

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on Thursday, 7th September, 2023 at 2.00 pm

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**Attendees:** Cllr C. Cochrane (Chair), Councillors J. Greenwell, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine and E. Thornton-Nicol, Ms K. Hamilton (NHS Borders), Mr K. Langley (Scottish Fire & Rescue), A. Carson (Police Scotland), R. Noble (Police Scotland)

**Apologies:** Prof. R. Griggs (SOSE), C. Fancy (Eildon HA), Director Education and Lifelong Learning, R. McCowan, P. Smith (Borders College) and C. McGrath (SBCCN),

**Also in attendance:** Chief Executive, Director Resilient Communities, Participation Officer, J. Robertson, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden), (all SBC), J. Amaral (BCA), R. Devine (NHS Borders), K. Jackson (SOSE).

## 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received and noted accordingly.

## 2. MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER

2.1 Copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 8 June 2023 had been circulated.

### DECISION

**AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.**

2.2 Copies of an updated Action Tracker had also been circulated. Clare Malster, Participation Officer provided an update to the Action Tracker and completed actions were to be removed.

### DECISION

**NOTED the update.**

## 3. CPP IMPROVEMENT PLAN

3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report on the CPP Improvement Plan presented by Director Resilient Communities. The report set out the work undertaken through the CPP Improvement Plan to present a new Community Plan (Local Outcome Improvement Plan - LOIP) and Performance Management Framework and updated progress in the review of the Community Planning Partnership's governance arrangements. Members were reminded of the three key areas: 1. Prioritise – to refresh the LOIP to account for significant changes in the operating landscape post-pandemic; 2. Governance – to review the current Community Planning Partnership structures and processes; and 3. Performance – ensure the Partnership's long-term outcomes were supported by a performance framework to measure short- and medium-term progress. In relation to development of the new Community Plan, potential priorities were identified from plans/strategies currently in place across the CPP that had been developed following public consultation. Commonalities were mapped and data had been gathered from a refreshed SBC Strategic Assessment and the Health and Social Care Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Areas for improvement had been identified across a wide range of

outcomes. Following public consultation and discussion with other stakeholders and by the Joint Programme Board, the number of outcomes had reduced from 16 to 11 and theme names were changed to better reflect their focus.

3.2 Appendix 1 of the pack detailed the Community Plan which now contained eleven outcomes under four themes: Poverty; Learning, skills & economy; Good health & wellbeing; and Place, community & connectivity. With reference to paragraph 8.2 of the Minute of 9 March 2023, it had been agreed that the Health & Social Care Strategic Framework was to steer the work of the 'Good health and wellbeing' theme, though due to the cross-cutting nature of health and wellbeing, the objectives appeared across more than one theme. The new Community Plan also included the cross-cutting issue of 'A resilient and net zero Scottish Borders by 2045' which was to highlight the importance of addressing the climate change agenda across all themes. Incorporated into the Community Plan also were four values: People focused; Inclusive; Innovative; and Sustainable – underpinned by a commitment to both community engagement & empowerment and prevention & early intervention. The Community Plan did not detail targets and measures; these were to be included in the delivery plan along with the actions. The Plan was to be reviewed twice during its statutory 10-year period to ensure relevance. In relation to the Future Governance arrangements, further work was to be carried out before the next meeting of the CPSB when an update was to be provided.

3.3 There followed a brief discussion during which members gave feedback on the four themes of the Community Plan. Generally, there was praise for the one-page format which detailed the four themes and fundamental values. Concern was expressed about the lack of reference to older people specifically, despite it being included in progress reports to date. It was reported that the evidence base already available was to be used to effectively inform the delivery plan for each theme and ensure appropriately targeted support and action for each demographic going forward. With regards to 'Good health and wellbeing' it was noted that there was no mention of prevention of ill-health which had been included as an outcome in Theme 3 previously. In response, Ms Craig reported that during later discussions the issue of prevention was considered applicable to all four themes but its reintroduction could be discussed if requested. In response to a question about success criteria and performance assessment, it was confirmed that a significant amount of work was to be done on this once the themes had been approved. Though the focus on health inequality and domestic abuse was welcomed, it was acknowledged that this might add to existing workforce challenges and improved health outcomes would not necessarily follow. In response to a question about work being done to address the demographic balance of the Borders, it was confirmed that further discussion with SOSE was expected in order to investigate links with the REP Green, Fair and Flourishing outcomes. In relation to the cross-cutting theme of Net Zero it was suggested that sustainability be considered not only environmentally but also financially, with its definition to include reference to resource challenges.

### 3.4 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Clare Malster, the purpose of which was to inform members of the framework for Performance Management for the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP). The document outlined the responsibilities and accountability for performance management by partner organisations and the integration of these arrangements through the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), known as the Community Plan. The framework was to ensure a continuous cycle of improvement. Figure 1 illustrated 'The Improvement Cycle' based around the 'Plan, Do, Review, Revise' model of continuous improvement. The Performance Reporting Cycle table outlined how the Community Plan and associated plans were to follow the Improvement Cycle for its reporting. The report detailed the reporting governance arrangements provided by the Strategic Board. The CPP was to report quarterly on its Key Performance Indicators to the Strategic Board on progress towards the achievement of Community Plan outcomes and communicate this via the website. Informal progress updates were to be delivered via Networks, social media and the website. Qualitative

measures would also be included. In addition, an annual report was to be produced for the community and the Scottish Government. The 2023/33 Community Plan was to be reviewed at least twice in its 10-year period along with the regular review of partner plans and strategies, alongside an annual self-assessment exercise.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED to the recommendations contained in the report as follows:**

- (a) approved the Community Plan 2023/2033;**
- (b) approved the revised Community Planning Partnership vision;**
- (c) noted the progress on developing a new governance structure; and**
- (d) approved the Performance Monitoring Framework.**

## **4. 2018 COMMUNITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Clare Malster the purpose of which was to present the 2018 Community Plan Progress Report for approval by the Strategic Board prior to its submission to the Scottish Government. Appendix 1 contained the Progress Report. There had been a conscious decision to change from the previous format which was data heavy, in favour of a shorter version that had clearly set out how actions undertaken had contributed to the identified outcomes/aims. Rather than include all 15 outcomes the report represented progress on a selection of outcomes under each of the four themes. Supporting information has been included for one outcome under each theme to illustrate some of the work that has been taking place. Going forward, there was the aim to build on the amount of qualitative data in subsequent reports. A number of positive changes were highlighted since the Plan was agreed five years ago: 4% increase in pupils who gained 5+ awards at Level 5; 7% reduction in the geographical areas with no 4G signal; 6% reduction in the number of overweight adults; 15% reduction in the number of multiple emergency hospital admissions; 20% decrease in the number of people seriously injured on our roads compared to a national 9.9% increase; 125 new affordable homes completed in 2022/23; and a 5% decrease in fuel poverty. It was to be noted that going forward the Partnership was to ensure that measures reported on included those solely affected by the actions undertaken by the Partnerships itself.
- 4.2 There followed a brief discussion during which there was a request for greater clarity of the metrics used to calculate the average weekly wages of £571 and how it is calculated, to better reflect the lived experience of a significant proportion of the Borders population. It was also commented upon that there were more overweight people per head of population in the Borders than the National average and a question as to what was being done to address this and what percentage of schools had taken onboard the 'Daily Mile' initiative.

## **DECISION**

**AGREED to approve the Community Plan 2018 Progress Report prior to publication and submission to the Scottish Government.**

## **5. THEME 1 - ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ON PROGRESS REPORT**

There had been circulated copies of a report on Theme 1: Enough money to live on, the purpose of which was to inform members of the progress of actions to date. With regards to action 1, the short life multi-agency Partnership Group continued to meet and the Appendix provided an update in relation to the £1.2m financial support package that was released from Council reserves to provide support to communities during 2022/23. A breakdown of monetary allocations was provided and evaluations of the impacts of these supports was underway. A balance of £84,488 was to be carried forward to 2023/24 to be disbursed appropriately by the multi-agency Strategic Group and the Anti-Poverty Members Reference Group. However it was recently agreed that any earmarked balances were now to be used to alleviate the Council's budgetary pressures. In relation to action 2, it was confirmed that the Local Employment Partnership (LEP) had made good progress in the last few months and continued to support individuals into paid employment. Modern apprentices working for SBC now received the National Living Wage and SBC

contractors encouraged to do the same, with weighting to this given as part of a tender evaluation. Funding was in place to support a summer activities programme with free access to low-income households.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED the report.**

### **6. ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Janice Robertson, the purpose of which was to present progress made in the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan which had been adopted by Council on 23 September 2021. The progress report, now available on the Council's website, also gave an update on the work of the Anti-Poverty Members Reference Group, the Financial Inclusion Group, the Cost of Living Group and the quarterly Food Conversations, all of whom were to continue to meet regularly to respond to current and emerging issues. Appendix 1 detailed the actions and progress made against the eleven outcomes of the Anti-Poverty Action Plan. Some key highlights were: monetary gains for benefits in 2021/22 which amounted to £3.39m and in 2022/23 was £3.945m; the distribution of 15,000 iPads across the Education estate since 2019; over 1400 young people who directly benefitted from the Warm and Well: Youth Work Collaborative; and officers who supported the delivery of Place Making in 56 of the 69 community council areas so far. Gratitude was expressed for the work that had been undertaken by all groups involved in the work to date and for the fulsome report provided.

## **DECISION**

**NOTED:**

- (a) the Anti-Poverty Strategy 2021 Progress Report.**
- (b) the work of the Anti-Poverty Members Reference Group, the Financial Inclusion Practitioners Group and the Food Conversations Group.**
- (c) that the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan (created in 2021) is to be refreshed.**

### **7. A CREDIT UNION FOR THE BORDERS**

- 7.1** Jim Boyd and John McClay of Caledonian Credit Union (previously West Lothian Credit Union/WLCU) gave an informative presentation on the background to credit unions, specifically the work of West Lothian Credit Union with a view to its expansion into the Borders region under the rebranded Caledonian Credit Union (CCU). Credit Unions were worldwide predominantly in the USA and Australia. Ireland had the biggest concentration in Western Europe and Scotland had a relatively small number (only 7% of the population). Caledonian Credit Union (CCU) was a community credit union. It had over £3m in assets, with a potential £2m available for lending and a loan book of £1.4m. The Scottish Borders was currently served by Capital Credit Union, an industrial union concerned mainly with recruiting commercial/employee members. The operating model of the CCU, a community union with approximately 3,000 adult members, had fundamentally altered in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and had moved from their in-person Livingston premises to a solely digital/telephone-based service. In August 2021, WLCU/CCU had extended beyond the West Lothian Council area to cover most of east central Scotland, and now covered the KY, FK, G, ML, TD and some EH postcodes. This allowed both Borders residents and those working in the Borders to become members, apply for loans and open savings accounts. CCU was a preventive financial co-operative that offered savings plans with the caveat that members were to be savers before a loan would be agreed. It was not an emergency loan company but did signpost individuals as appropriate. CCU had neither raised loan interest rates nor tightened lending criteria as other institutions had. Members were given more time to repay, interest had been suspended and reduced repayments were arranged to support borrowers through financial challenges. A Working Group had been formed of CCU, Citizen's Advice Bureau Peebles, Peebles Foodbank and Councillor Tatler to take plans forward.

- 7.2 Deposits were made online or via the app and through standing orders; both regular and ad-hoc payments could be set up. Access to daily funds was achieved through the Engage card (a pre-paid card for those without a bank account) that could be set up to make funds available daily to meet the cost of living. It was confirmed that a partnership between CAB Peebles and Peebles Foodbank would provide support to applicants unable to access the service digitally. A dividend was paid at the end of the financial year, agreed by the Board and dependent on the amount of surplus. Any outstanding loans were repaid by CCU at the time of a member's death up to the age of 80. A death benefit grant (again up to the age of 80) of 50% of total savings and up to £2,500 was available for next of kin. Access to savings was assured under regulation and strict governance by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Bank of England for deposits of up to £85,000.
- 7.3 An effective PR and marketing strategy that encapsulated a Borders identity was required in the promotion of the Credit Union's services going forward alongside a targeted campaign on the benefits of credit unions with employers e.g. SBC, NHS and the RSLs. In the meantime, WLCU/CCU's website was available to promote to the Borders area. It was hoped that the relaunch of the WLCU/CCU in the Borders would coincide with both the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Credit Union and Challenge Poverty Week 2-8 October 2023. A proposed development worker was to coordinate activity in the Scottish Borders to target specific employers, expand the network of contacts and work with schools to promote financial education and benefits of the Credit Union. Any further queries on the matter were to be directed to Kenny Harrow. Juliana Amaral (BCA) and John McClay were to engage in further discussion concerning a series of Third Sector networking events. The potential role of a dedicated Development Officer was discussed. Members welcomed the presentation and voiced support for the work of the credit union.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the presentation.**

#### **8. WORK PLAN PROGRESS REPORTS (FOR NOTING)**

There had been circulated copies of work plan progress reports which related to Themes 2, 3 and 4. In relation to Theme 3 Progress report, it was reported that the Board of Trustees, NHS Borders recommended the reinstatement of the Volunteer Co-ordinator through NHS Borders which also had outreach to community hospitals etc. with a view to returning to a pre-Pandemic level of service.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the reports.**

#### **9. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLANNING PARTNERSHIP**

There had been circulated copies of the CYPP Update August 2023 for which Stuart Easingwood gave a brief verbal follow up. The Network Chairs had now been appointed as follows: A Good Childhood – Justin Sinclair (SBC); Whole Family Support Network – Alison Downie (NHS Borders); Supporting the Workforce – Sarah Axford (Children 1<sup>st</sup>); and Planning and Building Capacity – Inspector Robbie Noble (Police Scotland). Monthly meetings from early September 2023 were scheduled and a new Chair was to be appointed. On the matter of the Scottish Borders Summer 2023 Programme, it was reported that a range of programmes and approaches were being delivered through: third sector youth work summer programme; Jedburgh and Duns Swimming pools; Abbotsford Witch Corner; Live Borders; the provision of small grants to support summer activities; participatory budgeting approaches for people who are homeless; kinship carers; care experienced young people; children and young people in conflict with the law; and unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. Funding of £254,320 had been agreed in June 2023 by the CYPPT with an additional Scottish Government funding of £86,853 awarded in July 2023. The short timescale between the agreed funding and the start of the school holidays limited the scope of provision and was a barrier to effective communication to parents and carers. A programme evaluation was due following its conclusion and was to include examples of the extent to which poverty was impacting

families. Feedback indicated a need for year-round provision to better support families. To date there remained £130,657.75 in uncommitted funding which the CYPPP had agreed to earmark for developing programmes of support during other holiday periods and/or year-round support to targeted families.

- 9.2 With regards to the Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy, it was reported that in June 2023 the CYPPP Board approved the creation of a short life working group to co-produce a multi-agency strategy with a group of children and young people with a view to its launch in Spring 2024. Work was also ongoing to create a commissioning specification for an Independent Advocacy Service for children and young people aged 5 to 26.
- 9.3 With regards to the Commissioning Review and the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, there had been set up a short-term task and finish group to develop a new commissioning strategy for the CYPPP which was to ensure a more streamlined approach to multi-agency spend. The group was also to progress plans for the Scottish Government's Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, established to enable a shift to investment in early intervention and prevention activities. Funding had been committed for the next three years to work towards a target of at least 5% of community-based health and social care spend to be focussed on preventative whole family support measures by 2030.
- 9.4 Stuart Easingwood reported that SBC's implementation of 'The Promise' had been identified as a good model of governance and accountability for delivery by the National Promise Leads Network.
- 9.5 In response to a question about supporting the mental health needs of young people in school, it was reported that there was to be a review of provision. Commissioned services and the services of NHS Borders were to form part of a multi-agency, holistic approach in schools and the wider community. This was to be Mr Easingwood's final meeting as he was to leave his role at the end of the month. Members and attendees thanked Mr Easingwood for his achievements and dedication over the years and wished him every success for the future.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the report.**

#### **10. THEME FOR NEXT MEETING**

The theme for the next meeting was noted as Theme 2 – Access to work, learning and training.

#### **11. FORWARD PLANNER FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

There had been circulated copies of the Forward Planner which Members noted.

#### **12. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The next meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Board was scheduled for 16 November 2023, 2pm.

***The meeting concluded at 3.50 pm***