

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held in The Assembly Hall, Hawick High School, Buccleuch Road, Hawick on Wednesday, 16 November 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors C. Ramage (Chair), S. Marshall, N. Richards and A. Smart

Other organisations attendees: Mr J. Adams, Mr W. George (Hawick CC), Ms M. Short, and Mr D. Taylor (Hawick CC); Ms H. Batsch (The Bridge), Mr I. Crosbie (Newcastleton and District CC); Ms R. Disbury (Alchemy Film and Arts), Mr W. Douglas, Mr J. Martin and Ms S. Martin (Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water CC); Ms C. Elliot-Walker (Hawick Reivers Association), Ms C. Francis (South of Scotland Enterprise), Ms C. Hamilton (NHS Borders), Mr G. Muir (Hornshole Greenway), Mr P. Kerr (Southdean CC), Ms J. Scott (Hawick High School), Mr R. Swinton (Hobkirk CC).

Apologies:- Councillors J. Cox and W. McAteer

In Attendance:- Community Co-ordinator (G. Jardine), Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

1. WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and to Hawick High School.

2. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 13 September 2022. The chair advised attendees that since the last meeting of the Area Partnership that Burnfoot Community Council had been awarded £9,365 from the National Lottery for their memorial garden project. With reference to paragraph 4.4 of the Minute of the meeting held on 21 June 2022, the Chair advised that Neighbourhood Services were happy to discuss supporting community councils to control weeds in their towns. Contractors would need to be selected from an SBC-approved supplier and volunteers could be managed through the Community Council.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.

3. PLACE MAKING

3.1 The Chair introduced the update on Place Making and brought to the attention of attendees of work undertaken in Hawick on the Vision 2024 project undertaken in 2014.

3.2 Alchemy Film and Arts

Ms Rachael Disbury of Alchemy Film and Arts was introduced to present on a workshop held by Scottish Borders Council to engage young people in Place Making. Alchemy Film

and Arts was a creative art employer which engaged young people from marginal communities which afforded the organisation the opportunity to hear from them often. A Borderlands workshop was organised to hear from young people about how to make their place better. Discussions covered the potential for better cultural spaces, the railway, connecting communities for mutual benefit and the lack of a night-time economy. The importance of hearing from young people was identified as a key impact of discussions. The next workshop would focus on resources and the Hawick town centre with input from those outwith Hawick. Ms Disbury offered to help support engagement from young people in future Place Making activities.

3.3 **Hawick High School**

Jessica Scott, a pupil of Hawick High School, presented on Place Making discussions that had taken place amongst pupils in Hawick High School. She emphasised the importance of young people's views being heard and captured by the Scottish Borders Council. Surveys were used in Hawick High School to gather pupils' opinions, with Apple iPads used across younger and older year groups. Questions that were being formed to survey pupils included asking about pupils' thoughts on getting a job after school, how young people spent their free time and about transport. Attendees discussed how school pupils could be encouraged to share their views and Jessica Scott advised that pupils should be made to feel comfortable in a forum to share their thoughts.

3.4 Mr Philip Kerr, Southdean Community Council, advised that the village show were used to launch a survey to ask what mattered most to residents in Southdean. Issues covered included setting and landscape, broadband, roads and community facilities. Mr Kerr advised that consideration should be given to what the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods would mean for rural communities.

3.5 The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions on the discussion on Place Making.

4. **COAST TO COAST CYCLE ROUTE**

4.1 Ms Catherine Francis of South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) was introduced by the Chair to present an update on the Coast to Coast Cycle Route. Ms Francis advised that a long-distance cycle route from Stranraer to Eyemouth was planned for establishment in summer 2023. The route would be entirely on the road network and would be intended for experienced and competent road cyclists. The route would be the first long-distance cycle route in the South of Scotland comparable to the Caledonian Way cycle route from Inverness to Campbeltown. The route was expected to bring economic and community benefits through 175,000 new visitors a year. The route was intended to be launched in advance of the 2023 UCI World Championships which would be held in Scotland with SBC, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Sustrans and Visit Scotland as key partners in its development. Ms Francis advised that the route had not been fully finalised with several factors governing its route which included avoiding busier roads and the carrying out of a safety audit.

4.2 Members discussed the proposed route and considered potential investment in routes and signage. Ms Francis advised that investment and upgrading of signage would follow a safety and technical review of the potential route. Cllr Smart advised that she was familiar with the route as a cyclist and that there were several pinch points to be considered including the safety of the A75, and that she was happy to provide feedback on the route. Ms Francis stated that SOSE were keen to engage communities on the route and for them to be aware that the route's establishment was happening. Communities could engage with the route by contacting Ms Francis at SOSE.

4.3 The Chair thanked Ms Francis for the update on the Coast to Coast Cycle Route

5. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE FUNDING TABLE 2022-23**

There had been circulated copies of the Teviot and Liddesdale Funding Table 2022-23 which showed available funding in the Teviot and Liddesdale area. The Neighbourhood Support Fund had £87,826.02 available with £40,728.68 awarded since 1 April 2022 and applications valued at £21,991 that awaited decisions.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND - POT A FUND

6.1 There had been circulated copies of a report that detailed recommendations made by Pot A assessment panels from Hawick Community Council and Newcastleton Community Council.

6.2 Hawick Community Council

Ms Marion Short of Hawick Community Council presented the Pot A assessment panel report.

6.3 An application was received from 3rd Hawick Rainbows for £1,500 to fund a pack holiday to Craighope Outdoor Centre in May 2023 which would cover travel, meals, accommodation and activities. The panel assessed the application to be very worthwhile and recommended that the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership grant an award of £1,500.

6.4 An application was received from Hawick Reivers Association for £3,780 to support the annual Reivers event in March 2023. The panel recognised that other fundraising was in place and that costs were maximised due to it being the 20th anniversary of the Reivers festival. The panel recommended that Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership grant an award of £3,780.

6.5 Ms Short presented a request for £462.90 from the Teviot and Liddesdale Pot B Neighbourhood Support Fund to cover that value of overspend from the Hawick Community Council Pot A fund. Ms Short advised that members of the Pot B assessment panel had been approached who indicated support for the proposal. Attendees discussed the proposal. Some concern was raised regarding a possible precedent for future overspend of Pot A funds. Ms Short advised that had the situation had been known in advance then steps would have been taken to resolve the situation and if a similar scenario was to occur again, steps would be taken to avoid overspend. The Community Coordinator advised that there was still approximately £25,000 to award, that some community councils had not received any applications and that there was still funding available to support all applications. Attendees approved the proposal to fund the Hawick Community Council Pot A overspend from the Pot B fund.

DECISION

AGREED:

(a) To grant 3rd Hawick Rainbows an award of £1,500;

(b) To grant Hawick Reivers Association an award of £462.90; and,

(c) To transfer £462.90 from the Pot B fund to cover the overspend in the Hawick Community Council Pot A fund.

6.6 Newcastleton Community Council

Mr Iain Crosbie presented the summary of recommendations from the Newcastleton Community Council Pot A assessment panel.

- 6.7 An application had been received from Copshaw Warmer Winters Project for £3,340. Mr Crosbie advised the Area Partnership that the application was made to cover staffing costs so that the applicants may increase staffing numbers over the winter months. Attendees discussed the eligibility of applications to the Neighbourhood Support Fund with the purpose of covering staff costs. An update was provided that funding had been sourced for one element of the project. The Area Partnership agreed to a partial grant award of the funding requested

DECISION

AGREED to grant Copshaw Warmer Winters project an award of £1,840.

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND - POT B FUND

- 7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report from the Teviot and Liddesdale Neighbourhood Support Fund Pot B Assessment Panel which detailed recommendations for three applications for funding.

7.2 Hawick, Selkirk and Denholm Red Squirrel Network

An application had been received from Hawick, Selkirk and Denholm Red Squirrel Network to fund an expansion and administration of their volunteer survey, covering insurance, printing, feed/bait, leaflets, stamps and venue hire. The assessment panel recommended that the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership fund 90% of the application in recognition that the work of the applicant covered parts of the Eildon area and funding for 10% of the project could be sought from the Eildon Neighbourhood Support Fund.

7.3 Hawick Reivers Association

An application had been received from Hawick Reivers Association to for funding for the cost of the annual Reivers festival. The assessment panel asked elected members to consider taking forward considerations for the Reivers festival to attain 'festival status' by Scottish Borders Council.

7.4 Borders Green Team Enterprise

An application had been received from Borders Green Team Enterprise for £5,000 to fund additional staffing during the winter period. There were queries the assessment panel had about the application and no contact with the applicant was able to have been made.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) To grant Hawick, Selkirk and Denholm Red Squirrel Network an award of £3,371;**
- (b) To grant Hawick Reivers Association an award of £5,000; and,**
- (c) To not award grant funding to Borders Green Team Enterprise.**

8. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

- 8.1 The chair invited community council representatives to share updates on activities in their area.

8.2 Newcastleton and District Community Council

Mr Iain Crosbie, Chair of Newcastleton and District Community Council, advised that support was being sought for community council administration and that there was interest with how other community councils were managing. In-person Area Partnership meetings were raised and consideration was asked to be made for blended meetings. It was advised that blended meetings were dependent on available technology for people to participate in meetings and for the meetings to be streamed live.

8.3 **Hawick Community Council**

Ms Marion Short, Chair of Hawick Community Council, advised that presentation slides had been received from SBC Waste and Passenger Transport on how waste was managed which she was willing to share. Ms Short raised road status reporting and asked that community councils be added to the distribution list for reports.

8.4 **Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council**

Mr Walter Douglas of Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council advised that BT were switching line provision to digital for their area and that enquiries for a power pack to power landlines were being made.

9. **COST OF LIVING UPDATE**

The Community Co-ordinator provided an update on activity and support across the Borders and in Teviot and Liddesdale in relation to the cost of living. Scottish Borders Council had £1.2 million to support communities and households with the rising cost of living. Some grant awards had been made for Council Tax relief and for access to food. Funding was available for organisations to be part of Fareshare and for offering warm spaces.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

10.1 Mr Philip Kerr advised that he was to organise a Microsoft Teams meeting for attendees to meet and hear from Euan Norris of Scottish Power to address power grid capacity concerns in Teviot and Liddesdale.

10.2 Mr Kerr provided a further update on broadband experiences in the Southdean area. Following Storm Arwen, broadband provision was out for 20 days. Mr Kerr obtained a minihub following another tree that had interrupted telephone lines, however he had heard Openreach was prioritising the rollout of superfast broadband. While works were required to reinstate broadband, several houses were without service, including one with a pregnant woman and others who were working from home. Services were expected to be restored on 5 December. Mr Kerr stated that a message needed to be sent to BT to ensure that lessons from Storm Arwen were learned and that more is done for rural communities that were vulnerable in cases of broadband services being interrupted.

The meeting concluded at 8.45 pm.