

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 14 June 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors C. Ramage (Chair), J. Cox, W. McAteer and A. Smart together with 13 Community Councillors and Members of the Public.

Apologies:- Councillors S. Marshall and N. Richards

In Attendance:- Community Coordinator (G. Jardine), Community Engagement Officer (S. Culverwell), Participation Officer (C. Malster), Strategic Housing Development Officer (L. Renwick), Sgt A. Grainger (Police Scotland), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall).

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership which was held via Microsoft Teams.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 18 APRIL 2023**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 18 April 2023. The Chair advised that there were no actions which had been required to be taken forward. Comments from the five Area Partnerships on the Draft Health and Social Care Strategic Framework had been well received by the Health and Social Care Partnership, a full summary would be presented once completed.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.

3. **LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2023-2028 CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed Lindsay Renwick, Scottish Borders Council's Principal Officer, Housing Strategy, Policy and Development to the meeting to provide a presentation on the Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028. Ms Renwick explained that the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a requirement on Local Authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) every five years which set out a vision for the supply, quality and availability of housing in the region. The Plan was not just a council plan, but a Scottish Borders Wide plan. The LHS was the key planning document which provided a framework of action, investment and partnership-working to deliver local priorities. It was set within the context of a number of local and national strategies. Work had been ongoing for 18 months, but for 2 years in total. Ms Renwick was in attendance to make the Teviot and Liddesdale community aware of the LHS and to gauge opinion. Engagement had been underway since August 2021, and had involved an Early Engagement Survey with key stakeholders; Resident and Stakeholder workshops and surveys; work with the Gypsy and Traveller community; Key Worker surveys; and a Private Landlord survey. All of the details on engagement could be found in Appendix 3 of the full strategy. The LHS was now out for formal consultation, and was comprised of 12 documents. The main LHS consultation was open until 21 July 2023. Once the consultation closed the LHS would be sent to the Scottish Government for review, and once all comments and work had been incorporated into the report it would be presented to Committee later in the year. Ms Renwick outlined the major challenges faced by the Scottish Borders in the context of housing, which included the rural nature of the region; the labour market; low wage nature of the economy; ageing population and challenges

related to commitments to reach climate change targets. The ongoing issues of inflation and the cost of living crisis was also having an impact.

- 3.2 It was a requirement under the LHS to set a Housing Supply Target. The target under the proposed LHS had been set at 353 new houses per year. That was comprised of 141 affordable houses and 212 market houses. The methodology, which used Housing Need and Demand Assessment as starting point, for determining the target was contained in Appendix 4 to the report. Ms Renwick explained that the vision which underpinned the LHS was that everyone would have access to a home that met their needs as part of a sustainable community. There were five strategic outcomes; more, well designed homes; people had access to homes which promoted independence and health; improved energy efficiency of homes and promoting a reduction in fuel poverty whilst transitioning to net zero; communities were regenerated through improving the quality and condition of housing; and homelessness was presented using a range of housing options. Each of the priorities had between 5 and 7 key actions for delivery which were included in the draft LHS. Ms Renwick undertook to share the slides out of the meeting. The full LHS was available on the SBC website, paper copies of the documents were available and a questionnaire was on Citizens Space. In response to a question regarding attendance at the workshops, Ms Renwick explained that the early part of the consultation had received in the region of 250 responses. The stakeholder and other events across the engagement process had also been well attended. Attendees encouraged Ms Renwick to share the slides to allow them to cascade them out via their community council networks. In response to a question regarding a housing target of 1 set for the “South” area, Ms Renwick explained that different boundaries were used for housing purposes which did not reflect the ward make-up of the Scottish Borders Council Electoral Wards. The Housing Supply Target had not been split by area, and the current consultation was focused on the overall number at this stage. The Chair highlighted that the link to the LHS and other key information was included in the Additional Information Document which had been circulated with the agenda.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

4. REFRESHED COMMUNITY PLAN PRIORITIES CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Chair welcomed Keith Langley of Scottish Fire and Rescue to provide a presentation on the refreshed Community Plan Priorities. Community planning was the process by which councils and other public bodies such as Health Boards and Police Scotland worked with local communities, businesses, and community groups to plan and deliver better services and improve the lives of people who live in Scotland. Community Planning Partnerships was the name given to the group of organisations who deliver community planning. Initially the responsibility for leading CPPs sat with LAs. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 changed the responsibility to sit equally with five public sector bodies: LAs, NHS, Police Scotland, SFRS and Enterprise companies – in the Borders those lead partners were:

NHS Borders
Police Scotland
SBC
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
South of Scotland Enterprise
Other partners include:
Borders College
Borders Community Action (Third Sector)
Health & Social Care Integration Joint Boards
Live Borders
Berwickshire Housing Association
Eildon Housing Association
Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network

- 4.2 There was a CPP in each local authority area. It was further explained that under the Community Empowerment Act, Community Planning Partnerships were required to develop a ten year Plan that set out the priorities for improving people's lives and reducing inequalities. A lot had changed over the last five years since the previous Community Plan was agreed in May 2018. There were new priorities and it was important that the plan included those and like a lot of CPPs, there was an opportunity to completely review the plan to focus on what was most important for the area now. There would be a review of the new Plan at least twice in the next 10 years to ensure that it remained relevant. In putting together the draft priorities for the new Plan, the data had been analysed to get an understanding of what was working well and what needed to be improved. The views of the public had been sought through other surveys and community-based meetings, including the Council's Community Conversations and 16 priority areas had been identified and arranged under the five themes; Economy, Skills and Learning; Enjoying Good Health and Wellbeing; Good Place to Live, Grow Up and Enjoy a Full Life and Community Empowerment. Views were being sought on which priorities were the most important to those living in the Teviot Area and whether the themes were the right ones. The consultation was available online on SBC's website and available as a paper copy for those who would prefer to respond that way. The consultation would close on 16 July 2023. In response to a question regarding how the Plan could feed into Place Making initiatives, Ms Clare Malster, Participation Officer, explained that Place Plans were fed into the Council's Locality Plans. The Plan being reviewed twice in the next 10 year period provided a stronger link than previously.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. **POLICE SCOTLAND UPDATE**

The Chair invited Sergeant Alison Grainger to provide an update on Police Scotland activities in Teviot and Liddesdale. The item was not included in the agenda, but attendees agreed that it would be appropriate to hear the update. Sgt Grainger provided an update on staffing changes in the area and highlighted that she had fought hard to ensure that adequate resources were dedicated to the area. Police Scotland and Community Planning Partners had offered a range of sports and activities to young people in Burnfoot as part of a programme funded by the Police Scotland Community Budget. The local Community Partners would continue the programme over the summer to engage young people. The Hawick Common Riding had recently taken place, and Sgt Grainger highlighted the extensive work that had taken place behind the scenes to ensure that the event went smoothly. Liaison work with Scottish Borders Council had been sound, and the Common Riding Committee had planned the event well. Sgt Grainger highlighted that PC Alan Patterson had undertaken work on multiple rest days and commended the tireless dedication to his community that he had demonstrated. A scheme for reporting speeds in villages had gone live, and allowed people to report the unacceptable speeding that goes on in villages. Mr Kerr outlined that the issue was a commonly discussed topic at community council meetings and expressed an interest in becoming part of the group. Sgt Grainger undertook to provide information to Mr Kerr. The Scottish Borders Partnership Against Rural Crime was holding an event on 29 June between 9 and 12 at Caverton Mill in Kelso. Farmers, landowners, land managers, SBC officers, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and Scottish Land and Estates would be present, and a range of issues would be discussed. Members thanked Sgt Grainger for her presentation and highlighted the outstanding leadership and commitment shown that she had shown throughout the preceding months.

DECISION

NOTED.

6. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE FUNDING 2023/24**

There had been circulated copies of the Teviot and Liddesdale funding tables for 2023/24 with the agenda. Ms Jardine confirmed that the opening balance of the Neighbourhood Support Fund was £42,465k, which the Area Partnership had agreed to split evenly between Pot A and Pot B. Pot A had been sub-divided into equal shares, with a minimum of £2121 available. Hawick and Burnfoot had been allocated more due to the larger size compared to the other areas. The Scottish Borders Council website outlined what was available. Each individual area had a different amount available dependant on their underspend from the previous year.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND - POT A FUND**

7.1 There had been circulated copies of Pot A Fund recommendations from Hawick Community Council and a recommendation to the Area Partnership regarding funding related to wages.

7.2 **Eskdale Pony Club**

An application had been received from Eskdale Pony Club which had requested £846.32 to help support their proposed Games Rally in Hawick. Ms Marion Short, Chair of the Hawick explained that the Panel had carefully considered the application and recommended to provide funding of £282.11. The amount represented one third of the total grant, and Ms Short suggested that the applicants consider applying to Newcastleton and Teviothead for the remaining funds. The recommendation to grant £282.11 was unanimously approved.

7.3 **Future Hawick**

An application for funding for £4000 had been received from Future Hawick to support their project Hawick Welcome 2023. The funding applied for would be used to purchase uniforms and help meet the costs of brochure distribution. The Panel welcomed the project but felt that providing funding would not be the best use of Neighbourhood Support Funds. Ms Short highlighted that there had been a significant increase in the cost of the brochure delivery, from £90 in 2022 to £352 in 2023. The costs associated with brochure distribution had been subject to debate, with a figure of 40p per mile deemed too high by the panel, with 25p per mile deemed a more appropriate figure. The Panel recommended to award £863. Attendees discussed the recommendation, with particular focus on whether the rate paid per mile to volunteers. Councillor Cox, seconded by Councillor Smart proposed that Future Hawick be granted £995, which was unanimously agreed.

7.4 **Hawick, Pot A Recommendation to the Area Partnership**

There had been circulated copies of a recommendation from the Hawick Neighbourhood Support Fund Pot A Panel Members for Hawick which sought to exclude wage costs from applications for funding unless they were related to consultancy work. Sub-contractor and professional costs would remain eligible where they were required for project delivery. The Chair explained that Pot B applications already had a restriction on applying for wages, and that the Panel had felt that it would be prudent to match those conditions. Elected Members unanimously agreed to approve the recommendation.

DECISION

AGREED:

(a) to grant Eskdale Pony Club £282.11;

(b) to grant Future Hawick £995; and

- (c) that costs associated with wages, unless they were related to “consultancy” work, were no longer acceptable in applications for funding to Pot A. Sub-contractor and professional costs required for project delivery remained eligible.

8. **UPPER TEVIOTDALE AND BORTHWICK WATER CC POT A FUND**

Mr Walter Douglas explained that following a lengthy debate on whether to participate in the Neighbourhood Support Fund this year, the Members of Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council had, by majority decision, agreed to take part.

DECISION

AGREED that Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council take part in the Neighbourhood Support Fund.

9. **UPDATE ON PLACE MAKING PROGRESS IN TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE**

9.1 The Chair invited attendees to share with the Area Partnership progress of Place Making within their communities.

9.2 Mr Kerr advised that Southdean Community Council continued to await the results of neighbouring rural communities to complete their community surveys so that Place Plans covering multiple community councils could be pulled together. Ms Jardine explained that engagement sessions had been held in Hawick, with a view to reach as wide an audience as possible. Approximately 150 people had attended across 3 sessions. The network of people involved in Place Making continued to develop and it was hoped that a town team would be formed to help drive work forward.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

10. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE**

The Chair invited community council representatives to share activities of good practice and activities in their communities. Ms Short explained that it was pleasing to receive good feedback regarding the Common Riding, and that attendance and behaviour at the event had been exemplary. The Community Council was excited about progress in respect of CCTV. The project was almost at the point of going to tender. Ms Jardine confirmed that the Area Partnership was expected to be held on Tuesday evenings as normal moving forward. Mr Kerr highlighted that works for the Pineburn windfarm continued to cause issues on the road, and expressed thanks to Elected Members for helping secure more advanced notification of when large deliveries could be expected. Ms Elborn highlighted that discussions were ongoing regarding transport capacity in rural areas. A proposed build out at Douglas Square to support the visually impaired had the potential to be controversial due to a lack of consultation.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

11. **CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME FOR PARKS**

Ms Culverwell provided an update on Scottish Borders Council’s capital programme for parks. £4million was being invested by SBC on outdoor community spaces over a 7-year period from 2022 to 2029. It was hoped that the parks would improve community wellbeing, enhance outdoor activities for young people. The parks would be accessible to all. A consultation had been held online asking what improvements the people of Burnfoot would like to see at Sleepy Valley Park. 96 responses had been received. Landscape plan were being drawn up by the contractor in response to the consultation. The design would be presented to the local community for feedback. Four other play areas were on the programme, with Newcastleton, Denholm, Hobkirk and Hawick all part of the plans up to 2029.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

12. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

There had been circulated copies of the additional information document with the agenda. An amended version had been published as a supplement to the agenda.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm