

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT AREA
PARTNERSHIP held on Wednesday, 22
November 2023 at 6.30 pm via Microsoft
Teams

Present: - Councillors S. Hamilton, E. Robson, S. Scott, T. Weatherston, together
with Representatives of the following Community Councils and Partner
Organisations: -

John Taylor - Jedburgh Community Council
Graham Hayward – Jedburgh Community Council
Gavin Horsburgh – Kelso Community Council
Charles Strang – St Boswells, Mertoun and Community Council
Dean Weatherston - Chair of Cheviot Assessment Panel
Alison Grainger – Police Scotland
Katy Jackson – SOSE
Fiona Benton – The Bridge
Susan Oliver – Headteacher, Jedburgh Campus
Yvonne O’Hara – SBHA
Annette Patterson – Newtown St Boswells

Apologies: - Councillor P. Brown
Councillor S. Mountford
Jill Lothian – Kelso High School
Louise Rawlins – CLDS Worker
Hazel Woodsell – Kelso Heritage
Carol Spalton - Crailing Nisbet and Eckford Community Council
Clare Starla-Nicoll – Heiton & Roxburgh CC
David Watson – Ednam, Stichill and Berrymoss
Gus Russell – Kelso Community Council
Pam Rigby – Youth Engagement Officer
Patricia Watt – Sprouston Community Council
Carol Tugman – Social Security Scotland
Colin Taylor - Kelso North and Ednam Parish
J. Steele - Jedburgh Community Trust
Andrew Findlay - Interest Link Borders

In attendance: - Community Co-ordinator – Gillian Jardine, Community Engagement
Officer – Emma Husband, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

1.0 VICE CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Weatherston - Vice Chair, chaired the meeting.

DECISION NOTED.

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.

2.0 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which included Elected Members, Community Council representatives, Community Organisations and guests attending within the meeting and outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

3.0 **FEEDBACK FROM THE MEETING ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023**

- 3.1 At the last Area Partnership, there was a question raised about the return of traffic wardens to the Kelso area. Traffic wardens were previously employed by Police Scotland who had the enforcement powers in the Scottish Borders. It would be a decision for Police Scotland if they reinstated traffic wardens. Council officers do not have any enforcement powers for on- street parking as there is not decriminalised parking in the Scottish Borders. Police officers can, and do, issue parking tickets and the CAT team are asked to enforce parking at the request of Members in areas causing problems. Parking in Kelso does come up and the Police have asked for some double yellow line to be repainted to assist with this. If this is something the Community feel strongly about then it would be encouraged to raise the matter with elected members and include it within the place making process. Perhaps there are some space or traffic management schemes that could be implemented. Dumfries and Galloway were undertaking a consultation on parking enforcement, and worth having a look.

4.0 **SECTION 1: SERVICE & PARTNER UPDATE AND CONSULTATIONS TIME FOR CHANGE**

The Chair welcomed John McLaren - Employee Director; Andrew Carter – Director of HR and Carol Graham from NHS Borders to the meeting to discuss a Time for Change, a wide ranging conversation with communities to share the challenges they were facing with workforce and finance, and the impact pressures were having on the services they provided. It was explained that the scale of the challenges faced in planning and delivering health services to meet need were unprecedented and a balance had to be found between the delivery of safe, quality care within the financial and human resources available to the NHS. There were significant workforce challenges for NHS Borders, with a smaller working age population (45% vs 65% nationally) operating across a large rural area and national shortages of specialist workforce in many areas. The financial deficit had continued to increase over the past few years due to growth in demand and changes in the cost of healthcare and an overspend of £26 million by March 2024 was projected. Under the four suggested discussion headings: Services In the Community; Community Bed Based Services; Acute Hospital Services; and Mental Health Services there had been an audit of provision, public feedback, achievements and areas of focus. The planned public conversations were to be a means to discuss further how to start doing things differently.

- 4.1 The review would feed into a wider national discussion on the future of NHS services and would overlap with the Lothians and South of Scotland. In relation to pandemic planning, it was acknowledged that there was currently not enough capacity in the system and there were lessons to be learned from the outcome of the Covid-19 inquiry. The need for the consultation process to be accessible for all was highlighted and it was envisaged that this 3-year plan was to inform much longer-term plans into the future and a Borders specific plan was needed.

DECISION NOTED.

5.0 **POLICE REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Alison Grainger to the meeting to give an update on policing in the Cheviot Area. Sergeant Grainger advised that resources remained unchanged from the previous update. She reported that speed checks had been carried out in Roxburgh, Ancrum, Crailing and Heiton and the pop-up Bob had also been

deployed at Crailing and Heiton. Parking continued to be an issue and parking tickets were being issued. The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit were working with the police in terms of Youth patrols and detecting and reducing vandalism within the area. In terms of people congregating in Jedburgh Square on Court days, Police were out patrolling and those Officers attending Court to give evidence were also patrolling the area. A shop watch network had been established in Kelso to try and alleviate thefts from small business, which appeared to be on the increase. In terms of Crime Prevention, White Ribbons would be worn between 25 November and 10 December to highlight the Violence Against Women Campaign. Double yellow lines had been requested for Bridge Street to try and reduce parking on side of road.

DECISION NOTED.

6.0 RELATIONAL MENTORING SERVICE: THE WISE GROUP

The Chairman welcomed Katy Leigh from The Wise Group. Katy explained that The Wise Group was a leading social enterprise working to lift people out of poverty, and been in existence for over 40 years, although it was new to the Borders. As an enterprise, they build bridges to opportunity for the most vulnerable in society, through mentoring support, employment, skills, and energy advice. Customers were supported everyday into jobs, to enable people out of fuel poverty, and help people coming out of prison to build a better future. The work was varied, and underlying everything was a passion and commitment for social justice and a fairer society for all. In the past year demand for fuel vouchers at HES in SC&C had more than doubled to 2,860, which illustrated the astounding rate at which the COL crisis had increased poverty in communities. These numbers were purely from Home Energy Scotland and only for Strathclyde and Central belt and did not take into account the other organisations who could make applications to the FBF.

Renfrewshire 900
Glasgow City 827
North Lanarkshire 589
South Lanarkshire 322
Inverclyde 222

- 6.1 Families affected by fuel poverty were typically affected by other forms of poverty too. In terms of fuel poverty in Central Scotland, 87% of people were only able to access one voucher and, in many cases, people returned asking for more support. 65 requests for a voucher were denied in the second half of the last financial year due to the household reaching the limit for fuel voucher support, which was during the awful winter last year. We need to step in when someone requires quick help through a fuel voucher and address the other factors contributing to their circumstances, the cycle could be interrupted and lift this household out of poverty. The maximum number of vouchers is three for most customers trying to access help through fuel vouchers and having worked with HES the past few years, it is evident the difference the advice and support makes to the families who are supported, however many of the customers needed support for other factors contributing to their struggles which were outwith the role of energy advisor.
- 6.2 The Relational Mentoring Service was fully funded by the Scottish Government and covered 6 key areas in Scotland. The service would be based on a wide range of face to face holistic approaches which would be tailored to the needs, not only for the individual but for the whole family unit. The relational mentors would work in Communities providing support to the most vulnerable households where fuel insecurity funding eligibility applied. The Wise Group's aim was to have £100 mil of social value going back into communities through our relational mentoring services. **Progression:** A belief between mentor and mentee that positive change was possible and could be facilitated through mentoring. This does not mean that progression was on a linear, upward trajectory, but can be in constant flux. **Communication:** Clear communication in both directions facilitates mentoring and effective communication channels maintained.

Relationship-based: Mentoring between one person, or group of people, and another person or group of people. Relational mentoring, which was voluntary for the customer was a face to face two way relationship based either in the family home or in a setting suitable and comfortable for the customer. The presentation concluded with an explanation of the eligibility criteria and referral process, for more information contact katy_leigh@thewisegroup.co.uk

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7.0 **YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker for SBC regularly attended the Area Partnership meetings but was unable to attend and Emma Husband, Community Engagement Officer gave the update.

7.1 Three young people aged between 11 and 22 from the Cheviot Area had signed up to be part of the coproduction team that would research and write the SBC and Partners Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy. Sessions with the 20 young people from across the Borders would start on Tuesday the 5th of December and it was hoped that the strategy would be launched no later than summer 2024.

7.2 Youth engagement with the Cheviot Funding Assessment Panel had fluctuated and recruitment for a new person to join Alex on the board was underway, after Grace had to step down. It was hoped that the replacement would be in place by the January Assessment Panel meeting.

7.3 It was reported that problems had been encountered with the Scottish Youth Parliament elections. Due to a malfunction on the Young Scot voting platform, the voting process had to be stopped. This was due to the platform not recognising mobile devices (i.e. not counting the votes). It had been decided that all previous votes would be cancelled, and the process would be started from scratch, as this was seen as the only fairest option available. Discussions are underway to get this back up and running for December and failing that January 2024. The problem only applied to the Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire constituency as the other was uncontested. There were three candidates for the election, one of whom was from Cheviot area. It was hoped that the successful candidates would attend the area partnership meeting in the new year.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8.0 **SECTION 2: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY FUNDING**

8.1 **Cheviot Funding Tables 2023/24**

There had been circulated copies of the Cheviot Funding for 2023/2024 which detailed the funding available together with information on the allocation of the Neighbourhood Support Fund in 2023/24. The opening balance at 1 April 2023 was £46,383. Other sources of funding included Local Festival Grant Budget totalling £16,675.00, Annual Support Grant to Community Councils totalling £10,470.00, Common Goods, SBC Enhancement Grant, SBC Welfare Grant and SBC Small Schemes totalled £192,112.69. Following the previous Cheviot Area Partnership Meeting, all funding recommendations were supported totalling £40,771.30 leaving a balance of £19,057.06 and applications assessed and awaiting decision totalled £5,019.18.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

Neighbourhood Support Fund

8.2 It was noted that, since the last meeting of the Panel, the two young people, R. Flint and E. Chalmers had decided to step down from the panel due to other commitments and they were thanked for their input during the time they were on panel. Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Officer was working with another two young people interested in joining the panel. Mr Harry Tomczyk had joined the panel since the last meeting. There had been 3 applications received for the Cheviot Neighbourhood Support Fund totalling 5,019.18. There had been circulated copies of a report which provided a brief description of each application received and a recommendation on the sum to be awarded to each project. As previously reported, projects with a mean score of 80+ in terms of their ability to deliver, clear evidence of need, potential impact, use of public money, innovation and sustainability and therefore would be recommended for approval and those were detailed below:-

8.3 **Jedburgh Community Council**

An application had been received from Jedburgh Community Council in the sum of £2,500 to support the costs of electrical testing, erection and dismantling of the Town Christmas lights.

8.4 **Kelso Writers Club**

An application had been submitted by Kelso Writers Club in the sum of £262.62 to engage local schools in a writing competition. The winning authors would have their stories published in an anthology, together, with stories from Kelso Writers.

8.5 **Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association**

An application had been submitted by the Pinnaclehill park Orchard Association in the sum of £2,256.56 to establish an orchard in a 600m² piece of land in Kelso. The area would include a picnic table and benches to enable community members to meet and enjoy the outside space.

8.6 It was reported that the outstanding posts had been marketed through SBC Comms and E. Husband had shared amongst contacts, as well as reaching out to local community members.

Remaining positions: -

- Member of the Public (Jedburgh & District)
- Community Councillor (Jedburgh & District)

DECISION

(a) **AGREED that the following sums be awarded to each of those listed: -**

- **Jedburgh Community Council**
- **Kelso Writers Club**
- **Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association**

(b) **NOTED**

- (i) **that approval for the Pinnaclehill Park Orchard Association was subject to confirmation of the landowner's permission; and**
- (ii) **that approval for Jedburgh Community Council was subject to confirmation that information had been received from Neighbourhood Services.**

(iii) **The timetable for future meetings as follows: -**

Application Deadline	Assessment Panel	Area Partnership
13 December 2023	10 January 2024	31 January 2024

SECTION 3 : LOCAL PRIORITIES**9.0 PLACE MAKING - UPDATE ON PLACE MAKING PROGRESS IN CHEVIOT.**

The Community Engagement Officer explained that within Cheviot, there were 10 communities interested in Place Making, and increase of one since the last meeting. There was no major update since the last meeting, other than communities starting to request support from the consultancy framework to support their capacities.

Place Making Consultancy Framework:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b8af497ec5d0471597354de63ff05fe4>

- 9.1 The first engagement event for the Jedburgh Town Team was scheduled for Tuesday, 28th November 2023, where there would be open session in the Jedburgh Abbey from 11-3pm and again from 5-7pm. This was an opportunity for the community to have their say on what's important within Jedburgh and also to hear what the Town Team were doing and what the plans were for going forward.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

SECTION 4: OTHER**10.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

The Chairman advised that additional information was included in the agenda pack which contained information on current consultations and links to useful information.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11.0 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future Meetings of the Cheviot Area Partnership would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday, 27 March 2024

The next meeting would be held on **Wednesday, 31 January 2024 at 6.30 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams.

12.0 MEETING EVALUATION

Ms Jardine reminded those present about the meeting evaluation form which could be accessed via the link <https://forms.office.com/r/HHH1dEcmz3>. She added that feedback about the Area Partnership meetings was really helpful and always appreciated.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm