strategy to provide food and supplies to families in need so they could cook a meal at home. Other items such as second hand school uniforms, books, stationary and seasonal items such Christmas party items would be available. Councillor Bell spoke extremely highly of the application, highlighted the high scores in the assessment form, and seconded by Councillor Anderson, moved approval of £2,224.62 which was unanimously approved.

9.4 The Edible Garden

The application from the Edible Garden requested £2,800 to help make their garden safe and fit for purpose ahead of a new programme of community based workshops. The funding was to meet the cost of urgent repair works to the growing space in the garden. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Small, moved approval of £2,800 and this was unanimously approved.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Bell declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

9.5 The Peeblesshire Foodbank

The application for £6,750 was for part funding, in conjunction with the community fund, for a new van. The application noted that people who had accessed the food bank had struggled to transport food home, with the van expected to help relieve that pressure. Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Haslam, moved approval of £6,750, and this was unanimously agreed.

MEMBER

Councillor Bell re-joined the meeting following the discussion of the above item.

9.6 Innerleithen Lawn Tennis Club

The application from the Innerleithen Lawn Tennis Club was for £15,000 to help with the costs of a large project. The funding would help meet the construction costs of 2 mini tennis courts and a practise wall. The Club hoped the construction of the new facilities would help meet a wider community need by providing a place for children to engage in exercise and sport. The Club had also applied to the Community Fund to help meet the costs of the project. Concerns were raised about the total value of the two grants that the Club had applied for from the Area Partnership. Unanimous agreement was not reached, and Members voted on whether or not to grant the application.

Vote

Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Anderson moved that the application for funding was granted.

Councillor Small, seconded by Councillor Haslam moved as an amendment that the application for funding was rejected.

As the meeting was conducted by Microsoft Teams members were unable to vote by the normal show of hands and gave a verbal response as to how they wished to vote the result of which was as follows:-

Motion by Councillor Tatler – 2 votes

Amendment by Councillor Small – 3 votes

The amendment that the application for funding was rejected was accordingly carried.

Members expressed their hope that the project would go on to be successful, and advised the group to discuss further funding options with the Communities and Partnership Team.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Tatler declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor Tatler, Councillor Anderson acted as Chair.

9.7 The Food Foundation

The application from the Food Foundation had been considered under the fast track provisions. The application had not received a majority vote in favour of granting nor denying the funding and was therefore considered at the meeting. Further information was requested to provide clarity on some unresolved matters. Mr Harrow undertook to provide that information to Members and the application would be considered as a fast track application again.

MEMBER

Councillor Tatler re-joined the meeting following the discussion of the above item and resumed Chairmanship of the meeting.

10. GROUP EVALUATION

Mr Harrow advised that he was looking to receive evaluations following the voting on the Localities Bid Fund rounds one and two, and would look to distribute these in due course.

11. PEEBLES PARKING SUB GROUP UPDATE

The Chairman gave an update on the work of the Group. A meeting had been held on 22 November. The Chairman advised those in attendance that the group had moved on to getting more information. The next meeting would be held on 2 February 2022.

12. NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP - 29 MARCH 2022

The next full meeting of the Area Partnership was scheduled for 29 March 2022 and the Chairman asked for agenda item suggestions to be submitted.

13. **MEETING EVALUATION VIA MENTI**

Ms Lacon used Menti to get feedback from those in attendance on the meeting. The tool worked by asking users to scan a QR code with a mobile phone or tablet computer and then allowed them to provide feedback or ask questions that could be shared on screen. The Chairman suggested that the mid-meeting use of Menti would be a useful addition to future meetings.

The meeting concluded at 9.25 pm