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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 20 April 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), N. Richards (Vice-Chair), J. Anderson, P. Brown, J. Cox, M. Douglas, J. PatonDay, E. Robson, S. Scott and F. Sinclair

In Attendance:- Acting Chief Officer Corporate Governance, Clerk to the Council, and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. **MINUTE AND SCRUTINY ACTION SHEET**

- 1.1 Copies of the Minute of Meeting held on 12 January 2023 had been circulated.
- 1.2 Copies of the Action Tracker for Scrutiny decisions had been circulated. The following items were to be considered at the meeting scheduled for 1 June 2023: use of school premises by community groups; incorporation of rural proofing into checklists; and public transport and communities evaluation.

DECISION

- (a) **APPROVED** the Minute for signature by the Chair.
- (b) **NOTED** the dates where outstanding actions would be considered.

2. **FUTURE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 12 January 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Clerk to the Council, the purpose of which was to provide details of those subjects submitted for consideration for review by the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee and to seek approval for their inclusion in the Scrutiny Review Work Programme. Members were reminded of their strategic role whereby it was appropriate for reviews to scrutinise delivery against a plan, or benefit realisation against a target. In the first instance, Members were to be cognisant of the two threshold criteria: the proposed review was within the scope of the Council and its objectives; and the scope of the review was clear and concise. Further criteria were outlined in the report with due consideration to be given to the number of reviews directed to any particular Service at one time to ensure that their resources were not stretched too thinly. Officers from various Services of the Council would provide advice and support where appropriate. Eleven subjects had been submitted for possible inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme, detailed in the Appendix to the report. This list was to be added to, subject to Council approval, over the coming years as further subject reviews arose. There followed a discussion on each review proposal. It was agreed to combine proposals with commonality which resulted in nine proposed reviews as detailed in the Appendix to the Minute. A further verbal proposal from Councillor Cox was considered and deemed to be under the remit of the Audit Committee. The Council Management Team were to provide further details and outcomes for the proposed reviews. The final list of subjects for review was to be considered for agreement at the meeting of 1 June 2023, and then presented to the Council for approval on 29 June 2023. Reviews would be scheduled to begin in August 2023.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) the list of subjects it wished to take forward for inclusion in the Scrutiny Review Work Programme as detailed in the Appendix to this Minute; and
- (b) that the Council's Management Team would be asked to provide further details, including outcomes for such reviews, for consideration by the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee prior to it recommending its Review Work Programme for approval by Scottish Borders Council.

The meeting concluded at 10.25 am

SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY POTENTIAL REVIEWS

NO	POTENTIAL REVIEW	SUBMITTED BY/DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Action Update
1.	Public Toilet Provision	Cllr Sinclair (9 January 2023)	John Curry	Agreed to combine with No 2 and review implementation of new policy recently agreed at Council in approx. 18 months time. Possible WG?
2.	Closure of Public Toilet in Stow	Stow Community Council (20 March 2023)	John Curry	As above
3.	Employability Service public engagement	Cllr Anderson (12 January 2023)	Jenni Craig	Agreed
4.	Private Sector Housing Grants and assessment process (OT)	Cllr Robson (12 January 2023)	Gwyneth Lennox (OT assessment)/ Donna Bogdanovich	Agreed
5.	Unused Trading Estate on Lennel Road, Coldstream – this has no tenants and has stood unused for over 10 years. We would like to understand what SBC is going to do to ensure that whatever extra it takes to make it a useful site is invested so the grant monies used to create the site are not wasted and actually general a return and jobs for the community.	Coldstream CC (17 February 2023)	John Curry	Agreed to expand this to cover current and future use of industrial estates across the Borders.
6.	Scottish Government Covid Grant Funding – a full analysis of its purpose and use, with reference to the Audit Committee if necessary.	Cllr M Douglas (17 February 2023)	Jenni Craig/Suzy Douglas	Agreed to combine this review with No. 7
7.	Covid Recovery Fund – purposed and spend to date on what?	Cllr Thornton-Nicol	Suzy Douglas, Jenni Craig	As above
8.	Community Access to Schools out-with school hours and the availability of janitorial staff to open the premises.	Cllr M Douglas (17 February 2023)	Lesley Munro, Jenni Craig, John Curry	Agreed
9.	Shared Lives – what does the contract cost annually and what is the performance against KPIs, savings met?	Cllr Thornton-Nicol	Chris Myers/ Simon Burt	Agreed

NO	POTENTIAL REVIEW	SUBMITTED BY/DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Action Update
10.	E-Fleet – impact of pool cars on cost of reimbursing mileage to staff?	Cllr Thornton-Nicol	John Curry/ Clair Hepburn	Agreed
11.	See Hear funding 2013/14 – amount received, what hat has this been used for and what are the outcomes.	Cllr Thornton-Nicol	Michael Curran	Agreed to look at the annual grant from 13/14 onwards and the outcomes which are being achieved.