

# Public Document Pack



**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, 25 JANUARY, 2024**

A MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST. BOSWELLS AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 2024 at 10.00 AM.

**All Attendees, including members of the public, should note that the public business in this meeting will be livestreamed and video recorded and that recording will be available thereafter for public view for 180 days .**

N. MCKINLAY  
Director Corporate Governance,  
18 January 2024

<b>BUSINESS</b>		
1.	<b>Convener's Remarks.</b>	
2.	<b>Apologies for Absence.</b>	
3.	<b>Order of Business.</b>	
4.	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b>	
5.	<b>Minute (Pages 7 - 18)</b>  Consider Minute of Scottish Borders Council held on 14 December 2023 for approval and signing by the Convener. (Copy attached.)	2 mins
6.	<b>Committee Minutes</b>  Consider Minutes of the following Committees:-  (a) Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership 7 November 2023 (b) Selkirk Common Good 13 November 2023 (c) Jedburgh Common Good 13 November 2023 (d) Kelso Common Good 14 November 2023 (e) Eildon Area Partnership 16 November 2023 (f) External Services-Providers Monitoring Group 21 November 2023 (g) Peebles Common Good 22 November 2023 (h) Cheviot Area Partnership 22 November 2023 (i) External Services-Providers Monitoring Group 28 November 2023	5 mins

	<p>(j) Executive Committee 5 December 2023  (k) External Services-Providers Monitoring Group 5 December 2023  (l) Galashiels Common Good 7 December 2023</p> <p>(Please see separate Supplement containing the public Committee Minutes.)</p>	
7.	<p><b>Scottish Borders Bus Network Review and Recommendations</b> (Pages 19 - 74)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Infrastructure and Environment. (Copy attached.)</p>	15 mins
8.	<p><b>Scottish Borders Consultative Draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy 2024-2029</b> (Pages 75 - 240)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Infrastructure and Environment. (Copy attached.)</p>	15 mins
9.	<p><b>Council Tax - Second Homes</b> (Pages 241 - 250)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Resilient Communities. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
10.	<p><b>Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief</b> (Pages 251 - 266)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Resilient Communities. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
11.	<p><b>Community Conversations 2023 Feedback</b> (Pages 267 - 296)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Resilient Communities. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
12.	<p><b>Place Based Investment Programme</b> (Pages 297 - 304)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Resilient Communities. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
13.	<p><b>Pension Fund Employers (Scottish Borders Council) Contribution Rate</b> (Pages 305 - 314)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Finance and Procurement. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
14.	<p><b>Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Connectivity</b> (Pages 315 - 322)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships. (Copy attached.)</p>	15 mins
15.	<p><b>Reprovisioning of Night Support Service</b> (Pages 323 - 370)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
16.	<p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b> (Pages 371 - 378)</p> <p>Consider report by Chief Executive. (Copy attached.)</p>	10 mins
17.	<p><b>Scottish Borders Revised Admissions Policy</b> (Pages 379 - 402)</p> <p>Consider report by Director Education and Lifelong Learning. (Copy attached.)</p>	15 mins
18.	<p><b>Draft Calendar of Meetings for August 2024 - July 2025</b> (Pages 403 - 408)</p> <p>Consider draft Calendar of Meetings for the period August 2024 to July 2025. (Copy attached.)</p>	5 mins

19.

**Motion by Councillor Anderson**

5 mins

Consider motion by Councillor Anderson in the following terms:-

“The Scottish Borders Council recognizes the ongoing transition towards a cashless society, primarily driven by Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs). This motion aims to address the social and financial implications associated with this transition. One major concern is the potential exacerbation of revenue inequality and the digital divide. It is crucial to ensure that vulnerable populations have equal access to digital financial services to prevent marginalization. Therefore, the Scottish Borders Council urges the UK Government to take necessary measures to mitigate these concerns and ensure a fair and inclusive transition to digital currency with the retention of cash based finances.

1. Acknowledging the Transition: The Scottish Borders Council acknowledges the ongoing transition towards a cashless society, primarily driven by the introduction of Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs). SBC acknowledges the removal of cash will have a detrimental effect on our rural population.
2. Social and Financial Implications: Recognizing that the transition towards a cashless society has social and financial implications, including concerns related to revenue inequality and the digital divide.
3. Exacerbation of Revenue Inequality: The Council expresses concern that the transition towards a cashless society may exacerbate revenue inequality, as vulnerable populations may face difficulties in accessing and utilizing digital financial services. Which shows a need for cash based finances in rural areas.
4. Digital Divide: The Council acknowledges the potential for a digital divide to widen as a result of the transition towards a cashless society. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring equal access to digital monetary services for all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic status.
5. Preventing Marginalization: The Council emphasizes the need to prevent the marginalization of vulnerable populations during the transition towards a cashless society. It highlights the importance of providing adequate support and resources to ensure equal access and inclusion. The CBDC must be an addition to cash not a replacement to prevent marginalisation.
6. UK Government Action: The Scottish Borders Council urges the UK Government to take necessary measures to address the social and financial implications associated with the transition towards a cashless society. This includes implementing policies and initiatives that promote equal access to digital financial services and mitigate the potential exacerbation of revenue inequality and the digital divide.
7. Collaboration and Consultation: The Council encourages the UK Government to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, financial institutions, and community organizations, to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the transition to a cash and CBDC society.
8. Reporting and Monitoring: The Council requests that the UK Government provide regular updates and reports on the progress made in addressing the social and financial implications of the transition towards a cash and CBDC society. This will enable transparency and accountability in the decision-

	<p>making process.</p> <p>9. Dissemination of Information: The Council emphasizes the importance of raising awareness among the public about the transition towards a cashless society and its potential Negative impact. It encourages the UK Government to engage in public participation events to ensure that individuals are given the chance to have their say and prepared for the changes ahead.</p> <p>10. Adoption and Implementation: The Scottish Borders Council calls upon all relevant authorities and stakeholders to adopt and implement the necessary measures to address the social and financial implications of the transition towards a cashless society, in line with the principles of equality, inclusivity, and social justice.</p> <p>By passing this motion, the Scottish Borders Council aims to contribute to a fair and inclusive transition towards a cash and digital currency-based society, ensuring that vulnerable populations are not marginalized and that equal access to digital financial services is guaranteed.”</p>	
20.	<b>Open Questions</b>	15 mins
21.	<b>Any Other Items Previously Circulated</b>	
22.	<b>Any Other Items Which the Convener Decides Are Urgent</b>	
	<p>(a) <b>Urgent Motion by Councillor Leigh Douglas</b></p> <p>Consider Urgent Motion by Councillor Leigh Douglas in the following terms:</p> <p>“Acknowledging Finance Secretary Shona Robison's announcement of a 1,200 funded university places cut in Scotland due to financial constraints, the council expresses deep concern about the potential £28.5m reduction's impact on higher education stability and opportunities for our young population.</p> <p>Recognising the need for clarity, especially for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, this council urgently asks the leader to write to the Depute First Minister.</p> <p>We emphasise that this communication articulates the council's concerns and underscores the critical importance of understanding how these fiscal adjustments will affect the educational prospects of young people in the Scottish Borders.”</p>	5 mins
23.	<p><b>Private Business</b></p> <p>Before proceeding with the private business, the following motion should be approved:-</p> <p>“That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act.”</p>	

24.	<p><b>Minute</b> (Pages 409 - 410)</p> <p>Consider private Section of Minute of Scottish Borders Council held on 14 December 2023. (Copy attached.)</p>	1 mins															
25.	<p><b>Committee Minutes</b></p> <p>Consider private Sections of the Minutes of the following Committees:-</p> <table> <tr> <td>(a)</td> <td>Selkirk Common Good</td> <td>13 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(b)</td> <td>External Services-Providers Monitoring Group</td> <td>21 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(c)</td> <td>Peebles Common Good</td> <td>22 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(d)</td> <td>External Services-Providers Monitoring Group</td> <td>28 November 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(e)</td> <td>Galashiels Common Good</td> <td>7 December 2023</td> </tr> </table> <p>(Please see separate Supplement containing private Committee Minutes.)</p>	(a)	Selkirk Common Good	13 November 2023	(b)	External Services-Providers Monitoring Group	21 November 2023	(c)	Peebles Common Good	22 November 2023	(d)	External Services-Providers Monitoring Group	28 November 2023	(e)	Galashiels Common Good	7 December 2023	
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**NOTES**

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

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Please direct any enquiries to Declan Hall Tel: 01835 826556

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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

MINUTE of MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells and via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 14 December 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

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Present:- Councillors W. McAteer (Convener), J. Anderson, D. Begg, C. Cochrane, J. Cox, L. Douglas, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine, J. Linehan, N. MacKinnon, S. Marshall, D. Moffat, S. Mountford, A. Orr, D. Parker, J. PatonDay, J. Pirone, C. Ramage, N. Richards, E. Robson, M. Rowley, S. Scott, F. Sinclair, E. Small, A. Smart, H. Steel, R. Tatler, V. Thomson, E. Thornton-Nicol, T. Weatherston

Apologies:- Councillors C. Hamilton.

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Director Corporate Governance, Director Education and Lifelong Learning, Director Finance and Procurement, Director Infrastructure and Environment, Director Resilient Communities, Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships, Democratic Services Team Leader.

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**1. CONVENER'S REMARKS**

- 1.1 The Convener congratulated Scottish Borders Council's Homeless Housing Support Service, who had been awarded Grade 5 following an inspection by the care inspectorate.
- 1.2 The Convener highlighted that the Trimontium Museum in Melrose had won the Best Visitor Attraction Award at the Scottish Thistle Awards.
- 1.3 The Convener expressed his congratulations to the Vibrant Gala Project, which had been awarded the Creative Town of the Year award by the Scottish Regeneration Forum.
- 1.4 The Convener wished all Council staff season's greetings and expressed particular thanks to all of the volunteers across the region.

**DECISION NOTED.**

**2. MINUTE**

The Minute of the Meeting held on 23 November 2023 was considered.

**DECISION**

**AGREED that the Minute be approved and signed by the Convener.**

**3. COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Minutes of the following Committees had been circulated:-

Scrutiny and Petitions	19 October 2023
Tweeddale Area Partnership	31 October 2023
Planning and Building Standards	6 November 2023
Executive Committee	14 November 2023

**DECISION**

**APPROVED the Minutes listed above.**

**4. REINVIGORATION OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS**

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting held on 26 June 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Resilient Communities which gave details of work which had been undertaken on reinvigorating the Area Partnerships and proposed further work be undertaken on a way forward. The report explained that Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 was created to strengthen community empowerment, engagement, and participation, and how that could be supported and embedded within communities. Scottish Borders Council welcomed the introduction of the Act and the ethos behind it, anticipating that it would provide a strong legislative basis which could be built on to achieve the Council's vision of stronger, empowered and sustainable communities able to participate in public decision making and shaping their communities. In response to the Act, and taking steps to achieve its vision, the Council at its meeting on 2 November 2017, reshaped Area Partnerships with part of their remit being to inform the development of Locality Plans by involving communities in establishing a shared understanding of need in the area; the outcomes and priorities for the area; and the proposed outcomes to be achieved. That saw the constitution, remit and focus changed to one of community engagement and involvement with a view to increasing public participation. Those changes brought greater emphasis on community empowerment, participatory budgeting, and locality planning. Following a Fit for 2024 update report to Council in June 2019 it was identified that more needed to be done to achieve the Council's vision and, the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) was commissioned, in July 2019, to consult with individuals, groups and communities to identify how they could become more involved in Area Partnerships and decision making. Further work took place in 2021, delayed due to the pandemic, to seek views on the changes proposed by Area Partnership Working Groups, established following SCDC's work. There had been significant progress in relation to the development of Area Partnerships, both with the involvement of local communities and also by the investment made by the Council in 2021 to increase community capacity building. However, whilst there had been progress, significant steps of achieving the Council's vision of meaningful and increased community participation at Area Partnership meetings had not been achieved. Meetings often felt formal and Council led, which may be perpetuated by the fact that Area Partnerships are committees of Council. Members welcomed the report, highlighted that ensuring effective public engagement with the Area Partnerships was key, and encouraged officers to assess the effectiveness of different models used by Local Authorities across Scotland.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the work undertaken so far in terms of reinvigorating Area Partnerships;**
- (b) request the Director – Resilient Communities, following further engagement with Area Partnerships, brings a further report to Council due course on a future model for Area Partnerships, taking account of the following points:**
  - (i) removing Area Partnerships from the Council's Scheme of Administration**
  - (ii) establishing direct links between Area Partnerships and the Community Planning Partnership; and**
  - (iii) ensuring the management of any Council allocated funds to Area Partnerships takes account of the criteria within "Following the Public Pound".**

## **5. UK GOVERNMENT LEVELLING UP PARTNERSHIP**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Resilient Communities which provided an update on the recent announcement by UK Government to form a Levelling Up Partnership with Scottish Borders Council. That partnership aimed to deliver £20 million of



new UK Government investment into the region to support the local economy and communities and address regional inequality. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Autumn Statement on 22 November £80 million of new funding for four new Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs) in Scotland, including the Scottish Borders. Those were a first for Scotland, following UK Government delivery of a programme of LUPS across England. Levelling Up Partnerships were about Government working with a place to address specific local challenges and opportunities. The first stage of the process would involve a three month 'deep dive' with Government officials, to understand the needs and aspirations of local communities. The funding would be allocated based on evidence, and the deliverability of potential projects. The £20million capital funding must be spent in 2025/26. Further guidance from UK Government was expected early in the new year. The Director – Resilient Communities, Mrs Jenni Craig, presented the report and in response to a question regarding potential resource costs associated with the Partnership, explained that a further report would be brought to Council in the new year once more information was available. Members expressed their hope that the outcomes from the Partnership would take into account the rural nature of the region. The Chief Executive clarified that the aim of the Partnership was expected to focus on tackling the challenges which impacted on the Scottish Borders' ability to sustainably grow its economy, such as issues relating to transport and poverty.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the announcement made by UK Government to form a Levelling Up Partnership in the Scottish Borders which aimed to deliver £20 million of additional investment in the local economy and communities; and**
- (b) ask officers to bring back a further report once UK Government guidance had been issued to set out the Levelling Up Partnership process and next steps.**

## **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Rowley declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct given his employment with South of Scotland Enterprise and left the meeting during the discussion.

## **6. A NEW NATIONAL PARK FOR SCOTLAND**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Infrastructure and Environment which set out the process under which a new National Park for Scotland would be designated and the work undertaken to assess the potential for a National Park in the South of Scotland. It also sought Members views on whether the Council supported the proposal being developed by the campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park in the Southern Borders. It was accepted that National Park designation had the potential to bring a range of significant benefits to the region, helping to deliver key economic and environmental policy objectives. However, it was not without its opponents and potential negative impacts, based on the experience of other areas, including increasing house prices, additional bureaucracy, pressures on infrastructure and services, etc. The Regional Economic Partnership (REP) had been working to develop a strategic South of Scotland approach for a National Park, as it was felt that had the greatest potential to explore the opportunities and maximise the potential benefits to construct a robust and persuasive case, building on existing 'Scotland Starts Here' branding, and strategies and frameworks for the South of Scotland. However, that had failed to gain support from the existing campaign groups and Dumfries and Galloway Council have recently reiterated support for the Galloway proposal. There were two competing proposals in the South of Scotland and in the circumstances, it was not proposed to undertake any further work developing this concept at this time. The Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park had asked that Scottish Borders Council consider their proposal and had specifically asked for an indication of support. Officers had identified challenges with their proposed concept and did not feel that a compelling and cogent case had been made for a National Park in the Scottish Borders alone. In view of the inability to

get agreement on a strategic South of Scotland approach that would deliver the greatest potential benefits to the region and align more closely with key policy drivers and strategies, it was not possible to support a National Park in the Scottish Borders. Following extensive discussions regarding the report, and whether it would be appropriate to take no further action to allow Members additional time to consult their constituents, there was a difference of opinion so a vote was held the results of which were as follows:

#### **VOTE**

*Councillor Linehan, seconded by Councillor Pirone, moved that the recommendations as contained in the report be approved.*

*Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor PatonDay, moved as an amendment that the recommendations in the report were not approved.*

*On a show of hands Members voted as follows:-*

*Motion – 27 votes*

*Amendment – 2 votes*

*The Motion was accordingly carried.*

#### **DECISION**

##### **DECIDED:-**

- (a) to note the nominations process for a new National Park(s) in Scotland had commenced and acknowledged the work undertaken to develop a strategic approach to a South of Scotland National Park and the work of the campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park; and**
- (b) that the Council was unable to support the proposal by the campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park in the Southern Borders.**

#### **7. LOCAL INQUIRY RELATING TO THE SECOND REVIEW OF SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT BOUNDARIES**

With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of the meeting held on 23 May 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Corporate Governance which advised that Boundaries Scotland had arranged for the holding of a Local Inquiry into its provisional proposal regarding a Clyde Valley and Tweeddale Constituency. The report also sought the appointment of Elected Members to attend that Local Inquiry to represent the views of the Council. Boundaries Scotland was conducting its second review into Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies. It published its provisional proposals for new constituency boundaries on the 17th of May 2023. At that time, it opened a one-month public consultation on the proposals it had published. That consultation ran until the end of Saturday 17 June 2023. The length of consultation was set by law. At its meeting on the 25th May 2023, Scottish Borders Council received a report which invited Members to consider what, if any, response they wished to make to that consultation. In response, Members agreed to: “delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make a submission to Boundaries Scotland, in consultation with the Members Sounding Board, where all issues and options would be discussed.” Thereafter, a Members Sounding Board was convened, and a response was agreed. That response was issued by the Chief Executive. Boundaries Scotland had now announced the holding of a number of Local Inquiries into their proposals. Of particular relevance to Scottish Borders Council was the fact that such a Local Inquiry would be held regarding the proposed Clyde Valley and Tweeddale Constituency. It would be held at the Peebles Hydro on the 11th January 2024. SBC was not legally obliged to attend the Local Inquiry, but the report invited Members to appoint Members to attend to ensure that its voice was heard. Councillor Thornton-Nicol, seconded by Councillor Sinclair, proposed that Councillor Marshall Douglas attend as one of Scottish Borders Council’s representatives. Councillor Scott Hamilton, seconded by

Councillor Weatherston, proposed that Councillor Jardine also attend as a representative. Both proposals were unanimously approved.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED:-**

- (a) to appoint 2 Elected Members to represent its views at the Local Inquiry;**
- (b) that Councillor Jardine and Councillor Marshall Douglas were appointed to attend the Inquiry; and**
- (c) that the Director Corporate Governance intimate to Boundaries Scotland the details of those Elected Members so that they could be allocated a slot at the Local Inquiry.**

## **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillors PatonDay, Richards and Weatherston declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct given their membership of the Live Borders Board and left the Chamber during the discussion.

### **8. LIVE BORDERS FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting held on 23 November 2023, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Finance and Procurement which provided an update on financial support required by Live Borders to ensure financial balance in 2023/24. The report noted that Live Borders had now finalised its financial forecasts and recommended that an allocation of £1 million was provided to the Trust from Council reserves. Without the financial support the Trust would not be able to meet its projected financial liabilities in the current year. The Council had been in detailed discussions with Live Borders regarding their financial position in the current year. The Trust was experiencing significant financial difficulties as it adjusted its service delivery model in a post-COVID operating environment, dealt with a backlog of maintenance, the effects of inflation and the ongoing impact of energy price rises in recent years which had significantly impacted the cost of operating sports facilities, notably swimming pools. At the Council meeting on 23rd November 2023, Council agreed the independent consultants' report on the joint strategic review of sport, leisure and cultural services and agreed the resultant consolidated set of recommendations and the report findings. In implementing the recommendations from the strategic review there would be the requirement for a detailed prioritisation of spend, cost reductions, additional income generation and the potential closure of some facilities in order to keep the Trust financially viable. The financial implications in the joint strategic review report noted that there were expected to be significant financial implications resulting from both the implementation of the recommendations contained within the report and the short to medium term financial support required by Live Borders to ensure they remained a going concern. It was also noted that Live Borders were still finalising updated financial forecasts for the current year and that officers would report back to Elected Members for approval of additional funding as required and as the scale of financial implications became clear. Live Borders had finalised financial forecasts for the current year, including a detailed cash flow projection to the 31st March 2024. That information received after the Council meeting on the 23rd November confirmed, based on the current run rate of expenditure and forecast income, that by the 31st March 2024 the Trust was forecast to require up to £1.5m of additional funding to meet their projected liabilities. Live Borders was proactively taking a number of management actions to minimise that pressure as far as possible. As well as addressing financial challenges during the remainder of this financial year, significant emphasis was being placed on assessing the likely financial implications in 2024/25 as part of the ongoing financial planning process. It was now considered that the additional support recommended for 2023/24 would have to be followed up with an additional package of support as part of the budget process for 2024/25 and future years. The Director – Finance and Procurement provided a presentation of the proposals and responded to Members questions. In response to a question regarding whether further additional resources above

the £1.5m identified would be required, the Director clarified that the proposed funding was targeted at addressing revenue forecast issues for the current financial year. Addressing funding issues for future years would require further resources and difficult decisions needed to be made. Regarding the letter of comfort for LiveBorders, it was explained that the letter was a guarantee by the Council fund LiveBorders for a 12-month period. The letter would allow Live Borders' 2022/23 accounts to be signed off. In response to a question regarding whether the Council would receive regular updates from LiveBorders, the Chief Executive highlighted that at its meeting on 23 November 2023 it had been agreed that Council would be regularly updated on transformational work as part of the change programme. The first of those updates was expected at the end of Quarter 4 of the current financial year.

**DECISION  
AGREED to-**

- (a) note the Live Borders 2023/24 forecast pressures of up to £1.5m;**
- (b) approve the allocation of £1m from Council Reserves to provide Live Borders with immediate cash flow support;**
- (c) delegate authority to the Director of Finance & Procurement, in consultation with the Elected Members of the Executive Board of the Joint Transformational Change Programme, to allocate further funding, up to a maximum of an additional £0.5m, before the 31st March 2024 if required; and**
- (d) delegate authority to the Director of Finance & Procurement to provide a letter of comfort to Live Borders external auditors, confirming the Council's ongoing financial support for Live Borders to ensure they remain solvent and a going concern.**

**9. NATIONAL FOSTER CARE ALLOWANCE**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director - Education and Lifelong Learning which proposed the implementation of the National Foster Care Allowance for Scottish Borders Council Foster Carers without disadvantaging Scottish Borders Council's foster carers and kinship carers. On 29th August 2023 the Scottish Government announced the introduction of a national Foster Care Allowance for both foster carers and kinship carers. The national Allowance must be paid as a minimum and where local authorities were already paying above the national Allowance rates, that should continue so that foster carers of kinship carers were not financially disadvantaged. The new Allowance should be backdated to 1st April 2023. Aspects of the new Allowance enhanced the current payment rates for foster and kinship carers and aspects disadvantaged them. The Resources Group Manager, Children and Families Social Work, Mr Gareth Stott, presented the report and responded to members questions. Mr Stott confirmed that there was a cohort of emergency short term foster carers and highlighted that challenges regarding recruitment continued to be a significant difficulty. Members welcomed the report and encouraged officers to undertake work to increase recruitment levels to reverse long-term declines.

**DECISION  
AGREED to-**

- (a) implement the new national Foster Carer Allowance for all foster carers and kinship carers in the Scottish Borders; and**
- (b) continue to pay foster carers and kinship carers on a 56-week annual basis and provide additional telephone / broadband allowance and mileage.**

**10. MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LINEHAN**

Councillor Linehan, seconded by Councillor Scott Hamilton moved approval of the following Motion as detailed on the agenda:

“The release of helium balloons and sky lanterns has increased in recent years and each can cause significant harm to the environment, animals and livestock in particular.

Sky Lanterns can cause significant fire risk, particularly during dry spells. They also pose a threat to animals, as they can cause injury, suffering, and death, through, ingestion, entanglement and entrapment.

When eaten the sharp parts of a Chinese Lantern can tear and puncture an animal’s throat or stomach, causing internal bleeding.

Likewise, helium balloons when they land, become a danger to any wildlife, farmed animals or companion animals that may happen to find them first.

If ingested, the balloon can do irreparable and often fatal damage to an animal’s oesophagus and digestive tract and can cause suffocation.

Scottish Charity Animal Concern have launched a campaign seeking support from Scottish local authorities to reduce the harm caused by these balloons and lanterns by placing restrictions on the release of sky lanterns and balloons on council-owned land and property.

Scottish Border’s Council agrees to support the Animal Concern Campaign and so imposes a complete ban on the release of Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons from any and all of the land it owns. Information on this ban will be made available on the SBC website and will be intimated to any person seeking to book any public space owned by the Council.”

Councillors Linehan and Hamilton spoke in favour of the Motion which was unanimously approved.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to approve the Motion as detailed above.**

#### 11. **OPEN QUESTIONS**

The questions submitted by Councillors Thomson and Begg were answered.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED the replies as detailed in Appendix I to this Minute.**

#### 12. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

##### **DECISION**

**AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in Appendix II to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 6, 8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.**

### **SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS**

#### 13. **MINUTE**

The private section of the Council Minute of 23 November 2023 was approved.

#### 14. **COMMITTEE MINUTE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee recommendations of the following meetings were approved:

Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee 22 November 2023  
Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee 22 November 2023  
Selkirk Common Good Fund Sub-Committee 29 November 2023.

*The meeting concluded at 1.00 pm*



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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
**14 DECEMBER 2023**  
**APPENDIX I**

**OPEN QUESTIONS**

**Question from Councillor Thomson**

To the Executive Member for Estate Management and Planning

Following the review of the Scottish Borders Council Estate and the fact that we cannot afford to maintain/retain so many properties in need of investment has been recognised, has a list of potentially 'at risk' properties been compiled? And if so, at what stage in the process will communities via their respective Community Councils be invited to discuss the impact on, and for, their community?

Reply from Councillor Mountford

The Council's estate comprises of 1656 assets measuring just over 392,000 square metres. To support the Council's long-term sustainability and contribute toward net zero targets, a significant reduction of the estate is necessary.

The first stage in the process is to agree a policy with Members on the criteria for how we classify our estate, and how we prioritise our management and investment of it.

This is one of the core workstreams that is progressing linked to the Target Operating Model. It is expected that this will inform how we identify core, non-core and surplus buildings.

It will include recommendations on how we decarbonise our estate and 5 year targets for carbon reduction.

It is expected that a report will be brought to Council by March 2024 and this report will include proposals for how we engage with communities as we begin to implement the policy.

**Question from Councillor Begg**

To the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing

30 months ago the first minister said the National Care Service would arguably be the most significant public service reform since the creation of the National Health Service. At the time the Scottish government said it would increase funding for social care by at least £800m. At recent budget briefings we have been advised that the National Care Service may have a significant effect on the Scottish Borders Council budget for next year.

Can I ask the Executive Member responsible:

- i) what Scottish Borders Council knows about the National Care Service plans for 2024
- ii) what has happened to the Scottish Borders share of the additional £800M for social care made in 2021'

Reply from Councillor Parker

There is a much larger answer to this question which I am not going to read out, but I will send all Members the larger answer as it is a helpful briefing. A letter was sent on 06.12.2023 to the Scottish Parliament by Minister Maree Todd regarding proposed revisions to the draft NCS Bill.

This letter provides a response to a series of questions from the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, and the intention of the letter was to provide MSPs clarity about the changes which will be made to the Bill in Stage 2, following a consultation process, with the broader aim of giving MSPs confidence to approve the Bill in the Stage 1 debate, scheduled for the end of January 2024.

COSLA as the representative body for Local Government in Scotland and SOLACE, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, have also made representations on the draft Bill. It is not expected however that a revised or amended Bill will be published until after MSPs have agreed its core objectives in the Stage 1 vote.

The letter is available to read in full on the Scottish Parliament's website: [National Care Service \(parliament.scot\)](#)

The final implications of the Bill for the Health & Social Care Partnership, Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders will only be known once the final Bill is approved and enacted into legislation.

In respect to part ii) of Cllr Begg's question relating to the Scottish Borders Council share of the £800m made available nationally for Social Care in 2021, the allocation was split into two tranches with £700m of recurring funding allocated nationally in 2022/23 and a further £100m distributed in 2023/2024. The Scottish Borders Share of this funding was £15.967m and has been appropriately reflected in service budgets. Funding was allocated for the following purposes:

- £7.392m to support Health & Social Care including the implementation of the Scottish Living Wage
- £2.934m to address additional winter care pressures
- £4.541m for additional RLW and carers funding
- £1.05 m for additional nursing care uplift
- £50k for national trauma training

Funding has been deployed across Health & Social Care services in line with the objectives of the funding. If a more detailed breakdown of how the funding has been deployed is required, I will ask Officers to provide this.

#### Supplementary

Councillor Begg asked if the Executive Member agreed that for the people of the Scottish Borders further integration of health and social care as part of centralisation was akin to using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Councillor Parker agreed and highlighted that it was positive Scottish Government Ministers had appeared to move away from their original intentions.



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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS BUS NETWORK REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Report by Director of Infrastructure & Environment**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the bus network review and proposes a number of recommendations to amend bus services across the network.**
- 1.2 The Scottish Borders has a large number of bus services, set over a wide geographic area with a dispersed population. The routes have remained largely unchanged for many years. Only a small number of the services operate commercially, and Scottish Borders Council invests significant revenue funding each year to keep 80% of the network operating.
- 1.3 Scottish Borders Council commissioned a full bus network review in 2022, with the support of the City Deal Workforce Mobility Project. It sought to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing commercial and supported bus services, and make recommendations, where appropriate, that could improve the network in relation to better meeting potential outcomes and/or improving service efficiency.
- 1.4 A wide scale community and business engagement exercise was undertaken to identify the needs of communities and to assess new travel demand that is not currently met by the existing public transport network. This information has been used to design a new network that is focused on key trip attractors, such as the Borders General Hospital, rather than just servicing key road corridors across the region.
- 1.5 The review found that overall, the majority of the network operates well and provides sufficient coverage but there are opportunities to increase the frequency of inter-town services and town services, while looking at improving the operational durations and the timing of services to key employment, education and healthcare sites.
- 1.6 The review highlighted the opportunity for more demand responsive services to be introduced across the Scottish Borders to link remote rural communities into key towns.
- 1.7 An economic assessment was undertaken and has identified that the bus network provides significant economic and social value to the region, and

that SBC's support for non-commercial services provides a good rate of return.

- 1.8 The recommendation in this report will be delivered as existing Service contracts expire. However, due to the return of some service contracts by operators in the last six months, the Passenger Transport team have already utilised the analysis and recommendations of the Bus Network Review to implement changes to mitigate the loss of services where possible and sustain the existing commercial network.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council:-**

- (a) Notes the comprehensive assessment undertaken by the Bus Network review to identify changes that could deliver improved bus services for the communities and businesses of the Scottish Borders;**
- (b) Approves the proposed service changes set out in Section 10 of this report;**
- (c) Approves the proposed procurement approach set out in Section 11 of this report. Acknowledging the benefits that longer term contracts will bring for competition and enabling operators to invest in fleet and services, while committing Scottish Borders Council to longer term financial commitments;**
- (d) Approves the need for a report to be brought back to Scottish Borders Council to outline options if the tender returns exceed the existing budget provision;**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The local bus network plays a critical role, particularly in rural areas, in enabling people to access employment, healthcare, and daily essentials whilst supporting the local economy and helping to reduce social isolation.
- 3.2 Many of the outcomes outlined in the Council Plan are dependent on the provision of a financially sustainable and interconnected transport Network.
- 3.3 The current network has remained largely unchanged for many years and has struggled to keep pace with changes in working patterns, strategic developments, housing, tourism, and the arrival of the Borders railway in 2015. All of which have had a significant impact on the existing bus network, travel patterns and transport needs.
- 3.4 Given the length of time since the last review of the transport network, the impact of the COVID pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis, Scottish Borders Council commissioned a full bus network review.
- 3.5 The review was taken forward with the support of the City Deal Workforce Mobility Project and designed to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing commercial and supported bus services and make recommendations that could improve the network.
- 3.6 The review has identified three primary outcome objectives:
- **Reduce inequalities:** provide fair and equitable access to key services, easy to use for all and affordable for all.
  - **Take climate action:** contribute to net zero targets by reducing net carbon emissions from transport, promoting greener and cleaner choices.
  - **Maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the publicly subsidised bus services** in the Scottish Borders ensuring integration, removing overlap with other bus services.
- 3.7 There are three further supporting outcome objectives:
- **Help deliver inclusive economic growth and community wealth building** by linking people to jobs and customers to businesses.
  - **Improve health and wellbeing** by connecting people to communities and enabling healthy transport choices.
  - **Enhancing links between modes of transport**, supporting the National Transport Strategy 2 transport hierarchy.
- 3.8 This report summarises the key findings of the Bus Network Review focusing on the recommended changes to the Council funded/supported bus services.
- 3.9 For further details please see **Appendix 1** - Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations.

## 4 CURRENT NETWORK

4.1 At the time of undertaking the review the bus network in the Scottish Borders was made up of 61 services operated by five main operators:

- Borders Buses;
- Peter Hogg of Jedburgh;
- Scottish Borders Council;
- Telford Coaches; and
- Travelsure.

Borders Buses are by far the largest of the operators, carrying more than 80% of all journeys made.

4.2 Approximately 3 million miles are operated annually by scheduled public buses across the region with over 760,000 journeys made.

4.3 The Scottish Household Survey noted that passenger satisfaction with bus services in the Borders was only 50% in 2019, in comparison with a Scottish average of 68%, and one of the lowest in the country.

4.4 An assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) for the current network has been undertaken as part of the review and is included in **Appendix 2**.

## 5 CHALLENGES

5.1 The **biggest challenge of operating within a rural area is that most services do not stack up commercially and therefore require Council funding**. There is simply not the volume of people to sustain a commercially viable bus network as would be seen in urban areas.

5.2 The **transport infrastructure out with the main towns and villages is poor**. For example, lack of real time information, sheltered bus stops not provided or in poor condition and in many cases no visual indication of a bus stop being in place.

5.3 There are **limited hours of operation** on most services and very few evening services operate across the region, see **Appendix 3**.

5.4 There is a **lack of integration between services**, such as tourism, and between **modes of transport** for example:

- Bus to bus (ticketing between operators)
- Bus to rail (lack of integrated ticketing)
- Bus and rail connection times

5.5 There is a **lack of information for the public** to enable them to plan their travel and understand the fare structures.

5.6 The **COVID 19 pandemic had a significant impact on bus patronage** both locally and nationally. Whilst some services have almost recovered to pre covid level others have up to 30% fewer passengers compared to 2019 demonstrating that some services will not recover. This increases the likelihood that the Council will need to provide further financial support to maintain services in the future.

5.7 The **Scottish Government withdrew the additional COVID financial support** (i.e. NSG+) in March 2023 and it has not been replaced. The

support had been in place since June 2020, enabling bus operators to reintroduce networks at pre-pandemic levels whilst taking account of the loss of patronage.

- 5.8 All operators have seen **operating costs increase significantly** over the last 2 years linked to high levels of inflation. To put this context the recent, retender of the 101/102 saw an annual increase from £272k to £509k (86% increase) in operating costs for the same level of service. As a result the Council along with other Local Authority partners had to increase their contribution to maintain the service. This is indicative of the challenges ahead for maintaining the current transport network.
- 5.9 **Bus services are not a statutory provision** for local authorities and as such the budget for transport has decreased significantly over the last 10 years. The Council's only statutory provision for transport is Home to School transport.
- 5.10 **Local Authorities across Scotland have had to deliver savings across a wide range of services.** Scottish Borders Council continues to subsidise over 80% of the local bus network with around £1.389m being spent on bus services in 2023.
- 5.11 Historically **savings have been delivered through the withdrawal of services**, which risks isolating communities. To avoid the continued reduction in service provision for passengers, a new approach is required which aims to try to increase patronage and grow the income rather reduce the amount of money spent on subsidy and reduce service provision. This particularly important if the Council wishes to deliver on its **commitment to reduce carbon emissions**.
- 5.12 The **availability of data to inform decision making has been limited** which makes identifying opportunities to increase patronage and grow income extremely challenging.
- 5.13 Delivering a bus network that meets the needs of service users whilst **operating with a reducing budget will continue to be a challenge** particularly as operating costs and customer expectations increase.
- 5.14 Ongoing **driver shortages** are having a significant impact on the ability to provide transport services. In almost all cases operators are having to increase their driver pay rates and or bring in staff from outwith the Borders, again at additional cost. This cost is being passed onto the Council through increased contract costs.
- 5.15 The ongoing financial challenges that operators are facing has resulted in one **operator withdrawing from the Borders and ceasing operation**. This has the knock-on impact of **increasing contract costs as well as reducing competition**.
- 5.16 **Operators are not reimbursed the full fare for under 22 and over 60 concessionary travel.** To put this into context operators receive 55% of the adult fare for an over 60 traveller.
- 5.17 **Duplication of routes put commercial services at risk** and increases the likelihood of the Council having to step in when the commercial services are no longer sustainable.
- 5.18 There is a **need to work with partners** in tourism, NHS Borders, Borders College, local employers and Community Transport **to pool resources**. **This will support the delivery of an integrated and efficient**

**transport network** whilst reducing the cost of operation, meeting the needs of service users and ensuring best value. Partners must be willing and able to support this to make it happen.

5.19 **Access to the bus network is a challenge** particularly in the Borders as many people reside some distance from a bus stop or one that is easily accessible i.e. has a path.

5.20 Large parts of the Scottish Borders are subject to **workforce mobility deprivation** (i.e. transport related barriers to employment) as can be seen from the index in **Appendix 4**.

5.21 The **car remains the main mode of transport** in the Borders, with only 4% of journeys undertaken by bus in the region pre-Covid. This is significantly lower than the 7% for all journeys in Scotland, but is broadly comparable with other rural areas of the country.

5.22 There are **challenges in coordinating bus services locally, regionally and nationally**, due to the de-regulation of bus services that came into effect in 1986. Local Authorities have limited control or ability to influence privately operated bus services to ensure integration, coordination, and customer service.

5.23 There is a **general lack of understanding around the complex/integrated nature of the local bus network**, how it is funded (including concessionary reimbursement rates), and the role of national government, local authorities, and commercial operators. This is combined with an **increasing customer expectation** that services should be improved and or extended at a time when the Council can least afford it.

## **6 DATA LED APPROACH TO IMPROVING SERVICES**

6.1 In order to deliver a more sustainable bus network this review has taken a new approach using multiple threads of data to establish opportunities over and above existing users, these have included:

- Ticket machine data from operators
- Employee postcode data
- National mobile phone data (see **Appendix 5**)
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Shift patterns for key employers
- Journey to work analysis
- National transport statistic

Data on approximately 30K travel patterns were collected and used for the Review.

6.2 The analysis of this data has provided an indication of the actual scale of movements within the region and identified the potential to grow bus patronage, if the right service timings, frequency and supporting infrastructure can be delivered.

6.3 The comprehensive data analysis within the Bus Network Review reinforces the need for Scottish Borders Council to continually collate data, analyse the network's performance and identify areas to increase patronage.



- 6.4 It is important to note that at the Passenger Transport Team does not currently have the resource or budget to collate and analyse bus network performance data to the extent recommended by the Bus Network Review. See 'Additional Recommendations' outlined in **Section 13** and **Appendix 9**.

## **7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Engagement for the Bus Network Review included a survey which was issued to members of the public. The survey was issued online via the Scottish Borders Council's website and was promoted by Scottish Borders Council social media channels, and by a wide variety of partner organisations.
- 7.2 The survey gathered insights, views and feedback on travel habits, bus use and perceived barriers to bus use in the Scottish Borders. A further 27 responses were received on behalf of businesses/organisations.
- 7.3 The surveys were complemented with community workshops, via Microsoft Teams meetings, with Area Forums, bus operators, Scotrail, businesses, NHS, SOSE, Borders College and the Chamber of Commerce.
- 7.4 In total 1,103 surveys responses received were from individuals, see **Appendix 6** for further detail.
- 7.5 Key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges which were expressed by the stakeholders are shown in **Appendix 7**.
- 7.6 Feedback from the community engagement exercise has been used to inform the bus network review and its recommendations.

## **8 PINGO PILOT**

- 8.1 In May 2022, the Council funded a pilot demand responsive bus service in the Berwickshire area. The aim of which was to help understand how 'demand responsive' bus services could help to overcome remote-rural transport poverty.
- 8.2 Over a thousand passengers use the service on a monthly basis, with over 40% utilising the Under 22 free travel scheme.
- 8.3 The PINGO pilot has worked relatively well, with various improvements made over the last year. However, the following considerations need to be taken into account when making a decision about its future:
- A high proportion of journeys were single occupancy journeys, which is not sustainable.
  - Using an app to book transport restricts certain demographics from using the service e.g., older people who are less confident using technology.
  - Integration between the PINGO service and the fixed route service needs to be improved.
  - The current PINGO service could respond to travel requests more effectively if there were more vehicles to cover the large geographical area, or the service are only targeted at specific areas that don't have access to the fixed route bus network.
  - A larger 'demand responsive' bus service could be more cost effective with smaller vehicles and the contracts are structured to include school transport services.

- 8.4 An economic impact assessment was undertaken based on the first eleven months of PINGO operation and it was estimated that the benefit cost ratio for the pilot service is 2.2:1, or £2.20 of benefit for every £1 of investment.
- 8.5 Funding for the PINGO Pilot is scheduled to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and a decision is therefore required regarding its future.
- 8.6 Three options are being considered for the service beyond 31 March 2024:
1. **End the service on 31 March 2024** and undertake early communications with Berwickshire residents in 2024 to allow sufficient time for passengers to organise alternative transport solutions;
  2. Scottish Borders Council **extend the pilot in its current form at a cost of £360k per annum** and enable the concept to be continually improved for rural areas of Berwickshire; or
  3. Scottish Borders Council provide a **reduced funding commitment to allow the continued operation** of a service that utilises smaller vehicles and a combination of school transport contracts, targeted operating zones and alternative operating hours to deliver a service in Berwickshire for a budget of £250k per annum.
- 8.7 Members are currently considering the future of the PINGO service as part of the Council's 2024/25 budget setting process.
- 8.8 **Scottish Borders Council have successfully bid for Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) to trial taxi bus services in 3 localities across the region for a period of 12 months.** This will enable the findings from PINGO to be developed further whilst also supporting more rural communities who don't currently have transport links. **The taxi bus will be rolled out in Selkirk, Jedburgh and Newcastleton localities.**
- 8.9 Scottish Borders Council has a limited budget to support the delivery of passenger transport services across the region. Other sources of funding are critical in supporting the long-term provision of demand responsive transport services. Council Officers will work with local communities to explore, identify, and deliver opportunities to supplement the local transport network using additional sources of funding. It is important to note that communities have access to funding streams which could support the delivery of transport services which will enhance links into the wider bus network, this includes windfarm funding.

## 9 ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 As part of the review, estimates have been made of the economic, social and environmental benefits of the bus network.
- 9.2 The net benefit of the network is estimated to be £11.0M per annum, which can be broken down as follows:
- Access to employment £8.5M per annum
  - Access to retail and leisure opportunities: £1.1M per annum
  - Access to healthcare appointments: £0.62M per annum
  - Improved access to training and education: £0.49M per annum
  - Reduced car use: £0.31M.
- 9.3 Overall, the net benefit per journey made by bus in the Scottish Borders is estimated to be around £18.

9.4 The benefit to cost ratio for the investment that Scottish Borders Council provides to the regions network ranges from 3.8:1 (£3.80 for every £1 invested) for subsidised routes\*, to 8.8:1 (£8.80 for every £1 invested) for all services including those that operate commercially (i.e., are not subsidised).

*\*this based solely on Minimum Cost Contracts i.e., subsidised services where the Council retains the income.*

9.5 It is therefore concluded that the bus network in the Borders provides significant economic and social value to the region, and that SBC's support for non-commercial services provides a good rate of return.

## **10 PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES**

10.1 This section summarises the proposed service changes, by locality, as identified by the Bus Network Review. These are in line with those outlined in a series of Councillor briefings, which took place between September and October 2023.

10.2 In order to raise awareness and increase patronage the Bus Network Review recommends a marketing budget of £70k-£120k per annum which would see a return on investment of circa £115k-£175k from a 10-15% increase in passenger growth.

### **10.3 Berwickshire Area**

**Main towns:** Duns, Coldstream & Eyemouth

- **Service 60** – Forms part of new 15-minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH. Divert via Eyemouth and Foulden on alternating hours increasing the frequency of the service between Duns and Berwick to Hourly.
- **Service 67** – Forms part of new 15 minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH. Explore opportunity for operator to operate commercially between Kelso and Galashiels.
- **Service 85** – Consider a revised Kelso town services, which could extend to Leitholm and Greenlaw. Potential also to introduce a taxi bus service.
- **PINGO** – The **PINGO** service commenced in May 2022 with further funding committed through to March 2024. The service and app have undergone continual development over the past 18 months in partnership with the operator and the app developer and based on feedback from service users.

Enhancements to the PINGO service have been introduced to improve the integration between PINGO and the fixed route bus network. The operating hours were also amended to cater for later evening journeys.

The service could be further improved through varying the size of vehicle that operates and combining DRT with school transport contracts to improve the efficiency, providing further value for money and improving the long-term sustainability of the service.

Further consideration is required with regards to the format of the service beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024 with 3 options available, see section 8.

## 10.4 **Cheviot Area**

**Main towns:** Jedburgh, Kelso & St Boswells

- **Service 20** - Retain and incorporate Service 21, Operator to focus on links between Hawick, Jedburgh and Howdenburn providing connections to the Jed Campus
- **Service 21** - Incorporate into service 20.
- **Service 51** – Service to form part of a 15-minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH also serving Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.
- **Service 68** - Service to form part of a 15-minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH, Explore commercial opportunities with operator.
- **Services 80/81/81A** – Extend routes to include areas served by 983 service (Springwood & Sprouston) and extend operations until 18:30
- **Service 85** - Replaced by PINGO option for northern part of route, and/or by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week.
- **Service 86** – Replace, acts as a placing journey for Kelso services.
- **Service 131** – Retain
- **Service 902** - Replaced by PINGO option for northern part of route, and/or by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week.
- **Service 910** - Replaced by extended 80, 81 or 81A service, and/or revised Town Service.
- **New Service** - New DRT service between Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk and St Boswells, all villages within area bounded by A68, A698, A699 and A7 and Borders General Hospital.
- **New Service** - DRT many-to-few (lollipop) Taxi bus serving Jedburgh.

## 10.5 **Eildon Area**

**Main towns:** Galashiels, Melrose & Selkirk

- **Core Network Services 51, 60, 67 and 68** – Retain and create a 15-minute frequency into the BGH serving Langlee and Tweedbank and improving connections to Lauder, Oxtou and the Royal Infirmary
- **Service 54** – Incorporate Netherdale into the service and consider an hourly evening service through to 22:30
- **Service 70 – Discuss with operator potential to** Incorporate Melrose Gait and replace service 74.
- **Service 73** – Discuss with operator utilising the 73 as a Selkirk town service connecting with the X95.
- **Service 74** – Replace with service 70 for Melrose Gait, Netherdale to be included in new 54 service.
- **Service 86** – Replace, acts a placing journey for Kelso services.
- **Service 911** - Replace with new "lollipop" DRT / Taxi bus centred on Selkirk .

- **Service 912** - Ettrick - Selkirk - Galashiels DRT (SBC) - Replace with new "lollipop" DRT / Taxi bus centred on Selkirk.
- **Service 964** – Retain
- **Service X62** – Commercial Service
- **Service X95** – Commercial Service

#### 10.6 **Teviot and Liddesdale Area**

**Main towns:** Hawick & Newcastleton

- **Service 20** – Retain and incorporate Service 21, Operator to focus on links between Hawick, Jedburgh and Howdenburn
- **Hawick Town Services** – Replace existing 46, 47, 48 & 49 services with a revision of H1 and H2 routes to serve key points on 46 - 49 routes. Some stops already served by existing H1/H2, 20 and other services.
- **Service 127/127a** - No changes proposed.
- **Service 128** - Replaced by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Hawick.
- **Service 910** – Replace 910 service with new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Hawick, operating 5 days/week.
- **Service 911** - New "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Selkirk, operating 3 days/week.
- **Service 912** - New "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Selkirk, operating 3 days/week.
- **Hawick Town Service** - Extend route to replace 46 - 49 and extend services until beyond 18:30.
- **Hawick Town Service Sundays** – No Changes Proposed
- **X95** – Commercial Service, No Change Proposed although consideration to be given to improved connections to the BGH.
- **New DRT Service** - DRT many-to-many serving Hawick / Jedburgh / Selkirk / St Boswells, College campus, Bowhill House, Dryburgh Abbey and Borders General Hospital

#### 10.7 **Tweeddale Area**

**Main towns:** Peebles

- **Service 90a/90b** - Retain, extending services into the early evening, consider a 30 minute frequency beyond 18:30.
- **Service 91** – Improving the connections between the 91 and Stuarts 191 service and Borders Buses X62. Consider working with Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) and Stuarts coaches to extend the 191 through to Peebles.
- **Service 93** – Consider a loop service serving Peebles, Biggar and West Linton.
- **Service 101** – No changes proposed.
- **Service X62** – Commercial Service, No changes proposed.

## 10.8 **Early implementation of recommendations**

It should be noted that since the council set out on the network review, a number of contracts have been handed back in both the Berwickshire and Teviot and Liddesdale localities. This is because operators have been unable to fulfil existing contracts. As a result, the Passenger Transport Team have been forced to implement some of the recommendations of the Bus Network Review ahead of Council approval in order to mitigate the impact and continue the provision of services for communities where possible. Members were consulted in advance of the changes being implemented. The services impacted included:

- Service 32
- Service 34
- Service 51
- Service 236
- Service 260
- Hawick town service on a Sunday.

## 11 **CURRENT CONTRACT POSITION**

11.1 The subsidised bus network is delivered via 61 separate contracts, which can be categorised as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Contract Length</b>	<b>Net Cost Budget</b>	<b>Contract Renewal</b>	<b>Contractor</b>
<b>Core Network</b>	51, 60, 67 & 68	5 + 1 + 1	~£550k	January 2025	Borders Buses
<b>Non-Core Network</b>	All other Services	3 + 1 + 1	~£750k	Contract expired – requires extension	Borders Buses, Telford & Hoggs

11.2 The 'Core Network' was awarded in January 2020 through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and is delivered in partnership with Borders Buses. The Bus Network Review is proposing only minor changes to the timings of the Core Network to support passenger growth to the Border General Hospital (BGH). As the Contract has up to 4 years left to run these changes will be delivered through discussion with Borders Buses.

11.3 The Bus Network Review proposes numerous changes to the 'Non-Core Network', which are highlighted in **Section 10**. These changes are significant and cannot be introduced until such time the Contracts are re-tendered, which is anticipated to take place during 2024/25. This will require the current 'Non-Core Network' contracts to be extended in their current form whilst the new procurement process is undertaken.

## 12 PROCUREMENT APPROACH

12.1 In order to ensure best value and implement the recommendations of the review it proposed that changes are made to the procurement approach, for example:

- Increase the contract length of 'Non-Core Services' from 3+1+1 years to 5+1+1+1 years.
- Develop new Conditions of Contract.
- Develop new Service Specifications.
- Develop new Key Performance Indicators

See **Appendix 8** for further detail.

12.2 The TAS Partnership has been commissioned by the Workforce Mobility project to support the Council with the procurement process. See **Appendix 8** for further detail.

12.3 **IMPORTANT** - If the tender returns from bidders are in excess of the available budget a further report will be brought back to Committee to agree which services can be awarded.

## 13 ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 This report has focused on the recommended changes to the Council funded/supported bus services, see **Section 10**.

13.2 The Bus Network Review has also made a number of additional recommendations (**Appendix 9**), which are beyond the scope of the Council funded/supported network and thus no provisions for delivering these recommendations are contained within existing budgets.

13.3 Due to the current financial constraints these additional recommendations are not deliverable and will not be considered further by Officers unless requested by Council.

## 14 IMPLICATIONS

### 14.1 Financial

(a) The bus subsidies base budget contains the following provisions, set out in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2 – Income & Expenditure (2024/25)**

<b>Expenditure Headings</b>	<b>Cost / Income</b>
Minimum Cost Contracts	£840,000
Minimum Subsidy Contracts	£1,077,000
Transport Payments to LA's	£54,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£1,972,000</b>
<b>Income Headings</b>	
Transport Payments from LA's	-£105,000
Developer Contributions	-£40,000
Concessions	-£122,000

Fares	-£122,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-£389,000</b>
Financial Plan Savings for 2024/25	<b>-£193,000</b>
<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>£1,389,000</b>

- (b) In order to deliver the new Non-Core Network in 2024/25 it is necessary extend the current contracts to enable the procurement process to be undertaken. It should be noted that it would be more expensive to re-procure these services than extending the current contracts. However, there is a risk that the incumbent operators may not agree to the extension of the current contracts.
- (c) The cost of the new Non-Core Services (fixed route or flexible) will only be known once the procurement process has been undertaken in 2024/25. There is a risk that this exceeds the current budget, particularly given recent experience of school bus contract and the 101/102 service. If this is the case a report will be brought back to Council for consideration before award.
- (d) The Core Network remains in Contract until 2027 and therefore increases are not expected until they are retendered.
- (e) There is currently no marketing budget in place to promote the services in the Scottish Borders. The estimate from the Bus Network Review is a marketing budget of £70k-£120k per annum would see a return on investment of circa £115k-£175k from a 10-15% increase in passenger growth. This obligation could be included in the new service contracts as part of the procurement process, so that a competitive price can be obtained for the activity”, but it will ultimately be a pass-through cost back to the Council.
- (f) The proposed approach to procuring the services will commit the Council to longer term contracts, that will deliver multiple benefits, but restrict the ability of the Passenger Transport team to absorb future budget cuts.
- (g) Funding for the PINGO Pilot ends in March 2024. This is to be considered as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process and therefore the financial impacts are not considered as part of this report. See **Section 8** for further details.

## 14.2 Risk and Mitigations

An assessment of the risks and mitigations of implementing and not implementing the recommendations of this report has been undertaken. Please see **Appendix 10** for full details.

## 14.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

A Stage 1 - Scoping and Assessing for Relevance (**Appendix 11**) and Stage 2 – Evidence Gathering and Consultation Integrated Impact Assessment (**Appendix 12**) have been undertaken.



The Stage 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment determined that the Bus Network Review and its proposals:

- Will impact other Council policies as it is an enabler for the Borders economy, it provides access for communities to employment, education, welfare support and is a lifeline for young people accessing opportunities.
- Will impact the following groups of people:
  - Age – Positive & Negative Impact
  - Disability – Positive & Negative Impact
- Have the potential to impact the following socio-economic groups:
  - Low and/or No Wealth – Positive & Negative Impact
  - Material Deprivation- Positive & Negative Impact
  - Area Deprivation – Positive & Negative Impact
  - Socio-economic background – Positive & Negative Impact
  - Carers - Positive & Negative Impact
- Do not impact on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty

The Stage 2 – (Evidence Gathering and Consultation) Integrated Impact Assessment established a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges through the stakeholder engagement process, See **Appendix 7**. In addition it confirmed that the Stage 1 - initial assessment remained valid and no further impacts have become evident and therefore the proposal should proceed on the basis that there is no disproportionate impact on equality or Fairer Scotland characteristics.

However, it is important to recognise that there will be some instances where access to the transport network will change. This may result in longer journey times and or multiple connections. The recommendations of the bus network review are to be delivered within the existing passenger transport budget and it is not possible to cater to everyone's needs. Therefore, there may be some residents, communities and groups who feel negatively impacted by some of the proposals. An analysis of the data has been carried out to ensure that any impacts will be minimised.

#### 14.4 Sustainable Development Goals

The impact of the proposals on the UN Sustainable Development Goals has been undertaken. See **Appendix 13** which outlines the specific goals that are affected and summarises the impacts.

#### 14.5 Climate Change

The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will help deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education, and leisure.

Public transportation is a crucial part of the solution to climate change. It can help reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants while providing people with an efficient and affordable way to get around.

Studies on public transport have shown that switching from car to public transportation can reduce a person's carbon footprint by up to 1.5 metric tons per year.

In addition to reducing emissions, public transportation can also help reduce traffic congestion and save people money. Mass transit systems such as buses can move many people quickly and efficiently reducing the number of single car journeys which ultimately lead to increased congestion.

Carbon emissions from the operation of scheduled passenger bus services in the region are estimated to be 3.3 million tons per annum. See **Appendix 14** for further information relating to carbon emissions.

It is important to note that for bus travel to be more carbon efficient than the private car it requires on average 12 people to use the bus rather than the car. This is a challenge in the Borders as many bus journeys will have less than 12 passengers per journey. Hence why enhancing the network is key to support residents in choosing the bus over the car.

#### 14.6 Rural Proofing

A rural proofing assessment has been undertaken, for further details please see **Appendix 15**.

#### 14.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

It is anticipated that the proposals in this report will have a minimal impact on data subjects and the Data Protection Officer has confirmed that a Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

#### 14.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required.

### 15 CONSULTATION

15.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and comments have been incorporated into the final report.

15.2 The Chief Executive, the Director (Public Health), the Director (Social Work & Practice), Director (Education & Lifelong Learning), Director (Resilient Communities), Chief Officer (IJB/Health & Social Care) and Procurement have been consulted and comments have been incorporated into the final report.

#### Approved by

**Name**

**John Curry**

**Title**

**Director – Infrastructure & Environment**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
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**Background Papers:** [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

**Previous Minute Reference:** [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Ross Sharp-Dent can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [RSharp-Dent@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:RSharp-Dent@scotborders.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1 - Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations**



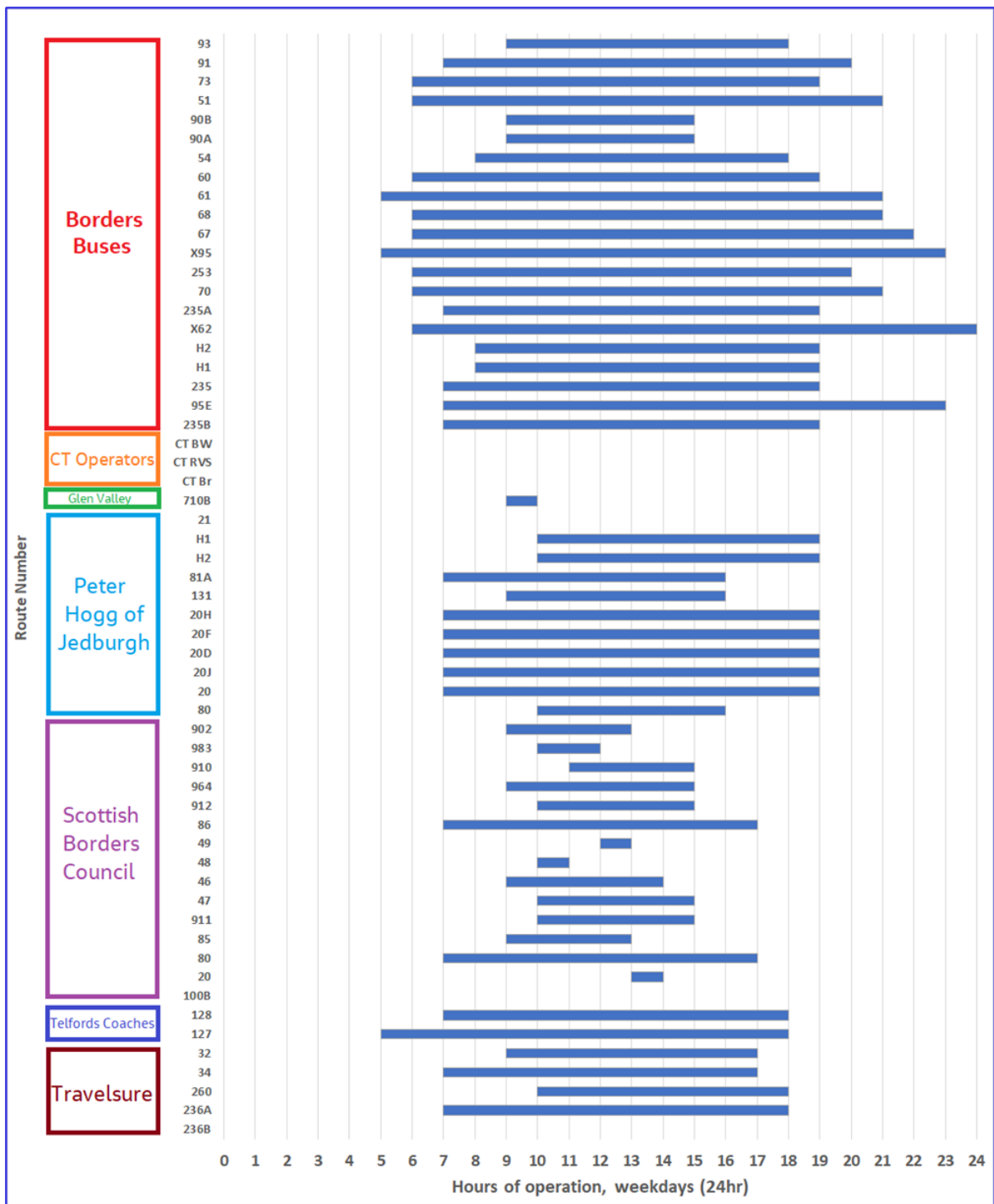
Scottish Borders  
Bus Network Review

## Appendix 2 – SWOT Analysis of Current Bus Network

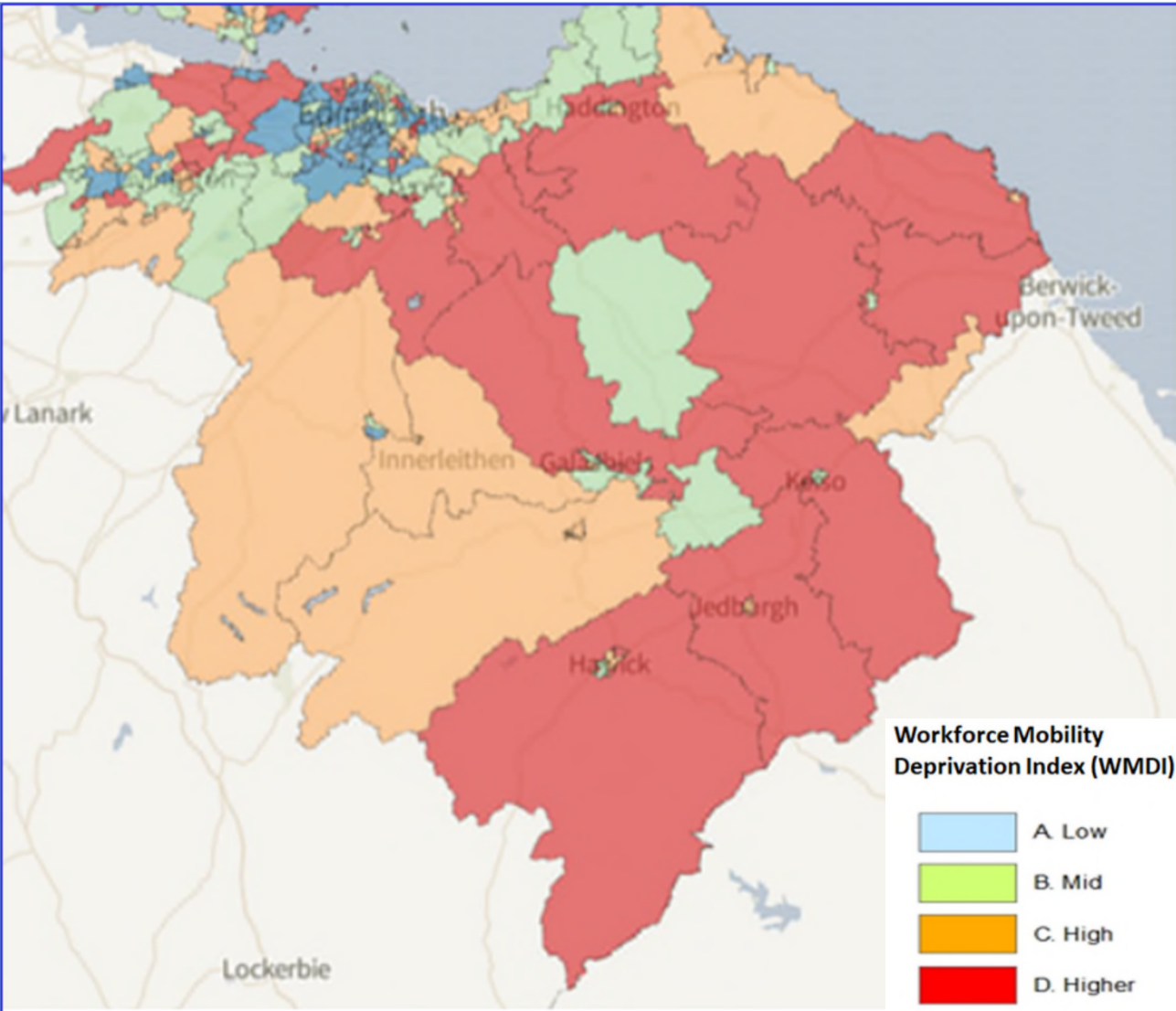
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Buses are essential for many people to access employment, services and other key social needs, and well-liked by many of its users</li> <li>▪ The bus network provides significant social, economic and environmental benefits (quantified in Section <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b>)</li> <li>▪ The extant bus network connects all main settlements of the Borders with at least reasonable weekday daytime frequency, as well as providing town services within the main settlements</li> <li>▪ Scheduled bus services are complemented by a broad range of more specialist provision, including demand-responsive and community transport services</li> <li>▪ Many people are eligible for free bus travel</li> <li>▪ The Borders has a major operator (Borders Buses) who is willing to invest in bus services in the region and innovates (e.g. Borders Buses app, Pingo, bikes on buses)</li> <li>▪ There is some good infrastructure supporting bus services (notably including Galashiels interchange)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The settlement pattern of the Borders makes it challenging to serve by public transport, as there are no dominant demand corridors</li> <li>▪ Journey patterns are highly dispersed, meaning it is difficult for bus to serve a high proportion of them, and bus is used for only a relatively small proportion of journeys</li> <li>▪ Many residents of the Borders do not have good access by bus to employment, services, healthcare or other key needs, for reasons including buses not operating on appropriate routes or at appropriate times, and not being able to access a nearby bus stop</li> <li>▪ Most bus services are not commercially viable, and rely on on-going public revenue funding which is scarce</li> <li>▪ The network is highly dependent on concessionary users, which may distort demand from fare-paying passengers</li> <li>▪ Few bus services operate early or late in the day, or in some of the rural areas away from main routes</li> <li>▪ Bus service reliability is perceived by many users to be a regular problem</li> <li>▪ There is limited competition for contracts between operators, which is likely to increase costs to SBC</li> <li>▪ There is no consistency of specialist transport provision (different areas have different provision) and it is proving challenging for the CT sector to maintain its operations</li> <li>▪ Demand for bus use in the Borders was significantly impacted by Covid, and the long-term patronage effects remain uncertain</li> <li>▪ For those people that have access to one, there are few disincentives for using car for journeys in the Borders</li> <li>▪ SBC is probably investing less per person in its bus network than is typical amongst other comparable Scottish authorities</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An effective and attractive bus network is supported by a broad range of national, regional and local policies</li> <li>▪ Growth in use of the bus network could help more people in the Borders access jobs, education, healthcare and other key needs using a sustainable transport mode, benefiting the region's economy, social inclusion and carbon emissions</li> <li>▪ Most journeys in the Borders are local, and there is potential for the bus network to serve more of them</li> <li>▪ More journeys by bus could be encouraged and enabled, using options including improving access to bus stops and increasing awareness of services</li> <li>▪ Full uptake of the Under-22 concessionary pass should promote bus use by more people</li> <li>▪ Rebuilding of demand back closer to pre-Covid levels, especially for older/disabled concessionary passengers</li> <li>▪ Joint working with partners outside the bus industry (e.g. NHS Borders, Borders College) to share vehicle assets and encourage use of bus could enable improved efficiencies</li> <li>▪ Better integration of school transport services with the main scheduled network may also be able to improve efficiencies</li> <li>▪ Make use of the opportunities that new data sources, especially employee travel pattern data and movement data tracked by mobile phones, provide to understand demand for transport in the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SBC funding for bus services is being reduced at a time of significant cost pressures on operators, so there is a high risk of service withdrawals</li> <li>▪ Withdrawal of Scottish Government NSG+ funding places a further cost pressure on operators</li> <li>▪ The ageing population of the Borders is likely to increase demand for more specialist transport provision</li> <li>▪ Usage of bus services is influenced by many external factors, including car ownership and use, and there are presently few incentives not to use car for journeys in the Borders for those people that have access to one</li> <li>▪ There is a lack of partnership working ethos between relevant organisations (SBC, operators, employers, communities, etc)</li> <li>▪ The challenges that the bus industry is facing to recover patronage from the effects of Covid</li> <li>▪ Increased cost of living reduces demand for travel</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3 – Current Bus Network – Hours of Operation



**Appendix 4 - Workforce Mobility Deprivation Index**





## **Appendix 6 – Individual Stakeholder Feedback**

In total 1,103 surveys responses received were from individuals, see below:

- 81% were 'current bus users within the Scottish Borders region'.
- 38% typically travel by bus several times a month
- 31% who travel by bus once a month or less
- 24% travel by bus several times a week
- 7% travel by bus daily
- 95% indicated typically using timetabled bus services
- 5% use door-to-door bus services.
- 32% indicated the bus was the most convenient travel option
- 30% indicated they had no alternative transport option
- 33% use bus for leisure and recreation
- 24% use bus for shopping
- 20% use bus for appointments



**Appendix 7 – Community Engagement Feedback - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p>PINGO demand-responsive service            Innovations such as Wi-Fi, USB charging and Bike on Bus            Under 22 concessionary pass has allowed many young people to keep using buses for study and work            A positive customer service ethos and community feel of bus operators            Galashiels Transport Interchange            Investment in Borders Buses vehicle quality            Real Time information infrastructure improvements</p>	<p>Lack of evening service            Timetables that change on Fridays to accommodate school times            Confusing timetables and passenger information, especially at stops            Quality of some service vehicles            Quality of stop infrastructure, with insufficient shelters and poor lighting            Journey times to main population centres            Cost of fares, especially for families or groups of people travelling together            Frequency and reliability of some services            Damage to vehicles caused by poor road conditions            Links to GP's and BGH</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>Expansion of PINGO or similar services into other parts of the Scottish Borders.            Better integration of PINGO and Community Transport with Scheduled bus services.            Better integration of bus and train timetables interoperability of ticketing.            Optimising timetables to enable more people to travel to work by bus.            Improve timetable presentation and passenger information.            Increase provision of card / contactless payment.            Register school services.            Using bus services to transport school pupils to/from Borders College.            Future partnership working with Borders College, BGH and other employers.            Continued access to demand data through the Workforce Mobility Project to continually review data and network performance.            PowerBi data analysis for service data that has been set up by the Workforce Mobility Project.</p>	<p>Setting up interoperable ticket system which is easy to use and is accepted by operators as fair and equitable.            Availability of drivers.            High cost of fuel.            Ultra-low emission vehicles not considered practical in rural areas like the Borders.            Driver recruitment issues across all operators affecting the ability to deliver service provision.            Getting patronage back up to pre-covid levels.            Under 22 free bus travel scheme reduces income for bus operators and services.            Reducing Government subsidy.            Reducing Council budgets and savings requirements.            Increasing cost of living.            Community Transport coordination and performance management to review value for money and service to the communities.            Community Transport driver recruitment.            Demographics of the Borders.            Road network.</p>

## Appendix 8 – Procurement Approach

- The procurement will be delivered through an 'Open' tender process, enabling any operator in the UK market to submit a bid for the available contracts in the Scottish Borders.
- Each route will be procured as a separate contract, to allow smaller operators to compete for all available routes.
- There will be the option for bidders to propose multiple route discounts if they are successfully at winning 2 or more service route contracts ('Multi Lot' discount); and
- The proposed contract length will be 5 years, with up to three single year additions, variations of which to be agreed between PTU and the operator if the operators are performing in accordance with the contract and specification. The length of the contract is important if Scottish Borders Council want to enable operators to invest in fleet development to help transition to a Net-Zero future. Also, the commitment for longer contracts provides greater operational certainty for operators and could attract more operators to the region.
- The Workforce Mobility project has commissioned the TAS Partnership to undertake the following activities to support the Council's procurement process:
  - Create new Conditions of Contract for all of the proposed services in the Bus Network Review, which included fixed route and demand responsive solutions, building on industry best practice from around the UK;
  - Create a new set of network timetables that reflect the recommendations of the Bus Network review that will form part of the new contracts specifications.
  - Create a new operational specification for every route and service to be procured.
  - Create a set of data standards that the operators must comply with to enable the Passenger Transport team to continually review route performance in a proactive manner, utilising the PowerBi automated analysis that has been set up.
  - Create a set of Key Performance Indicators that operators must adhere to that allow the future performance monitoring of the services and some linked to contractual actions to stimulate performance.
  - Draft the technical procurement questions for the procurement process.
  - Support Scottish Borders Council with the tender queries, tender assessment, and award process; and
  - Finalise the contracts and specifications following the procurement exercise, prior to award.

## Appendix 9 – Bus Network Review – Additional Recommendations

The Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations is provided in **Appendix 1** and provided further detail on the highlights identified in this report. There are a number of additional recommendations for the Passenger Transport Team to consider in the medium to long term, but below is a list of considerations for Scottish Borders Council to consider as part of this report:

- a) Develop and maintain a data-driven approach to understanding the performance of, and potential to make improvements to, the network, with sufficient capacity and expertise within SBC's Passenger Transport Team to deliver this;
- b) SBC should continue to access and utilise demand data from the county's workforce and mobile phones (as supplied by the Workforce Mobility Project) for continued network performance analysis and decision making.
- c) Seek to enhance SBC's long-term investment of revenue funding for bus services, recognising that cost pressures are likely to lead to a reduction of what can be delivered per pound invested in future years, resulting in a reduction in economic activity for the region;
- d) SBC should seek to improve bus stop infrastructure at busier stops (for bus boardings) where extant provision is relatively poor. It should analyse data on bus boardings and work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement such as the installation of real time information screens which will enhance the information available to the public with regards to bus times. The Council has already obtained external funding to deliver real time information screens at a number of stops across the region. It should test the market for whether there are worthwhile opportunities for revenue raising from advertising on bus shelters.
- e) It is recommended that SBC invests to improve walking/wheeling routes between bus stops and key destinations in locations where road crossings are a concern, or where there is a significant community which does not currently have a safe route. It should analyse available data on gaps between communities and bus stops, then work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement. It is also recommended that SBC pilot the provision of cycle parking infrastructure at some bus stops which meet the criteria set out in the Bus Network Review report.
- f) Utilise the demand data collected to identify and deliver Active Travel infrastructure to improve rural, remote rural access to the sustainable transport network; and
- g) Identify and support the development of bike on bus solutions to increase the reach of 'first mile / last mile' accessibility to the fixed route networks.
- h) SBC should work to develop detailed proposals and identify funding to deliver improvements to bus-bus interchange locations.
- i) Monitor the effectiveness of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) funded evening bus service pilot, and work to expand to other services if proven successful;

- j) SBC should invest in the marketing and promotion of bus services as there is direct correlation with increased patronage and income (up to 15% patronage growth, equating to up to £175k of increase income to operators). Sharing costs with those operators that would benefit from the increased use, with focus given to:
- i. Raising awareness of new/amended services;
  - ii. Promoting bus use to people that have had a significant change in their journey needs;
  - iii. Promoting use of services that are marginally commercial;
  - iv. Encouraging previous users 'back to bus'.
  - v. Increasing the awareness of the comfort of modern bus fleet;
  - vi. Work with business to promote services and align shift timings with service provision.
- k) Promote the use of bus services for leisure purposes;
- l) SBC should seek to work in partnership with operators to improve two-way information flow to help SBC manage the bus network and jointly identify opportunities for service or network enhancements. Making best use of available data would be dependent on increased capacity within SBC's Passenger Transport team.
- m) Support any operator that is seeking to adopt a more sustainable bus fleet.
- n) Support the growth of the community transport sector where this can be demonstrated to deliver cost-effective and reliable transport particularly for people unable to make use of scheduled services; and
- o) SBC should amend its policies in order to register more extant school transport services to enable carriage of members of the public. Discussions should be held with operators to determine the most effective routes for any such change, based on issues including capacity on the school service and potential for operating cost savings on other routes. SBC should consider option of putting out tenders for both a registered public service and a school transport only service to help evaluate costs and benefits.

## Appendix 10 – Risks & Mitigation

### **Risks associated with delivering the Recommendations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The cost of delivering the new network exceeds the existing budget.	<p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>The recommended bus network aims to grow patronage and therefore associated income, which should offset contract costs.</p> <p>If tender returns exceed the existing budget a further report will be brought back to Council for consideration before award.</p>
Negative customer feedback	<p>The changes to the bus network are based on a detailed review, which has taken account of multiple threads of data including existing travel patterns, customer and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Communication will be delivered prior to the introduction of any service changes including officer attendance at Area Partnership Meetings.</p>
Lack of competition for new contracts.	<p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>Marketing to be undertaken to raise awareness of the procurement exercise.</p>
The procurement takes longer than expected and exceeds the current contract extensions.	It is proposed to extend the current contracts for a sufficient period to allow the new procurement process to be completed.
Operators do not agree to contract extension for current services to enable time to procure the new bus network.	Officers will engage with bus operators regarding the continuity of service.
That expected growth in patronage is lower than expected leading to less income from fares.	<p>The introduction of a marketing budget to promote the services, which estimates a 10 to 15% increase in patronage.</p> <p>Timetables and frequency of operations can be amended to reduce cost and reflect passenger trends.</p>
Council approves changes to the bus network without a marketing budget.	Officers will work with the communications team to promote within current resource availability. However, this will be limited and will likely impact the estimated growth in patronage and associated income.

## **Risks associated with NOT delivering recommendations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
The cost of maintaining the existing network exceeds the existing budget making it more likely we will need to reduce the Bus Network to deliver savings, thus increasing the likelihood of social isolation.	<p>Council increases the bus subsidy budget to cover additional costs.</p> <p>Continue to reduce the current service provision in order to deliver within budget, as has been the case for the last 10 years plus.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p> <p>Negotiate with the operators regards the opportunity to take on some elements of the network on a commercial basis.</p>
Reduced benefit to the Borders economy.	<p>Work with partners to market the opportunities of the current bus network.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p>
Bus operators continue to hand back contracts due increased costs of operation and or there is a lack of interest when we procure existing services.	<p>Regular meetings with existing bus operators.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p>
Continued reduction in service provision / bus network does meet needs of service users.	Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.
Continued reliance on single occupancy car journey and associated carbon emissions	Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.
Continued decline in passenger growth and associated income.	Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.
Continued negative customer feedback as bus network does not meet customer needs.	Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.
Social isolation in more rural communities continues to be an issue.	Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which help to reduce social isolation.
Lack of competition for contract renewals.	<p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>Marketing to be undertaken to raise awareness of the procurement exercise.</p>
The procurement takes longer than expected and exceeds the current contract extensions.	It is proposed to extend the current contracts for a sufficient period to allow the new procurement process to be completed.

**Appendix 11** – Stage 1 – Integrated impact Assessment - Scoping and Assessing for Relevance



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**Appendix 12 - Stage 2 – Integrated impact Assessment - Scoping and Assessing for Relevance**



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## Appendix 13 – UN Sustainable Development Goals Assessment

UN Sustainable Development Goal	Impact
1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Positive - The BNR will help re-shape services to better match demand across the region to try and grow patronage and support communities.
3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages	Positive - The objective the BNR is to deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education, and leisure.
4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all potential	Positive - The bus network review has been undertaken with stakeholders including Borders College and it is anticipated that by implementing the recommendations that links to education will be improved. This will make it easier for young people to attend Borders College for further education.
7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will improve transport links across the region, including links into active travel. It is anticipated that by implementing the changes the number of single occupancy journeys will reduce and consequently the associated carbon emissions. There are also opportunities to introduce alternative fuel vehicles.
8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Positive - It is anticipated that the recommendations from the BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure. The recommendations have been built on employee travel/shift time data supplied by local business to support sustainable access to help grow employee opportunities. There are also opportunities to grow the tourism economy through closer working with partners.
10 - Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Positive - The BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure.
11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable	Positive - The BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure, whilst also mitigating against the impacts of climate change.
13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will improve transport links across the region, including links into active travel. It is anticipated that by implementing the changes the number of single occupancy journeys will reduce and consequently the associated carbon emissions. There are also opportunities to introduce alternative fuel vehicles.
16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable	Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and

<p>development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>leisure. Residents of the Scottish Borders were surveyed and communities meetings held to support the information gathering and shape the priorities for the new bus network.</p>
<p>17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development</p>	<p>Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure. The proposed new services will be delivered in partnership with private operators and communities. Data has been and will continue to be gathered to help monitor progress and implement necessary service changes.</p>

## Appendix 14 – Bus Network Review – Taking Climate Action

Carbon emissions from the operation of scheduled passenger bus services in the region are estimated to be 3.3 million tons per annum.

Typical carbon emissions from the Scottish bus fleet are estimated by DEFRA to be six times that of cars for each km travelled, and a bus will need to have an average load of around 12 passengers to have a lower carbon impact per km than would be incurred by the same number of people travelling by car.

Industry standard data suggests that 49% of bus passengers would otherwise travel by car or taxi if the bus was not available<sup>1</sup>. There were around 760,000 passenger journeys by bus in the Borders in 2021, so this suggests that around 370,000 car journeys ( $= 760,000 \times 0.49$ ) were saved.

The average car journey in Scotland is reported to be 14.5km long<sup>2</sup>, so around 5.4 million ( $= 370,000 \times 14.5$ ) car km are saved by using buses per annum, giving a carbon benefit of around 610,000 tons per annum ( $= 5,400,000 \times 0.113$ ).

This simplistic approach suggests that there is a net carbon disbenefit from transport arising from the operation of buses in the Borders. It overlooks the potential for the bus network to carry many more passengers with negligible additional carbon emissions (because there is spare capacity on most buses). The potential for bus to attract more demand from car is limited by a range of factors, most particularly the ready ability to use car for most journeys.

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<sup>1</sup> WebTAG data book A5.4.6, considering the national weighted mean and discarding rail and light rail as alternatives, as not being relevant choices for most journeys in the Borders.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Transport Statistics, 2021

## Appendix 15 – Rural Proofing Assessment



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# Scottish Borders Bus Network Review

Scottish Borders Council

Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations



## Introduction

This report contains the key recommendations that have emerged from a review of the bus network in the Scottish Borders.

The Scottish Borders has a large number of bus services, set over a large geographic area with a dispersed population. The routes have remained largely unchanged for many years and are run by multiple bus operators, the largest being Borders Buses. Few of the services operate commercially, and Scottish Borders Council (SBC) invests significant revenue funding each year to keep the network operating.

The bus network review has assessed the existing commercial and supported bus services, and related transport options including demand responsive services, and made a number of recommendations, where appropriate, which could improve the network in relation to better meeting potential outcomes and/or improving service efficiency.

Extensive data (provided by the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal – Workforce Mobility Project), research, analysis and stakeholder engagement has informed the review.

The research and evidence has confirmed that:

- The bus network is a key part of many people’s lives, and an important element of many communities, helping connect many people to a broad range of opportunities and social needs;
- That there are substantial risks to the future viability of the network which SBC and its partners should recognise and work to mitigate; and
- Whilst the current network operates well in many respects and provides many benefits, there are opportunities to amend aspects of it to encourage greater use and improve value for money through continued data analysis and partnership working.

## Summary of Issues

The key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints of the bus network in the Borders have been informed by the research and evidence, and are summarised below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Buses are essential for many people to access employment, services and other key social needs, and well-liked by many of its users</li> <li>▪ The bus network provides significant social, economic and environmental benefits (quantified in Section <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b>)</li> <li>▪ The extant bus network connects all main settlements of the Borders with at least reasonable weekday daytime frequency, as well as providing town services within the main settlements</li> <li>▪ Scheduled bus services are complemented by a broad range of more specialist provision, including demand-responsive and community transport services</li> <li>▪ Many people are eligible for free bus travel</li> <li>▪ The Borders has a major operator (Borders Buses) who is willing to invest in bus services in the region and innovates (e.g. Borders Buses app, Pingo, bikes on buses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The settlement pattern of the Borders makes it challenging to serve by public transport, as there are no dominant demand corridors</li> <li>▪ Journey patterns are highly dispersed, meaning it is difficult for bus to serve a high proportion of them, and bus is used for only a relatively small proportion of journeys</li> <li>▪ Many residents of the Borders do not have good access by bus to employment, services, healthcare or other key needs, for reasons including buses not operating on appropriate routes or at appropriate times, and not being able to access a nearby bus stop</li> <li>▪ Most bus services are not commercially viable, and rely on on-going public revenue funding which is scarce</li> <li>▪ The network is highly dependent on concessionary users, which may distort demand from fare-paying passengers</li> <li>▪ Few bus services operate early or late in the day, or in some of the rural areas away from main routes</li> <li>▪ Bus service reliability is perceived by many users to be a regular problem</li> <li>▪ There is limited competition for contracts between operators, which is likely to increase costs to SBC</li> <li>▪ There is no consistency of specialist transport provision (different areas have different provision) and it is proving challenging for the CT sector to maintain its operations</li> <li>▪ Demand for bus use in the Borders was significantly impacted by Covid, and the long-term patronage effects remain uncertain</li> <li>▪ For those people that have access to one, there are few disincentives for using car for journeys in the Borders</li> </ul>

## Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is some good infrastructure supporting bus services (notably including Galashiels interchange)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBC is probably investing less per person in its bus network than is typical amongst other comparable Scottish authorities</li> </ul>
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Opportunities	Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An effective and attractive bus network is supported by a broad range of national, regional and local policies</li> <li>Growth in use of the bus network could help more people in the Borders access jobs, education, healthcare and other key needs using a sustainable transport mode, benefiting the region's economy, social inclusion and carbon emissions</li> <li>Most journeys in the Borders are local, and there is potential for the bus network to serve more of them</li> <li>More journeys by bus could be encouraged and enabled, using options including improving access to bus stops and increasing awareness of services</li> <li>Full uptake of the Under-22 concessionary pass should promote bus use by more people</li> <li>Rebuilding of demand back closer to pre-Covid levels, especially for older/disabled concessionary passengers</li> <li>Joint working with partners outside the bus industry (e.g. NHS Borders, Borders College) to share vehicle assets and encourage use of bus could enable improved efficiencies</li> <li>Better integration of school transport services with the main scheduled network may also be able to improve efficiencies</li> <li>Make use of the opportunities that new data sources, especially employee travel pattern data and movement data tracked by mobile phones, provide to understand demand for transport in the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBC funding for bus services is being reduced at a time of significant cost pressures on operators, so there is a high risk of service withdrawals</li> <li>Withdrawal of Scottish Government NSG+ funding places a further cost pressure on operators</li> <li>The ageing population of the Borders is likely to increase demand for more specialist transport provision</li> <li>Usage of bus services is influenced by many external factors, including car ownership and use, and there are presently few incentives not to use car for journeys in the Borders for those people that have access to one</li> <li>There is a lack of partnership working ethos between relevant organisations (SBC, operators, employers, communities, etc)</li> <li>The challenges that the bus industry is facing to recover patronage from the effects of Covid</li> <li>Increased cost of living reduces demand for travel</li> </ul>

## Objectives for Change

The primary outcome objectives that were developed for the study are informed by the issues and are to:

- Reduce inequalities: provide fair and equitable access to key services, easy to use for all and affordable for all;
- Take climate action: contribute to net zero targets by reducing net carbon emissions from transport, promoting greener and cleaner choices;
- Maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the publicly subsidised bus services in the Scottish Borders ensuring integration, removing overlap with other bus services.

There are three further supporting outcome objectives:

- Help deliver inclusive economic growth and community wealth building by linking people to jobs and customers to businesses;
- Improve health and wellbeing by connecting people to communities and enabling healthy transport choices;
- Enhancing links between modes of transport, supporting the NTS2 transport hierarchy.

## Options for Change

There are a large number of options for change to the Borders’ bus network which have potential to make contributions to objectives. This review considers and appraises those options.

These options are presented mindful of the current governance and regulatory environment for bus service operation in Scotland, which can be briefly summarised as:

- Scottish Government/Transport Scotland: who set the regulatory environment, provides some on-going revenue funding support for bus operations and occasional capital support to meet specific priorities;
- Local Authorities: who can provide revenue funding for socially necessary bus services that would not otherwise operate, and provide and maintain most of the roads on which services operate and most other bus infrastructure (including stops);
- Bus operators: who run bus services and collect fare revenue, and who operate either on a commercial or third-sector basis;
- Communities, employers, land-use planners and many others that have an influence on travel demand, and hence on bus use.

## Funding and Regulation

### Funding

Source	Section Summary	Recommendations
Bus Infrastructure Funding	There are several funding opportunities available which might be able to assist develop bus infrastructure in the Scottish Borders, but none that is specifically focussed on the wholesale enhancement of bus stops or interchanges that may be the highest priority improvements in the region.	SBC should work to monitor the availability of funding and work, with partners where appropriate, to access external funds where these can efficiently help deliver improvements to the bus network.
Bus Vehicle Funding	Funding options for investment in buses are limited, but the Scottish Zero Emission Bus Challenge Fund (ScotZEB) might be relevant for some operators if they have appetite to invest in electric vehicles.	SBC should engage with operators to highlight the potential opportunity of ScotZEB and offer support for any applications.
Bus Service Revenue Funding	Sources for significant long-term revenue funding for bus operations are extremely limited	SBC should work with operators to grow the number of bus passengers, and hence revenue, and consider investing additional revenue funding to support maintenance and expansion of the network.
Operating Costs	Bus operators’ costs are increasing significantly, at the same time as revenue from passengers and external sources is under pressure	SBC should anticipate a widening gap between operators’ income and costs which, unless it can be filled by increased investment by SBC, will lead to service withdrawals
School Transport	The requirements of school pupil transport mean that many buses operating in the Borders have a larger capacity than is required for the operation of scheduled services. However, the operating cost saving of moving to smaller vehicles can often be relatively modest. A change to electric propulsion may be able to help reduce operating costs, but the benefits of so doing are uncertain, and the financial barriers to change currently high	SBC should engage with operators to determine whether changes to schools and/or scheduled contracts could facilitate operating cost savings, and also assist any local operator that wants to access external funding to facilitate a move to electric propulsion



## Contractual and Regulatory Options

**Section summary:** SBC has a variety of contractual and regulatory mechanisms available to it in order to influence the strength of partnership working with commercial operators and deliver best value for expenditure on support for the bus network.

**Recommendations:** SBC should:

- Continue to make use of both minimum subsidy and minimum cost contracts for supported services, with the latter being prioritised for new/innovative contracts;
- Consider the length of contracts to enable bus operators to invest in the long term and also attract new operators interest to the region;
- Consider whether there are investments that it could make which could support the development of an in formal bus alliance or Voluntary Bus Partnership agreement and, if there is, enter discussions with all operators in the region to determine whether there is joint appetite for entering into such a partnership;
- Keep the benefits of entering a formal Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) under review (especially in respect of the potential for the creation of a BSIP to unlock Government funding) and should those benefits significantly increase and/or the costs of entering into a BSIP reduce, assess operators' appetite for the creation of one;
- Continue to operate council run services (i.e. as an operator of last resort) in situations where it is efficient to do so and competition would otherwise be limited, but engage with operators to identify mechanisms to increase competition and their ability to operate a wider range of services;
- Not consider the implementation of franchised operations or the creation of a municipal operator unless there are significant changes in the operating environment in the Borders.

## Encouraging Competition

**Section summary:** there are actions which SBC could progress which might be able to increase competition for bus tenders and hence efficiency of public investment, notably including facilitating a data-driven approach to understand demand for use of bus. Some would increase revenue burden and/or financial risk to SBC; SBC must consider whether it can take on these costs or risk but should prioritise officer time to engage with operators to improve joint working.

## Infrastructure and Marketing

Infrastructure Type	Recommendations
Improved bus stop infrastructure	<p>SBC should seek to improve bus stop infrastructure at busier stops (for bus boardings) where extant provision is relatively poor. It should analyse data on bus boardings and work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement.</p> <p>It should test the market for whether there are worthwhile opportunities for revenue raising from advertising on bus shelters.</p>
Improved Interchanges	<p>SBC should work to develop detailed proposals and identify funding to deliver improvements to bus-bus interchange locations.</p>
Improved Routes to/from Bus Stops	<p>It is recommended that SBC invests to improve walking/wheeling routes between bus stops and key destinations in locations where road crossings are a concern, or where there is a significant community which does not currently have a safe route. It should analyse available data on gaps between communities and bus stops, then work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement.</p> <p>It is also recommended that SBC pilot the provision of cycle parking infrastructure at some bus stops which meet the criteria set out in the report.</p>
Increased Park & Ride Provision	<p>It is not recommended that SBC pursue opportunities for dedicated bus-based park &amp; ride sites at this time. <i>However, this provision should be monitored as the region develops and Net-Zero obligations need to be delivered.</i></p>

## Marketing, Ticketing and Passenger Experience

Passengers must be aware of, understand how to use, and rate the user experience if they are to be regular users of the bus network.

Opportunity	Recommendations
Marketing of Bus Services	<p>SBC should invest in the marketing and promotion of bus services as there is direct correlation with increased patronage and income. Sharing costs with those operators that would benefit from the increased use, with focus given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raising awareness of new/amended services;</li> <li>▪ Promoting bus use to people that have had a significant change in their journey needs;</li> <li>▪ Promoting use of services that are marginally commercial;</li> <li>▪ Encouraging previous users 'back to bus'.</li> <li>▪ Increasing the awareness of the comfort of modern bus fleet;</li> <li>▪ Work with business to promote services and align shift timings with service provision.</li> </ul>
U22 Concessionary Pass	<p>SBC should work to raise awareness of the Under 22s' concession and encourage applications to it in order both to enable everyone who can benefit from the scheme to do so, and to help sustain the bus network. High schools, Borders College and Heriot Watt University may be key partners to enable access to this audience.</p>
Ticketing, Passenger Information and Mobility as a Service (MaaS)	<p>SBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to review the market for MaaS systems and, if a provenly cost-effective solution becomes available, ensure that all bus operators in the region support it;</li> <li>▪ Support the provision of real-time bus information on all services in the region through extant public portals;</li> <li>▪ Support operators to provide a range of attractive ticketing options;</li> <li>▪ Work with operators to raise awareness of the variety of ticketing options that are available, and also of the potential of One Ticket for multi-bus journeys and app-based payment.</li> </ul>
Improved Data Sharing and Analysis	<p>SBC should seek to work in partnership with operators to improve two-way information flow to help SBC manage the bus network and jointly identify opportunities for service or network enhancements. Making best use of available data would be dependent on increased capacity within SBC's Passenger Transport team.</p> <p>It could use the powers of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 to compel operators to share at least basic information in certain circumstances and should consider writing this into contracts for supported services.</p> <p>SBC should continue to access and utilise demand data from the county's workforce and mobile phones (as supplied by the Workforce Mobility Project) for continued network performance analysis and decision making.</p>
Scheduling Software	<p>It is recommended that SBC moves away from timetable-based contracts towards specification-based ones (which will help operators identify how to operate most efficiently, and it is hoped will be reflected in their tender prices), the value of timetable preparation by SBC is reduced. In the light of this, and the significant potential financial and staff time implications, it is therefore not considered that investment in bus scheduling software should be a priority for SBC at this time.</p>
Complaints Management	<p>SBC should seek to channel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The feedback from any complainant on issues that relate to a specific operator (these including of driver or vehicle standards and of reliability/punctuality) to the operator, with contracts for tendered services to include a requirement for operators to log, respond to and provide summary reports to SBC regarding complaints;</li> </ul>

Opportunity	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any feedback on broader network issues that are within SBC’s control to the ‘report it’ functionality of its website, which currently has sections for many issues (including the reporting of potholes or faulty streetlights), but not issues relating to bus services.</li> </ul>

## Operational Options

This section considers options for types of passenger transport operations (over and above scheduled public bus operations). It considers options in a generic manner, where they may be relevant to all or much of the Borders region.

Option	Recommendations
<p>Integrated School Bus Services</p>	<p>SBC should amend its policies in order to register more extant school transport services to enable carriage of members of the public. Discussions should be held with operators to determine the most effective routes for any such change, based on issues including capacity on the school service and potential for operating cost savings on other routes. SBC should consider option of putting out tenders for both a registered public service and a school transport only service to help evaluate costs and benefits.</p> <p>Privilege Lifts should be withdrawn from those pupils that have access to a reasonable public bus service for their journeys between home and school, with the children encouraged to make use of the Under-22 concessionary entitlement.</p>
<p>Other Operational Models</p>	<p>A variety of operational options are appropriate for the transport mix in the Scottish Borders, in addition to the operation of fixed timetable scheduled bus services. Following the context set out in this section, the following recommendations emerge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many-to-Few Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services have the potential to offer cost-effective solutions for the small communities and rural areas that are not served by scheduled buses, and hence be an important component of the overall bus network. Services could potentially be operated by bus or taxi operators (the latter as Taxibus), and operator engagement and market-testing of both is likely to be beneficial;</li> <li>Many to Many DRT services are likely to only offer a cost-effective solution in locations where there is significant potential for the sharing of journeys; if not then taxi operation may be more efficient to provide door-to-door transport;</li> <li>Taxicard schemes could provide benefits to some people, but the costs of establishing and operating such schemes is likely to outweigh their benefits, at least in situations where community transport solutions are available to enable door-to-door journeys for people that would otherwise be unable to use and pay for conventional taxis, so their introduction is not recommended in the Borders at this time;</li> <li>Community transport provided through social car schemes can provide a valuable service to users for modest cost to local authorities, though the capacity and sustainability of services can be uncertain. It is recommended that SBC continue to work with CT operators to build capacity and resilience, and support social car schemes where they can provide good value (tested through adherence with SLAs);</li> <li>It is also recommended that SBC help facilitate the sharing of minibuses or other vehicles between organisations, but only in cases where there is a clear joint willingness to do so, with investigations to focus on opportunities with Borders College in the first instance.</li> </ul> <p>Recommendations for which option is applicable in each circumstance are made in Section 7 of the report.</p>
<p>Network Change Options</p>	<p>This section considers some potential generic options for changes to service provision; that may have relevance to all of the Borders. Recommendations for changes to specific services or in specific locations are addressed in section 7 of the report.</p>

Option	Recommendations
	<p>SBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor the effectiveness of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) funded evening bus service pilot, and work to expand to other services if proven successful;</li> <li>▪ Promote the use of bus services for leisure purposes;</li> <li>▪ Support any operator that is seeking to adopt a more sustainable bus fleet.</li> </ul>

## Recommendations for Changes

This review of the bus network of the Scottish Borders has undertaken an evidence-led approach, building on extensive data analysis, research and engagement. It has provided network concept scenarios and appraised options for change in the light of this evidence.

This section of the review makes recommendations for change which would enable that vision to be realised. It commences with an overview of network- or region-wide changes, followed by locally specific changes.

### Network-Wide Recommendations

Recommendations for network-wide changes are listed below. More information about specific recommendations is provided in the review's main report.

- Funding and efficiency:
  - Withdraw or amend inefficient and/or duplicitous services in order to enable investment of their subsidy requirements into better value bus options;
  - Seek to enhance SBC's long-term investment of revenue funding for bus services, recognising that cost pressures are likely to lead to a reduction of what can be delivered per pound invested in future years;
  - Determine whether SBC has appetite to take on more revenue risk in relation to bus services, which would help encourage competition and patronage growth;
  - Develop and maintain a data-driven approach to understanding the performance of, and potential to make improvements to, the network, with sufficient capacity and expertise within SBC's Passenger Transport Team to deliver this;
- Service changes (refer to later section for specific recommendations):
  - Move to an integrated school transport concept, at least on those routes where there is some space capacity on vehicles and it makes operational sense to do so;
  - Focus opportunities for service enhancements on filling gaps in local connectivity, especially town services, bringing people to town centres for local services and onward connections;
  - Enable rural accessibility, but with more efficient delivery models (most likely through many-to-few demand responsive services, by either taxi or bus operators) and with a focus on meeting key social needs;
  - Support the growth of the community transport sector where this can be demonstrated to deliver cost-effective and reliable transport particularly for people unable to make use of scheduled services;
- Infrastructure changes:
  - Seek to improve passenger infrastructure at busier stops where there is currently none, and access routes to stops where there are clear gaps that can be readily remedied;
  - Seek to improve facilities at key bus-bus interchange locations;
  - Utilise the demand data collected to identify and deliver Active Travel infrastructure to improve rural, remote rural access to the sustainable transport network; and
  - Identify and support the development of bike on bus solutions to increase the reach of 'first mile / last mile' accessibility to the fixed route networks.
- Complementary investments:

- Improve the marketing and promotion of bus services, especially to specific target groups (including to Under-22s and people that stopped using bus because of Covid) and where there are service changes;
- Partnership:
  - Further develop more constructive working relationships with operators, encouraging all to join at least a voluntary Bus Service Improvement Partnership agreement, and working with them towards a higher level of competition for contracted services;
  - Seek to agree Service Level Agreements with operators of all services subsidised by SBC (be those for scheduled, demand responsive or community-based services) which sets out both parties' responsibilities for items including revenue and capital investment, passenger experience requirements (including vehicle quality and service reliability) and data sharing.

## Service-Specific Recommendations

This section provides more specific recommendations for changes to the bus network of the Borders, where it is considered that they will help achieve the vision. Recommendations have focussed on identifying priorities for service enhancements, and the amendment of more poorly performing services that could enable a transfer on investment.

In each instance, recommendations are provided for consideration by SBC and its partners as the basis for further investigation. This review has assessed the potential benefits and costs of change based on the available data, but this data has not included items including operators' detailed schedules, comprehensive information on the spare capacity on school transport services, the views of operators of commercial services on changes to the contracts subsidised by SBC, or market testing of the financial implications.

Discussion of relevant issues with partners (likely to include both operators and community representatives) to validate the recommendations being made is therefore suggested.

### DRT Services Recommendations

The use of demand responsive services is recommended in the locations shown below, some as a replacement for existing schedule bus services. These could be Taxibuses operated by appropriately licensed taxi operators which only operate when pre-booked by intending passengers, or could be provided by bus operators. Each service would be available to book at specified times and part of the route could be fixed (on a Many-to-Few basis). On inbound journeys, passengers would be picked up from a specified set of postcodes in a defined area. Return journeys would operate from the appropriate town centre bus stops, returning passengers to their point of origin.

The following Taxibus services have been recommended:

- Hawick – Bonchester Bridge;
- Hawick – Jedburgh – Kelso;
- Hawick – Newcastleton;
- Jedburgh;
- Selkirk;
- Tweedmouth – Swinton.

A new Many-to-Many service, similar to the current Pingo service operating in Berwickshire, is recommended for the area bounded by Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk and St Boswells. Referred to in the spreadsheet as "Cheviot – Teviot", this would serve all the villages within the area bounded by the A68, A698, A699 and A7, connecting them with the four towns. It would also serve the Borders College campus at Newton St Boswells, the BGH and Dryburgh Abbey (near St Boswells) and Bowhill House (near Selkirk) during the times of the year when they are open to the public. The rationale for this service is to enable movements not served by fixed-route bus services. Potential users who could use existing fixed routes could be encouraged to use these services instead of DRT.

The Pingo service has been funded until March 2024 and the service has been extended to serve Berwick-upon-Tweed station since 1st May 2023. It is recommended that the recommendations contained in the separate evaluation study which reported in March 2023 be applied to improve and continue to develop the service. Development to the Pingo booking app should enable greater efficiencies, such as enabling passengers to share bookings. Also review of operational fleet, operational hours and contract combinations with school services to improve efficiency and value for money.

### Town Services Recommendations

Recommendations have been made to SBC that the town services be revised to provide an improved and consistent passenger offer across the five largest towns in the Borders. Further details of the recommendations for each service are provided in the area summaries below. These changes could be achieved by developing the existing services which are already in place in most of the towns (except Selkirk) or by replacing them with new services to the recommended specification. Some elements of the specification (such as evening and Sunday services) may need piloting to determine whether there is sufficient demand to make them viable. Discussions between SBC and the operators of these services in Galashiels, Hawick, Kelso, Peebles and Selkirk recommended to further inform the development of these services.

### School Service Registration Recommendations

In many areas of the Borders, there is the potential for some school services to be registered for use by the wider public to provide additional capacity, especially in small settlements which currently have infrequent scheduled bus services, or no bus services at all. The recent registration of the P03, P06 and P12 routes into Peebles on minimum subsidy contracts has been successful and delivered a cash saving of over £15,000 per annum compared to the previous operating model.

Services only operate inbound in the morning and outbound in the mid-afternoon, except on Fridays, so would not suit the needs of all passengers. However, in several locations, school services operate in the Pingo operating area, or in areas where new/revisted DRT services are recommended, which would provide opportunities to make return journeys at other times. Several of the school services are over capacity, so these services run twice. Other services are very near to capacity, so would provide limited opportunities for carrying additional passengers.

### Interurban Services Recommendations

It is recommended that services to/from Borders General Hospital (BGH) be improved to increase the journey opportunities available to staff, patients and visitors. It is understood that SBC is in discussion with relevant operators to discuss ways to optimise timetables to match shift times, to improve communication between BGH management, SBC and operators and to improve the marketing and promotion of relevant services.

In addition to improving services to BGH, the following service specific changes have been recommended for consideration, which are also described in the appropriate area summaries:

- the 61A and 68 services be retained, however there is potential for some journeys to be operated on a commercial basis;
- the 60 and 235 services be retained in their current form;
- the 91 and 93 service are improved from Broughton to West Linton via Peebles. The 91 service currently extends to Biggar in South Lanarkshire, but very few passengers are carried between Broughton and Biggar, so better connections with Stuarts 191 and Borders Buses X62 required. Biggar is also served by the 101/102 services. Service 93 could operate on a loop serving Peebles, Biggar and West Linton
- the 127/127A service be revised to operate only between Newcastleton and Canonbie, with journeys to/from Carlisle achieved through interchange in Canonbie with the X95;
- the 21 service operated by Peter Hogg be integrated into the Peter Hogg Service 20 timetable;
- the 34 and 236 services be withdrawn, with the commercial operator of the 235 and 253 services encouraged to increase the number of services to meet increased demand as a result;
- the 260 service operating between Tweedmouth and Duns be withdrawn, with some adjustment to the routes of the commercial services operating on the Berwickshire coast to ensure that affected communities retain access to bus services;
- the 73 service could be modified to run as a Selkirk town service, with interchange to the X95 for onward travel to Galashiels, as there is significant duplication in the timetables of the 73 and X95. However, it is recognised that this route is largely commercial, only supported by SBC on Sundays, so any change will require discussions with the commercial operator;
- the 86 service be withdrawn and that the 32 and 128 be replaced by DRT services.

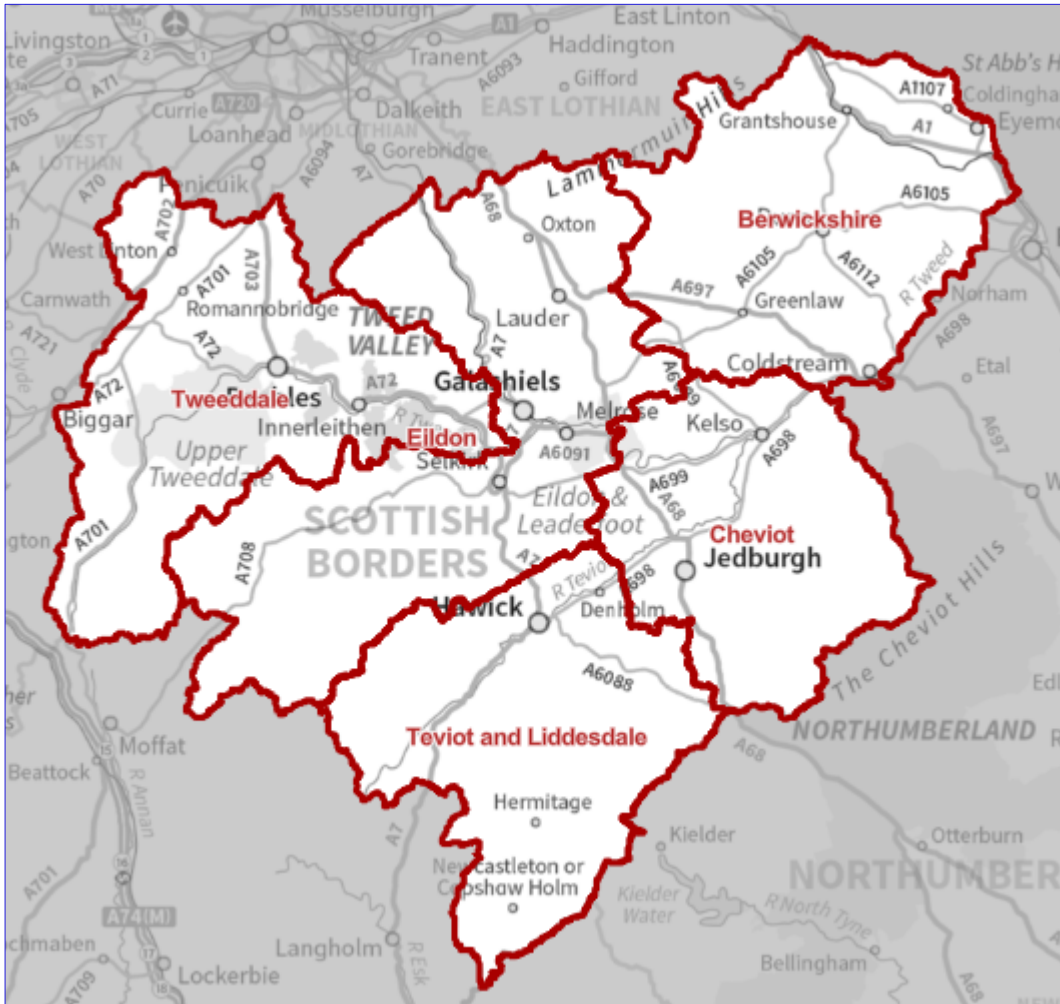
### Long Distance Services Recommendations

The recommendations for these services can be summarised as follows:

- the 67 service operates almost at break-even point, and it may be feasible for it to operate commercially with additional marketing and promotion;
- options be explored for some of the 51 services to be operated commercially, possibly by making the 51 more of an express service, in a similar fashion to the X62 and X95 services;
- the 60 service is retained, with discussions to be continued with the operator regarding potential changes to the route in light of recommended changes to the 32, 34, 236 and 260 services, to ensure that affected communities retain access to bus services;
- Weekend support for the 253 and X95 services to be continued;
- Support for the 100/101/102 services, 131 service and 710 service which are managed by neighbouring authorities.

## Recommendations: Area Summaries

Recommendations are summarised for each Area Partnership region of the Borders separately, in order to aid comprehension.



Area Partnership Boundaries <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: SBC <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/mapadvanced>



## Recommendations Summary: Berwickshire Area

### Main towns:

- Duns
- Coldstream
- Eyemouth

### Key recommendations:

Changes to DRT Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service 32 – Withdraw and replace by Pingo option for most of route, and by new "lollipop" Taxibus services travelling eastwards from the Swinton area into Berwick, operating 6 days per week.</li> <li>▪ Pingo service has been funded until March 2024 and has served Berwickshire since 1st May 2022. Further consideration is required with regards to the format of the service beyond the 31st of March 2024 with 3 options available.</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Services	No new Town Services are proposed in Berwickshire
Changes to Town Hinterland Services	Service 85 – Consider a revised Kelso town service, which could extend to Leitholm and Greenlaw. Potential also to introduce a taxi bus service.
Changes to Inter-urban Services	<p>SBC to discuss with operators the consolidation of coastal services to support the viability of commercial services and deliver better value for public subsidy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service 236 – Withdraw, passengers able to use Borders Buses B1, 235 and 253</li> <li>• Service 260 – Withdraw, passengers able to use Services B1 and 60, may increase journey time between Duns and Berwick</li> <li>• Service 34 – Withdraw, duplicates Borders Buses commercial services B1, 235 and 253</li> </ul> <p>Still opportunities to utilise the data and respond to the demand between Coldstream and Duns, whether this is achieved by registering school services or creating a new service (data from PINGO and mobile phone).</p>
Changes to Long Distance Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service 60 – Forms part of new 15-minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH. Divert via Eyemouth and Foulden on alternating hours increasing the frequency of the service between Duns and Berwick to Hourly.</li> <li>▪ Service 67 – Forms part of new 15 minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH. Explore opportunity for operator to operate commercially between Kelso and Galashiels.</li> </ul>
Potential service reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 32 service to be replaced by Pingo &amp; new Taxibus service</li> <li>▪ Service 34 – Withdraw, duplicates Borders Buses commercial services B1, 235 and 253</li> <li>▪ Service 85 – Consider a revised Kelso town services, which could extend to Leitholm and Greenlaw. Potential also to introduce a taxi bus service</li> <li>▪ Consolidation of coastal services to deliver better value for public subsidy and support the viability of commercial services (remove duplication of services B1, 235 and 253) could result in withdrawal of 34, 236 and 260 services</li> </ul>
Key infrastructure / non-service options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve facilities at key interchange points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Duns</li> <li>- Eyemouth</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>.Key transport corridors would benefit from a data review to identify Active Travel linkages to support improved and safer connections for passengers, linking with key communities and employment zones, while increasing the potential for 'bike on bus' usage.</p>
Marketing	Marketing of new services (including new Taxibus service and changes to Pingo) and significant service changes could derive patronage benefits identified earlier in this report.
Key benefits / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consolidation of coastal services to deliver better value for public subsidy and support the viability of commercial services</li> <li>▪ New Taxibus service more cost-effective, only operates when pre-booked and may offer more journey opportunities</li> <li>▪ Building on success of Pingo and maximising benefits and explore new operating models</li> <li>▪ More efficient use of subsidy to maximise passenger benefits</li> </ul>

## Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations

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|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>All recommendations will be subject to tender return and delivery within current budget.</i></li></ul> |
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## Recommendations Summary: Cheviot Area

### Main towns:

- Jedburgh
- Kelso
- St Boswells

### Key recommendations:

Changes to DRT Services	<p>Jedburgh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New Service - New DRT service between Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk and St Boswells, all villages within area bounded by A68, A698, A699 and A7 and Borders General Hospital</li> <li>▪ New Service - DRT many-to-few (lollipop) Taxibus serving Jedburgh</li> </ul> <p>Kelso - review of town services by SBC underway, with new Taxibus services being considered as part of the solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service 902 (SBC) - Replaced by PINGO option for northern part of route, and/or by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week.</li> </ul> <p>St Boswells – many-to-many "Cheviot/Teviot" service, as above</p>
Changes to Town Services	<p>All Kelso Town and Hinterland services (80, 81, 81A, 85, 902 and 983) being considered by SBC in comprehensive review of Kelso town services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services 80/81/81A (Peter Hogg) – Extend routes to include areas served by 983 service (Springwood &amp; Sprouston) and extend operations until 18:30</li> <li>• Service 85 (SBC) - Withdrawal of 85 service, replaced by Pingo option for northern part of route, and/or by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Hinterland Services	<p>Review of Kelso town services by SBC underway, to include 85 &amp; 902 services, seeking to retain similar (or higher) levels of service and with more efficient operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services 80/81/81A (Peter Hogg) – Extend routes to include areas served by 983 service (Springwood &amp; Sprouston) and extend operations until 18:30</li> <li>• Service 85 (SBC) - Withdrawal of 85 service, replaced by Pingo option for northern part of route, and/or by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week</li> </ul>
Changes to Inter-urban Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service 20 (Peter Hogg) – Retain and incorporate Service 21, Operator to focus on links between Hawick, Jedburgh and Howdenburn providing connections to the Jed Campus</li> <li>▪ Service 86 - Replace, acts as a placing journey for Kelso services.</li> <li>▪ Service 131 - (Peter Hogg) – Retain</li> <li>▪ Service 68 (Borders Buses) - Service to form part of a 15-minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH, Explore commercial opportunities with operator.</li> </ul>
Changes to Long Distance Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SBC to consider options to improve 51 service and reduce subsidy requirement, possibly operating peak services as X51</li> <li>▪ Service 51 (Borders Buses) – Service to form part of a 15 minute frequency between Galashiels and BGH also serving Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.</li> </ul>
Potential service reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service 21 (Peter Hogg) – incorporate into service 20</li> <li>▪ 85, 902 and 983 being considered by SBC in comprehensive review of Kelso town services</li> <li>▪ Service 86 – Acts as a placing journey. To be withdrawn, route can be served by 67 service</li> <li>▪ Service 902 (SBC) - Withdrawal of 902 service, replaced by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Kelso, operating 2 days/week</li> <li>▪ Service 910 (SBC) - Withdrawal of 983 service, replaced by extended 80, 81 or 81A service, and/or revised Town Service</li> </ul>
Key infrastructure / non-service options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve facilities at key interchange points:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jedburgh Bus Station</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horsemarket and Woodmarket, Kelso</li> <li>- St Boswells Bus Stance</li> <li>▪ Key transport corridors would benefit from a data review to identify Active Travel linkages to support improved and safer connections for passengers, linking with key communities and employment zones, while increasing the potential for 'bike on bus' usage.</li> </ul>
Marketing	Marketing of new services (including Taxibus and new Pingo-style DRT service) and improved Town Services could derive patronage benefits identified earlier in this report.
Key benefits / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New DRT services within Jedburgh and to/from rural communities to/from Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk, St Boswells and BGH</li> <li>▪ New Taxibus services more cost effective - only operate when pre-booked and will offer more journey opportunities</li> <li>▪ Kelso Town Services to be revised, with simpler passenger offering and extended hours</li> <li>▪ More efficient use of subsidy to maximise passenger benefits</li> <li>▪ <i>All recommendations will be subject to tender return and delivery within current budget.</i></li> </ul>

## Recommendations Summary: Eildon Area

### Main towns:

- Galashiels
- Melrose
- Selkirk

### Key recommendations:

Changes to DRT Services	<p>Selkirk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce new many-to-many (Pingo-style) "Cheviot/Teviot" service operating 7 days/week in rural area bounded by Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk and St Boswells, to/from rural communities and towns, and to/from Borders General Hospital</li> <li>▪ Potential for new Taxibus services (operating 3 days/week) to replace 911 &amp; 912 services, once review of 73 complete</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Services	<p>Improvements recommended to town services with higher frequency and potentially some extended operating hours. SBC reviewing 54 and 74 services, seeking to retain similar (or higher) levels of service and with more efficient operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service 54 (Borders Buses) – Incorporate Netherdale into the service and consider an hourly evening service through to 22:30</li> <li>• Service 70 (Borders Buses) – Discuss with operator potential to incorporate Melrose Gait and replace service 74</li> <li>• Service 74 (Borders Buses) – Replace with service 70 for Melrose Gait, Netherdale to be included in new 54 service.</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Hinterland Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service 73 (Borders Buses) – Discuss with operator utilising the 73 as a Selkirk town service connecting with the X95.</li> <li>▪ Review of 54 and 74 services (see Town Service section) may result in slight change of route for 964 service.</li> </ul>
Changes to Inter-urban Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Core Network (Borders Buses) Services 51, 60, 67 and 68 – retain and create a 15 minute frequency into the BGH serving Langlee and Tweedbank and improving connections to Lauder and the Royal Infirmary</li> <li>▪ Service 61 (Borders Buses) – Incorporate into the 51 service improving Lauder links</li> <li>▪ Service 964 (SBC) – Retain</li> <li>▪ Service 86 (SBC) – Acts as a placing journey. To be withdrawn, route can be served by 67 service</li> <li>▪ Service 68 – SBC to discuss with operator whether there is potential for some commercial operation.</li> </ul>
Changes to Long Distance Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SBC to consider options to improve 51 service and reduce subsidy requirement, possibly operating peak services as X51</li> <li>▪ SBC studying options for revising 60 route to serve Berwickshire coastal villages if other coastal services withdrawn (see Berwickshire area summary)</li> <li>▪ SBC to review potential for some 67 services to operate commercially, reducing subsidy requirement</li> <li>▪ Service X62 (Borders Buses) – Commercial Service</li> <li>▪ Service X95 (Borders Buses) – Commercial Service</li> </ul>
Potential service reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential for 911 &amp; 912 services to be replaced by new Taxibus services (operating 3 days/week)</li> <li>▪ Service 74 – Explore replacing with 70 for Melrose Gait and 54 for Netherdale, discuss with operator</li> </ul>
Key infrastructure / non-service options	<p>Improve facilities at key interchange points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Melrose Market Square</li> <li>▪ Selkirk Market Square</li> </ul> <p>Key transport corridors would benefit from a data review to identify Active Travel linkages to support improved and safer connections for passengers, linking with key communities and employment zones, while increasing the potential for 'bike on bus' usage.</p>
Marketing	<p>Marketing of new DRT services and improved Town services could derive patronage benefits identified earlier in this report.</p>

## Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations

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Key benefits / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ New DRT Taxibus services to/from rural communities to/from Hawick, Jedburgh, Selkirk, St Boswells and BGH</li><li>▪ New Taxibus services more cost-effective - only operates when pre-booked and with greater choice of journey times</li><li>▪ Review of 54, 73 &amp; 74 services should result in improved passenger offer in Galashiels and Selkirk, and better use of resources</li><li>▪ More efficient use of subsidy to maximise passenger benefits</li><li>▪ <i>All recommendations will be subject to tender return and delivery within current budget.</i></li></ul>
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## Recommendations Summary: Teviot and Liddesdale Area

### Main towns:

- Hawick
- Newcastleton

### Key recommendations:

Changes to DRT Services	<p>Hawick</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New DRT Service - DRT many-to-many serving Hawick / Jedburgh / Selkirk / St Boswells, College campus, Bowhill House, Dryburgh Abbey and Borders General Hospital</li> <li>▪ Service 910 (SBC) – Withdrawal of 910 service, replaced by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Hawick, operating 5 days/week.</li> <li>▪ Service 911 (SBC) - New "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Selkirk, operating 3 days/week</li> <li>▪ Service 912 (SBC) - New "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Selkirk, operating 3 days/week</li> </ul> <p>Introduce new Hawick / Newcastleton Taxibus to replace 128 service</p>
Changes to Town Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hawick Town Services (SBC) - Replace existing 46, 47, 48 &amp; 49 services with a revision of H1 and H2 routes to serve key points on 46 - 49 routes. Some stops already served by existing H1/H2, 20 and other services.</li> <li>▪ HTS (Borders Buses) - Extend route to replace 46 - 49 and extend services until beyond 18:30.</li> <li>▪ HTS Sundays (Peter Hogg) – No Changes Proposed</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Hinterland Services	<p>New "Cheviot/Teviot" DRT service (see DRT section)</p>
Changes to Inter-urban Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service 20 - (Peter Hogg) – Retain and incorporate Service 21, Operator to focus on links between Hawick, Jedburgh and Howdenburn</li> <li>▪ Service 128 - Replaced by new "lollipop" DRT/Taxibus service focussed on Hawick.</li> <li>▪ Service 127/127a (Telfords) - No changes proposed</li> </ul>
Changes to Long Distance Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBC to review potential for some 67 services to operate commercially, reducing subsidy requirement</li> <li>• X95 (Borders Buses) – No Change Proposed although consideration to be given to improved connections to the BGH.</li> </ul>
Potential service reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 46, 47, 48 &amp; 49 services under review (see Town Service section)</li> <li>▪ 128, 910 &amp; 911 services to be replaced by new Taxibus services</li> </ul>
Key infrastructure / non-service options	<p>Improve facilities at key interchange points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hawick, Mart Street</li> </ul> <p>Key transport corridors would benefit from a data review to identify Active Travel linkages to support improved and safer connections for passengers, linking with key communities and employment zones, while increasing the potential for 'bike on bus usage.</p>
Marketing	<p>Marketing of new services (including new Taxibus services and Pingo-style service) and significant service changes could derive patronage benefits identified earlier in this report.</p>
Key benefits / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consolidation of coastal services to deliver better value for public subsidy and support the viability of commercial services</li> <li>▪ New Taxibus service more cost-effective, only operates when pre-booked and may offer more journey opportunities</li> <li>▪ Building on success of Pingo and maximising benefits</li> <li>▪ More efficient use of subsidy to maximise passenger benefits</li> <li>▪ <i>All recommendations will be subject to tender return and delivery within current budget.</i></li> </ul>

## Recommendations Summary: Tweeddale Area

### Main towns:

- Peebles

### Key recommendations:

Changes to DRT Services	Potential for new Taxibus service to serve communities to west of Peebles which may not be served by new service operating between Broughton – Peebles – West Linton, combining 91 and 93.
Changes to Town Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service 90a/90b (Borders Buses) - Retain, extending services into the early evening, consider a 30 minute frequency beyond 18:30.</li> </ul>
Changes to Town Hinterland Services	Potential new Taxibus service to west of Peebles (see DRT section)
Changes to Inter-urban Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service 91 (Borders Buses) – Improving the connections between the 91 and Stuarts 191 service and Borders Buses X62. Consider working with SPT and Stuarts coaches to extend the 191 through to Peebles.</li> <li>• Service 93 (Borders Buses) – Consider a loop service serving Peebles, Biggar and West Linton.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Changes to Long Distance Services	No changes proposed to either 100/101/102 service (managed by Dumfries & Galloway Council) or X62 (commercial service)
Potential service reductions	
Key infrastructure / non-service options	<p>Improve facilities at key interchange points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peebles Eastgate</li> </ul> <p>Key transport corridors would benefit from a data review to identify Active Travel linkages to support improved and safer connections for passengers, linking with key communities and employment zones, while increasing the potential for 'bike on bus' usage.</p>
Marketing	Marketing of new fixed route and DRT services and improved Town Services could derive patronage benefits identified earlier in this report.
Key benefits / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New Taxibus services more cost effective- only operate when pre-booked and may offer more journey opportunities</li> <li>▪ Earlier start and/or later finish for Town Services would improve passenger offer and be consistent with other larger towns</li> <li>▪ More efficient use of subsidy to maximise passenger benefits</li> <li>▪ <i>All recommendations will be subject to tender return and delivery within current budget.</i></li> </ul>



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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS CONSULTATIVE DRAFT LOCAL HEAT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2024-2029**

**Report by Director - Infrastructure and Environment**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the consultative draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and provides an overview of the consultation process.
- 1.2 The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Scotland) Order 2022 places a duty on Local Authorities to prepare, publish and update a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). The LHEES will be the core strategy and delivery programme for reducing energy demand and decarbonising heat supply.
- 1.3 The proposed consultative draft LHEES has been prepared in accordance with [Scottish Government Guidance](#) which sets out the drivers, scope and requirements of the strategy.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that Council is asked to:**
  - (a) Consider the draft Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy;**
  - (b) Approve plans for formal consultation; and**
  - (c) Note that the final LHEES will be presented to Council before the end of the financial year.**

### **3 BACKGROUND TO LOCAL HEAT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGIES**

- 3.1 The production of LHEES became a statutory duty for local authorities in May 2022 through [The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies \(Scotland\) Order 2022](#). This requires local authorities to publish their strategy and associated delivery plans by the 31st of December 2023; renewal of both is required on a five-year cycle.
- 3.2 Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) will be the core strategy and delivery programme to reduce energy demand and decarbonise heat supply. This consolidates existing energy reduction and affordable warmth strategies and plans, and is comprised of a long-term strategy and shorter-term delivery plans. The strategy is a place based, locally led and tailored approach which sets out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders. This ambition applies to every building in the Scottish Borders area (domestic, non-domestic and public), thus the LHEES is a shared vision of how all building owners can retrofit their properties.
- 3.3 The concept of LHEES brings together strategic priorities around fuel poverty and carbon emissions associated with heating our buildings. This is supported at national level through both the [Heat in Buildings Strategy](#) and [Scotland's Energy Strategy & Just Transition Plan](#).
- 3.4 The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy makes clear the need to ensure that, by 2045, our homes and buildings no longer contribute to climate change, while also tackling fuel poverty. Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies will be the principal mechanism for this locally-led heat planning.
- 3.5 The Scottish Borders LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland's statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty:
- Net zero emissions by 2045 and 75% reduction by 2030.
  - In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.
- 3.6 The creation of LHEES brings together key priorities around the reduction of carbon emissions, improvement of domestic and non-domestic stock and the need for affordable warmth. The development of LHEES requires consideration of these priorities in a comprehensive way to ensure that action addresses inequalities, expressly that of fuel poverty, and enables a just transition to net-zero carbon by 2045. The strategy aims to:
- Set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
  - Set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.

- Identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone; and
- Prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

3.7 In developing the new draft strategy Scottish Borders Council has followed the eight-stage process outlined in the guideline issued by Scottish Government:

- Stage 1: Policy and strategy review – identifying the local and national policies, targets and strategies that are linked to the LHEES.
- Stage 2: Data and tools library – developing a library of all appropriate data and tools that will support analysis in subsequent stages of the LHEES.
- Stage 3: Strategic zoning and pathways – establishing a baseline for the Scottish Borders region’s existing building stock including: characteristics, energy efficiency levels and heat supply and performance. This results in the establishment of strategic zones relating to the LHEES considerations.
- Stage 4: Generation of initial delivery areas – generation of potential delivery areas driven by the LHEES considerations.
- Stage 5: Building-level pathways assessment – assessing the interventions required to decarbonise heating and improve energy efficiency in buildings within the Scottish Borders, quantifying financial costs and carbon reduction benefits.
- Stage 6: Finalisation of delivery areas – using the outputs from stages 1-5 to identify a range of potential projects further refine delivery areas, giving consideration to local priorities and any existing local programmes works.
- Stage 7: Strategy – summarising findings in stage 1-6, providing a short and long-term focus of LHEES at the strategic level and areas - i.e., this document and supporting materials.
- Stage 8: Delivery Plan – setting out how SBC will implement their LHEES through preparation of a Delivery Plan, and the short- and long-term low-regrets actions to support the process.

3.8 The LHEES seeks to address the following considerations:

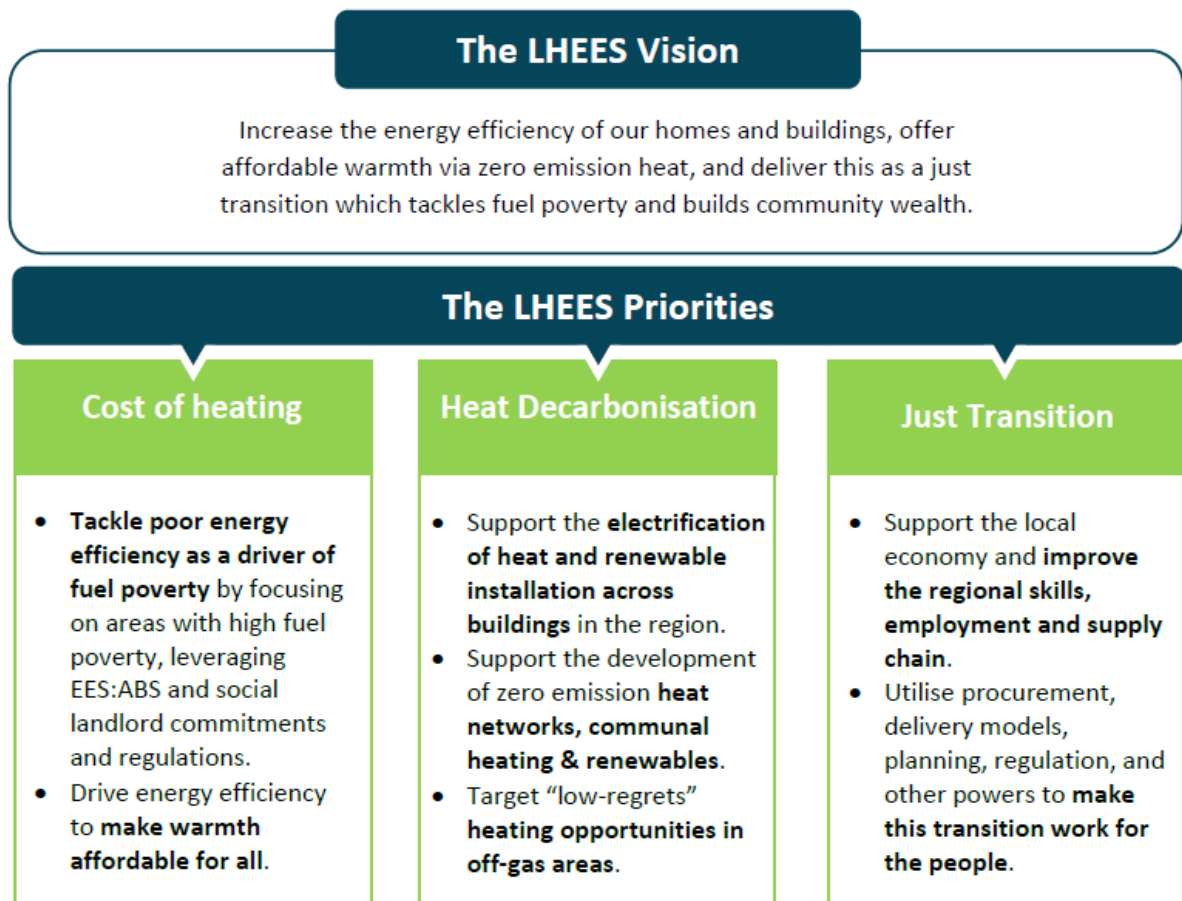
1. Heat Networks – Decarbonisation using heat networks
2. Off-gas buildings – Transitioning from heating with oil and LPG in off-gas areas
3. Poor building energy efficiency
4. Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty
5. Mixed-tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings – Covers mixed-tenure/use, listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas
6. On-gas grid buildings – On-gas grid heat decarbonisation

3.9 The LHEES supports and helps to deliver national outcomes and targets whilst also reflecting the needs and priorities of local people through the Community Planning process, as well as being set within the context of the updated Council Plan 2023-24. The draft strategy is closely linked to other strategies, both national and local. These include; the Scottish Borders Council Plan, Scottish Borders Climate Change Strategy, Scottish Borders Council Estate Strategy 2022-2027/32, Local Housing Strategy 2023-

#### 4 DRAFT VISION AND PRIORITIES

- 4.1 LHEES represents an opportunity for the Scottish Borders to align areas of regional and national focus around addressing fuel poverty, decarbonisation, and building energy efficiency as well as developing a strong sustainable local economy, boosting skills and delivering a just transition so the benefits of a green economy transition are shared widely.
- 4.2 Scottish Borders Council is committed to creating a region that is fair for everyone and where we all have an equal and positive chance to succeed. The vision identified is to “Increase the energy efficiency of our homes and buildings, offer affordable warmth via zero emission heat, and deliver this as a just transition which tackles fuel poverty and builds community wealth”. The priorities under this vision are captured in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Vision & Priorities



- 4.3 The output of the strategy is a framework for taking an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery.
- 4.4 The accompanying delivery plan will set out the approach to implement the strategy over the next five years 2024-28. This outlines prospective actions for the council, local communities, government, investors, developers and wider stakeholders, pinpointing areas for targeted intervention and “low

regrets” measures. This adopts a pragmatic approach to delivery whereby a council-led programme will support projects across the Scottish Borders. It will also incorporate all existing programmes, such as the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES: ABS).

## 5 DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY

5.1 As set out at paragraph 3.7 the draft has been developed in strict accordance with the published LHEES guidance. A diverse range of partners, stakeholders, and property owners have participated in developing the consultative draft LHEES. This engagement has built on the recent engagement with stakeholders in relation to the development of the new Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-2028 which was approved by the [Executive Committee on the 14th November 2023](#). In particular, there is clear alignment with LHS Strategic Outcome 3: Improved energy efficiency of homes and a reduction in fuel poverty while supporting a Just Transition to Net Zero through decarbonising domestic heating and energy.

Development of the draft LHEES has been informed by:

- Initial workshops to determine the scope of LHEES.
- Establishment of a project steering group within SBC to ensure joined up supportive work around the SBC estates, schools, buildings, carbon reduction.
- Stakeholder mapping to identify key stakeholders to support the development and implementation of LHEES.
- Ongoing meetings with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
- Ongoing meetings with the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs).
- Ongoing meetings with local estates, NHS, and Police to ensure alignment of plans with the LHEES.
- An interactive workshop to explore and discuss initial Delivery Areas and recommendations alongside the wider policy, strategy and delivery environment.
- An interactive workshop to ask for feedback on the finalised Delivery Areas (incorporating analysis to date).

5.2 Discussions have taken place and are ongoing between Scottish Borders Council and stakeholders such as Scottish Water (SWH) (there may be opportunity to harness renewable waste heat from the sewerage network) and Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) (to confirm supply capacity data) to refine opportunity zones. Importantly, both SWH and SPEN seek to publish online resources for local authorities to assist in clarifying LHEES delivery zones.

5.3 SBC appointed Changeworks as an independent consultant to lead on the development and analysis work through stages 1 to 6 of the prescribed LHEES methodology. This data driven work involved processing and interrogating various data sets, primarily Energy Saving Trust’s Home Analytics, to identify particular areas and zones that potentially represented opportunities which aligned with the 6 core LHEES considerations. These were then overlaid onto spatial mapping software (ArcGIS) to present area level maps within the region. The output at stage 6 presented a list of likely LHEES delivery areas based on the data, supported by maps, and a hierarchy of “intermediate zones” and “data

zones” based on the LHEES considerations. At stages 7 and 8, the stage 1 - 6 outputs relating to opportunity zones were then reviewed in line with existing plans, policies, local knowledge and stakeholder interests to establish areas where action should be targeted within the LHEES delivery plan. This includes shorter term projects to address building inefficiency, supporting identified areas of high instances of fuel poverty, or identifying areas where a Heat Network could be an appropriate heat decarbonisation option.

## **6 PLANNED CONSULTATION AND FINALISING THE STRATEGY**

6.1 As mentioned at paragraph 5.1, pre-consultation engagement has been undertaken during 2023 as part of the draft LHEES preparation. This will be further built on through the formal consultation period which will run from 29<sup>th</sup> January – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024, subject to approval.

6.2 The formal consultation will include:

- LHEES consultation survey hosted on Citizen Space.
- Publishing a LHEES consultation video.
- Stakeholder contact – stakeholders will be contacted with links to the LHEES consultation survey. This includes community councils and area partnerships.
- Posts on Yammer – we will schedule posts on internal communications site Yammer, with the aim of encouraging all SBC staff to engage in the consultation.
- LHEES webpage – a webpage on LHEES will be created which provides information on the LHEES and links to the consultation on Citizen Space.
- Social media posts will be published to encourage people to read the draft LHEES and respond to the consultation questions.
- Dialogue will be held/continued with community groups.
- A press release will be published to further raise awareness and promote engagement in the LHEES consultation.

6.3 All feedback from the consultation process and engagement undertaken to date will be summarised and considered during the process of finalising the LHEES strategy.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

- (a) There are no direct financial implications from this report but implementation of the LHEES is dependent on SBC’s continuous provision of core services alongside SBC’s capital investment programme and estate strategy, whereby the Council will lead by example and invest in decarbonising and improving the energy efficiency of its buildings.
- (b) Delivery of the LHEES will require coordination of fabric improvement and decarbonisation projects, many of which are the responsibility of Housing Associations, private individuals, building owners and other external stakeholders.



- (c) However, where there are specific actions considered as having a resource implication for the Council, Officers will bring back proposals to Council as they arise over the period of the strategy. There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.
- (d) The Scottish Government has committed to resourcing LHEES across all local authority areas by allocating £75k through the general fund every year to individual Councils. This resource has now been utilised through the permanent appointment of the principal heat and energy efficiency coordinator and with additional support through the provision and engagement of external technical support as required.

## 7.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) The draft LHEES has been developed in cooperation with a range of partners to ensure it is based on evidence and shared priorities.
- (b) Delivery is largely dependent upon a number of variables not least of which relate to resource and other political and organisational decision-making processes beyond the control of the Local Authority.
- (c) Annual progress update reports will be presented to Council.
- (d) A Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken which determined a full SEA would not be required for the LHS as the strategy itself is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.
- (e) Any potential environmental effects from any specific proposals or plans which may relate to the draft LHEES would be individually considered and addressed through the planning process and full SEAs.

## 7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

- (a) Equalities forms an integral part of the LHEES process and is part of the LHEES guidance. A full Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken and was embedded in the development process of the draft LHEES.
- (b) The integrated impact assessment (IIA) template has been completed and will be published on the Council's website, alongside all the associated documentation in relation to this draft strategy, subject to approval. The IIA can be viewed at Appendix 2 and 3. In addition to the full Integrated Impact Assessment additional screening on the draft LHS was undertaken, including:
  - Consideration of the Fairer Scotland Duty
  - Consideration of Human Rights
  - Strategic Environmental Assessment (Appendix 5)
  - Rural Proofing Exercise (Appendix 7); and
  - Health Inequality Impact Assessment (Appendix 4)

## 7.4 Sustainable Development Goals

It is considered that the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) will contribute positively to goals 1,3,7,11,12.,13, 16 and 17. A full summary as to how the LHEES will support these goals will be presented when the strategy is finalised after the formal consultation period.

#### **7.5 Climate Change**

It is considered that there will be positive effects on the Council's carbon emissions arising from this report. The LHEES outcomes are anticipated to accelerate the reduction of carbon emissions from buildings. This is likely to have significant positive effects on climatic factors including air, population, and human health.

#### **7.6 Rural Proofing**

(a) As part of the LHEES development a Rural Proofing exercise was undertaken. The full checklist can be viewed at Appendix 7. This helps us consider any challenges presented by rural circumstances and recognise the distinct needs of rural communities. There is clear recognition of the opportunity for LHEES to help support rural areas, including "off gas" areas. Considerations specific to rural areas have been covered in the draft LHEES, for example higher project costs and lack of skilled labour and local supply chains.

(b) Responding to these issues and opportunities has been core to the development of the draft LHEES, ensuring that the strategy and delivery plans take the needs of rural communities fully into account.

#### **7.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

#### **7.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes which are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

### **8 CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change) and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

## Approved by

**Name**

**John Curry**

**Title**

**Director – Infrastructure and Environment**

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**Background Papers:**

LHEES Consultative Draft Strategy

Appendix 1: First National Assessment Report on Heat Network Potential [within Main Strategy Document]

Appendix 2: LHEES – Integrated Impact Assessment Stage 1

Appendix 3: LHEES - Integrated Impact Assessment Stage 2 and 3

Appendix 4: LHEES – Health Inequality Impact Assessment

Appendix 5: LHEES – Strategic Environmental Assessment (Pre-Screening)

Appendix 6: LHEES – Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

Appendix 7: LHEES – Rural Proofing

**Previous Minute Reference: N/A**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Donna Bogdanovic can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk)

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SCOTTISH BORDERS

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy  
Consultative Draft



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## FOREWORD

It is a great pleasure to introduce the first Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy for the Scottish Borders, which outlines the long-term shared vision for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat in our buildings.

The national objective to achieve net zero emissions by 2045 is a key driver for this strategy, alongside Scotland's target to eliminate fuel poverty as far as possible by 2040.

This Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) builds on the Climate Change Route Map and the Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028, outlining the approach to our buildings as part of the response to the climate emergency.



This draft LHEES recognises the specific issues within the Scottish Borders relating to rurality and our sparsely spread population, a challenging economic context, and an above average proportion of fuel poor households. To achieve climate targets and a just transition, everyone has a duty to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change by using cleaner energy and changing our behaviour to reduce heat and energy waste. Through the identification of opportunities for energy efficiency improvements and heat decarbonisation in buildings, this strategy will ensure we can enhance our resilience and mitigate further irreversible impacts on our environment.

Strong regional and local partnership working will be critical to the effective delivery of this LHEES in order to meet targets for the benefit of everyone. We need the business sector, communities, and individuals to come together to help shape and deliver activity which responds to the climate emergency. The next decade will be critical in our just transition to a sustainable Scottish Borders future, and I look forward to working with partners and communities to meet these targets and see our plans progress.

Councillor Jenny Linehan  
*Executive Member for Environment & Transport*

# 1 Executive Summary

This is the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) for the Scottish Borders. The LHEES is a place-based and locally led strategy covering the following national aims:

- Improving the energy efficiency and decarbonising the heat supply of all buildings in the Scottish Borders
- Eliminating poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty.

This strategy will play a crucial role in helping the Council meet its 2045 net zero target and 2040 fuel poverty target. It defines the changes required to the Scottish Borders' buildings and infrastructure, including all domestic and non-domestic buildings, to achieve these targets. This strategy does not only cover the council-owned buildings but rather an area-wide approach relevant to all property owners and occupiers in the Scottish Borders. Therefore, it goes much further than the council's role in decarbonising its own estate as it outlines what action all owners and occupiers will need to take to deliver the LHEES. This covers a large proportion of the population who will need to be motivated and supported to take big steps to decarbonise their homes and places of work. To fully represent this broad participation, the council has engaged with multiple stakeholder groups and is holding an open public consultation to gather feedback before finalising the LHEES.

This LHEES has been prepared in line with the LHEES Guidance issued by the Scottish Government and LHEES Methodology issued by Zero Waste Scotland. The methodology for preparing this LHEES covers:

- Establishing the necessary changes required for each segment of the Scottish Borders' building stock to increase its efficiency and decarbonise its heat.
- Identifying strategic zones for heat decarbonisation and establishing the primary steps to decrease emissions from buildings in each of these zones.
- Identifying delivery areas for building-level energy efficiency measures and zones for heat networks and communal heating systems.

In developing this LHEES, the council aligned the national targets set out in legislation with the local priorities of the people in the Scottish Borders. This included reflecting regional needs and local building characteristics and performance, gathered via stakeholder engagement or work carried out to inform existing local policies and plans. The result is an overall 'LHEES Vision' to address fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency of buildings and decarbonise their heat supply as part of a just transition which delivers on community wealth building. This means that the outcomes of the LHEES will be delivered in a way which ties together multiple priorities, as visualised in the following figure.

## The LHEES Vision

Increase the energy efficiency of our homes and buildings, offer affordable warmth via zero emission heat, and deliver this as a just transition which tackles fuel poverty and builds community wealth.

## The LHEES Priorities

### Cost of heating

- **Tackle poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty** by focusing on areas with high fuel poverty, leveraging EES:ABS and social landlord commitments and regulations.
- Drive energy efficiency to **make warmth affordable for all**.

### Heat Decarbonisation

- Support the **electrification of heat and renewable installation across buildings** in the region.
- Support the development of zero emission **heat networks, communal heating & renewables**.
- Target “low-regrets” **heating opportunities in off-gas areas**.

### Just Transition

- Support the local economy and **improve the regional skills, employment and supply chain**.
- Utilise procurement, delivery models, planning, regulation, and other powers to **make this transition work for the people**.

The LHEES addresses the improvement and development of three main types of built assets: **domestic buildings, non-domestic buildings and heat networks**.

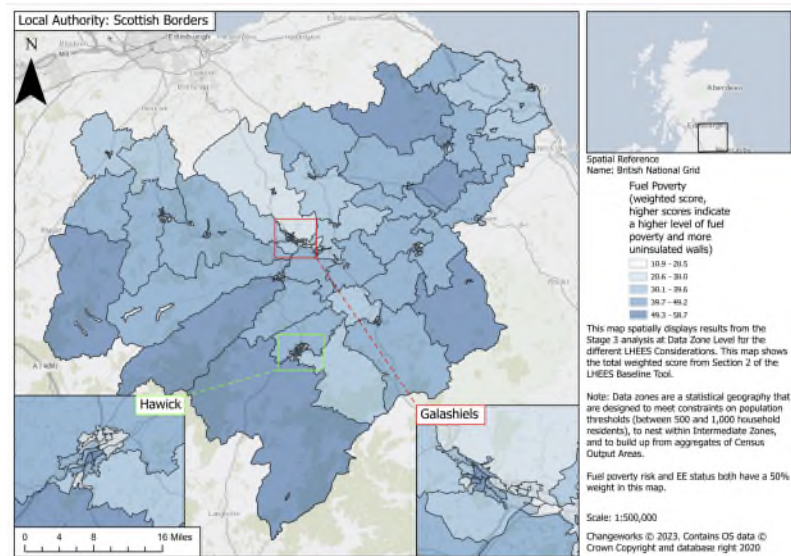
**Domestic:** Most properties in the Scottish Borders are domestic (88.4%). The majority (81%) of domestic properties have EPCs between C and E, highlighting a large challenge but also major potential for improvements which will directly help people with the cost of heating. Existing energy efficiency standards, national policy, majority of grants and most efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects have also focused heavily on domestic properties. These facts, in addition to the imperative of meeting fuel poverty targets which are linked to domestic properties, have led to domestic properties becoming a focus for the coming 5-10 years.

**Non-domestic:** However, non-domestic buildings also have an important role to play. There are 8,090 non-domestic buildings in the Scottish Borders. Almost 80% of these are located either in an urban area or a well-connected accessible area. This presents an opportunity for planning and delivering retrofit interventions collectively across domestic and non-domestic buildings. Non-domestic buildings are also an important factor for heat network viability as they can have more heat demand as well as different heat demand timings to domestic properties leading to potentially greater and more stable demand. There remain challenges around limited data on the non-domestic building stock, especially regarding

building performance due to the low proportion of EPCs in the sector. There is also limited clarity on the route to decarbonising non-domestic buildings, with proposals in the early stages of consultation on the Heat in Buildings Bill.

**Heat networks:** There are multiple towns which have been identified by the LHEES analysis to show promise of heat networks at a sufficient scale and density to be taken forward. This includes Galashiels, Duns and Jedburgh. These initial proposals focus on areas with a high level of presence (and potential energy demand) by public buildings, making these some of the most viable opportunities. Furthermore, the council is also undertaking a major development at Tweedbank, east of Galashiels, where it is conducting feasibility for a heat network. The council is also undertaking pre-feasibility work in Croft Street (Galashiels) assessing the viability of a heat network based on waste heat from the sewerage system. Scottish Borders has the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest population density among all Scottish local authority areas. The council area is 6<sup>th</sup> largest in Scotland covering 1,825 square miles. The area is constituted of a large number of small settlements which individually are small and far apart. While heat network opportunities have been identified for the largest settlements, the council has also investigated the potential for communal heating systems to ensure rural areas of the Scottish Borders benefit from lower cost heat where there is the potential. Communal heating systems are small networks which can provide heating to a single larger building (such as a block of flats) or a cluster of buildings in close proximity. They can be more cost efficient than individual heat pumps where the right set of conditions exist.

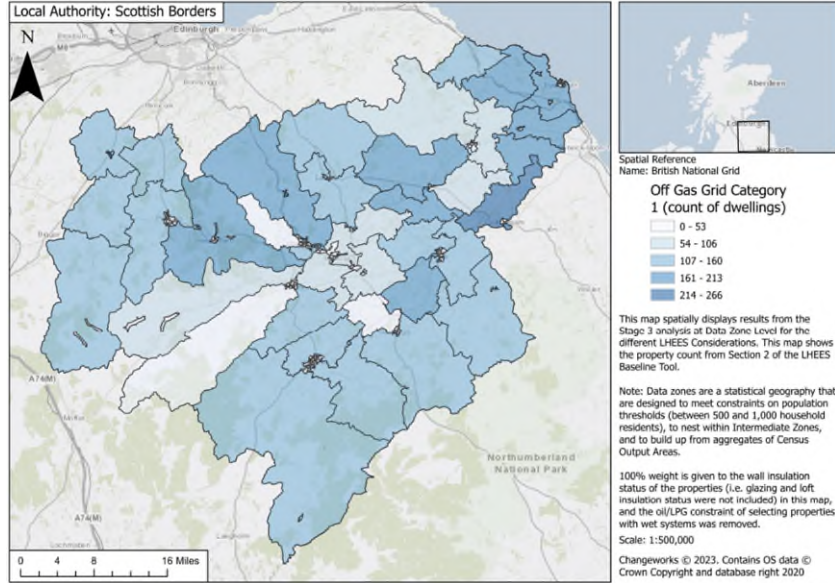
As part of the data-led process, the council used data analysis and geographic mapping to assess the priorities associated with the LHEES Vision. For the cost of heating priority, the council focused on areas where there is the greatest concern for poor energy efficiency as the driver for fuel poverty (Figure 1). This helped to identify strategic zones where we should focus efforts on improving energy efficiency, such as building and growing existing fuel poverty programmes, further collaboration with social housing providers or targeting government funding more strategically. These zones were also the basis for identifying further “Potential Delivery Areas” as specific locations where new retrofit and heat decarbonisation projects could be introduced and existing ones expanded.



**Figure 1: Areas with the highest indication of fuel poverty. This map shows a weighted score that combines energy efficiency, income, and other socioeconomic values.**

To address its second priority of the LHEES Vision, heat decarbonisation, the council analysed the role of heat pump installation across the Scottish Borders, including the on-gas and off-gas zones which are heat pump ready. These maps and results are discussed in section 9. Figure 2 provides an example of one such key strategic consideration covering properties which are not on the gas grid (e.g. with oil boilers) but sufficiently insulated to be ready for a heat pump installation directly or with minor

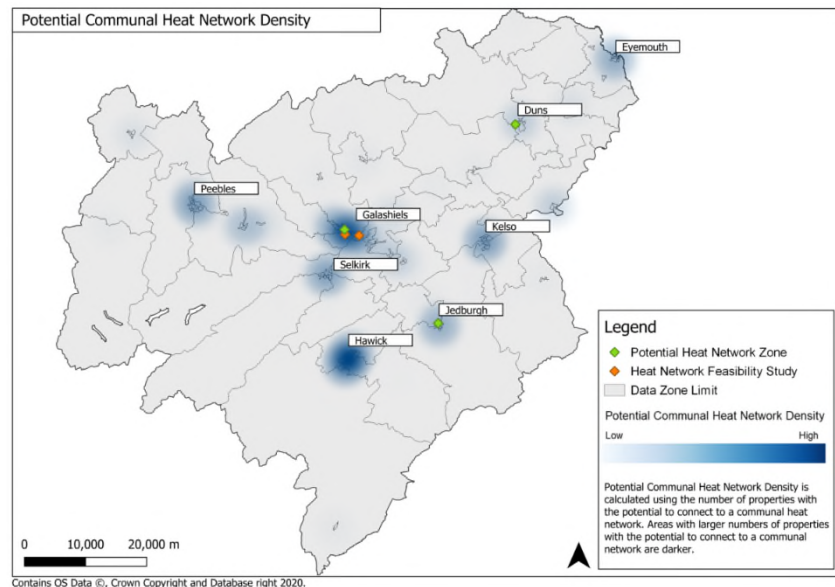
improvements (e.g. loft insulation). These areas are ‘low regrets’ opportunities of high importance since these heating systems are costly to run and create high levels of emissions and other pollutants but may already have a hot water central heating system which is suitable for connection to a heat pump or a heat network. The LHEES has considered all types of properties (including on and off-gas, mixed tenure, and those with poor energy efficiency) and the Delivery Plan has provided delivery areas covering each of these types of priorities.



**Figure 2: This map represents the number of "Category 1" properties. These are typically well-insulated and heat pump ready properties.**

As part of its second priority of heat decarbonisation, the council also investigated heat network opportunities involving the installation of large-scale networks as well as communal heating systems. This was done by mapping areas with the highest level of heat demand density to reveal the potential of the appropriate type of technology (Figure 3).

The LHEES will look to leverage both energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation opportunities to unlock the benefits of this third priority of the LHEES vision, Just Transition. The Delivery Plan, which defines projects covering these priorities over the coming five years, will be geared to use initiatives which support local economic development, improvement of regional skills, employment and supply chain growth. These will deliver on net zero and fuel poverty targets while building community wealth.



**Figure 3: Map representing the initial potential for three main heat network opportunities where there is significant public sector heat demand, ongoing heat network feasibility studies as well as communal heating systems opportunities.**

## 2 Glossary

Terms	Description
Anchor Load	A building requiring a consistent, enduring need for heat, ensuring a reliable demand for a heat network operator, thereby contributing to the economic viability of the network.
Baselining	Baselining is the purpose of understanding at local authority or strategic level, the current status of the buildings against the LHEES Considerations, Targets and Indicators.
Building-level Pathway	As part of LHEES Stage 5, a building-level pathway is the outcome of the assessment undertaken using PEAT. It provides the likely energy efficiency retrofit technologies, as well as the low carbon heating system (where applicable) to support building level decarbonisation.
Coolth	Cold as a tradable asset (Cf. heat / warmth).
Criteria	Criteria are the settings applied to the Indicators for each Consideration in order to support Baselining, Strategic Zoning and the identification of Delivery Areas. An example of Criteria is a simple “no” applied to the Indicator of “wall insulation (Y/N)” to identify properties with uninsulated walls. Another example is the definition of an “anchor load” within the Heat Networks analysis, which applies a minimum threshold to the “heat demand” Indicator. The LHEES methodology provides a set of default Criteria that local authorities may wish to use, with flexibility to update and augment these to support local needs or for more focused analysis linked to specific actions and project identification within the Delivery Plan.
Data - Alternative	Alternative data can overwrite the Core data to improve accuracy (national to local level of detail, e.g. local housing data to overwrite fields in Home Analytics).
Data - Core	Core data is the data that is essential to complete the minimum requirements of the LHEES analysis. Core data will come from national datasets e.g. Home Analytics or the Scotland Heat Map.
Data - Supplementary	Supplementary data allows inclusion of additional Indicators to inform specific, local based & targets; also, Supplementary data can be used in GIS investigation to complement the Core analysis carried out in any assessment. An example of Supplementary data would be the inclusion of a constraint’s appraisal as part of a district heating analysis.
Data Zone	Data zones are groups output areas which have populations of around 500 to 1,000 residents.
Delivery Area	Delivery areas are at a higher granularity than Strategic Zones. These spatial zones should set out clusters of buildings within a Strategic Zone or across the whole local authority that identify potential solution(s) at a delivery level. They will be an important starting point for identifying a range of projects, regulation and actions that are within the competence of the Scottish Government, local authorities and wider partners (included as actions to be developed in the LHEES Delivery Plan).
Detailed practitioner approach	These Steps form part of the detailed practitioner approach in LHEES Stage 4, Generation of Initial Areas to set out particularly suitable heat network zones and to support project identification.
Electric boiler	A boiler utilising the method of heating water through passage across an element, with emissions correlated to the electricity grid’s emissions factor
Energy Centre	A building where heat is produced.
Energy services company	A company offering energy-related services.

Fuel Poverty	As defined by the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, situations where a household allocates more than 10% of their post-housing-cost net income towards fuel expenses, and their remaining income falls below 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard.
Heat network	As defined in the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, a (district) heat network is “a network by which thermal energy is distributed from one or more sources of production to more than one building” <sup>1</sup>
Heat pump	A heating system that harnesses thermal energy from sources like air, ground, or bodies of water (such as rivers, seas, or sewers). Through a refrigeration cycle, it transforms this energy to provide heat to the end user. The carbon emissions of a heat pump are contingent on the grid emissions factor.
Indicator	For a given Consideration, the purpose of an Indicator is: 1) to act as a key information field to help characterise and baseline the local authority. 2) to act as a key information field to support strategic zoning and generation of initial delivery areas; 3) if suitable, to act as a key information field to measure progress against Targets over the duration of the LHEES - set out in the LHEES Delivery Plan. For some Considerations, one Indicator may be sufficient, but for others a range may be appropriate.
Intermediate Zone	Intermediate zones are a statistical geography that are designed to meet constraints on population thresholds (2,500 - 6,000 household residents), to nest within local authorities, and to be built up from aggregates of data zones.
LHEES Considerations	The LHEES Considerations are a list of technologies, building typologies and policy priorities used to identify and target interventions. They include: - Heat networks - Off-gas grid buildings - On-gas grid buildings - Poor building energy efficiency - Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty - Mixed-tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings
LHEES Delivery Plan	An LHEES Delivery Plan is a document setting out how a local authority proposes to support implementation of its local heat and energy efficiency strategy.
LHEES Guidance	The LHEES Guidance sets out the production and content requirements for a local authority to prepare a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan. Its purpose is to ensure that a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan contain outcomes and actions that are backed up by robust data and analysis, supported by stakeholder engagement, and that are linked to national and local priorities, plans and targets.
LHEES Methodology	The LHEES Methodology is a more detailed, step by step approach, which includes models, tools and templates, and represents best practice in how to produce an LHEES in accordance with the requirements set out in the LHEES Order and Guidance.
LHEES Stages	There are 8 LHEES Stages proposed in the methodology. The purpose of the LHEES Methodology is to enable the local authority to complete LHEES Stages 1 to 6. The completion of these Stages will provide the local authority with the data analysis and evidence base to enable them to complete their LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan documentation. There are two LHEES reporting templates included alongside this methodology– LHEES Strategy example template and LHEES Delivery Plan example template. The completion of these two templates will satisfy the completion of LHEES Stages 7 and 8. The 8 LHEES Stages proposed in the methodology are: 1 - Policy and strategy review

<sup>1</sup> Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, Scottish Parliament ([link](#))

	<p>2 - Data and tools library</p> <p>3 - Strategic zoning and pathways</p> <p>4 - Generation of initial delivery areas</p> <p>5 - Building-level pathway assessment</p> <p>6 - Finalisation of delivery areas</p> <p>7 - LHEES Strategy</p> <p>8 - LHEES Delivery Plan</p>
LHEES Strategy	<p>An LHEES Strategy is a long-term strategic framework for—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the improvement of the energy efficiency of buildings in the local authority’s area, and</li> <li>- the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the heating of such buildings</li> </ul>
Mixed-tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings	<p>Mixed-tenure and mixed-use buildings could include a mixture of owner occupied, private rented and social housing, and also non-domestic uses, or simply multiple ownership within the same tenure. Historic buildings include the buildings that are within conservation areas or those that are listed buildings. These categories may require established alternative approaches and regulation for the installation of low carbon heat and energy efficiency solutions and where specific advice and support might be available relating to the installation of these solutions.</p>
Net Zero Carbon	<p>A situation where any carbon emissions are offset by an equivalent amount of carbon being removed from the atmosphere, resulting in no net change in carbon levels</p>
Passivhaus	<p>A construction standard where buildings attain elevated levels of energy efficiency and user comfort.</p>
Potential Zones	<p>The analysis carried out for strategic zoning and pathways for the heat networks Consideration is to identify potential zones rather than the otherwise used naming convention of Delivery Areas. The potential zones identified are to be included in the LHEES Strategy and should inform actions around further investigation / progression within the LHEES Delivery Plan. The heat networks Consideration analysis and activity carried out within LHEES is also anticipated to support activity related to formal zone designation as required by the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021.</p>
Raster	<p>A matrix of squares, or grid, used as a method of data analysis in GIS. Each cell in the grid contains a value representing information on the cell’s contents.</p>
Solar photovoltaic	<p>Technology that transforms sunlight into electrical energy.</p>
Strategic Zone	<p>Strategic Zones present a visualisation of the potential pathways to decarbonise the building stock at a local authority level. These could, for example, be split out by intermediate zone or data zone. They are useful to understand the baseline performance, the scale of potential and initial areas of focus, which could be used to inform Delivery Areas and follow on engagement.</p>
Targets	<p>Targets are the measurable aspect of the Consideration and are likely to be taken directly from national and/or local policy documentation, for example net zero by 2045, or EPC C by 2040. Targets are likely to comprise of end-point targets and milestone targets and would sit along a timeline within (and beyond) the LHEES. This timeline would help to prioritise the types of projects undertaken within the LHEES over its duration.</p>
Weighting	<p>For some Considerations, one Target and Indicator may be sufficient, but for others a range of Indicators may be appropriate to contextualise and characterise performance against a Target and/or progress towards a Consideration. If multiple Indicators are used in strategic zoning or the identification of delivery areas, a Weighting can be applied based on the importance of each. The LHEES methodology sets out a core set of default Weightings for instances where multiple Indicators are suggested as a default setting. There is flexibility to update and augment these to support local needs or for more focused analysis linked to specific actions and project identification within the Delivery Plan.</p>



## 3 Introduction

### 3.1 Overview of LHEES

#### 3.1.1 What is an LHEES?

Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets a net zero emissions target for the year 2045 and interim targets for 75% reduction by 2030 and 90% reduction by 2040. Additionally, the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definitions and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 includes statutory targets for reducing fuel poverty, including for no more than 5% of households to be in fuel poverty and no more than 1% of households will be in extreme fuel poverty by 2040. These targets are closely linked to our buildings since the heat produced by them accounts for approximately 20% of Scotland's emissions and the cost of this heating is a primary driver of fuel poverty.

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) Order (2022) introduces a statutory requirement for all Scottish local authorities to produce an LHEES and an accompanying Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan (LHEEDP or 'Delivery Plan'). The Delivery Plan details how these ambitions will be delivered over the coming five years through actions, initiatives, and programmes. The LHEES sets out a locally led and area-wide plan for:

- improving the energy efficiency of buildings across the Scottish Borders area to a reasonable standard
- decarbonising the heat supply of all buildings in the Scottish Borders, whether this is through a heat pump, communal heating system or a heat network

Importantly, the LHEES sets the vision for what needs to be done to all buildings in the Scottish Borders area, thus achieving the LHEES vision will need to be a collective effort involving all property owners who will need to retrofit their respective properties. This is a significant challenge as it will require a major effort to ensure the 62,296 properties in the Scottish Borders are energy efficient and use zero direct emission heating before 2045. Based on Scottish Government estimates, this transformation will entail close to £1bn of investment made by property owners to meet these requirements.

In addition to building-level improvements, the LHEES also provides the vision for the relevant local infrastructure improvements required to fulfil the national targets and local priorities.

The Scottish Borders LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland's statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction to net zero and fuel poverty:

- Net zero emissions by 2045.
- In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.

Though led by national statutory drivers on net zero and fuel poverty, the LHEES also provides an important opportunity to meet these ambitions in the way that benefits the local population. The development of the LHEES has been led by the Scottish Borders Council with input from stakeholders. This engagement has been key to understanding and incorporating the local cross-cutting policy drivers important to the region's priorities.

This strategy aims to achieve the goals described in this section by:

- setting out how each segment of the building stock needs to change, including reaching net zero direct emissions, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
- identifying strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and setting out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone: heat pump, communal heating system, or a heat network
- prioritising initial areas for delivery based on national and local priorities

The LHEES and Delivery Plan are ‘living documents’ which will be updated with information such as new opportunities. An annual update to the documents will be considered if the need for an update reaches the appropriate level of materiality.

### 3.1.2 LHEES Considerations

The national targets are a useful direction and overarching ambition. However, they are too high-level to understand how to address buildings and infrastructure at the local level.

The LHEES Guidance issued by the Scottish Government recommends that the LHEES should be framed around six “LHEES Considerations” (Figure 4). The LHEES Considerations are more specific and manageable, allowing the council to better grapple with and plan for the priorities. These considerations form the basis for understanding, interpreting, and developing the pathways to decarbonisation. One of the main ways to view this LHEES is as a means to addressing these considerations.

**Figure 4: Six LHEES Considerations as defined by the LHEES Guidance**

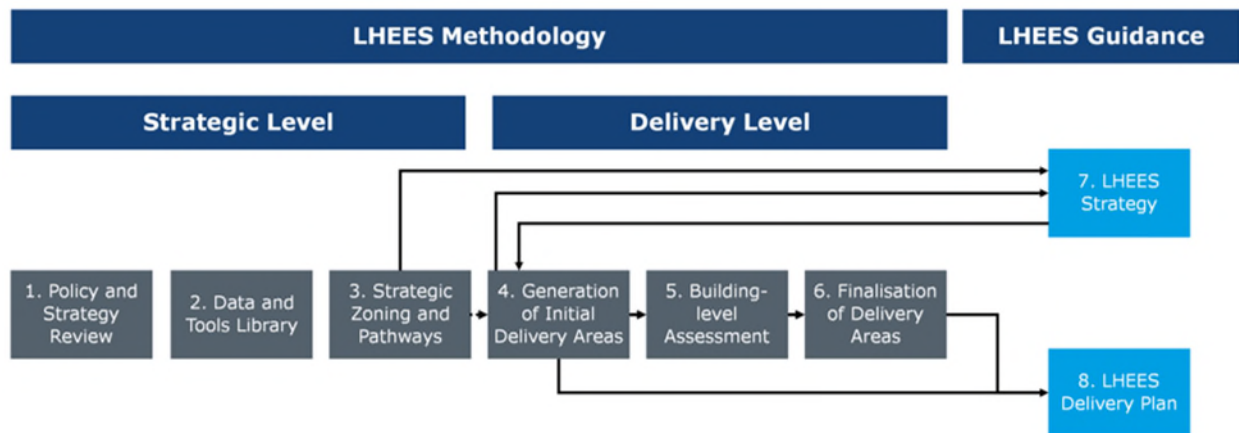
	Consideration	Description
Heat decarbonisation	Off-gas grid buildings	Transitioning from heating oil and LPG in off-gas areas
	On-gas grid buildings	On-gas grid heat decarbonisation
	Heat networks	Decarbonisation with heat networks
Energy efficiency and other outcomes	Poor building energy efficiency	Poor building energy efficiency
	Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty	Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty
	Mixed tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings	Mixed-tenure, mixed-use buildings, listed buildings, and buildings in conservation area

### 3.1.3 Developing the LHEES

Developing the LHEES is at its core a data-driven process, although it is heavily informed by local knowledge and context, stakeholder engagement and building on existing local and national policies. The council has developed this LHEES in line with the LHEES Guidance issued by the Scottish

Government as well as the LHEES Methodology issued by Zero Waste Scotland. These documents follow an eight-stage process summarised in Figure 5 and described below in Table 1.

**Figure 5: The LHEES process involved cycles of data analysis guided by stakeholder input and policy context (existing priorities at national and local levels), ultimately feeding into this LHEES document (Stage 7) and the accompanying Delivery Plan (Stage 8).**



**Table 1: This table describes each of the eight stages of LHEES.**

Stage	Description
<b>Stage 1: Policy and strategy review</b>	Identifying the local and national policies, targets and strategies that are linked to the LHEES and understanding how these will guide the development of the LHEES. The outputs of this analysis are discussed in section 5.
<b>Stage 2: Data and tools library</b>	Developing a library of all appropriate data and tools that supported analysis in subsequent stages of the LHEES.
<b>Stage 3: Strategic zoning and pathways</b>	First, establishing a baseline for the Scottish Borders region’s existing building stock including: characteristics, energy efficiency levels and heat supply and performance (summary provided in sections 8.2 and 8.3). Second, this data was then analysed through the lens of the LHEES Considerations (as discussed in section 3.1.2) to develop a set of ‘strategic zones’. Strategic zones provide an overview of the key challenges and opportunities across the region. This analysis is summarised in section 9.
<b>Stage 4: Generation of initial delivery areas</b>	The data is used to generate potential delivery areas driven by the LHEES Considerations. These delivery areas define the opportunities in the form of potential projects which can be delivered by stakeholders with support from the council.
<b>Stage 5: Building-level pathways assessment</b>	Further analysis is carried out to assess the interventions required to decarbonise heating and improve energy efficiency in properties in each delivery area, including a quantification of financial costs and carbon reduction benefits. This is based on data analysis which defines interventions required and financial and carbon implications for buildings across the Scottish Borders.
<b>Stage 6: Finalisation of delivery areas</b>	Using the outputs from stages 1-5, the delivery areas are finalised into a set of projects after giving consideration to local priorities and any existing local programmes works.

<b>Stage 7: LHEES Strategy</b>	Based on the findings in stage 1-6, this LHEES Strategy document provides a short and long-term focus of LHEES at the strategic level.
<b>Stage 8: LHEES Delivery Plan</b>	The accompanying Delivery Plan sets out how the council will implement the LHEES through the next 5 years, based on the priorities identified by the LHEES Vision (section 6) and building on existing progress made by the council (section 7).

Given that the LHEES is an area-wide plan for the whole of Scottish Borders, collective working is crucial for it to succeed. In the practical sense, while the council will achieve net zero for its own buildings the LHEES at large will be delivered by wider stakeholders (i.e. building owners and occupiers) with enablement support from the council insofar as possible. Stakeholder engagement is important to the LHEES process as it provides a strong basis for collective action by local communities, the council, investors, developers and wider stakeholders. Engagement allows key stakeholders to raise their concerns, pinpoint areas for targeted intervention, and identify low regret measures or opportunities during the development stages. Collective action will be necessary as the council with its limited resources can only address the select most high-priority buildings and infrastructure developments. To achieve a true area-wide transformation, all residents and organisations need to act collectively as stakeholders to retrofit their properties and, where relevant, invest into infrastructure opportunities.

The Council has engaged with stakeholders to develop the local energy efficiency policies in relation to the new Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028 particularly in relation to Strategic Outcome 3: Improved energy efficiency of homes and a reduction in fuel poverty while supporting a Just Transition to Net Zero through decarbonising domestic heating and energy. The council has continued to build on this engagement throughout the LHEES development process. LHEES stakeholder engagement entailed the following:

- Stakeholder mapping to identify key stakeholders to support the development and implementation of LHEES.
- Initial workshops to determine the scope of LHEES.
- Establishment of a project steering group within SBC to ensure joined up supportive work around the council estates, with a view to using the estate as an exemplar and leader to demonstrate emission reductions.
- Ongoing meetings with Registered Social Landlords (RSL) to understand challenges with the existing building stock and scheduled works relating to energy efficiency and decarbonisation, LHEES milestones and the best way to align existing efforts with the ambition of the LHEES.
- Ongoing meetings with the Distribution Network Operators (DNO) Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) to discuss their key role in supporting the delivery of LHEES. Additionally, engagement with other utility providers in relation to development of heat networks (for example with Scottish Water in relation to plans for the Tweedbank Heat Network).
- Ongoing engagement with wider public bodies such as NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, and local estates about their focus to align plans with the LHEES.
- The council aims to engage with the main housing associations to address the feasibility of the development of heat networks, particularly on the development of small-scale communal heat networks. This will be prioritised for new developments planned from the housing associations.

The main associations identified are Eildon Housing Association, Berwickshire Housing Association, Waverly Housing Association and Scottish Borders Housing Association.

- Interactive workshops with stakeholder groups to explore and discuss initial Strategic Zones, Delivery Areas and recommendations alongside the wider policy, strategy and delivery environment.
- Interactive workshop with stakeholders to gather feedback on the finalised Delivery Areas (incorporating analysis to date), and explore key actions, enablers and challenges to support content for LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Developed stakeholder engagement programme as part of the Delivery Plan with a deliberative approach to gathering interests from parties to drive the LHEES.
- This consultative draft LHEES is subject to a public consultation to allow anyone in the Scottish Borders to provide their feedback.
- The council also intends to engage and present at area partnership meetings for further public engagement. The council will look to enter dialogue with community groups to build on previous discussions on energy and renewable opportunities, and to feed into the strategic long-term effort for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across an entire local authority area.

#### 3.1.4 LHEES Strategy Content

This strategy is structured to align with the LHEES Guidance that was issued by the Scottish Government. It covers:

- An overview of the key concepts in the LHEES, such as an exploration of fuel poverty, energy efficiency, decarbonisation technology options and other topics (Section 4)
- The national and local policies and strategies which have fed into the LHEES, including a summary of the route map and targets to improve the energy efficiency, decarbonise the heat supply and develop heat networks (Section 5).
- Scottish Borders' vision on heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency in buildings, explaining how the council has used partnerships and stakeholder working to combine national and local priorities into one unified LHEES Vision for the region (Section 6).
- The progress that Scottish Borders has already made towards this LHEES Vision, in addition to what ongoing works in the area may align with the LHEES (Section 7).
- An overview of the current performance of the building stock across the Scottish Borders, highlighting the scale of the challenge and priorities going forward (Section 8).
- The strategic zones and pathways to decarbonise heat and improve the energy efficiency which have been identified through the LHEES development process. The zones and pathways are driven by the LHEES Vision (Section 9).

## 4 Key Concepts in LHEES

### 4.1 Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is a major national policy driver for LHEES since it is imperative to eradicate fuel poverty if Scotland as a country is to make a just transition to net zero. Fuel poverty is an equally important local priority for the council to work towards a future where people living in the Scottish Borders are free of

financial stress related to warming their homes. In Scotland, a household is defined as being in fuel poverty when<sup>2, 3</sup>:

- after housing costs, the total fuel costs needed to maintain a satisfactory heating schedule are more than 10% of the household’s adjusted net income; and
- if, after deducting fuel costs, housing costs, benefits received for a care need or disability, and childcare costs, the household’s remaining income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living.

The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, set the above definition along with new statutory targets, including the aim to have no more than 5% of households in fuel poverty and 1% in extreme fuel poverty by 2040<sup>4</sup>. One of the most relevant pressures on fuel poverty is poor building energy efficiency which drives up heating costs and contributes to fuel poverty. As the LHEES concerns the improvement of buildings and development of infrastructure, it is important to consider buildings and areas where poor energy efficiency is a driver for fuel poverty. This has been one of the most important factors in deciding what to prioritise for LHEES.

According to the most recent data, fuel poverty affects around 29% of households in the Scottish Borders, where the rural nature of the area, the type of housing and energy efficiency, type of heating systems and the low wage economy, contributes to higher levels than the Scottish average.

**Table 2: Levels of Fuel Poverty and Extreme Fuel Poverty**

	Fuel Poverty	Extreme Fuel Poverty
Scottish Borders (Scottish House Condition Survey 2019)	29%	14%
Scottish Borders (Home Analytics)	28%	16%
Scotland Average (Scottish House Condition Survey 2019)	25%	12%

Ongoing pressures on energy prices and cost of living have had a major negative impact, pulling many people into fuel poverty and pushing households already in fuel poverty further into extreme fuel poverty. While updated data is not available, it is understood by the council that the fuel poverty rate is likely much higher than these estimates due to the ongoing cost of living crisis. Recent modelling suggests that the Scottish national fuel poverty rate reached 35% at October 2022, having gained 10 percentage points since the 2019. There is reason to believe that the current fuel poverty rate for the Scottish Borders is yet higher.

## 4.2 Energy Efficiency

A more energy efficient building is one which uses less energy to provide a given amount of heating or power, in turn reducing carbon dioxide emissions from reduced grid electricity and/or fossil fuel use. The energy efficiency of buildings is usually assessed through Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). EPCs use an A to G rating scale, where A is the most efficient and G is the least efficient. The certificate also lists

<sup>2</sup> Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 ([link](#))

<sup>3</sup> Office of national statistics. How fuel poverty is measured in the UK: March 2023 ([link](#))

<sup>4</sup> Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets (Scotland) Act 2019 ([link](#))

<sup>5</sup> Scottish House Condition Survey 2017-19, Energy Saving Trust - Home Analytics Scotland V3.8

the potential rating of the building if all cost-effective measures are installed; these can include wall, floor and loft/roof insulation and double glazing to reduce the rate of heat loss from the building, and therefore indirectly reduce the amount of energy required to keep the building warm. Efficient (LED) lighting also requires less energy to produce the same amount of light than traditional incandescent bulbs. Efficient heating controls can improve the energy efficiency of a building by either reducing the number of hours the heating is on (for example when the building isn't occupied) or by slightly lowering the target temperature<sup>6</sup>. These measures will be a crucial component for Scotland's building stock to be aligned with the national target of 75% emissions reduction by 2030<sup>4</sup>.

The national targets for improving the energy efficiency of Scotland's domestic stock have been established through the Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy and being taken forward through the Heat in Buildings Bill:

- All private rented sector properties to reach a minimum standard equivalent to EPC C, where technically feasible and cost effective, at change of tenancy, with a backstop of 2028 for all remaining existing properties.
- All owner-occupied properties to reach a minimum standard equivalent to EPC C, where technically feasible and cost effective, with a backstop of 2033.
- Targets relating to social housing were previously set through the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). EESH2 was confirmed in 2019 and set a target for all social housing to achieve EPC B (or is as energy efficient as practically possible) by 2032. In addition, no social housing below EPC band D is to be re-let from December 2025 subject to temporary specified exemptions<sup>7</sup>. The newly proposed Social Housing Net Zero Standard has been proposed as a replacement for EESH2; it will incorporate both a minimum fabric efficiency rating (measured in a maximum annual energy use under a certain threshold; kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year) to be achieved by 2033 and the requirement for zero direct emission heating by 2045.
- Through the Heat in Buildings Bill, the Scottish Government has indicated that it will not introduce an energy efficiency standard for non-domestic buildings due to their significant variability and diverse needs, making a single standard too limited.

### 4.3 Heat Decarbonisation Technologies and Renewables

The Heat in Buildings Bill has proposed various timelines and requirements for buildings to reach net zero. At most, all buildings will be required to have a zero direct emission heating system by 2045. However, certain types of buildings may be required to replace their heating systems before this deadline. These include public sector organisations (who may have to complete the transformation by 2038) or social landlords (who may be required to meet interim targets). There are many types of technologies to decarbonise the heat supply of buildings. The council takes a technology agnostic approach and will encourage and support the use of solutions which best meet the financial and practical needs of property owners. Most heating system transformations will involve the installation of a heat pump or connection to a heat network or communal heating system<sup>8</sup> since these are currently the most feasible solutions. A heat pump is a device that absorbs heat from one environment and transports it into another using electricity. For example, an air-source heat pump extracts heat from the air outside and transfers it into the building. This heat can then be used to warm water for radiators, underfloor heating systems and hot

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<sup>6</sup> Office for National Statistics. Energy efficiency of housing in England and Wales: 2022 ([link](#))

<sup>7</sup> The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH2), Scottish Government ([link](#))

<sup>8</sup> Heat networks and communal heating systems are discussed in section 4.4

water use. Conversion to heat pumps enables properties to shift from polluting heating systems to those which use electricity and do not produce any direct emissions.

Solar PV panels can provide electricity that a property can use directly, store for future use, or be exported to the grid. Scottish Borders Council has included Solar PV and battery storage technology as a “special project” within existing fuel poverty retrofit programmes (see section 7.3 further details). Effective generation and safe storage of electricity can contribute to an energy efficient property and also address the pressures that lead to cost of heating and fuel poverty.

#### 4.4 Heat Networks and Communal Heating Systems

Heat networks (also known as district heating) supply heat from a central source to consumers, via a network of underground pipes carrying hot water. Heat networks can cover a large area such as an entire city or be fairly local supplying a small street. The central heat source is often referred to as ‘the energy centre’ which can be more efficient and less costly to maintain than the combined individual property-level heat sources. There are many possible technologies that can provide the input to a heat network including heat pumps, energy from waste (EfW) facilities, waste heat sources, and industrial processes. A heat network avoids the need for dedicated heat pumps for individual properties (though in some types of heat networks this can be an optional addition as the heat generated by individual systems can be added to the system and shared). Heat networks can be various sizes and serve various combinations of building types. They can also be extended over time by adding new connections (heat demand) and new energy centres (heat sources) to the network. Where there are sufficiently dense areas, it will be the council’s priority to support the development of heat networks as the preferred decarbonisation solution.

A communal heating system is a system whereby a shared heat source supplies a group of properties. These systems are smaller than a full-scale heat network as they service a limited number of properties, such as properties in a block of flats, or a cluster of buildings joined together or proximate to each other (e.g. retirement villages, commercial zones, terraced housing and similar). Communal heating provides similar benefits over individual heat pumps as a heat network does (such as lower cost heating due to higher efficiency of the system and reduced maintenance cost) although not to the same degree due to its smaller economies of scale. Furthermore, these systems also provide the benefit of being able to decarbonise properties at scale.

Home Analytics data indicates that 912 properties have their primary heating as ‘Communal Heating.’ Typically, these are small and localised systems serving one building of separate flats, or properties in the direct vicinity, such as a farm and adjacent farm cottages. These are mostly retirement villages/flats or social housing blocks/flats/terraces.

The council has placed importance on the role of communal heating systems in LHEES as they offer a viable ‘middle-ground’ for properties in the Scottish Borders which aren’t in a potential heat network zone but have sufficient heat density for a communal heating opportunity. These systems may provide the opportunity to decarbonise properties efficiently at scale, especially when the local authority area is faced with a supply chain challenge. There aren’t sufficient skilled workers to serve the area’s decarbonisation needs and those which are present are costlier due to long travel distances involved. A smaller number of large projects are economical more economical for customers, both for installation and operating costs, and more attractive to suppliers as a business opportunity. It is the council’s view that these projects could unlock major potential to decarbonise properties and help control the cost of heating.



The Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021<sup>9</sup> has set statutory targets to ensure that the combined supply of thermal energy by heat networks in Scotland reaches 2.6TWh in 2027 and 6TWh by 2030 (3% and 8% of total demand, or approximately 120,000 and 400,000 additional homes respectively). The council will play its role in supporting these targets and, while doing so, bring benefits to the people of the Borders.

#### 4.5 Resources and support

There are a range of existing initiatives that can support private building owners with improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat. There are several organisations and groups which support the implementation of energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects:

- Borders Home Energy Forum
- South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE)
- The South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP)
- Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal

Additional detail on how the council will leverage these support systems to implement the LHEES is provided in the Delivery Plan.

Support for energy efficiency and decarbonisation can also come in the form of multiple funding streams that can enable property owners to pay for the upfront costs of installation. The Scottish Government funds various initiatives to support various types of property owners and occupiers. The council will seek to leverage this funding and support to maximise the potential benefit for people in the Scottish Borders. The Delivery Plan provides details for how this will be achieved. The key funding and support initiatives are:

- **Area-based Schemes (ABS)**<sup>10</sup>: funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by local authorities, ABS are place-based energy efficiency schemes targeted mainly at improving fabric efficiency of homes in areas with high levels of fuel poverty. ABS enables local authorities to develop and deliver energy efficiency programmes by identifying the localities, properties and types of measures which could be implemented and targeting funding toward these. This funding can supplement owners' contributions or social landlords who can choose to insulate their homes at the same time, making it an efficient process as well as an enabler for retrofitting mixed-tenure properties. Some properties which meet certain eligibility criteria can be retrofitted using funding from UK Government's Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme. Therefore, ECO funding is also usually considered as part of ABS programmes. The council delivers the ABS scheme across the local area in close partnership with social landlords.
- **Home Energy Scotland**<sup>11</sup>: this advice and funding service provides owner-occupiers and private landlords and tenants with support to improve the energy efficiency of their properties. It includes grant and loan support as well as advice services to help owners with the process of installing energy efficiency measures, zero direct emission heating and renewable energy.

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<sup>9</sup> Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 ([link](#))

<sup>10</sup> Area-based Schemes ([link](#))

<sup>11</sup> Home Energy Scotland ([link](#))

- **Warmer Homes Scotland**<sup>12</sup>: this programme offers funding and support to households struggling to stay warm and manage energy bills by carrying out property assessments and installing a range of energy saving improvements which can include insulation, heating and renewable measures. Eligibility for this programme includes private homeowners and tenants of a private-sector landlord.
- **Business Energy Scotland**<sup>13</sup>: this programme offers advice and funding for small and medium enterprises through advice on saving energy, money and creating a more sustainable business. Businesses can choose from various options including lighting assessments, solar PV assessments and energy efficiency assessments which includes renewable heat technologies, insulation and window glazing. This programme has identified over £200 million in savings to date for businesses.
- **Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES)**<sup>14</sup>: this programme is managed by Local Energy Scotland and supports communities in the energy transition to net zero emissions. CARES supports community organisations and charities on a wide range of renewable projects including installing renewable technologies in community buildings, assigning consultants to carry out feasibility studies and supporting potential opportunities for energy generation.

## 5 Policy Context

This LHEES is driven by considerations given to Scotland’s statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction (net zero by 2045) and fuel poverty (no more than 5% of households in Scotland in fuel poverty by 2040) alongside various other national and local policies and strategies. Figure 6 shows how these policies intersect and link into the LHEES.

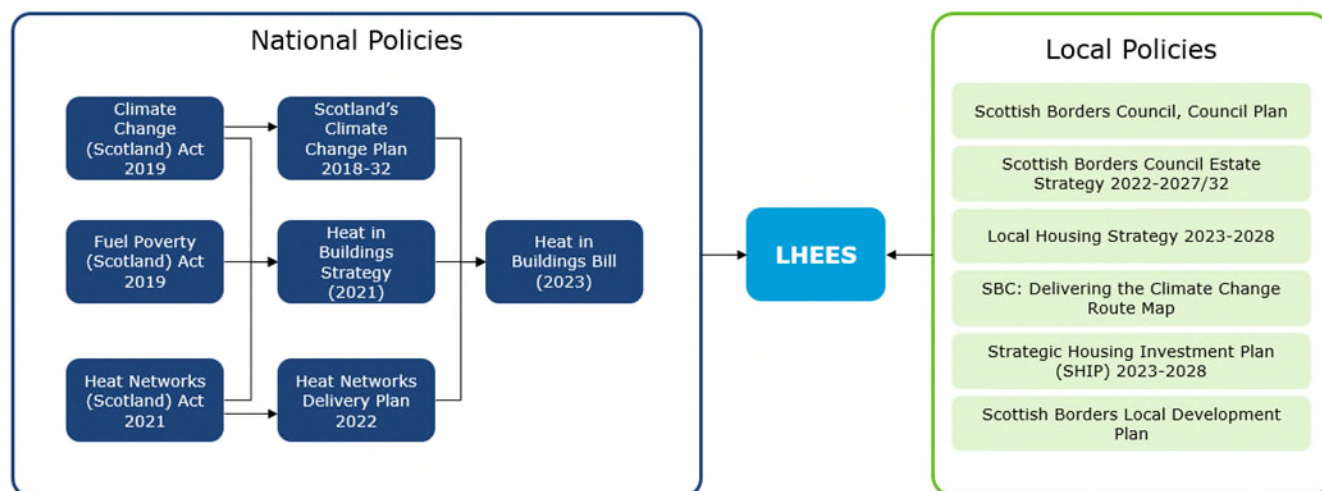
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<sup>12</sup> Warmer Homes Scotland, Scottish Government ([link](#))

<sup>13</sup> Business Energy Scotland ([link](#))

<sup>14</sup> Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) ([link](#))


**Figure 6: Relevant National and Local Policy for the Scottish Borders LHEES**

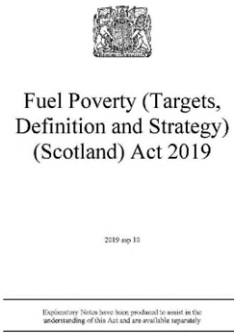






### 5.1 National Policies



Linking the LHEES to national policies is important to ensure national alignment to Scottish Government and other local authorities. It is also necessary to ensure the funding, policy, regulatory and other opportunities are not missed by the LHEES. The primary national policies central to the development of the LHEES are detailed in Table 3, along with their aims and how they are relevant and have been linked to the LHEES.

**Table 3: Relevant National policies for the Scottish Borders LHEES**

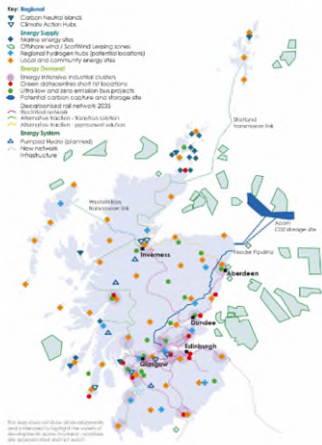
National policies	Aims	Links to Scottish Borders LHEES
<p><b>Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019</b></p> 	<p>This sets emission reduction targets for Scotland, including interim targets to ensure sufficient progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 75% reduction by 2030</li> <li>- 90% reduction by 2040</li> <li>- Net zero emissions by 2045</li> </ul>	<p>The LHEES will align with these targets and support the national effort by reducing emissions from buildings in the Scottish Borders. This will be achieved through energy efficiency upgrades and heat decarbonisation.</p>

<p><b>Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definitions and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019</b></p>  <p>Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019</p> <p>2019 asp 13</p> <p><small>Explanatory Notes have been produced to assist in the understanding of this Act and are available separately</small></p>	<p>This includes statutory targets for reducing fuel poverty and introduces a new definition of fuel poverty to better align with relative income. Targets include that by the end of 2040:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No more that 5% of households will be in fuel poverty.</li> <li>- No more than 1% of households will be in extreme fuel poverty.</li> <li>- The median fuel poverty gap of households in fuel poverty is no more than £250 in 2015 prices before adding inflation.</li> </ul>	<p>These targets also apply to individual local authorities. Thus, it is a target for Scottish Borders to achieve the above. This LHEES will contribute to the statutory target by eliminating poor energy performance as a driver for fuel poverty, thus helping to reduce fuel poverty.</p>
<p><b>Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021</b></p>  <p>Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021</p> <p>2021 asp 9</p> <p><small>Explanatory Notes have been produced to assist in the understanding of this Act and are available separately</small></p>	<p>This sets out a regulatory framework to support the development of heat networks. It sets targets of 3% of national heat demand to be supplied by heat networks by 2027 and 8% by 2030.</p>	<p>The LHEES will align with this act by maximising the potential for heat networks as well as communal heating systems, ensuring that heat supply within the Scottish Borders will be as efficient, cost effective and future-proof as possible. This will contribute directly to national targets but also benefit residents and businesses.</p>
<p><b>Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021)</b></p>  <p>Heat in Buildings Strategy Achieving Net Zero Emissions in Scotland's Buildings</p> <p>Scottish Government www.scotland.gov.uk</p>	<p>This sets out steps to end emissions from Scotland's buildings and the remove poor energy performance as a driver for fuel poverty. Building on the above three Acts, the focus is on reducing energy demand for space and water heating in homes, workplaces and community buildings using a fabric first approach, followed by conversion to zero direct emission heating. This strategy provides the route map detailing what Scotland's buildings need</p>	<p>LHEES and the Heat in Buildings Strategy are inextricably linked as they are both centred around reducing emissions from buildings and tackling poor energy performance as a driver for fuel poverty. Much of the work for this LHEES is based on the approaches outlined by this strategy.</p>

	<p>to do to help achieve the above targets.</p>	
<p><b>Heat in Buildings Bill Consultation (2023)</b></p> 	<p>This Bill is currently being consulted on and includes a comprehensive set of proposals for regulations which will drive forward the goals of the Heat in Buildings Strategy and aspects of the above acts in relation to buildings. It proposes a ban on polluting heating systems by 2045 to support the climate change targets, as well as efficiency targets for homes under all tenures.</p>	<p>This Bill will be instrumental in paving the way for heat decarbonisation. It could lead to regulatory means and support which the council could use to accelerate decarbonisation. The council looks forward to the changes that the subsequent Act will introduce. These will be built into the LHEES once the Act has been passed and further Scottish Government guidance released.</p>
<p><b>Social Housing Net Zero Standard Consultation (2023)</b></p> 	<p>After a thorough review of previous standards (i.e. EESSH2), the Scottish Government is currently consulting on a new standard which proposes various options for improving the energy efficiency of and decarbonising social housing. This includes a proposed minimum fabric efficiency standard which defines the energy consumption limit in kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. In addition, proposals also include a ban on polluting heating systems by 2045 with the possibility of interim targets.</p>	<p>With 23% of dwellings within the Scottish Borders belonging to housing associations this will be a key contributor to through the LHEES. Implementing this standard will ensure that more vulnerable residents who live in housing associations will be at reduced risk of fuel poverty.</p>

<p><b>Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-32</b></p> 	<p>The Climate Change Plan for Scotland sets the Scottish Government’s approach to delivering a green recovery, and a pathway to achieve the climate change targets. This includes a focus on low carbon heating for buildings centred around three key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regulatory change</li> <li>- Delivering significant investment</li> <li>- Supporting supply chain growth</li> </ul>	<p>The LHEES is a major step that will contribute to all three key areas relevant in the Climate Change Plan. It will approach the challenge by using the emission reduction priority as a means to also future-proofing homes and workplaces in the Scottish Borders.</p>
<p><b>Housing to 2040 (2021)</b></p> 	<p>This strategy sets a vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map of how housing will become net zero by 2045. The main goal is for everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be. In terms of sustainability priorities this plan sets zero emission targets for new and existing homes and recognises housing as an opportunity to contribute to the green recovery. The target is to have 100,000 affordable homes by 2032, between new builds and refurbishing existing homes, and for all new homes to be of high quality and with zero emission heating.</p>	<p>This strategy is of aligns closely with LHEES priorities, helping to drive the fuel poverty and net zero housing agenda. It has served as an important compass to guide the direction of the Scottish Borders LHEES given almost 90% of properties in the Scottish Borders are domestic.</p>

**Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)**



This draft plan consists of a route map to deliver net zero energy systems that will supply affordable, resilient, and clean energy to Scotland’s workers, households, communities and businesses. The priorities in this plan include the decarbonisation of homes alongside a focus on access to affordable, clean energy within a net zero system and can be established in the domestic and non-domestic sector.

The council aims to grow the influence and scope of the LHEES in the future and the area of renewable energy and heat generation and storage will be prioritised for future addition. As part of a just transition, the council aims to drive the potential economic, employment, skills and net zero benefits that renewable energy infrastructure development could bring to the region. This will not only be beneficial but instrumental in the success of LHEES targets.

**Heat Networks Delivery Plan (2022)**



This sets out how the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 will be implemented to maximise the potential for heat networks. It sets out the details of the regulatory regime as well as future work on the wider policy framework, including building assessment reports, heat network zoning, licencing and permitting and more.

The council is committed to maximising the role for communal heating systems and heat networks as key enablers in decarbonising buildings at scale as well as making renewable heat available at an affordable cost.

**5.2 Local Policies**

Local policies for buildings and energy have been developed in line with national policies. Thus, the main objectives of the national policies discussed in section 5.1 are already reflected across multiple existing local policies. This LHEES will go yet further to incorporate these national priorities in a more direct way and holistically in one place.

However, the LHEES also provides an avenue for unique locally driven and championed priorities to be bridged with national policies to pave a way for national targets to be delivered while maximising benefits for the people of the Scottish Borders. Various policies, detailed in Table 4, cover themes of promoting affordable warmth, prioritising the well-being of residents, and having a tangible route to achieving net zero which is beneficial for the environment, economy, and people within Scottish Borders. Any works arising from the LHEES will consider and align with these existing policies. These policies all align with various LHEES considerations (as discussed in section 3.1.2) and will work in conjunction with the LHEES to create a strong foundation for implementing projects supporting cross-cutting policy objectives.

**Table 4: Relevant local strategies for Scottish Borders LHEES**

Local Policy and Strategy	Aims relevant for LHEES
<p><b>Scottish Borders Council, Council Plan 2023</b></p> 	<p>This Council Plan is based on six outcomes, five of which are focused on improving the wellbeing of citizens and making the Scottish Borders region a more sustainable and better place to live, work in and visit. The 2033 vision for Scottish Borders includes increasing the number of residents living and working in energy efficient homes and premises, powered by green energy sources. This also links to the local priority of accelerating action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.</p>
<p><b>Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy (AWHEES) 2019-2023</b></p> 	<p>This multi-agency strategy was designed to support the provision of warm, energy efficient homes for everyone in the Scottish Borders. The three main priorities of the AWHEES were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To collectively work with partners to improve affordable warmth and energy efficiency in homes;</li> <li>- To explore wider measures to better manage and increase warmth in the home;</li> <li>- To ensure the AWHEES provides opportunities for all in the Scottish Borders.</li> </ul> <p>Achievements from this strategy are already becoming apparent with the setup of the Scottish Borders Home Energy Forum (further discussed in section 7.5) which has acted as a catalyst for building collective support for ongoing strategies such as implementation of EESSH 1 and 2, and upcoming funding opportunities are discussed proactively. The LHEES a successor to the AWHEES as it will build on this work in combination with other priorities (e.g. non-domestic buildings and heat networks) as a holistic approach.</p>
<p><b>Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-2028</b></p> 	<p>The LHS sets out a vision for the supply, quality and availability of housing in the Scottish Borders. The vision of the LHS is “Everyone in the Scottish Borders has access to a home that meets their needs and is part of a sustainable community.” The LHS has five strategic outcomes to meet this vision, of which strategic outcome three dovetails with LHEES priorities: “improved energy efficiency of homes and a reduction in fuel poverty while supporting a Just Transition to Net Zero through decarbonising domestic heating and energy.” It covers the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to improve energy efficiency across all tenures.</li> </ul>








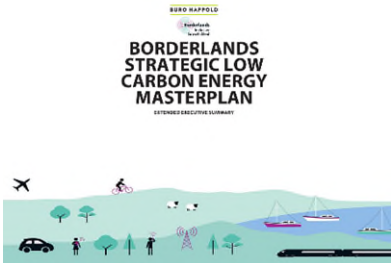
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy for the Scottish Borders.</li> <li>• Implement a public engagement strategy for heat in buildings.</li> <li>• Work with partners to develop the skills needed to deliver energy efficiency &amp; zero emissions heating systems.</li> <li>• Explore wider measures to better manage energy and increase warmth in the home.</li> <li>• Adapt and retrofit existing homes to improve their energy efficiency.</li> </ul> <p>Strategic outcome three has been incorporated within the objectives of this LHEES. The other four strategic outcomes from the LHS have also been an important part of developing this LHEES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Outcome 1: More homes in well designed, sustainable communities that increase opportunity for all and support our economy to thrive</li> <li>• Strategic Outcome 2: People have access to homes which promote independence, health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Strategic Outcome 4: Communities are regenerated through improving the quality and condition of housing and the built heritage</li> <li>• Strategic Outcome 5: Homelessness is prevented wherever possible, and a range of housing options are provided so people can secure a suitable and sustainable housing outcome as quickly as possible</li> </ul>
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**Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024-2029**



This is the key document for targeting investment in affordable housing within the Scottish Borders. The SHIP defines how affordable housing investment priorities set out in the LHS will be delivered in practice over the period 2023-2028.

<p><b>Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan (2023)</b></p> 	<p>This plan outlines how the Scottish Borders will further use its land to fulfil development needs of the community. This includes all uses, such as social, economic and housing needs. The plan promotes the net zero 2045 target, and places emphasis on place making and design. It recognises the importance of the LHEES and the targeting support toward fuel poor households. It also highlights the council’s support for heat networks, referring to National Planning Framework (NPF4) Policy 19: Heating and Cooling to facilitate heat networks in new developments.</p>
<p><b>Anti-Poverty Strategy (2021)</b></p> 	<p>This strategy highlights activity that the council will aim to deliver to help reduce poverty in the Scottish Borders. It includes a key relevant outcome which is for all residents to have the ability to live in warm, affordable homes.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change Strategy (2018-2028)</b></p> 	<p>The Climate Change Strategy contains the route map for how the Scottish Borders will reach net zero by 2045 for both the council as an organisation and partners across the region. It contains 25 milestones across five themes, one of which is Energy and has a focus on reducing domestic emissions with an overarching target for annual reductions.</p>

<p><b>Scottish Borders Council Estate Strategy 2022-2027/32</b></p> 	<p>The estate Strategy for Scottish Borders Council for the next 5-10 years (2022-2027/32) sets objectives across 5 themes including having a best value estate and sustainability, making the estate fit-for-the-future financially, socially and economically. Some actions include: using and maintaining assets that have a long-term viable future, embedding sustainability into estate decisions and to operate a resilient and viable estate. This sets the foundation for building a net zero programme to take the council's estate to net zero emissions, which will demonstrate leadership and encouraging other stakeholders to also take similar actions as part of a collective effort to deliver this LHEES.</p>
<p><b>Scottish Borders Community Plan (2018)</b></p> 	<p>This plan looks to highlight what The Borders-wide inequalities are and how the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) together with local communities and businesses can address existing inequalities and improve outcomes. The main outcome placed against the theme of 'Our Place' is for Borders residents to be able to afford to heat their homes and to have more residents living independently in affordable and sustainable homes. The council is in the process of updating the community plan, which will align with this LHEES.</p>
<p><b>Borderlands Strategic Low Carbon Masterplan (2021)</b></p> 	<p>The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal provides up to £452 million in funding to support a range of activities, including those targeting the low carbon energy transition. The priorities of this strategy include aiming toward a net zero carbon region with a whole systems approach, alongside a focus on stakeholder engagement to motivate and include all groups in discussion and the transition. The LHEES will utilise this as a potential funding opportunity for heat and energy decarbonisation projects.</p>

**Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland Regional Prosperity Framework, the City Deal Region, Edinburgh and South East Scotland (2021)**



This framework focuses on the long-term aspirational goals for Edinburgh and the surrounding South East to guide the future direction of regional economic and wider policy across stakeholders. Multiple themes within this framework link to LHEES priorities, such as delivering net zero carbon homes, retrofitting existing homes, ensuring homes are future-proofed and energy efficiency as part of a transition to a net zero economy. This provides an opportunity to link funding and outcome delivery across these policies.

**Regional Economic Strategy (2021-2031)**



This strategy sets a vision between 2021-2031 for how the South of Scotland regional Economic Partnership will support the region’s economy, focusing on the vision of ‘Green, Fair and Flourishing.’ One priority includes creating a green and sustainable economy with actions such as a just transition to net zero alongside improving the efficiency of Homes and Buildings. This provides opportunities for, both, the Scottish Borders as well as joint opportunities with other local authorities.

**Roadmap to Decarbonisation: Retrofit of Social Housing Stock in the South of Scotland (2022)**



This document explores the potential of social landlords to lead in delivering a just transition in Scotland. Priorities include building on existing collaborative work across social housing and exploring the creation of a collaborative body to facilitate the delivery of retrofit projects within the region.

**Newstead Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan (2023)**

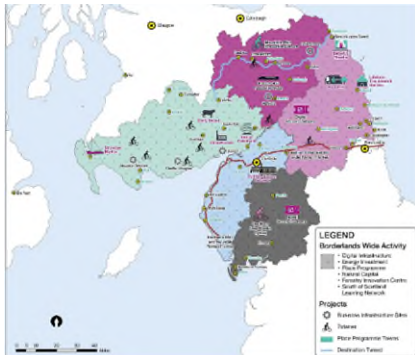


DRAFT Newstead Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan 2023



The Conservation Area Appraisal sets out Newstead’s context and historic development, before identifying the elements of its character (such as layout, views, landscape, trees, buildings, structures and spaces) that make it significant. The Management Plan provides guidance on how change can happen in Newstead in a way that preserves and enhances its significant character. This includes guidance to support measures to address climate change. The management plan takes into consideration EV charging points, energy efficiency and renewable energy including heat pumps and solar PVs.

**Borderlands Place Programme (2022)**



As part of the Borderlands Place Programme there is a focus on town centres and an ambition that all towns and their centres are economically vibrant and resilient to change. The key objectives are to:

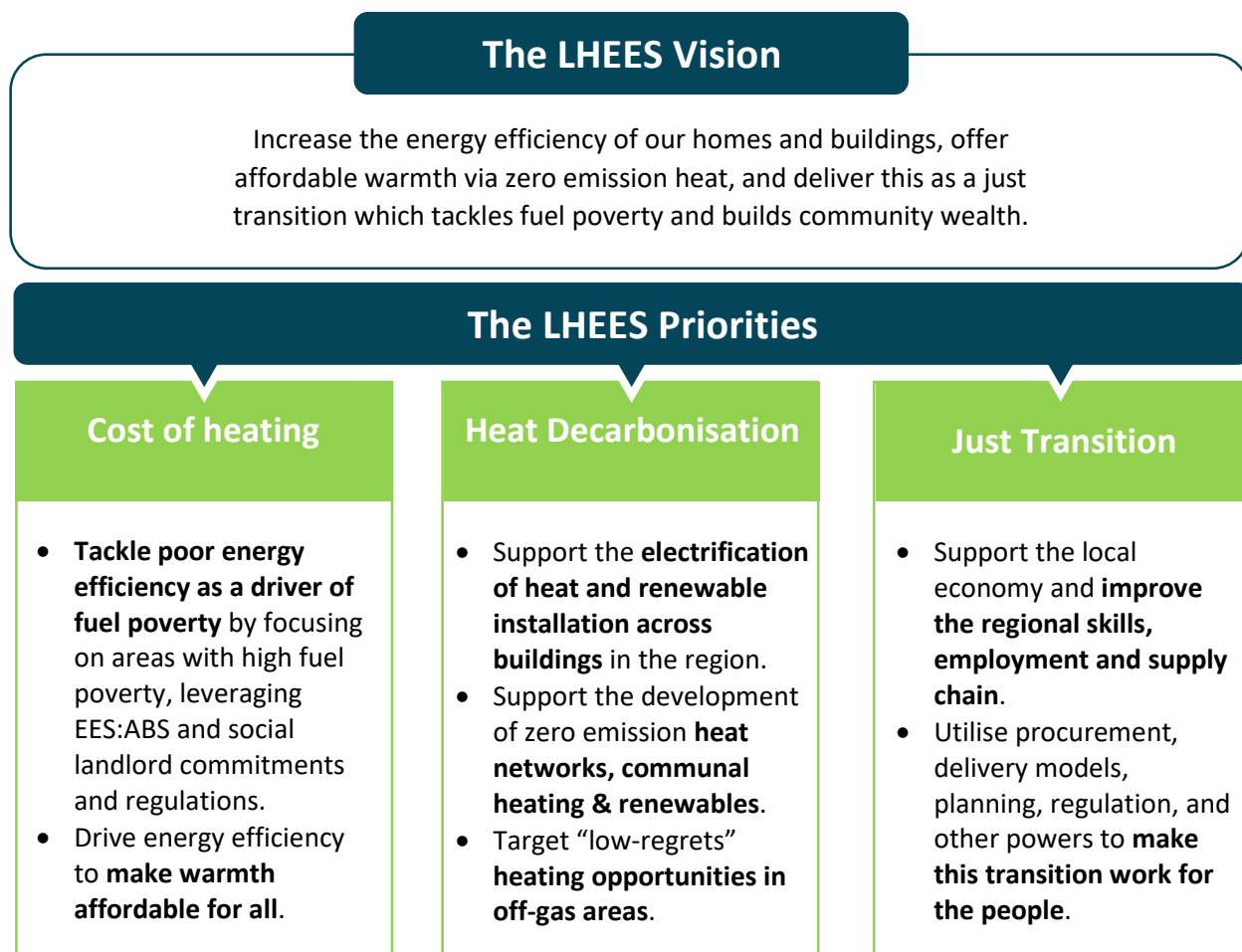
- Attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.
- Increase and retain our working age population.
- Raise the standard of the physical environment in our towns and town centres.
- Increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres.
- Deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation.
- Increase the number of visitors who spend time and money in our towns and town centres.

Towns across the Borders have held workshops and meetings to develop local place plans.

**6 The Scottish Borders LHEES Vision**

LHEES represents an opportunity for the Scottish Borders to align areas of regional and national focus. The is committed to creating a region that is fair for everyone and where all have an equal and positive chance to succeed. Our aim is to provide affordable warmth and healthy homes and buildings in the Scottish Borders whilst contributing to carbon reduction and the transition to renewable heating and energy. Therefore, the council combined the relevant aspects of the above national and local policies to develop an LHEES Vision (Figure 7) which addresses fuel poverty, decarbonisation, and building energy efficiency while contributing to the development of a strong and sustainable local economy, boosting skills and delivering a just transition so the benefits of developing a green economy are shared widely.

Figure 7: The Scottish Borders LHEES Vision



The LHEES Vision brings together the relevant outcomes and objects across policies into three priorities tied together by an overall vision statement:

- The negative impacts of the **cost of heating** impacts all residents and organisations in the Scottish Borders. At it’s worst, it can push individuals, households and communities into fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty, causing distress, discomfort, ill-health and debt. Living in a cold home can be damaging to physical and mental health and older people, children and those with disabilities are often at the most risk. The priority for this LHEES is to work collectively with stakeholders, especially social landlords, to improve affordable warmth and energy efficiency in all our homes and buildings. Addressing poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty is the most important element of this priority.
- The council is committed to making the Scottish Borders a net zero emissions area. The council has declared a climate emergency and developed policies which reinforce this commitment. Several key actions to **decarbonise heat** from our buildings been identified as part of declaring a climate emergency, including:
  - the electrification of heat

- moving away from reliance on fossil fuels and towards renewable energy generation and heat infrastructure (heat networks and communal heating systems)
- promoting measures to help reduce energy use and encourage positive behaviours in how people use energy.
- developing an approach to decarbonise the council’s own building stock in line with national targets (currently under consultation as part of the Heat in Buildings Bill), providing local leadership by example.
- Another priority of this LHEES is to enable coordination across policy areas to use the delivery of retrofit and decarbonisation projects to go beyond just delivering climate and fuel poverty goals, but to also bolster supply chain development, green skills development and economic development of the region as part of a **just transition**. Success of the LHEES will also be determined by delivering on these economic strategic outcomes and by actions that can build our communities’ wealth. This includes providing multiple benefits that reach out to homeowners, businesses, and the wider supply chain. With such momentum and commitment at a national level, the LHEES will need to leverage the energy transition to deliver for people at the local level. The LHEES will build upon the council’s partnerships across the region to deliver the LHEES in a way which realises these goals. This will include collaboration with public bodies and local enterprises to channel opportunities appropriately. It will also involve delivering heat network and energy generation projects in a way which prioritises the benefits for local communities.

## 7 Scottish Borders Progress

A significant amount of activity relevant to the LHEES Vision has been undertaken to date across the Scottish Borders, including programmes to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, reduce fuel poverty, decarbonise buildings and develop heat networks. These are summarised in Table 5 and detailed in following sections. The LHEES will build on these successes first and foremost, using the knowledge and experience gained through these as a launchpad for further activity. A Principle LHEES Officer has been recruited as a dedicated LHEES coordinator to lead the development and delivery of LHEES.

**Table 5: A summary of the activities, progress and achievements in relation to the LHEES Vision.**

Year	Activities
<b>2017/18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SBC awarded £1.05m ABS grant funding from Scottish Government. Over 700 private households supported with installing energy efficiency measures on their properties via ABS.</li> <li>● Changeworks in Peebles opened, offering the local community face to face advice and support via a hub on Peebles High Street.</li> <li>● Borders Home Energy Forum established.</li> </ul>
<b>2018/19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency developed with significant engagement.</li> <li>● SBC allocated £1.29m grant funding from Scottish Government for ABS.</li> <li>● Over 2,000 referrals for support via Home Energy Scotland on energy efficiency and fuel poverty.</li> <li>● Changeworks in Peebles continues to operate and has been expanded to cover the whole Tweeddale locality.</li> <li>● Scottish Borders Council has almost 6,000 approved registered landlords and over 8,700 rental properties approved.</li> </ul>

<b>2019/20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBC allocated £1.34m ABS grant funding from Scottish Government. ABS Air Source Heat Pump installation scheme was developed to support properties in off-gas areas.</li> <li>• 724 referrals for support via Home Energy Scotland energy efficiency and fuel poverty.</li> <li>• Pilot of Missing Shares Scheme initiated in Hawick Conservation Area. This scheme enables essential common repairs to be undertaken to private properties within the town's conservation area where property owners with shared responsibility are unwilling or unable to contribute to their share of the costs.</li> <li>• Landlord Forum held in Galashiels with around 100 landlords/agents attending.</li> <li>• Training course in Tenancy Agreements &amp; Notices for private landlords and letting agents within the Scottish Borders held in Hawick in November 2019.</li> </ul>
<b>2020/21</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Borders Council allocated 1.7m ABS grant funding from Scottish Government.</li> <li>• 5,501 advice interactions with Home Energy Scotland</li> <li>• Successful joint bid by 4 Scottish Borders RSL's to secure £450k from the Scottish Government's Fuel Poverty Fund.</li> <li>• Online training courses held in conjunction with Landlord Accreditation Scotland (LAS)</li> <li>• Over 300 households supported with energy savings of £300,000.</li> <li>• The council developed the Climate Change Route Map in June 2021, showing a pathway to climate change resilience and to net zero emissions for the Scottish Borders, over a 25-year time horizon</li> </ul>
<b>2021/2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The launch of Scottish Borders Home Energy Forum a catalyst for building collective support for ongoing Strategies including ABS and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) 1 &amp; 2.</li> <li>• Increase in EPC ratings across all tenures and wards.</li> <li>• Insulation levels (cavity wall, solid wall, and loft) have all increased.</li> <li>• Increase in EESH compliance within Social Housing Sector.</li> <li>• Establishment of Construction Forum to support local supply chain and build on outputs of Home Energy Forum.</li> <li>• Two years extension to the Warm &amp; Well programme offering support advice and income maximisation to Borders households, particularly those in Fuel Poverty.</li> <li>• Increased spend and allocation on ABS and development and introduction of renewable technologies.</li> </ul>

**7.1 LHEES pilot**

Scottish Borders Council participated in the LHEES pilot for Peebles in 2018/19, allowing officers to gain an early understanding of the process involved in developing an LHEES, which has been an essential skill in the development of this region wide LHEES.

**7.2 Affordable Warmth and Energy Efficiency Strategy (AWHEES)**

The Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy (AWHEES)<sup>15</sup> is a multi-agency Strategy designed to support the provision of warm, energy efficient homes for everyone in the Scottish Borders. The Strategy involves key partners within the council, as well as a wide array of stakeholders spanning the full breadth of the energy efficiency and fuel poverty agenda. Covering the period 2019-23, it contains a Vision, Priorities and an Implementation Plan. It was progressed in parallel with the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and was a core part of the LHS 2017-2022. The AWHEES has generated significant activity and stakeholder engagement, all of which will be used to build the momentum for this LHEES.

<sup>15</sup> Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy, Scottish Borders Council (link)



### 7.3 Energy Efficiency Scotland: Area Based Scheme

The Scottish Government provides funding for home energy efficiency improvements via the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme (ABS)<sup>16</sup>. The funding enables local authorities to invest in external and internal wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, and underfloor insulation. As well as offering insulation and fabric first measures, the scheme also aims to deliver renewable technology, such as air source heat pumps, solar PV and battery storage systems.

### 7.4 Fuel poverty

There has been a considerable amount of ongoing works by the council and partners to mitigate the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis with a dedicated webpage offering access to a wide-ranging information and advice (financial support and advice<sup>17</sup>, help with rising energy costs<sup>18</sup> and help with access to food). The council has been working with community and voluntary groups to create a network of Warm Spaces throughout the region, resulting in the Warm Spaces Initiative where community centres, libraries and clubs offer a warm and welcoming space, free to anyone struggling to heat their home.

### 7.5 Borders Home Energy Forum

The Borders Home Energy Forum was established in March 2018 to ensure that a strategic, multiagency approach is taken to help reduce fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency, and improve health and well-being in the Scottish Borders. The Forum comprises of organisations representing housing providers, statutory bodies, advisory groups, bodies associated with energy, affordable warmth, health and income maximisation, and representative officers of the council. The forum has helped progress core priorities, including:

- Increase in EPC ratings across all tenures and wards.
- Increased insulation levels (cavity wall, solid wall, and loft).
- Increase in EESSH compliance within the social housing sector.
- Establishment of the Construction Forum to support the local supply chain and build on outputs of Home Energy Forum
- Two years' extension to the Warm & Well programme offering support advice and income maximisation to Scottish Borders households, particularly those in fuel poverty.
- Increased spend and allocation on ABS.
- Development and introduction of renewable technologies into ABS.

### 7.6 Green Homes Pilot

The council supported the Green Home Pilot project led by the Eildon Housing Association (EHA) and Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BEST), to undertake studies on new building techniques to optimise energy efficiency. Four of the Eildon Housing Association's affordable housing projects were selected for inclusion in the Green Homes Pilot, comparing the cost, design strategies and post-construction building energy performance.

This has seen plans for new energy efficient properties built to the Passivhaus standard by EHA at St Boswells, utilising heat recovery heating systems. EHA are progressing Passivhaus standard aspirations whilst considering best value and there are four development locations which will see up to 50 new green

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<sup>16</sup> Energy Efficient Scotland Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS), Scottish Government ([link](#))

<sup>17</sup> Scottish Borders Council, Financial support and advice ([link](#))

<sup>18</sup> Scottish Borders Council, Help with rising energy costs ([link](#))

homes built using different building methods. This pilot will provide valuable real time insight and enable comparison of project journeys, construction costs, time to build and the experience of tenants living in the homes.

The St Boswells project was completed in March 2020 and was the first Passivhaus development in the Scottish Borders. The insights and learnings from the pilot projects will provide a better understanding of best practice approaches to future green housing in the region.

### 7.7 Improvement in EPC ratings

Since the previous Local Housing Strategy (LHS) (2017-2023) there have been consistent improvements made in average EPC ratings, shown in the table below. The improvements are in line with EPC improvements required by the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing regulations - EESSH 1 & 2. These improvements have been driven by ABS and Warmer Homes Scotland schemes providing funds to support homeowners in implementing energy efficiency measures.

The private rented sector has seen the lowest increase in EPC ratings. ABS is available to some private landlords in addition to Energy Saving Trust loans. Delayed Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards may have slowed improvements, although the ongoing consultation on the Heat in Buildings Bill is proposing new ambitious standards for improving the energy efficiency of private homes.

**Table 6: Average EPC ratings within the Scottish Borders area**

Averages - EPC C or higher <sup>19</sup>	2018	2023	Increase
<b>Owner Occupied</b>	24%	30%	+6%
<b>Social Housing</b>	42%	72%	+30%
<b>Private Rented</b>	19%	22%	+3%

### 7.8 Warm and Well Borders project

The council secured two years of funding worth £551,000 from the National Grid’s Warm Homes Fund to deliver the “Warm and Well Borders” project. The scheme was able to support 771 households and resulted in savings of £1.2 million for households across the region. This project has been extended for another 24 months in a revised delivery model, delivered by the regional Citizens Advice office in the Borders with support from the council via the Cost of Living Fund. In this revised format, the project has supported 628 clients, putting £2,394,960 of client financial gains and realised benefits back into the Scottish Borders, and offering energy advice and advocacy as well as referring households onto appropriate agencies such as Home Energy Scotland, Warm Homes Scotland and Changeworks. The project has also discharged £10,000 of discretionary funds for urgent cases.

### 7.9 Supply chain

To effectively deliver LHEES, a sustained development of the national and local supply chains is required. The council has a provision to support the growth of skills and trainings in the manufacturing sector and is already working with Borders College and South of Scotland Enterprise and other local stakeholders to explore how this activity can be supported. Additionally, the council is engaging with the Borders Construction Forum to share opportunities and insight.

<sup>19</sup> Home Analytics v3.8 (February 2023)

## 8 Local Area Profile and Baseline

### 8.1 Demographics

The Scottish Borders is a medium-sized council area in terms of population though with a much larger than average geographical area when compared to other Scottish local authorities, giving it a unique set of challenges. As of 2021, the population of the Scottish Borders was 116,020 and increasing, though with population loss in certain towns and villages, especially in the younger age range (16–24-year-olds). The number of births within the area has been steadily declining since 2001 therefore the trajectory seems to be that in the future there will be a high proportion of older people who are financially and physically dependent on an unequal number of working aged people. The council's population forecast is that population will increase but with a larger proportion of pensioners, number of children stabilising, and the working age cohort population dropping. Therefore, the population of vulnerable people living in the area will increase, potentially resulting in resource issues in the future.

The current population is spread across 4723 sq. km, making the SBC the fourth most sparsely populated area in Scotland. Of the total population, 48% are living in rural areas, 27% in a small town and the remaining population is in various urban areas (there are no 'large urban areas' within the Scottish Borders). These statistics vary significantly from the Scottish average, meaning the Scottish Borders will have varying risks to mitigate and considerations around the implementation of their LHEES including supply chain constraints, a vulnerable older population, loss of young talent, a diverse range of stakeholders spread across a large area, grid-related challenges, and barriers to achieving economies of scale and cost-effective solutions. The 2020 SIMD shows that 6% (9 of 143) data zones in the Scottish Borders are within the 20% most deprived of all of Scotland. A further 17% (24 of 143) of the data zones in the Scottish Borders are amongst the 21-40% most deprived in Scotland. Poverty-stricken areas will be prioritised to ensure the council is targeting its resources for vulnerable residents.

### 8.2 Domestic housing stock baseline

There are 62,296 properties within the Scottish Borders. Of these, 61,369 (88.4%) are domestic properties, 5% of which are listed buildings and 16% are located within conservation areas. The majority of domestic properties (74%) were built before 1984, close to the national average of 70%. Of all domestic properties, 57% are either detached, semi-detached or mid terrace houses, and 32% are flats, lower than the national average of 40%.

Since domestic properties constitute a significant proportion of Scottish Borders building stock, they have been established as a priority for the LHEES. This has also been carefully considered in the council's new Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028. The LHS vision was developed jointly with stakeholders and is: "Everyone in the Scottish Borders has access to a home that meets their needs and is part of a sustainable community". In order to deliver this vision successfully and contribute to the LHEES, the strategic outcome three (of five) was defined as: improved energy efficiency of homes and a reduction in fuel poverty while supporting a Just Transition to Net Zero through decarbonising domestic heating and energy. Many of the identified actions in the LHS Action plan in relation to Strategic Outcome 3 have been supported and considered in the LHEES and Delivery Plan.

Houses and flats both have their opportunities and challenges to retrofit and decarbonise. Houses may require larger investments and might present a challenge in terms of generating demand at scale when compared with flats. However, compared to flats they do not require engagement with individual

owners/tenants for approval from multiple decision-makers. This is because it is a simpler challenge to engage and agree with individual owners to plan for interventions, compared to facilitating agreement of retrofit from majority flat owners. Of 61,369 domestic properties 7,500 are in buildings with mixed tenures and 928 are of unknown tenure type.

The domestic stock within Scottish Borders mostly precedes 1983 construction; 74% of the properties are from 1984 or prior, with 35% being built in the mid decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and 30% from before 1919. This presents a challenge in terms of energy efficiency since old homes tend to be less energy efficient. The majority (60%) of the domestic stock have EPCs between D and G, highlighting a large potential area of improvement. Two-thirds of domestic properties have walls that are not sufficiently insulated, and many of these may be difficult or impossible to insulate. Although a large proportion (86%) of buildings already have at least double glazing.

Over 21% of the domestic properties within the Scottish Borders are listed buildings or within conservation areas, requiring special planning and considerations. It will be important to consider the possible energy efficiency measures, practically achievable efficiency and costs in relation to the benefits when planning and delivering projects concerning these properties.

As discussed in section 4.1, according to the most recent 2019 data 29% of households in the Scottish Borders are fuel poor, and this number is likely much higher due to the ongoing cost of living crisis. Poor building energy efficiency is a major factor in driving fuel poverty. It causes or exacerbates fuel poverty through a number of factors in the Scottish Borders:

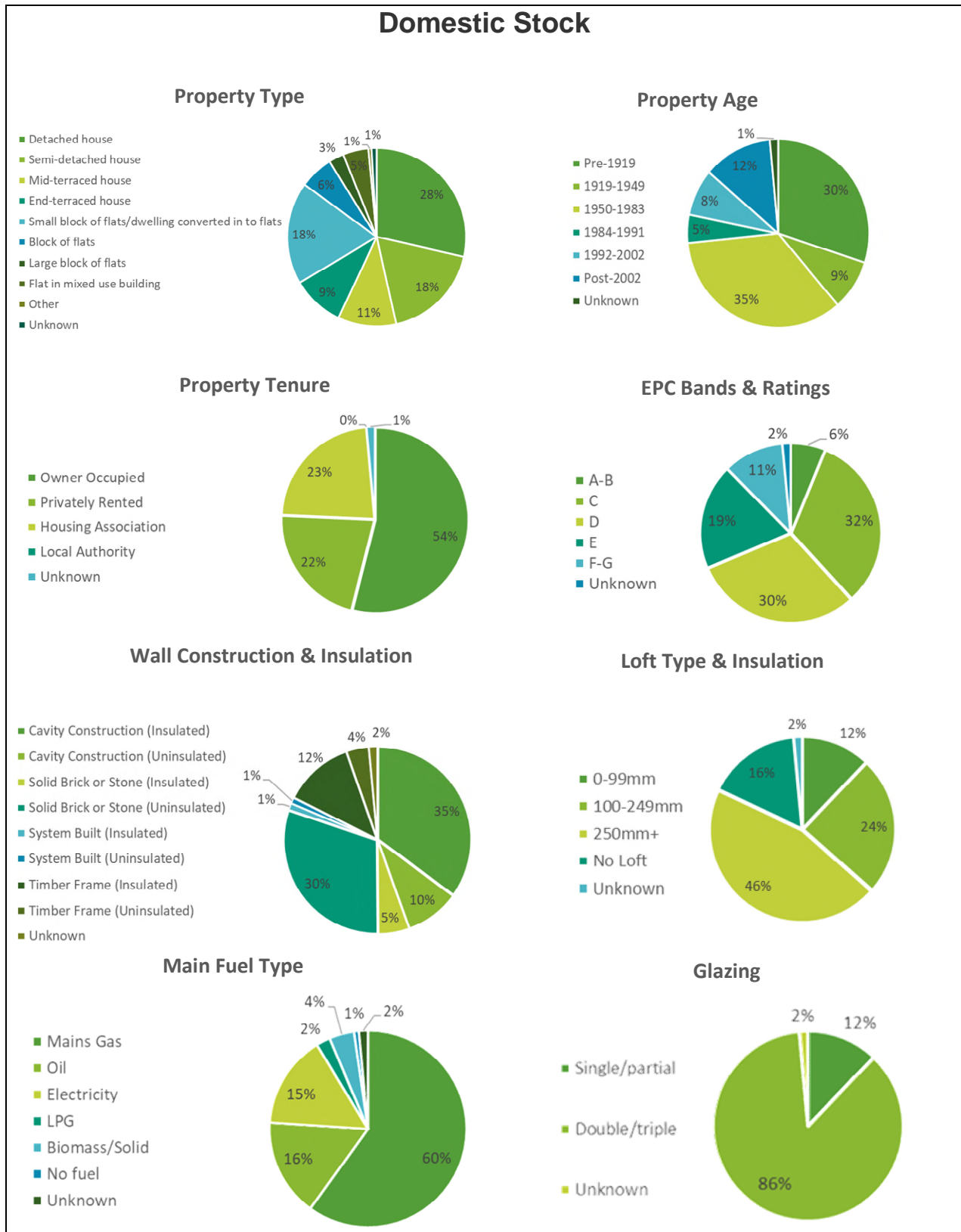
- 11% of dwellings in Scottish Borders have an F or G EPC rating, 19% have an E rating and 30% have a D rating. Altogether this 60% of the domestic stock has a lower than reasonable level of energy efficiency.
- 33% of dwellings in Scottish Borders were built before 1945.
- 35% of Scottish Borders dwellings are off the gas grid<sup>20</sup> meaning they must use other means of more expensive heating, largely oil and direct electric heating.
- The Scottish Borders has a lower wage economy.
- 48% of the population in the Scottish Borders live in rural areas.

A visual summary of all the key statistics relating to the domestic building stock is provided in Figure 8.

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<sup>20</sup> Energy Saving Trust - Home Analytics Scotland V3.8

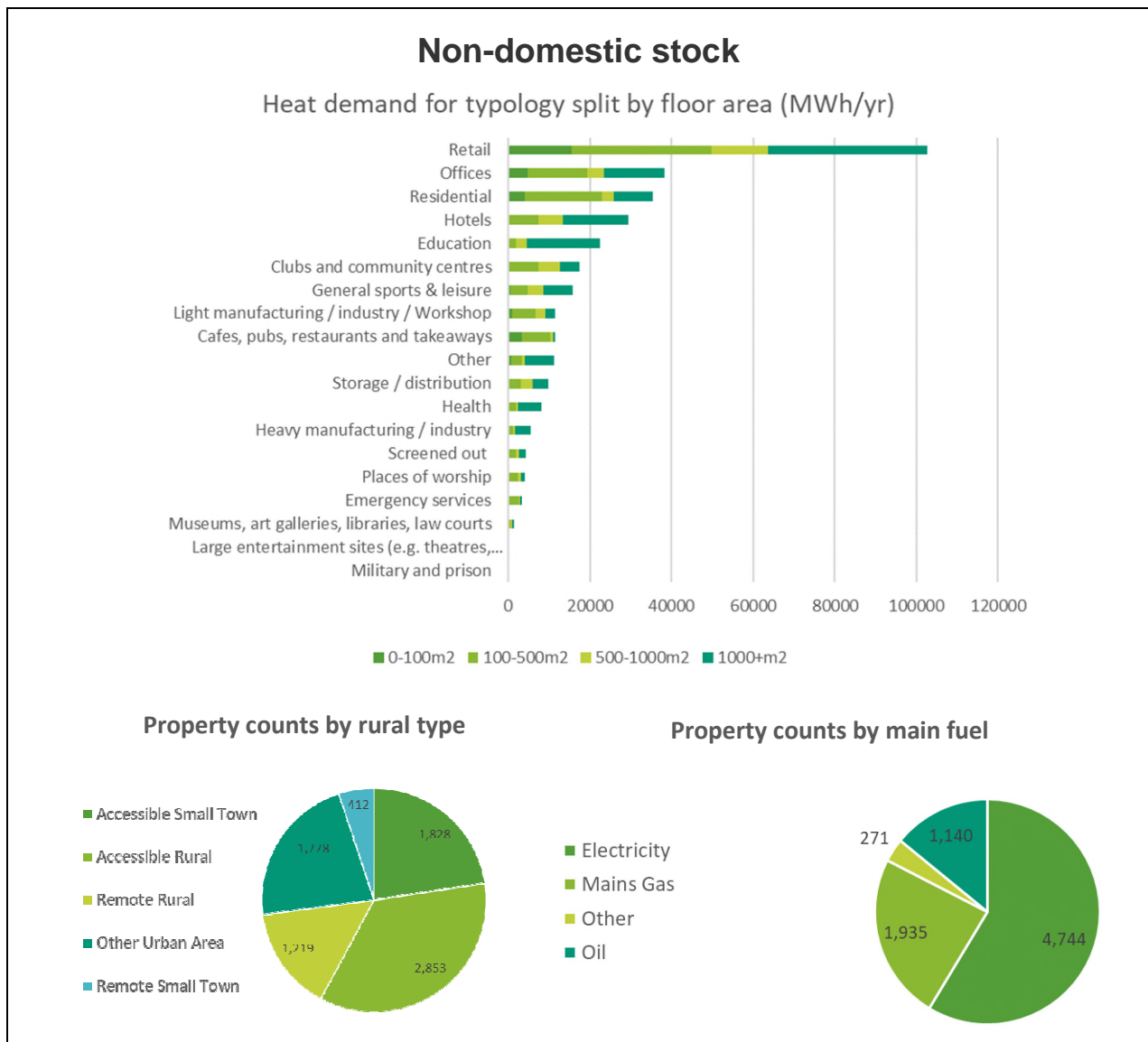
Figure 8: Baseline summary of the domestic stock



### 8.3 Non-domestic stock baseline

There are 8,090 non-domestic buildings within the Scottish Borders. Of these, 3,500 are retail, 1,250 are offices, and the remaining are split between various types of buildings such as the cafes/restaurants, education, industry, storage/distribution and clubs and community centres. The majority of non-domestic buildings (66%) were built pre-1949, 9% were built between the years of 1949-1983, and 25% were built post 1983. This means the majority are older and less efficient properties unlikely to be the most cost-effective option for the organisations using them. Almost 80% of the non-domestic buildings are located either in an urban area or a well-connected accessible area which presents an opportunity for planning and delivering retrofit interventions at scale. Currently, 59% of the non-domestic buildings are already using electricity as the main source of energy meaning they are already connected to the grid as a route of decarbonisation. There is limited performance data for non-domestic buildings due to the very low percentage of EPCs. Figure 9 provides an overview of the non-domestic stock.

**Figure 9: Baseline summary of the non-domestic stock**



## 9 Strategic Zones and Pathways

One of the key steps in developing the LHEES was mapping the data from the preceding two sections to develop and understanding of how the council will target and prioritise. In essence, this was done to understand what approach needs to be taken in each area and where the priority areas are. This mapping was done through the lens of the LHEES Considerations (as discussed in section 3.1.2) to develop a set of 'strategic zones'. Strategic zones provide an overview of the key challenges and opportunities across the region. The subsequent sections present results of this zoning in relation to two priorities<sup>21</sup> of the LHEES Vision:

- Cost of Heating (section 9.1)
- Heat Decarbonisation
  - Building Level (section 9.2)
  - Heat Networks & Communal Heating (section 9.3)

These strategic zones provide the understanding and basis for developing delivery areas and building-level pathways, which define what needs to be done to each property in these areas to bring it to a good level of energy efficiency and zero emission heating. The zones help prioritise where the council should focus its efforts and how it should approach each area. The delivery areas they helped generate are detailed in the Delivery Plan.

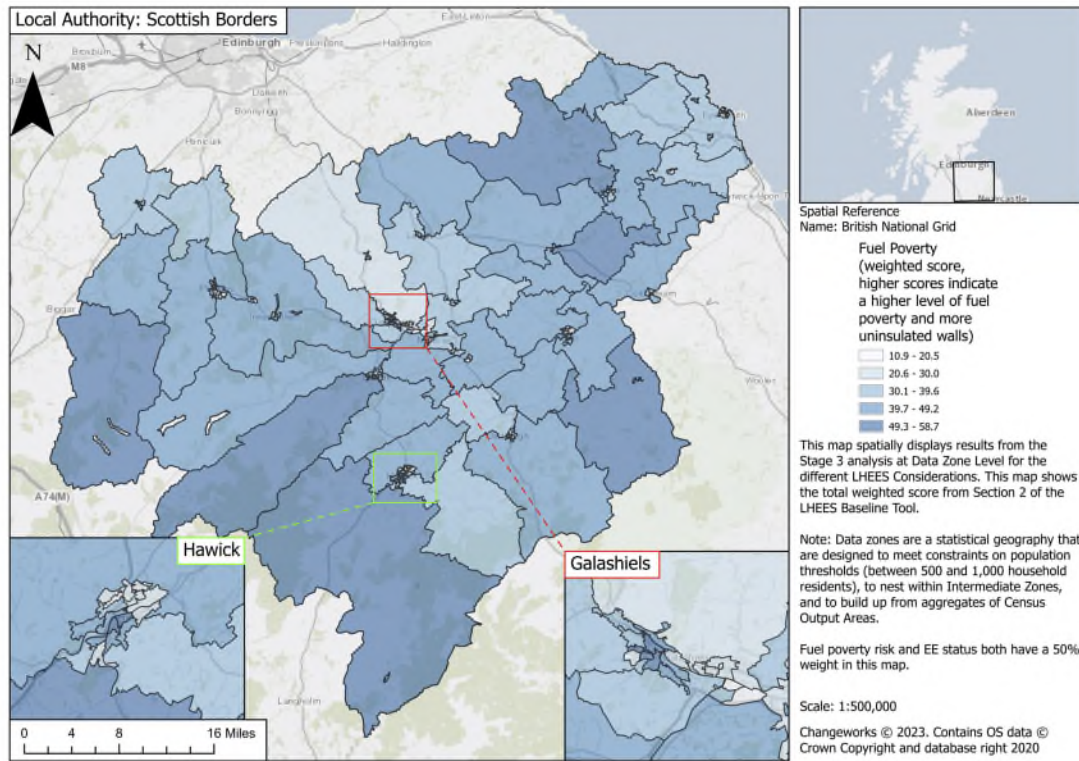
### 9.1 Cost of Heating

As part of the cost of heating priority, tackling, and eliminating poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty is a paramount objective of the council. As such, data was analysed to understand areas with the greatest number of properties which are low energy efficiency and have a high indication of fuel poverty to find those struggling most with their heating bills. Figure 10 provides the geographic summary of these areas. As part of this LHEES, these will be a focus for the ABS programme, local and national fuel poverty schemes, and other initiatives.

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<sup>21</sup> The third priority of Just Transition is not a building or heat decarbonisation action but rather the way in which these projects should be carried out. Thus, it is not something which could be mapped as a Strategic Zone. This priority is instead discussed in the Delivery Plan.

**Figure 10: Areas with high indication of fuel poverty and more uninsulated walls**





## 9.2 Heat Decarbonisation: Building Level

This section discusses the properties with heat pump installation as the appropriate decarbonisation route. The LHEES Methodology provides a way to organise the heat decarbonisation pathways of each property based on the level of intervention:

- Category 1: these are largely 'heat-pump ready' properties. They typically have a good level of energy efficiency and either ready for a heat pump or could be made so with a relatively non-disruptive measure (e.g. loft insulation). They have wall insulation, are not listed or in a conservation area and do not have a communal main heating system.
- Category 2: these properties do not have a good level of energy efficiency and their standard needs to improve before a heat pump is installed. For example, they need cavity wall insulation. They may have a communal main heating system and cavity construction walls without risk of them being uninsulated narrow cavity walls.

The data was analysed to map these properties based on whether they were on-gas grid or off-gas grid to provide further granular information about their existing fuel type. This selection of strategic zones was made with a view to installing the following measures where possible:

- Wall insulation
- Loft insulation
- Single glazing
- Solar PV suitability

The following figures display the density of category 1 and category 2 buildings which are, both, on gas and off gas. These areas will help guide the development of delivery area projects.

Figure 11: Map showing density of On Gas Grid Category 1 dwellings within the Scottish Borders

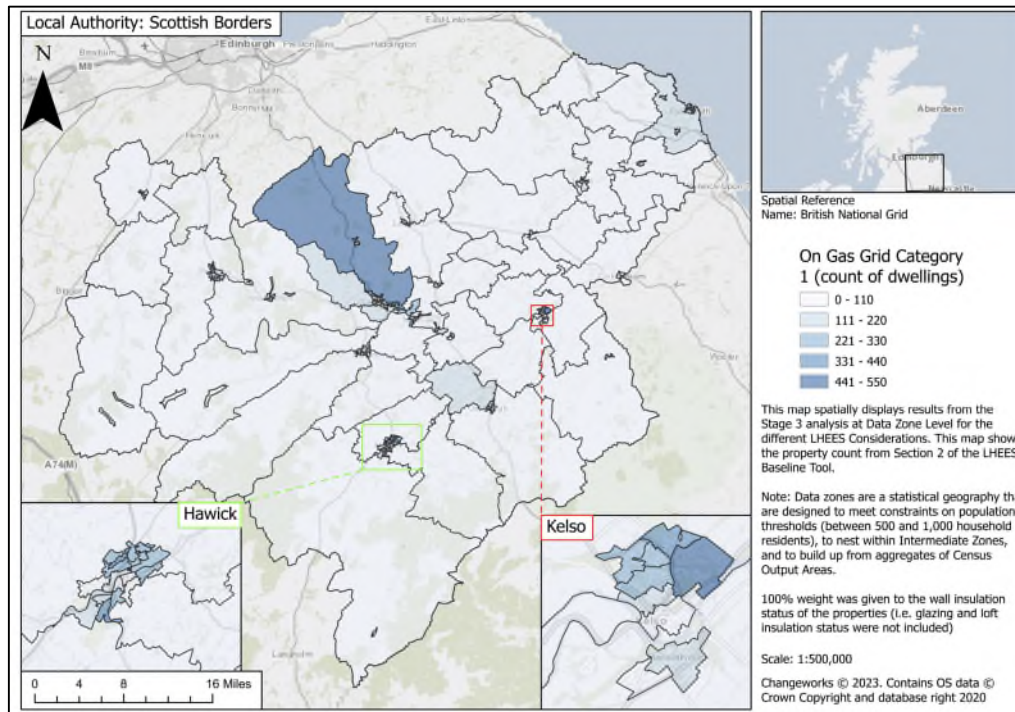
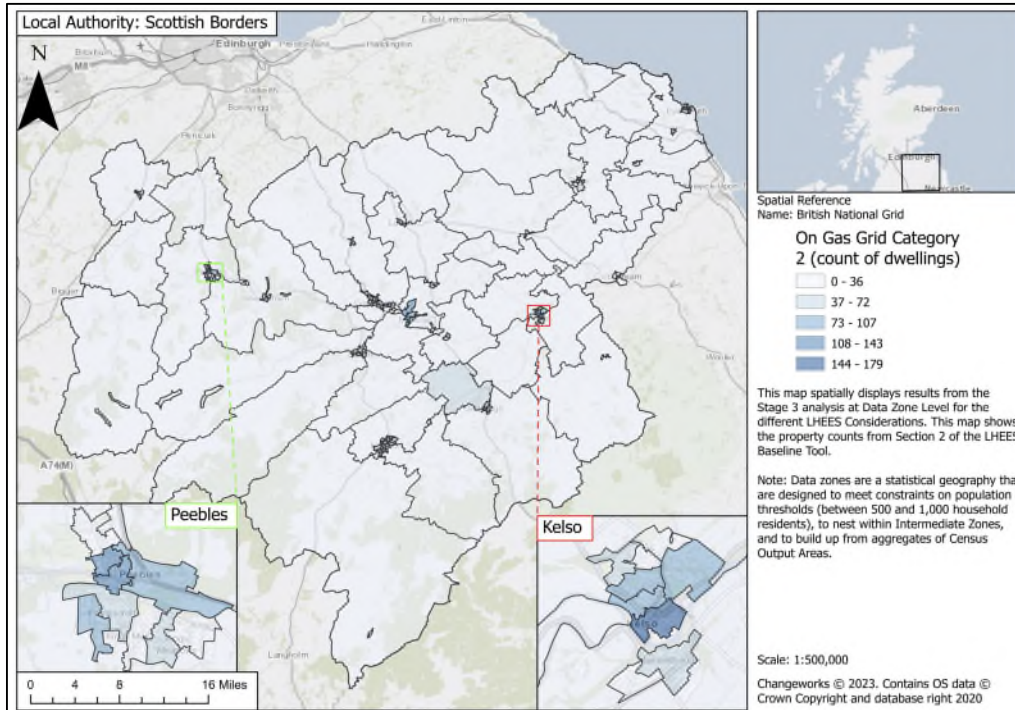
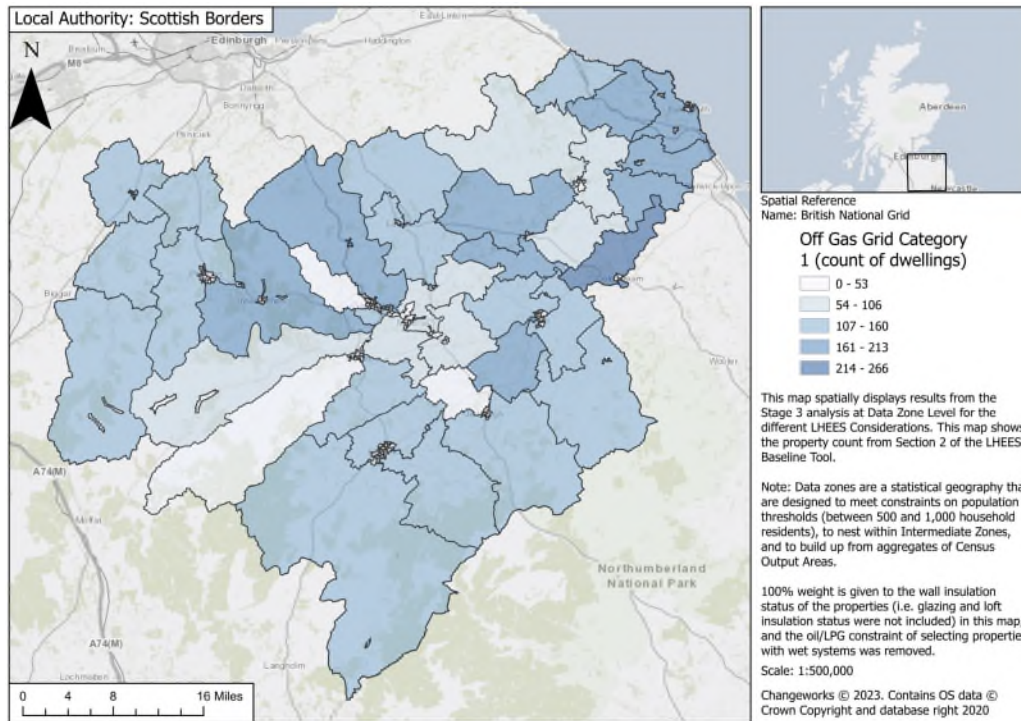


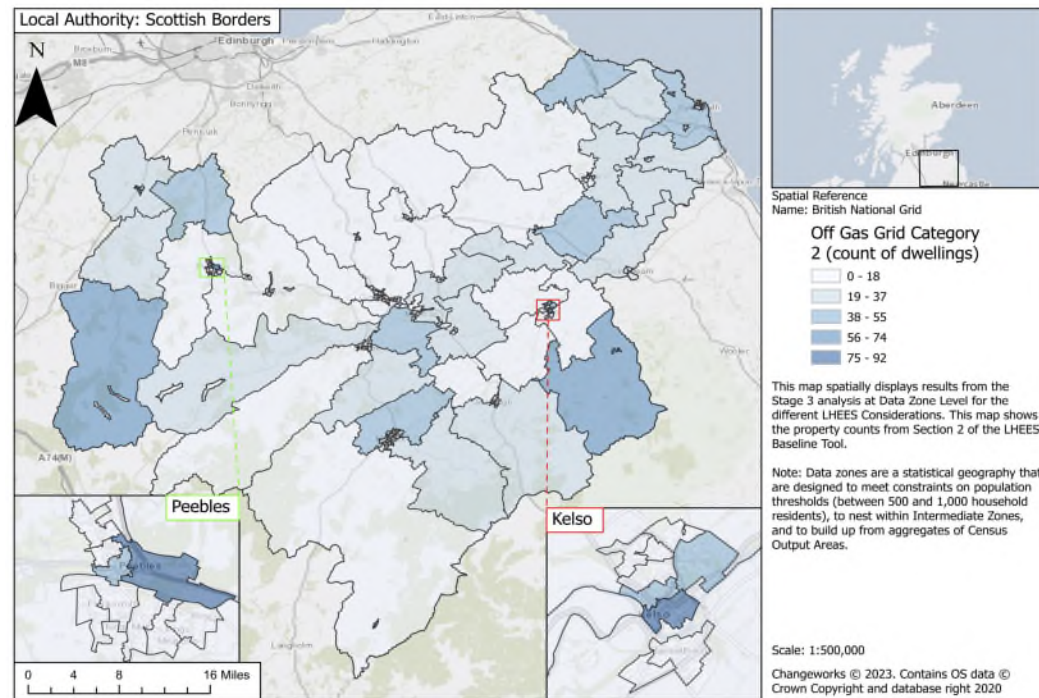
Figure 12: Map showing density of On Gas Grid Category 2 dwellings within the Scottish Borders



**Figure 13: Map showing density of Off Gas Grid Category 1 dwellings within the Scottish Borders**



**Figure 14: Map showing the density of Off Gas Grid Category 2 dwellings within the Scottish Borders**



### 9.3 Heat Decarbonisation: Heat Networks & Communal Heating

All Scottish local authorities are required through the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 to identify potential areas or opportunity zones for Heat Networks to help meet the national targets. Heat Networks are more efficient and viable in energy dense areas with high numbers of properties in close proximity that can be served by the network. Larger energy users (anchor loads) can also be critical to help balance and sustain the network. The council is already assessing heat network opportunities at Tweedbank (a new development) and Croft Street, Galashiels (existing buildings with potential for sufficient heat demand).

Through this LHEES, the council has carried out an initial investigation, and generated three further potential options for heat network developments. These clusters are around the populations of Jedburgh, Duns and Galashiels. The analysis was based on potential for heat network where there is a significant heat demand from public buildings. This approach to the analysis means that only a limited number of heat network opportunities (centred around public building heat demand) have been identified, but these opportunities are based on heat demand with public sector control and thus could be a major enabler in progressing the development. Through ongoing work on this LHEES, the council will continue to explore the large number of other sites (outside of major public building heat demand spheres), either through data analysis, local knowledge of the area or working with stakeholders. Where potential for a heat network is identified, steps will be taken to assess feasibility and progress its development if appropriate.

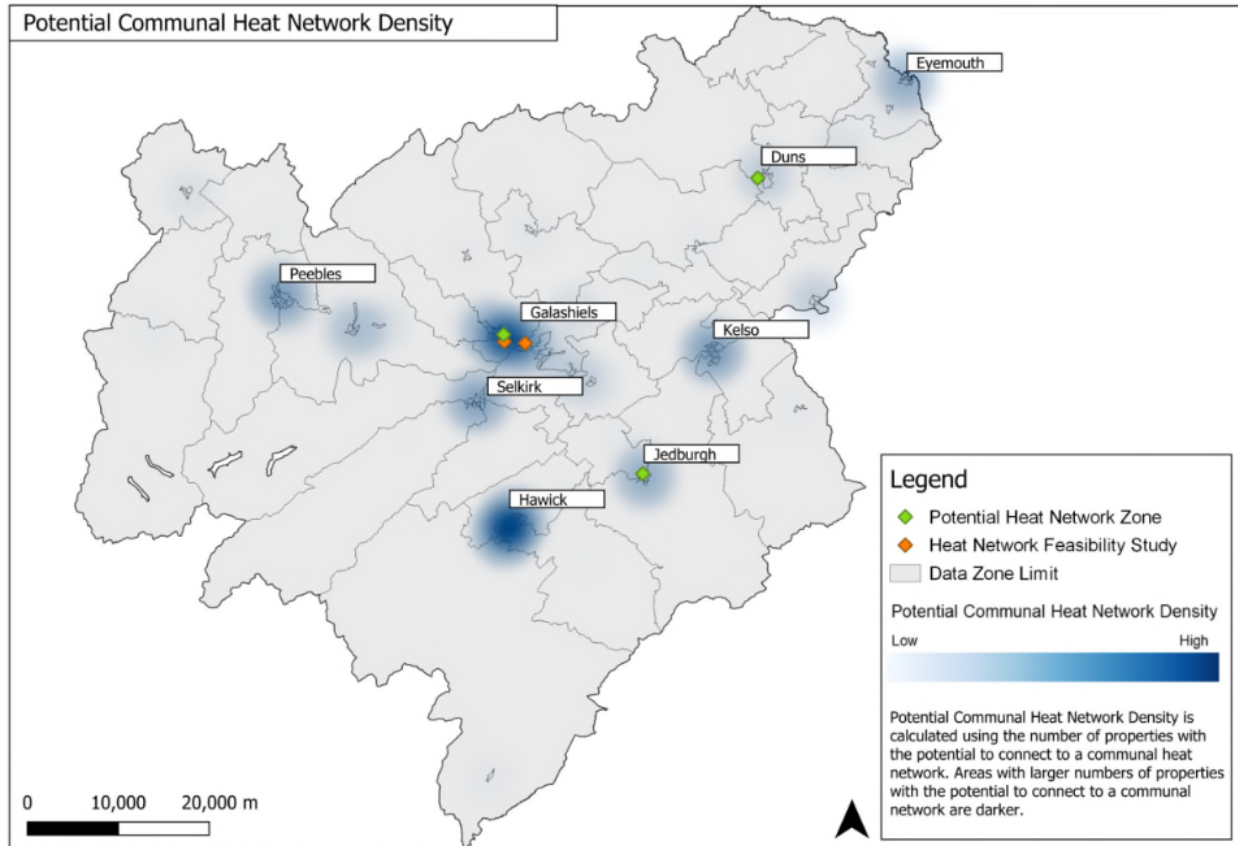
According to the First National Assessment Report on Heat Network Potential<sup>22</sup>, areas with the highest potential in Scotland are large and mid-size urban areas, while properties located in small rural settlements or remote locations account for less than ten percent of the potential properties which could be connected to a heat network (see Appendix 1). These types of properties, however, account for over two-thirds of the domestic properties within Scottish Borders. There are local limits on large-scale and interconnected heat networks due to the rurality, sparse population and limited suitably dense areas. As such, it is likely that the only viable large-scale heat networks in the Scottish Borders will be in the larger towns and new build developments.

To ensure the council takes a balanced approach to providing low-cost heating to residents across the Scottish Borders, this LHEES investigated the potential for communal heating systems. Communal heating is a priority for the council to ensure rural areas of the Scottish Borders benefit from lower cost heat where there is the potential and that the council is able to support heat decarbonisation at a greater scale than individual heat pump installations. Where communal systems present a feasibility to be more cost effective for property occupiers, they may also be a larger, more attractive business opportunity for installers, ultimately also reducing the cost of installation. The Home Analytics data indicates that 912 properties in the Scottish Borders already have communal heating as their primary heating. The council conducted further analysis matching energy and heat use with building types to identify potential communal heating opportunities across the Scottish Borders. This analysis was fruitful and resulted in multiple hotspots across the region, including in rural and urban areas. The council will take these forward as important decarbonisation options, preferable over individual heat pumps where they are economically and practically more advantageous.

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<sup>22</sup> Potential heat network zones: first national assessment, Scottish Government, 2022 ([link](#))

**Figure 15: Map of Scottish Borders highlighting existing feasibilities on heat networks (orange diamonds) the areas identified for potential heat networks (green diamonds), and potential for communal heating systems (blue heat map).**



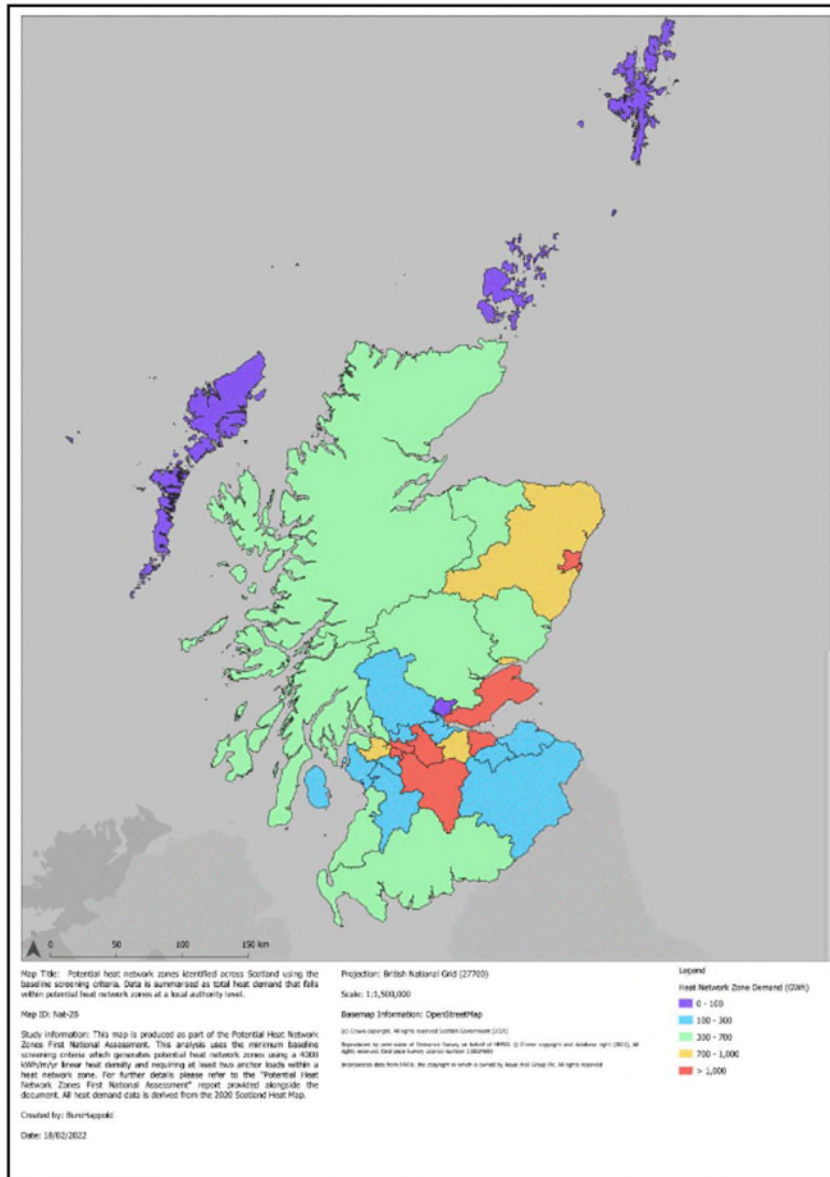
## 10 Appendix 1

### The First National Assessment

Results from the first National Assessment for potential heat network zones carried out by Zero Waste Scotland (Figure 16) show the potential heat network zone demand across Scotland, estimated using the baseline criteria. Baseline criteria assessment means that for an area to be considered a heat network it has the following characteristics:

- A linear heat density of 4,000 kWh/m/yr and
- The presence of at least two anchor loads

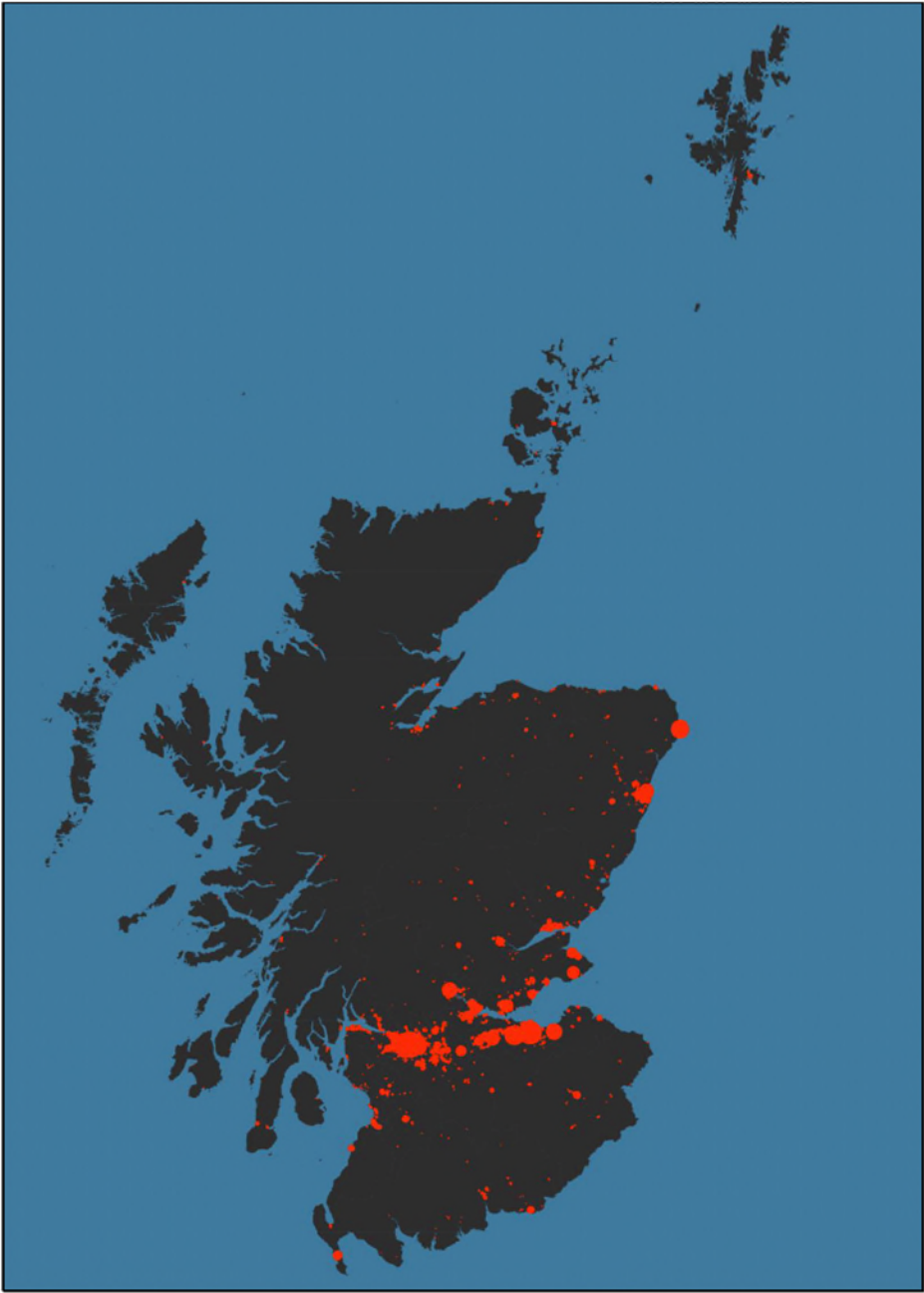
Figure 16 Potential heat network zone demand identified using a baseline criteria<sup>23</sup>



<sup>23</sup> Potential heat network zones: first national assessment, Scottish Government, 2022 ([link](#))

The assessment report outlines the potential locations of the neat networks based on this analysis (Figure 17).

**Figure 17 Potential Heat network outline considering a baseline criteria<sup>24</sup>**



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<sup>24</sup> Potential heat network zones: first national assessment, Scottish Government, 2022 ([link](#))

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SCOTTISH BORDERS  
LHEES Delivery Plan  
Consultative Draft



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## 1 Executive Summary

This Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan (or Delivery Plan) details how the Scottish Borders Council will itself deliver as well as support other property owners and occupiers to deliver the vision of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). The Delivery Plan covers a timeframe of five years from 2024 to 2028.

Figure 1: The Scottish Borders LHEES Vision

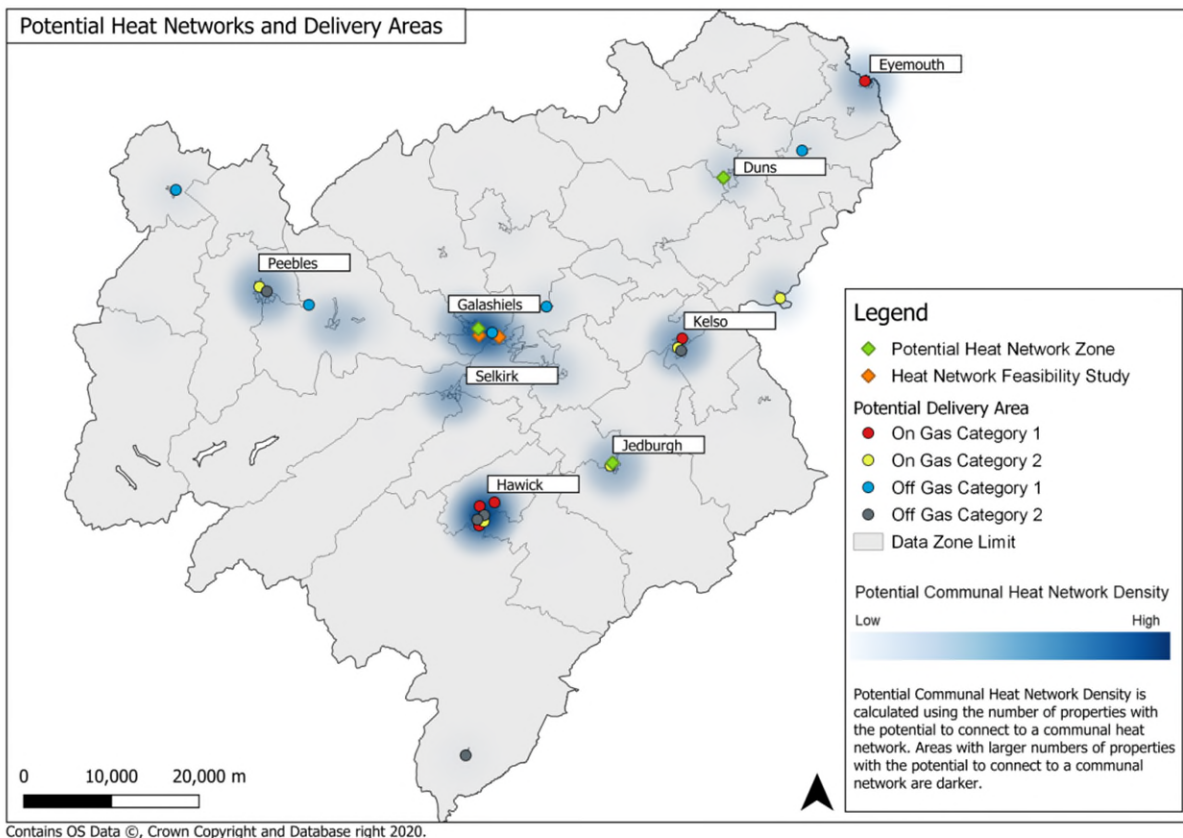


The council has developed a vision for the LHEES with three key priorities which underpin this vision (Figure 1). This Delivery Plan sets out the system through which the council will deliver this vision. The delivery model will be based on an LHEES Programme, led by the council and with participation from other stakeholders, where appropriate. The purpose of the LHEES Programme is to provide the necessary tools and support functions to facilitate the delivery of area-wide energy efficiency, heat decarbonisation, communal heating and heat network projects. The overall purpose of the LHEES Programme will be to support the delivery of projects in two types of areas identified in this Delivery Plan (Figure 2):

1. **Potential Delivery Areas:** the LHEES strategic zoning identified two types of properties, category 1 ('heat pump-ready') and category 2 (which require insulation) in, both, on-gas grid and off-gas grid areas (see LHEES for details). Potential Delivery Areas in this Delivery Plan were developed based on granular locations where these properties are in their greatest numbers and coincide with high levels of fuel poverty. This Delivery Plan also provides a detailed understanding of the properties in these hotspots, along with an indication of the building level work these will require to reach a reasonable level of energy efficiency and decarbonise their heat. Twenty Potential Delivery Areas have been identified across the Scottish Borders, and these range from urban centres to rural areas.
2. **Potential Heat Network Zones and Communal Heating Systems:** the LHEES provided an overview of the potential areas where there is feasibility for heat networks as well as potential communal heating opportunities. The Delivery Plan provide specifics of these locations as well as potential heat demand which could be met by these opportunities.

These areas are currently considered as "Potential" as they are subject to further stakeholder engagement, data collection and analysis as well as resource made available by the Scottish Government to progress work at this scale. The areas will be finalised once these aspects are satisfied.

**Figure 2: This map presents a summary of all the types of areas where the council will progress activity through this Delivery Plan, including those concerning building retrofits and heat networks.**



The LHEES Programme will serve as the practical vehicle to achieve the LHEES Vision by providing the blueprint for how action will be driven in the above areas and catalysing this action. The LHEES Programme will, first, provide the programme management function for delivering projects in the above areas. This will entail project management support for council staff and stakeholders including data, insights, tools and (where there is a more involved role for the council) project execution capacity and

support. In addition to programme management, the LHEES Programme will also entail several sub-programmes which will aid the delivery of projects in these areas:

- **Leadership by Example:** the council will demonstrate and lead the retrofit by developing its net zero programme in alignment with national targets. The council will carefully consider its stock in relation to the above areas to unlock opportunities as well as encourage and inspire broader action by others in the area.
- **Supply Chain Programme:** the Scottish Borders faces dual challenges of lack of labour supply to carry out retrofit and heat network delivery (leading to delays and increased costs) as well as lack of green skills green economic growth in the area. The council will develop a supply chain programme to support the delivery of LHEES at pace and scale while achieving regional green economic growth and skilled employment. This will be a key aspect of ensuring the transition to net zero is a just one for the people of the Scottish Borders.
- **Funding:** recognising that the success of the LHEES Vision is impingent upon investment, the council will work to ensure that it is maximising the funding available for projects across the Scottish Borders.
- **Heat Network Delivery Plan:** the council will seek support from the Heat Network Support Unit to develop a Heat Network Delivery Plan covering the three main strategic areas of: delivery models, investment opportunities, and building a management case.
- **Communication and Stakeholder Engagement:** the council will undertake consistent and ongoing stakeholder engagement across the Potential Delivery Areas, Potential Heat Network Zones and Communal Heating Scheme opportunities. The council will also drive communication to inspire, support, advise and signpost people toward action, focusing on these locations and growing this activity across the region as far as practical.

The council will dedicate whatever resources it currently has for delivering LHEES to develop and deliver the LHEES Programme, with the understanding that the full set-up and delivery of the programme is contingent on further Scottish Government support and funding.

## 2 Glossary

Terms	Description
Anchor Load	A building requiring a consistent, enduring need for heat, which can have a reliable demand for a heat network, thereby contributing to the economic viability of the network.
Baselining	Baselining is the purpose of understanding at local authority or strategic level, the current status of the buildings against the LHEES Considerations, Targets and Indicators.
Building-level Pathway	As part of LHEES Stage 5, a building-level pathway is the outcome of the assessment undertaken using the PEAT modelling tool. It provides the likely energy efficiency retrofit technologies, as well as the low carbon heating system (where applicable) to support building level decarbonisation.
Coolth	Cold as a tradable asset (Cf. heat / warmth).
Criteria	Criteria are the settings applied to the Indicators for each Consideration in order to support Baselining, Strategic Zoning and the identification of Delivery Areas. An example of Criteria is a simple “no” applied to the Indicator of “wall insulation (Y/N)” to identify properties with uninsulated walls. Another example is the definition of an “anchor load” within the Heat Networks analysis, which applies a minimum threshold to the “heat demand” Indicator. The LHEES methodology provides a set of default Criteria that local authorities may wish to use, with flexibility to update and augment these to support local needs or for more focused analysis linked to specific actions and project identification within the Delivery Plan.
Data Alternative	-Alternative data, can overwrite the Core data to improve accuracy (national to local level of detail, e.g. local housing data to overwrite fields in Home Analytics).
Data - Core	Core data is the data that is essential to complete the minimum requirements of the LHEES analysis. Core data will come from national datasets e.g. Home Analytics or the Scotland Heat Map.
Data Supplementary	-Supplementary data allows inclusion of additional Indicators to inform specific, local basel & targets; also, Supplementary data can be used in GIS investigation to complement the Core analysis carried out in any assessment. An example of Supplementary data would be the inclusion of a constraints appraisal as part of a district heating analysis.
Data Zone	Data zones are groups output areas which have populations of around 500 to 1,000 residents.
Delivery Area	Delivery areas are at a higher granularity than Strategic Zones. These spatial zones should set out clusters of buildings within a Strategic Zone or across the whole local authority that identify potential solution(s) at a delivery level. They will be an important starting point for identifying a range of projects, regulation and actions that are within the competence of the Scottish Government, local authorities and wider partners (included as actions to be developed in the LHEES Delivery Plan).
Detailed practitioner approach	These Steps form part of the detailed practitioner approach in LHEES Stage 4, Generation of Initial Areas to set out particularly suitable heat network zones and to support project identification.
Electric boiler	A boiler utilising the method of heating water through passage across an element, with emissions correlated to the electricity grid’s emissions factor
Energy Centre	A building where heat is produced.
Energy services company	A company offering energy-related services.
Fuel Poverty	As defined by the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, situations where a household allocates more than 10% of their post-housing-cost net income towards fuel expenses, and their remaining income falls below 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard.
Heat network	As defined in the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, a (district) heat network is “a network by which thermal energy is distributed from one or more sources of production to more than one building”.
Heat pump	A heating system that harnesses thermal energy from sources like air, ground, or bodies of water (such as rivers, seas, or sewers). Through a refrigeration cycle, it transforms this energy to provide



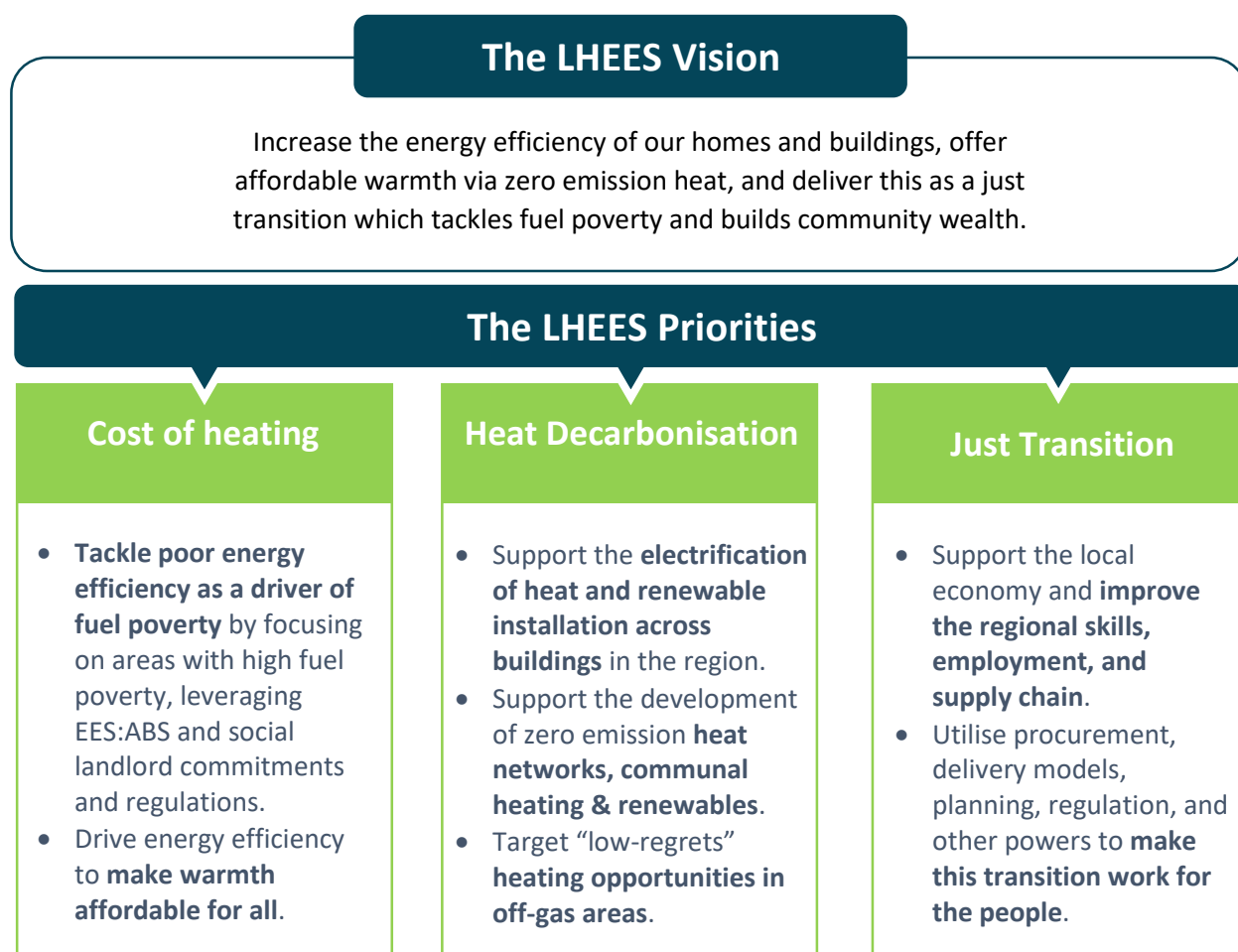
	heat to the end user. The carbon emissions of a heat pump are contingent on the grid emissions factor.
Indicator	<p>For a given Consideration, the purpose of an Indicator is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to act as a key information field to help characterise and baseline the local authority.</li> <li>2) to act as a key information field to support strategic zoning and generation of initial delivery areas;</li> <li>3) if suitable, to act as a key information field to measure progress against Targets over the duration of the LHEES - set out in the LHEES Delivery Plan.</li> </ol> <p>For some Considerations, one Indicator may be sufficient, but for others a range may be appropriate.</p>
Intermediate Zone	Intermediate zones are a statistical geography that are designed to meet constraints on population thresholds (2,500 - 6,000 household residents), to nest within local authorities, and to be built up from aggregates of data zones.
LHEES Considerations	<p>The LHEES Considerations are a list of technologies, building typologies and policy priorities used to identify and target interventions. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heat networks</li> <li>- Off-gas grid buildings</li> <li>- On-gas grid buildings</li> <li>- Poor building energy efficiency</li> <li>- Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty</li> <li>- Mixed-tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings</li> </ul>
LHEES Delivery Plan	An LHEES Delivery Plan is a document setting out how a local authority proposes to support implementation of its local heat and energy efficiency strategy.
LHEES Guidance	The LHEES Guidance sets out the production and content requirements for a local authority to prepare a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan. Its purpose is to ensure that a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan contain outcomes and actions that are backed up by robust data and analysis, supported by stakeholder engagement, and that are linked to national and local priorities, plans and targets.
LHEES Methodology	The LHEES Methodology is a more detailed, step by step approach, which includes models, tools and templates, and represents best practice in how to produce an LHEES in accordance with the requirements set out in the LHEES Order and Guidance.
LHEES Stages	<p>There are 8 LHEES Stages proposed in this methodology. The purpose of the LHEES Methodology is to enable the local authority to complete LHEES Stages 1 to 6. The completion of these Stages will provide the local authority with the data analysis and evidence base to enable them to complete their LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan documentation. There are two LHEES reporting templates included alongside this methodology– LHEES Strategy example template and LHEES Delivery Plan example template. The completion of these two templates will satisfy the completion of LHEES Stages 7 and 8. The 8 LHEES Stages proposed in this methodology are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 - Policy and strategy review</li> <li>2 - Data and tools library</li> <li>3 - Strategic zoning and pathways</li> <li>4 - Generation of initial delivery areas</li> <li>5 - Building-level pathway assessment</li> <li>6 - Finalisation of delivery areas</li> <li>7 - LHEES Strategy</li> <li>8 - LHEES Delivery Plan</li> </ol>
LHEES Strategy	<p>An LHEES Strategy is a long-term strategic framework for–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the improvement of the energy efficiency of buildings in the local authority’s area, and</li> <li>- the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the heating of such buildings</li> </ul>
Mixed-tenure, mixed-use	Mixed-tenure and mixed-use buildings could include a mixture of owner occupied, private rented and social housing, and also non-domestic uses, or simply multiple ownership within the same historic buildings tenure. Historic buildings include the buildings that are within conservation areas or those that are

	listed buildings. These categories may require established alternative approaches and regulation for the installation of low carbon heat and energy efficiency solutions and where specific advice and support might be available relating to the installation of these solutions.
Net Zero Carbon	A situation where any carbon emissions are offset by an equivalent amount of carbon being removed from the atmosphere, resulting in no net change in carbon levels
Passivhaus	A construction standard where buildings attain elevated levels of energy efficiency and user comfort.
Potential Zones	The analysis carried out for strategic zoning and pathways for the heat networks Consideration is to identify potential zones rather than the otherwise used naming convention of Delivery Areas. The potential zones identified are to be included in the LHEES Strategy and should inform actions around further investigation / progression within the LHEES Delivery Plan. The heat networks Consideration analysis and activity carried out within LHEES is also anticipated to support activity related to formal zone designation as required by the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021.
Raster	A matrix of squares, or grid, used as a method of data analysis in GIS. Each cell in the grid contains a value representing information on the cell's contents.
Solar photovoltaic	Technology that transforms sunlight into electrical energy.
Strategic Zone	Strategic Zones present a visualisation of the potential pathways to decarbonise the building stock at a local authority level. These could, for example, be split out by intermediate zone or data zone. They are useful to understand the baseline performance, the scale of potential and initial areas of focus, which could be used to inform Delivery Areas and follow on engagement.
Targets	Targets are the measurable aspect of the Consideration and are likely to be taken directly from national and/or local policy documentation, for example net-zero by 2045, or EPC C by 2040. Targets are likely to comprise of end-point targets and milestone targets and would sit along a timeline within (and beyond) the LHEES. This timeline would help to prioritise the types of projects undertaken within the LHEES over its duration.
Weighting	For some Considerations, one Target and Indicator may be sufficient, but for others a range of Indicators may be appropriate to contextualise and characterise performance against a Target and/or progress towards a Consideration. If multiple Indicators are used in strategic zoning or the identification of delivery areas, a Weighting can be applied based on the importance of each. The LHEES methodology sets out a core set of default Weightings for instances where multiple Indicators are suggested as a default setting. There is flexibility to update and augment these to support local needs or for more focused analysis linked to specific actions and project identification within the Delivery Plan.

### 3 Introduction to the Delivery Plan

This document is the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan ('Delivery Plan') for the Scottish Borders and accompanies the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). This Delivery Plan will help implement the LHEES Vision (Figure 3) over the next five years (2024-2028). It has been developed in line with guidance from the Scottish Government and provides details on how the LHEES will be delivered. It draws from, both, a data-led process which involved an analysis of regional needs and local building performance as well as a strategy-led process which informed the data analysis with the LHEES Vision and stakeholder engagement.

Figure 3: The Scottish Borders LHEES Vision



This Delivery Plan provides the prospective actions for the council, local communities, government, investors, developers and wider stakeholders, pinpointing areas for targeted intervention. The Delivery Plan covers actions and priorities for the next 5 years, with the next iteration expected to be developed before the end of 2028. This is a “living document” which is expected to be updated based on new opportunities and challenges. The Council will continuously engage with the relevant stakeholders to inform emerging actions to be incorporated in the LHEES and this Delivery Plan.

**Actions**

1. The council will update the LHEES and develop a new Delivery Plan before the end of 2028, as per legal requirements.
2. An annual update to the documents will be carried out if the need for an update reaches the appropriate level of materiality for each given year.
3. The council will use the LHEES as the starting point for further data collection and analysis (e.g. on building stock and heat demand) to deepen its understanding of opportunities as well as to keep the work started for LHEES and Delivery Plan updated

The central approach proposed in this Delivery Plan is that of a structured and well-defined LHEES Programme dedicated to meet the LHEES Vision. This programmatic approach to delivery will be instrumental to facilitate the delivery of projects across the Scottish Borders area. This programme will provide the necessary capability and tools for property owners and occupiers to work collectively at scale. It will also incorporate all existing programmes delivered by the council, such as the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (ABS) and other programmes described in the LHEES, into one coherent and streamlined delivery vehicle.

The council recognises the importance of LHEES and is committed its delivery. However, the council also realises there is a major resource gap to deliver on its vision for LHEES. As such, this is an aspirational Delivery Plan for which the council will aim to seek funding to deliver. Therefore, the actions set out in this document are proposals which the council will deliver insofar as possible, and beyond which it will seek resources from the Scottish Government and other partners.

**Actions**

4. The council will seek further funding, including from the Scottish Government, to enable delivery at scale. The council will use this funding to build capacity and develop an LHEES Programme to deliver on the LHEES Vision.
5. The council will integrate its existing programmes into the LHEES Programme to develop a single vehicle to support the delivery of energy efficiency, heat decarbonisation and heat network projects.

## 4 LHEES Programme

The council currently employs one full-time position, a Principal LHEES Officer recruited in autumn 2023, to lead the development and delivery of the LHEES and Delivery Plan. The LHEES Officer is also supported by the council's senior management to facilitate delivery and resource allocation, where available. Following the publication of this Delivery Plan, the role of the LHEES Officer will transition from development of the LHEES to delivery of the LHEES Programme. As a first step, the council will engage with the Scottish Government to discuss existing constraints and identify opportunities to fund the programme. However, in addition to seeking resource, the council will also set-up and deliver the LHEES Programme on a limited basis, insofar as reasonably practical. The priority and deliverable aspects of the programme will be prioritised. In the scenario sufficient resource is made available the council will scale these efforts into the full LHEES Programme.

Delivering retrofit, decarbonisation measures and heat networks can be a complex and multi-staged process. The LHEES Programme will include a function to oversee delivery area projects, heat network projects, and communal heat network projects where these have direct council involvement. These projects will be taken through robust project management tools and practices, including resource management, project planning, strategic alignment to LHEES Vision, quality assurance, performance evaluation and monitoring, and reporting.

Programme set-up will also include appropriate governance practices which define the roles and responsibilities of council staff with respect to each project as well as the overall programme. Delivering the LHEES will be the responsibility of the Director of Infrastructure & Environment, with reporting responsibilities into committee. The practical implementation of the LHEES will be led by the Principal LHEES Officer.

### Actions

6. The council will begin delivery of the LHEES Programme to the extent allowed and within the limited resources it currently has. The council will engage with the Scottish Government and other partners to discuss resource constraints as well as opportunities to grow the LHEES Programme.
7. The council will develop and implement programme management tools to deliver the appropriate projects where it has direct involvement.
8. The council will allocate responsibility of delivering the LHEES and this Delivery Plan to appropriate members of staff.

The LHEES Programme will be shaped by a series of sub-programmes which are described in the following sections.

### 1.1 Leadership by Example

The LHEES is an plan for every domestic and non-domestic property in the Scottish Borders area to reach net zero, including those owned by public sector, private sector, charitable bodies, other organisations, private landlords, social landlords, and owner-occupiers. Therefore, parties responsible for their property will be expected and encouraged to carry out appropriate works, with funding support and advice provided through various avenues. The council will have an enablement role through the LHEES Programme, which it will use to support stakeholders. However, it will not be able to retrofit properties

which are not its own (except in limited cases such as when works are funded by a council-led fuel poverty scheme, e.g. ABS).

However, the council is responsible and committed to decarbonising its own estate, and it will do so in line with national targets. This is a major opportunity, not just because it will decarbonise the most significant estate in the region, but also because it could support the delivery of other stakeholders in a major way:

- The council will ensure its decarbonisation plans are in line with action across the Potential Delivery Areas and Potential Heat Network Zones. This will maximise opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders and unlock opportunities such as heat network viability.
- The council will use its procurement power to drive the growth of local supply chains and green jobs in the region. This will contribute to the Just Transition priority and also make skills available for other stakeholders, feeding the economic cycle.
- The council will investigate the potential for aggregating demand across stakeholders to provide everyone in the area with access to lower cost and higher quality services.
- The council will use its own estate as an opportunity to learn and transfer lessons, showcase examples, and encourage domestic and non-domestic property owners in the area to embark on their own retrofit journeys.

The council has engaged with several public bodies with favourable outcomes and discussions on net zero plans, including NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue. It will continue to engage with public sector organisations in the Scottish Borders to understand their approach and timelines to net zero. Where feasible, the council will support or collaborate with other public sector organisations to realise mutual benefits. The impact of LHEES will be compounded with each public sector organisation aligning to the LHEES Vision and its timelines.

**Actions**

9. The council will establish a dedicated net zero programme to decarbonise its estate in line with national targets.
10. The council will use the decarbonisation of its estate to maximise any value that can be contributed to the success of the LHEES.

## 1.2 Supply Chain Programme

One of the major delivery barriers faced by people across the Scottish Borders is the lack of a robust and cost-effective supply of labour to deliver retrofit works. This leads to increased prices, reduced quality, long lead times and greater project complexity for domestic and non-domestic property owners. Furthermore, the Scottish Borders has a low wage economy with limited opportunities for people. There is a significant gap in the number of people in the Scottish Borders going into skilled green jobs. Growth of a local supply chain programme could be a major opportunity to address these dual challenges: provide well-paying and skilled jobs which boost regional economy while also enabling the delivery of the LHEES Vision at scale.



The council has already taken steps in this area, including collaboration with local colleges and the development of a Construction Forum to work with local businesses. The supply chain programme will use this work as the basis to further support the growth of local employment and economy in parallel with the increasing demand by property owners. The first step of the programme will entail the development of a supply chain programme plan comprising of detailed explanation of initiatives, such as:

- Collaborating with South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) to develop support for encouraging new businesses servicing this industry. This will include a strong focus on understanding how local businesses can win local work to get started, build strong long-term foundations, and remain attracted to stay and work in the local area. It will also address how local businesses can best position for and win public contracts.
- Collaboration with public sector procurement teams, including the council’s own procurement team, to understand the barriers and opportunities for local businesses to access work. This may include exploring ways in which tenders can be simplified and made more accessible. Procurement work will also place a strong focus on using social value requirements to help the growth and employment of a local workforce, regardless of the location of businesses.
- Collaboration with colleges to understand how to attract young talent to the appropriate courses and develop a route which leads into well-paying local employment. The council will also work with colleges, associations, and other organisations to understand the potential for expanding programmes to retrain the existing workforce. These will aim to address barriers and provide incentives to encourage uptake of retraining and increase likelihood of generating business activity following retraining.
- The council will assess the feasibility of a potential demand aggregation pilot which will involve the development of a vehicle to gather multiple customers into a larger group of buyers, securing an affordable service for them and providing businesses with confidence of reliable work.
- The council will consult with appropriate bodies to understand the potential role for alternative delivery vehicles, including cooperatives, a public energy company and other models which could provide energy efficiency, heat decarbonisation, renewable energy, heat network or communal heating works.

To unlock delivery of this programme across the Potential Delivery Areas and Potential Heat Network Zones, the council will seek support from the Scottish Government in the first instance, followed by regional partners SOSE and others.

The supply chain programme will be one of the most important ways in which the council will deliver the LHEES as part of a Just Transition. It will encourage the training of young talent of working age to combat the decline of the working age population in the area. It will also promote reskilling and the development of a regional green economy by supporting people to start-up new businesses and grow existing businesses.

<b>Actions</b>
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11. The council will develop a supply chain programme to address the dual challenges of (1) lack of skilled workers to deliver projects and (2) regional green economic growth and skilled employment. This will begin with a supply chain programme plan, which will be used to implement the programme.

### 1.3 Funding

The Scottish Government estimated that over £33bn will be required to realise the ambitions of the Heat in Buildings Strategy. If the viewed through the lens of 61,000 homes in the Scottish Borders as a proportion of the 2.5m homes in Scotland, this equates over £800m investment in our homes, buildings and heating infrastructure. This is a significant amount of financing, which people in the Scottish Borders will need to access through affordable means which make investment into the LHEES Vision attractive. Thus, through the LHEES Programme, the council will find ways in which the LHEES Vision can become an attractive investment for home and building owners as well as infrastructure developers.

The council has an active role in delivering some funds and schemes, of which ABS is the most important and prominent programme. ABS will be incorporated into the LHEES Programme and continue to serve as the primary means by which the council tackles poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty. Where the council has a direct or partial role in other funds (such as those for heat network development or social housing retrofit) it will commit to maximising the level of investment it can draw to the Scottish Borders. This will entail making funding applications, attracting investment, collaborating with others on attracting funding, participating in appropriate investment opportunities through its own capital, supporting development projects as a customer and other means. For example, the council will make funding applications to the Scottish Government's Heat Network Support Unit (HNSU) for feasibility studies on Potential Heat Network Zones as well as work to attract private investment into heat network opportunities. Another example is the exploration of the Borderlands and City Region Deal initiatives to understand the potential for energy efficiency, renewable energy and heat network projects these could enable in locations highlighted by this Delivery Plan.

Where the council does not have a direct role in funding projects, it will signpost and support people to access funding where it is available. The council will keep abreast of appropriate funds, including the list of Scottish Government funds provided in the LHEES, and subsequently communicate and signpost these to the relevant people. For example, the Green Heat Finance Taskforce has made recommendations in its first report; the council will examine these outputs to ensure it is disseminating the most recent and accurate information across Delivery Areas.

#### **Actions**

12. Recognising that the success of the LHEES Vision is impingent upon investment, the council will work to ensure that it is maximising the funding available for projects across the Scottish Borders.

### 1.4 Heating Network Delivery Plan

Through the Local Development Plan as well as this LHEES and Delivery Plan, the council is committed to expanding the role of heat networks as a scalable method for decarbonising heat and making it affordable across the Scottish Borders. To realise this aspect of the LHEES Vision, the council will develop and implement a Heat Network Delivery Plan, for which it has already requested funding from the HNSU. The



Heat Network Delivery Plan will provide a route map for how the council will approach and roll out heat networks and communal heating systems across the areas identified in section 2.2.

It will help the council oversee the development of heat network opportunities identified by the LHEES by conducting a strategic assessment of the potential of each area identified, establishing the delivery models best suited to delivering heat networks and communal heating systems, understanding the investment scale against financial feasibility of the projects to prioritise these, and attract investment into projects by packaging them into attractive opportunities.

The council will cover three strategic areas in this plan: **delivery models**, **investment opportunities**, and building a **management case**. The intention of this strategic development work is to develop a plan which provides the council with full clarity, including a clear and actionable pathway as well as to provide decision-making and implementation support through the course of the project. This will prepare the council for execution of the plan.

- Appraisal will involve financial analysis of different **delivery models**, building on the information collected during the Tweedbank heat network feasibility study and LHEES development. This will help inform the council which route to market to take to support the initial Tweedbank development as well as a future expansion to wider areas and the other potential heat networks in Galashiels, Jedburgh and Duns. Analysis of suitable delivery models will also include delivery of multiple smaller communal heating schemes where a large-scale network is not suitable. This methodology will follow the development of a detailed techno-economic model for each for the preferred technology options. Appraising delivery model options will help aid the council's decision-making process and provide the preferred delivery model(s) the council can proceed with by answering these questions:
  - What delivery models are suitable for the larger scale networks in the identified Potential Heat Network Zones of Jedburgh, Duns and Galashiels?
  - What delivery models are suitable for communal heating systems, especially in rural areas?
  - What are the delivery models that the council is willing to utilise for the above two scenarios?
- Analysis of **investment opportunities** will involve the assessment of the four heat network opportunities across Jedburgh, Duns, Galashiels to understand their potential scale and furthest extent. This will also include route mapping for a large-scale network to include the key anchor loads and heat sources identified across the Tweedbank and Galashiels area. This will include the areas of Galashiels (focussing on Croft Street as a key anchor load), Tweedbank (new development and existing estate), Melrose Road (identified through the LHEES methodology as zone 3, see section 2.2) and Langlee, with potential heat sources such as the Easter Langlee landfill gas recovery and waste-water heat recovery at Croft Street. Analysis will include future heat demand scenarios, incorporating the council's own retrofit plans. In addition to large-scale heat networks, the investment analysis will compare communal heating schemes with individual heat pumps as the decarbonisation solution. A key part of understanding investment opportunities is to ensure they are reflective of market appetite and interest. This will include continuation of market engagement which has already started for Tweedbank heat network to test the attractiveness of these opportunities for investors as well as to identify potential funding opportunities. This engagement will be important for both heat networks and communal heating systems to

understand delivery partners' criteria for investment. The objective is to have a clear understanding of the capital investment required, funding opportunities, market appetite and criteria for capital delivery, with the intention to prepare a Heat Network Delivery Plan aligned to these preferences. In summary, this will be achieved once these questions are answered:

- What is the size of the heat network investment opportunities across the Scottish Borders area from a capital investment perspective?
  - How are the investment opportunities impacted by future energy scenarios considering energy efficiency measures proposed by the LHEES?
  - What are the criteria from potential delivery partners to deliver larger heat networks across the 3 identified clusters of Jedburgh, Duns and Galashiels as well as communal heating systems?
- The management case for heat networks and communal heating across the Scottish Borders region will define the recommended structure, resources, skills, responsibilities and role of the heat network delivery plan, including timescales for implementation. It will entail detailed internal and external engagement to inform recommendations for bridging the skills gaps, and develop capacity based on a maturity assessment. A review will provide the appropriate governance structures and the preferred approach to ensure relevant stakeholders are involved throughout. A critical aspect of developing this case will be agreeing customer charter aligned with existing council policies and the LHEES Vision. The customer charter will outline a set of best practice principles that any customer in the Scottish Borders area connected to a heat network should be able to expect (including heat tariffs, connection and disconnection etc.) as it will be used as a template for future heads of terms and supply agreements. The management case will follow HM Treasury's Business Case model to ensure that the council is able to take a robust and standardised approach to delivering communal and/or district heating schemes. It will provide the council with a plan for building up the required internal capacity to progress with the Heat Network Delivery Plan by answering these questions:
    - What are the resources and skills required to progress with the Heat Network Delivery Plan?
    - What roles and responsibilities need to be defined to progress with the Heat Network Delivery Plan?
    - How is the council going to build up the internal capacity required?
    - What is the appropriate governance structure for the larger scale heat networks and for communal heating schemes?
    - What are the standards that the council is willing to provide to all potential customers?

As with all other aspects of the LHEES and Delivery Plan, stakeholder engagement is critical to furthering progress and developing shared agendas. The council will continue stakeholder engagement with local stakeholders to better understand the potential of a large-scale heat network across the Galashiels/Tweedbank area and the role each local stakeholder will play in a heat network of that size. The council will also begin identifying and carrying out early engagement with key local stakeholders in the Jedburgh and Duns areas where the remaining two Potential Heat Network Zones were identified. Where appropriate, the council will gather real-world consumption data via engagement with heat off-takers and anchor load operators across the three main areas. The council will also begin identification and initial engagement with stakeholders for communal heating schemes. The council will begin with two

major stakeholder groups, social landlords and other public bodies, as they might play an important role in the development of large-scale heat networks as well as smaller communal heating schemes.

Alongside external engagement, the council will also conduct internal engagement with relevant officers to understand:

- Potential opportunities for council buildings to improve the potential for a heat network.
- The potential of solar PV and battery storage in the council's operational buildings, schools, waste recycling centres, land, parking lots, commercial enterprises, agricultural buildings/sites and other relevant sites with the intention of this energy to be used to power heat pumps and heat networks for greater savings.
- Exploring the council's powers to mandate connection to a heat network, whether this is through the planning process for new developments or for existing public buildings.

**Actions**

13. If the council is successful in its funding application to the HNSU, it will utilise that resource to develop a Heat Network Delivery Plan covering the three main strategic areas of delivery models, investment opportunities, and building a management case.

### 1.5 Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

The LHEES was developed with key considerations from stakeholders, and its ongoing success is dependent on continuing this engagement. Further, retrofit and decarbonisation are not currently common projects which a significant proportion of property owners have undertaken. This area is complex and new to most people. Therefore, property owners and occupiers require clear and consistent messaging about why and how to retrofit, the attractive funding opportunities available to retrofit, what the benefits of retrofit are, and the standards which may require them to act.

In addition to funding, the council also has an important function as a public body with regulatory functions. There are multiple existing standards to ensure our homes and buildings meet an appropriate level of energy efficiency and decarbonise their heat. There are also several new standards being proposed by the Scottish Government (in the Heat in Buildings Bill and Social Housing Net Zero Standard consultations). The council will seek to understand, communicate and guide people. The council will focus efforts on delivery areas, but also provide an avenue for anyone in the Scottish Borders to access this information.

Furthermore, the council will ensure that there is robust stakeholder engagement before and during projects which are undertaken for each Delivery Area. This will secure buy-in from relevant parties, prepare people in advance and unlock opportunities for wider participation in collaborative initiatives.

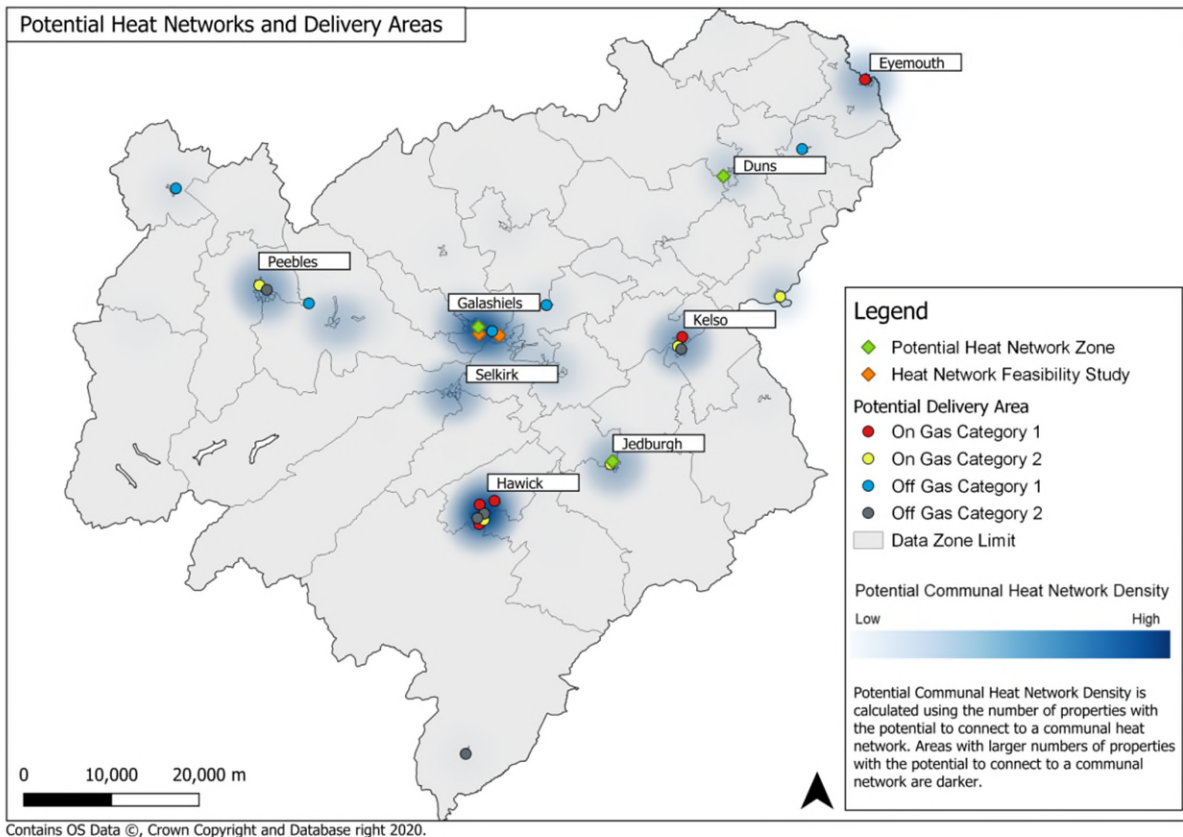
**Actions**

14. The council will undertake consistent and ongoing stakeholder engagement across the Delivery Areas, Heat Network Zones and Communal Heating Scheme opportunities. The council will also drive communication to inspire, support, advise and signpost people toward action, focusing these locations and growing this activity across the region as far as practical.

## 2 Delivery Areas and Heat Network zones

The council has identified a set of Potential Delivery Areas and Potential Heat Network Zones based on the LHEES Methodology and the Scottish Borders LHEES Vision. The council selected these locations as they have the highest potential to contribute to the achievement of the LHEES Vision and they align with progress made by existing local schemes. This resulted in 20 Potential Delivery Areas, 3 Potential Heat Network Zones and several hundred communal heating system opportunities. This is in addition to the 2 heat network feasibilities the council is already undertaking. These are all mapped in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: This map presents a summary of all the types of areas where the council will progress activity through this Delivery Plan, including those concerning building level works and heat networks.**



While the selection of areas is based on rigorous data analysis, they are only ‘starting points’. This is because the data available for analysing building performance is not always up-to-date or accurate. To mitigate the impact of any major inaccuracies, the council will aim, when feasible, to update this data for further analysis as required. This limitation has also highlighted the importance of local engagement and planning. Therefore, these areas have all been identified as “potential” areas which will need to be qualified based on investigation and further local engagement.

Potential Delivery Areas are detailed in section 2.1 along with a summary based on the changes that each building is expected to undergo for it to meet reasonable energy efficiency standards and have zero direct emission heat.

Potential Heat Network Zones and Communal Heating Systems are detailed in section 2.2.

## 2.1 Potential Delivery Areas

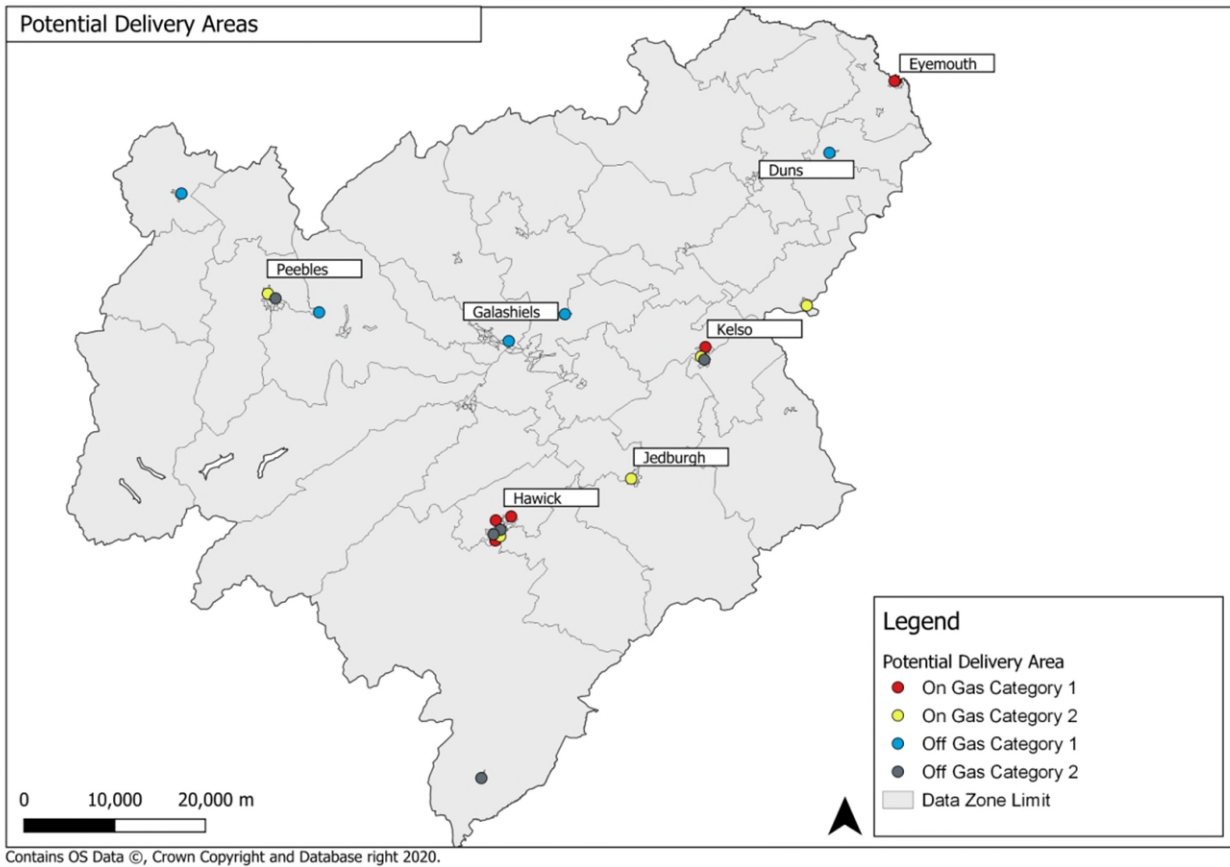
The council has prioritised Delivery Areas with the largest numbers of category 1 and 2 properties and defined them in terms of whether they are on-gas or off-gas, as per the LHEES Methodology. Category 1 properties are well insulated or mostly well insulated, requiring minimal or no building fabric measures and “heat pump-ready”. These properties are usually the most straightforward to decarbonise. Category 2 properties often require some form of fabric upgrade, such as wall insulation, before they are ready for a heat pump installation.

The Potential Delivery Areas are summarised in Table 1 and mapped in Figure 5.

**Table 1: List of Potential Delivery Areas within Scottish Borders**

Potential Delivery Area Name	Type of Delivery Area	Properties	Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/y)	Average Bill Savings	Average Retrofit Cost
<b>1: Kelso</b>	On Gas Category 1	1143	2,120	£ 343.51	£ 19,000
<b>2: Hawick 1</b>	On Gas Category 1	920	2,300	£ 348.47	£ 22,000
<b>3: Eyemouth W</b>	On Gas Category 1	572	1,890	£ 309.7	£ 18,000
<b>4: Hawick 2</b>	On Gas Category 1	542	1,080	£ 225.44	£ 11,000
<b>5: Hawick 3</b>	On Gas Category 1	538	1,520	£ 278.14	£ 14,000
<b>6: Kelso</b>	On Gas Category 2	280	916.82	£ 193.01	£ 9,024
<b>7: Peebles N</b>	On Gas Category 2	229	1,890	£ 306.6	£ 16,000
<b>8: Coldstream</b>	On Gas Category 2	132	940.84	£ 173.87	£ 9,297
<b>9: Jedburgh</b>	On Gas Category 2	99	1,010	£ 236.53	£ 10,000
<b>10: Hawick S</b>	On Gas Category 2	97	915.42	£ 229.08	£ 9,140
<b>11: Chrinside</b>	Off Gas Category 1	250	3,030	£ 1,220	£ 22,000
<b>12: West Linton</b>	Off Gas Category 1	238	3,320	£ 899.31	£ 21,000
<b>13: Cardrona</b>	Off Gas Category 1	211	1,640	£ 1,600	£ 19,000
<b>14: Earlston</b>	Off Gas Category 1	194	3,010	£ 1,490	£ 23,000
<b>15: Gala</b>	Off Gas Category 1	138	1,510	£ 1,140	£ 16,000
<b>16: Kelso S</b>	Off Gas Category 2	132	314.60	£ 293.86	£ 4,456
<b>17: Peebles N</b>	Off Gas Category 2	117	128.75	£ 124.41	£ 2,850
<b>18: Hawick C</b>	Off Gas Category 2	60	285.50	£ 245.11	£ 5,270
<b>19: Newcastleton</b>	Off Gas Category 2	56	4,520	£ 1,140	£ 26,000
<b>20: Hawick C &amp; W</b>	Off Gas Category 2	45	419.63	£ 369.87	£ 6,940

**Figure 5: A map of all 20 Potential Delivery Areas identified.**

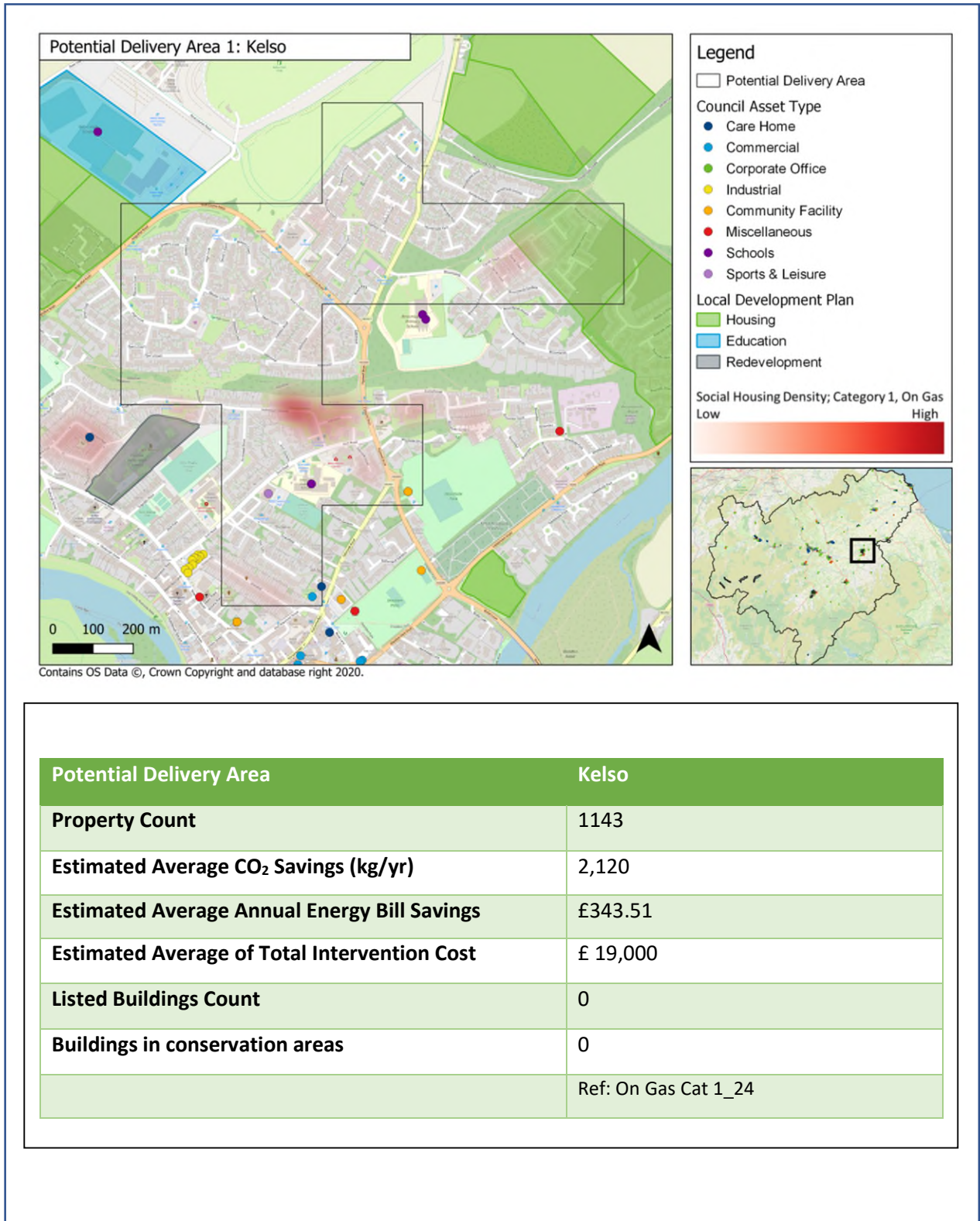


The following sections show maps and table summaries of the decarbonisation pathways for individual Potential Delivery Areas. The maps display:

- A boundary of the Potential Delivery Area indicating a presence of properties belonging to that type of Delivery Area.
- A mapping of the various types of council assets to identify potential synergies with the council’s own retrofit plans.
- Local development plan sites, displaying potential opportunities to align programmes with development activities as part of a holistic approach to regenerate and decarbonise the area.
- The density of social housing

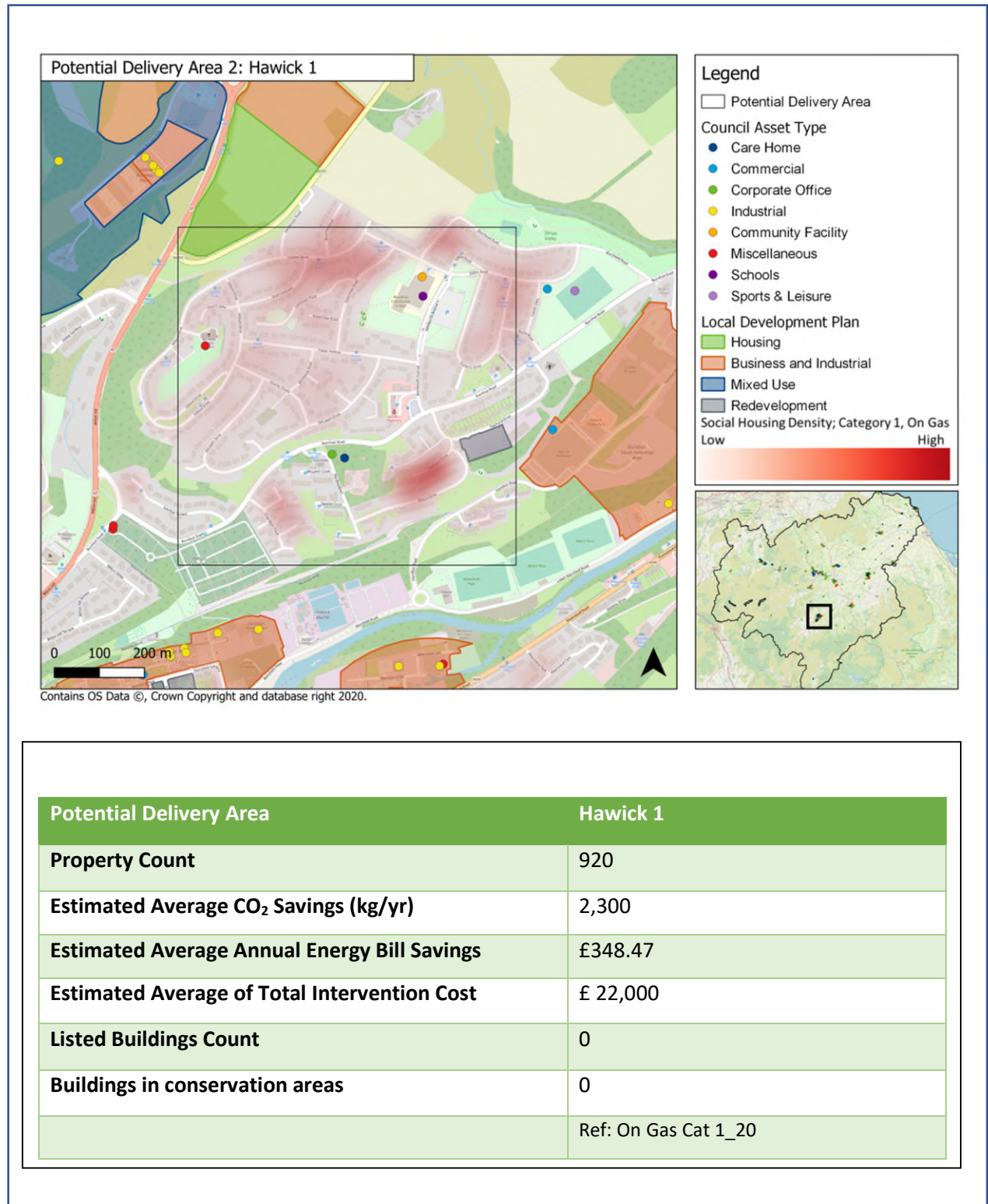
Alongside the map, a table identifies the summary outputs of the PEAT-OR tool, which provides building-level pathways for improving the energy efficiency and decarbonising homes. This data includes the number of properties belonging to the type of Delivery Area within the boundary, the average emission savings if the recommended measures were installed for each property, the estimated average annual cost savings, estimated average installation costs, and the total number of listed properties as well as the number of properties that are located within conservation areas.

Potential Delivery Area 1: Kelso



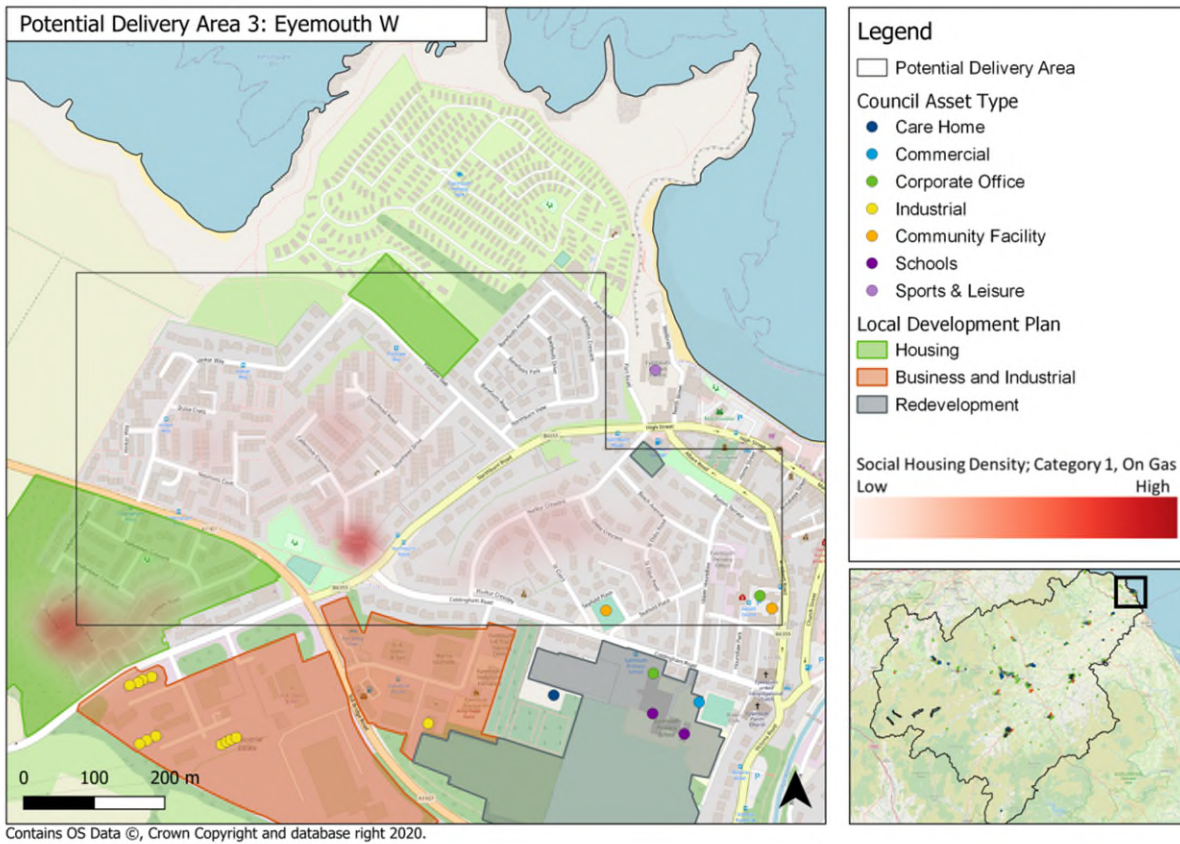
Potential Delivery Area	Kelso
<b>Property Count</b>	1143
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	2,120
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£343.51
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 19,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: On Gas Cat 1_24

Potential Delivery Area 2: Hawick 1



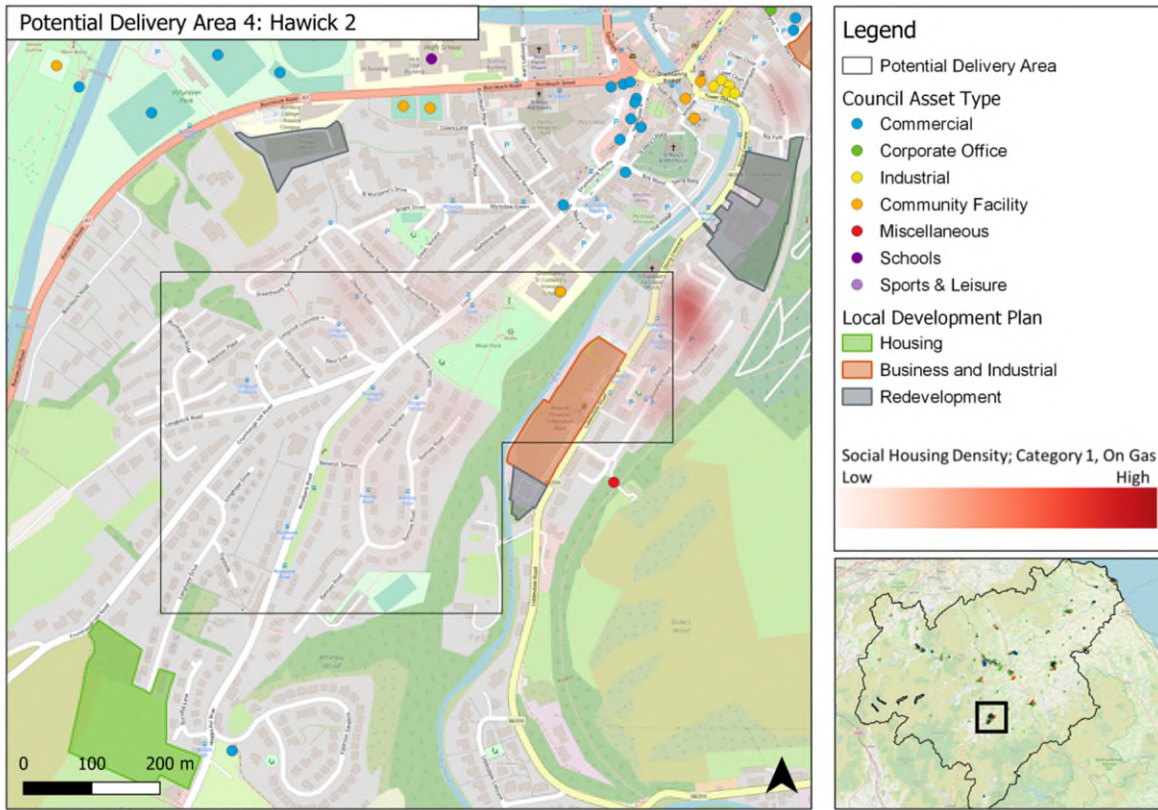


Potential Delivery Area 3: Eyemouth W



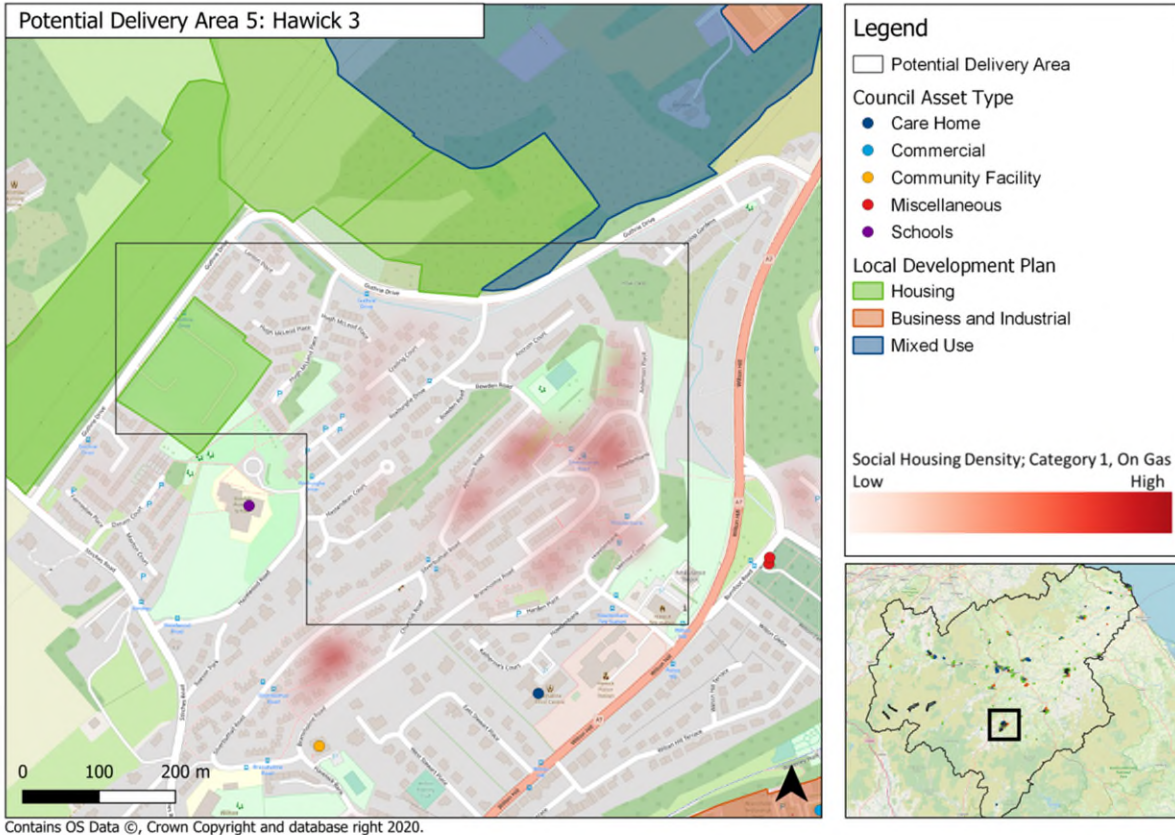
Potential Delivery Area	Eyemouth W
<b>Property Count</b>	572
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,890
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£309.70
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 18,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: On Gas Cat 1_44

Potential Delivery Area 4: Hawick 2



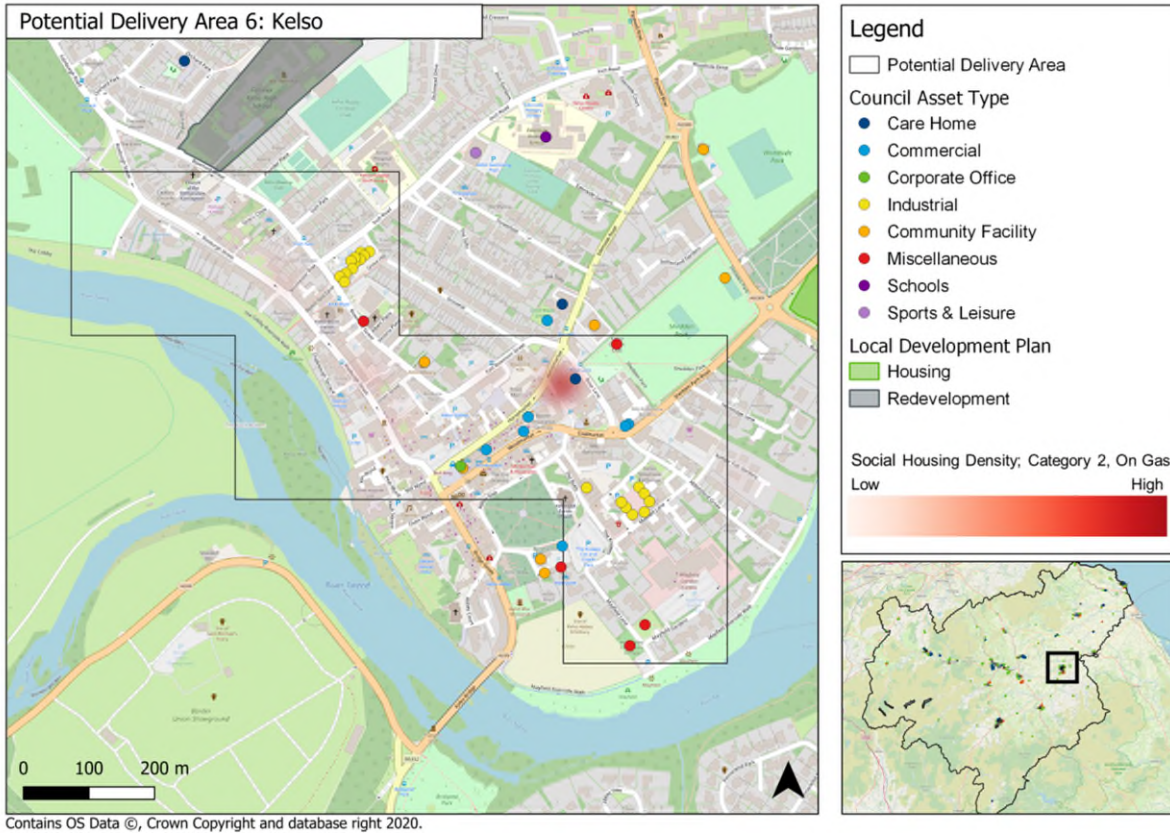
Potential Delivery Area	Hawick 2
<b>Property Count</b>	542
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,080
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£343.51
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 19,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: On Gas Cat 1_17

Potential Delivery Area 5: Hawick 3



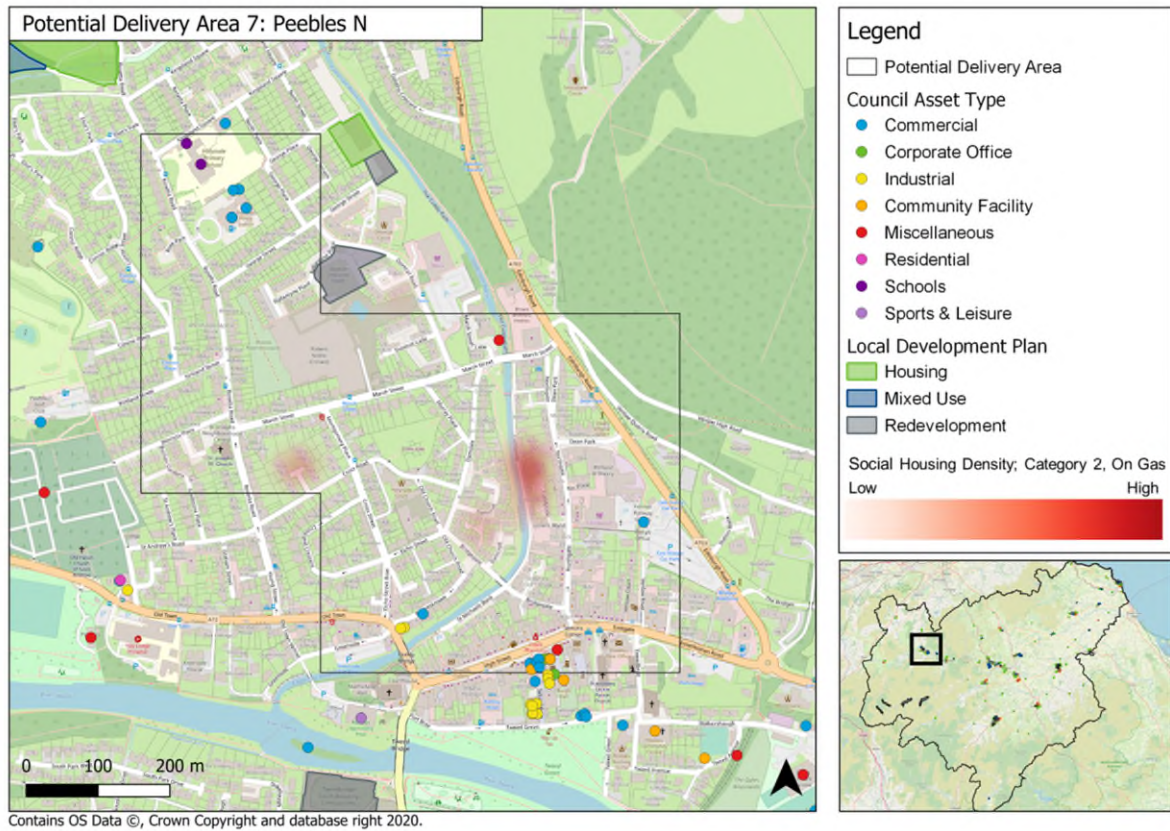
Potential Delivery Area	Hawick 3
<b>Property Count</b>	538
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,520
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£278.14
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 14,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: On Gas Cat 1_19

Potential Delivery Area 6: Kelso



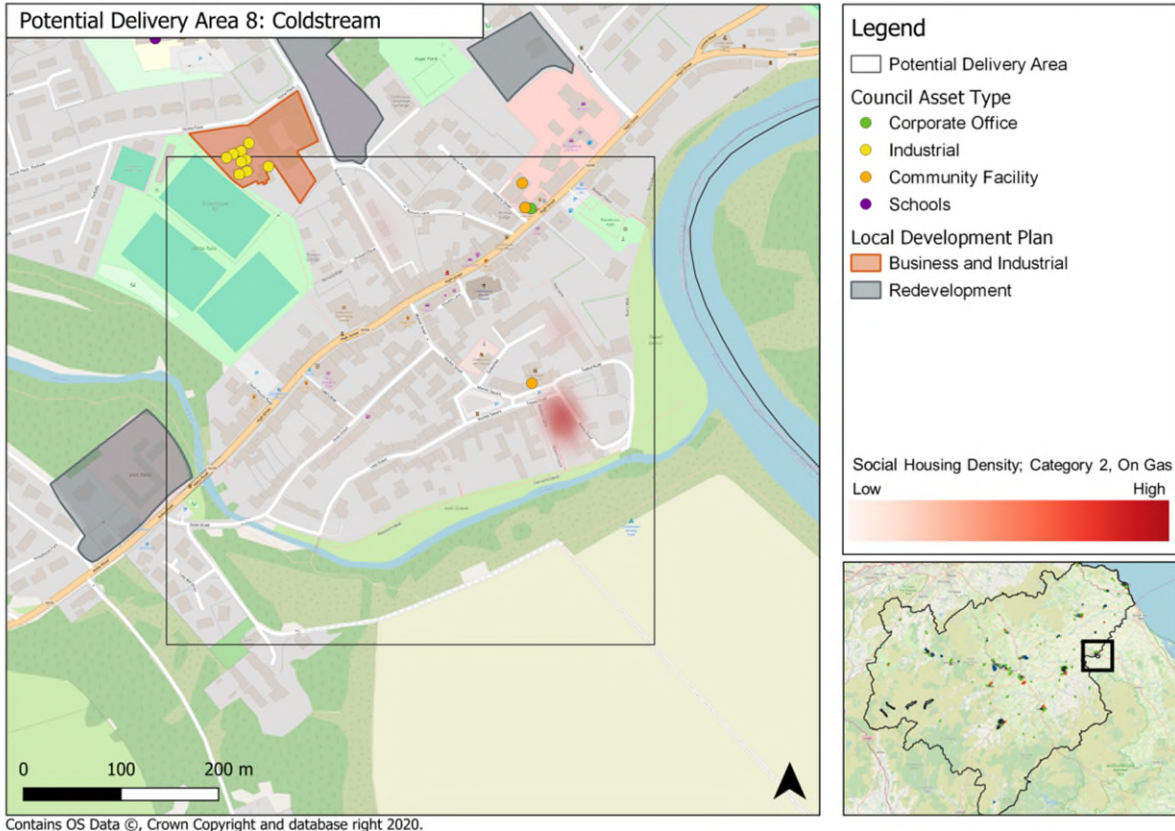
Potential Delivery Area	Kelso
Property Count	280
Estimated Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)	1,890
Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings	£306.60
Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost	£ 16,000
Listed Buildings Count	36
Buildings in conservation areas	274
	Ref: On Gas Cat 2_11

Potential Delivery Area 7: Peebles N



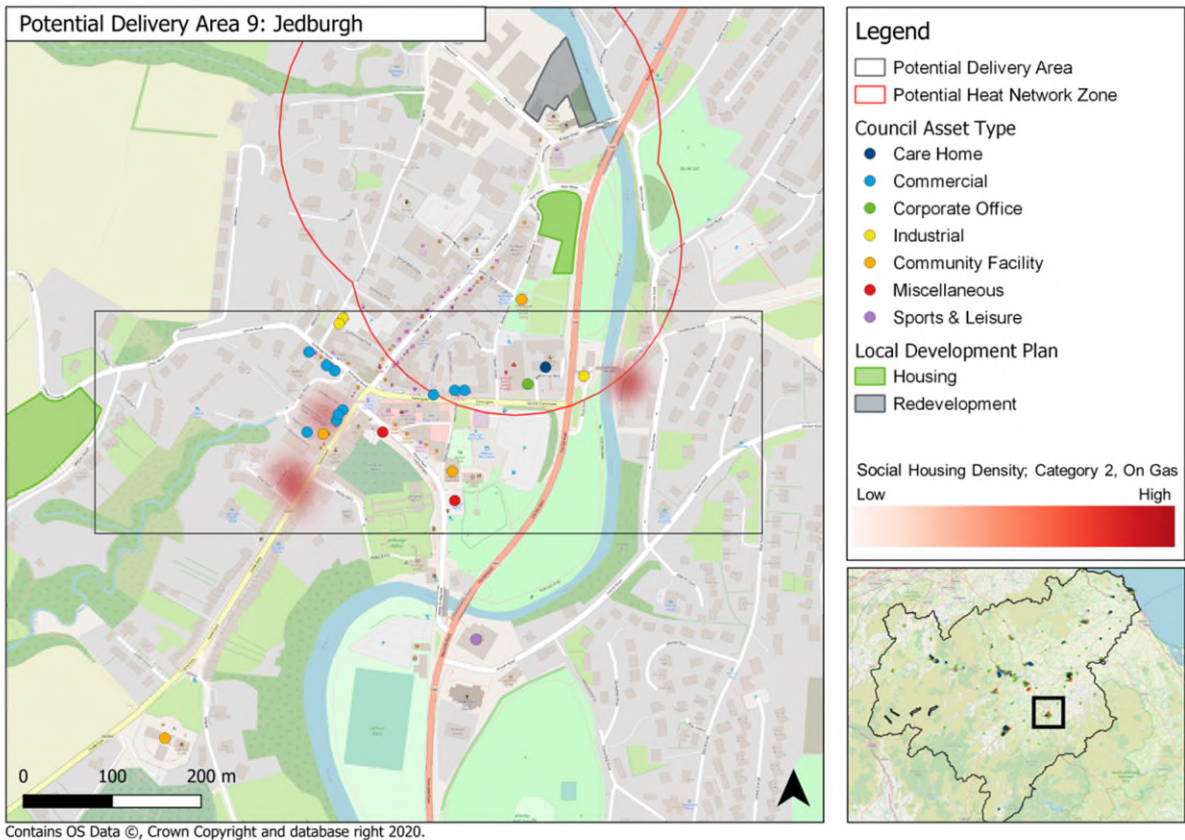
Potential Delivery Area	Peebles N
<b>Property Count</b>	229
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,890
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£306.60
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 16,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	5
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	223
	Ref: On Gas Cat 2_10

Potential Delivery Area 8: Coldstream



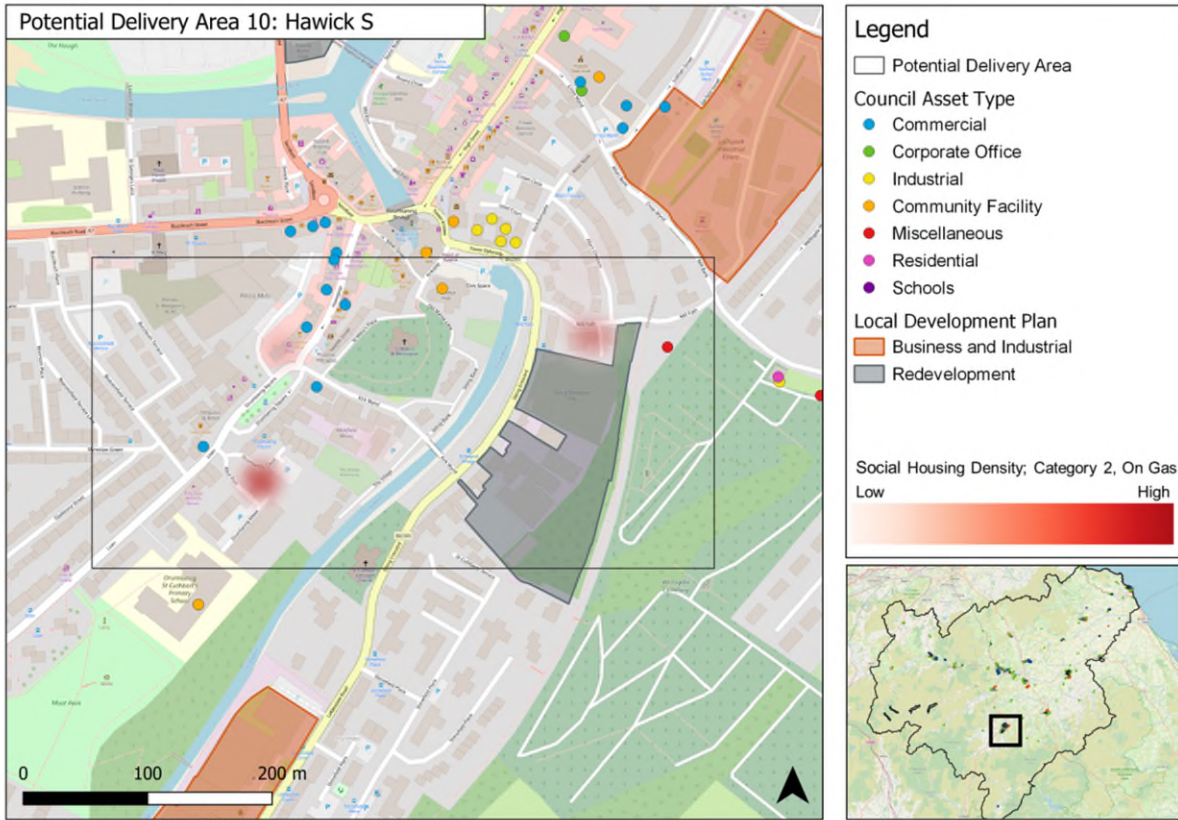
Potential Delivery Area	Coldstream
<b>Property Count</b>	132
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	940.84
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£173.87
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 9,297
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	21
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	132
	Ref: On Gas Cat 2_09

Potential Delivery Area 9: Jedburgh



Potential Delivery Area	Jedburgh
<b>Property Count</b>	99
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,010
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£236.53
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 10,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	27
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	94
	Ref: On Gas Cat 2_08

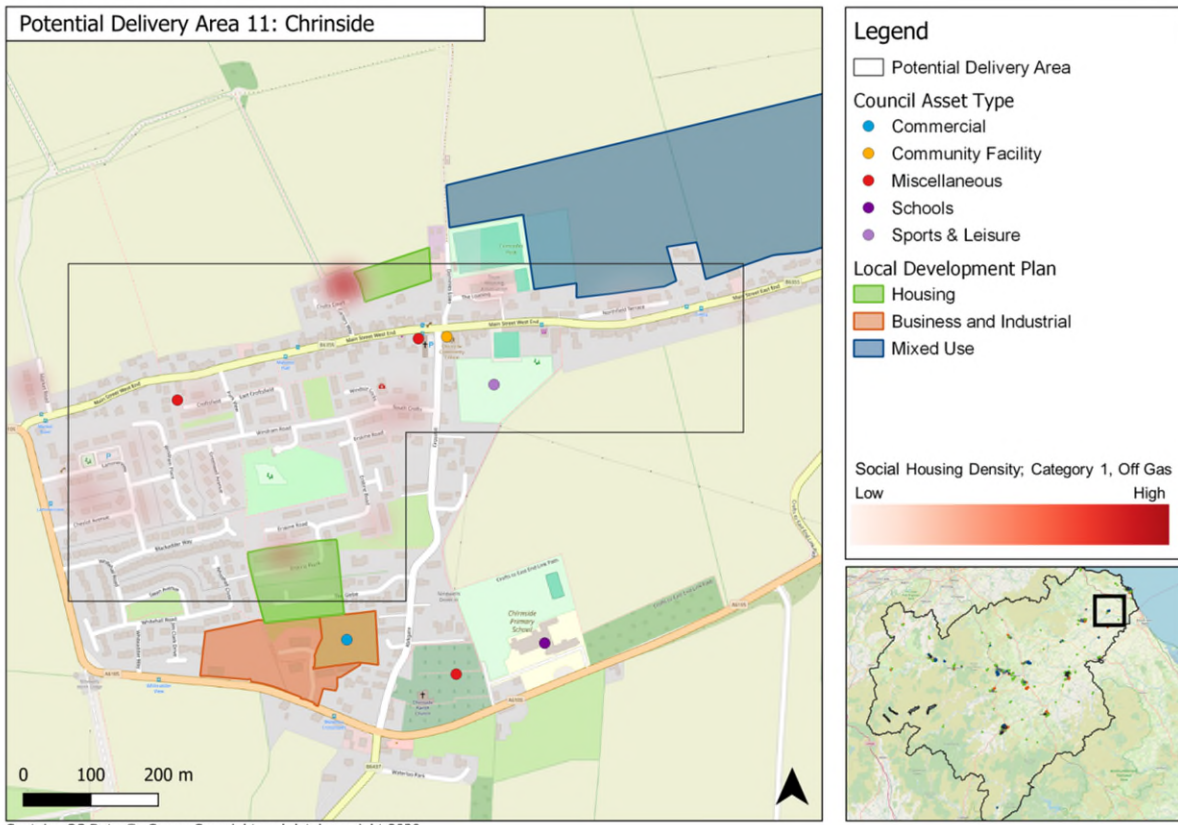
Potential Delivery Area 10: Hawick S



Potential Delivery Area	Hawick S
<b>Property Count</b>	97
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	915.42
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£229.08
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 9,140
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	10
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	74
	Ref: On Gas Cat 2_03

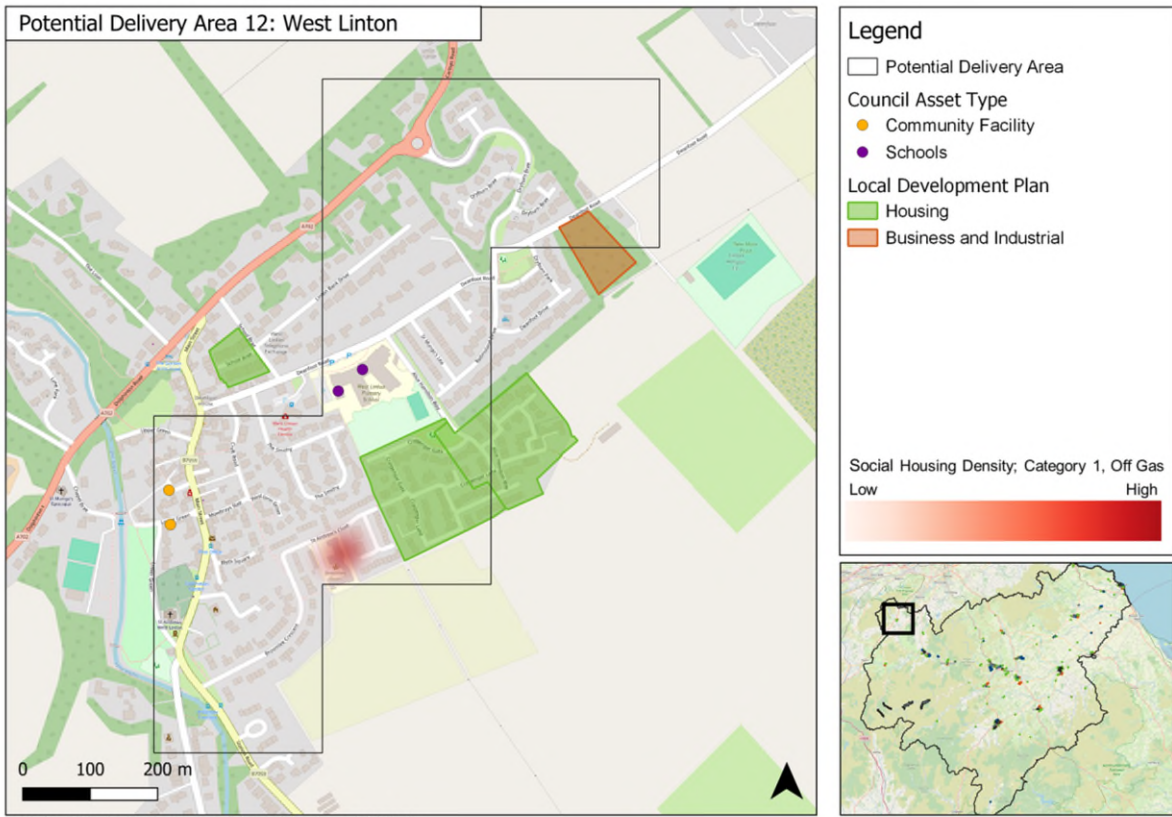


Potential Delivery Area 11: Chrinside



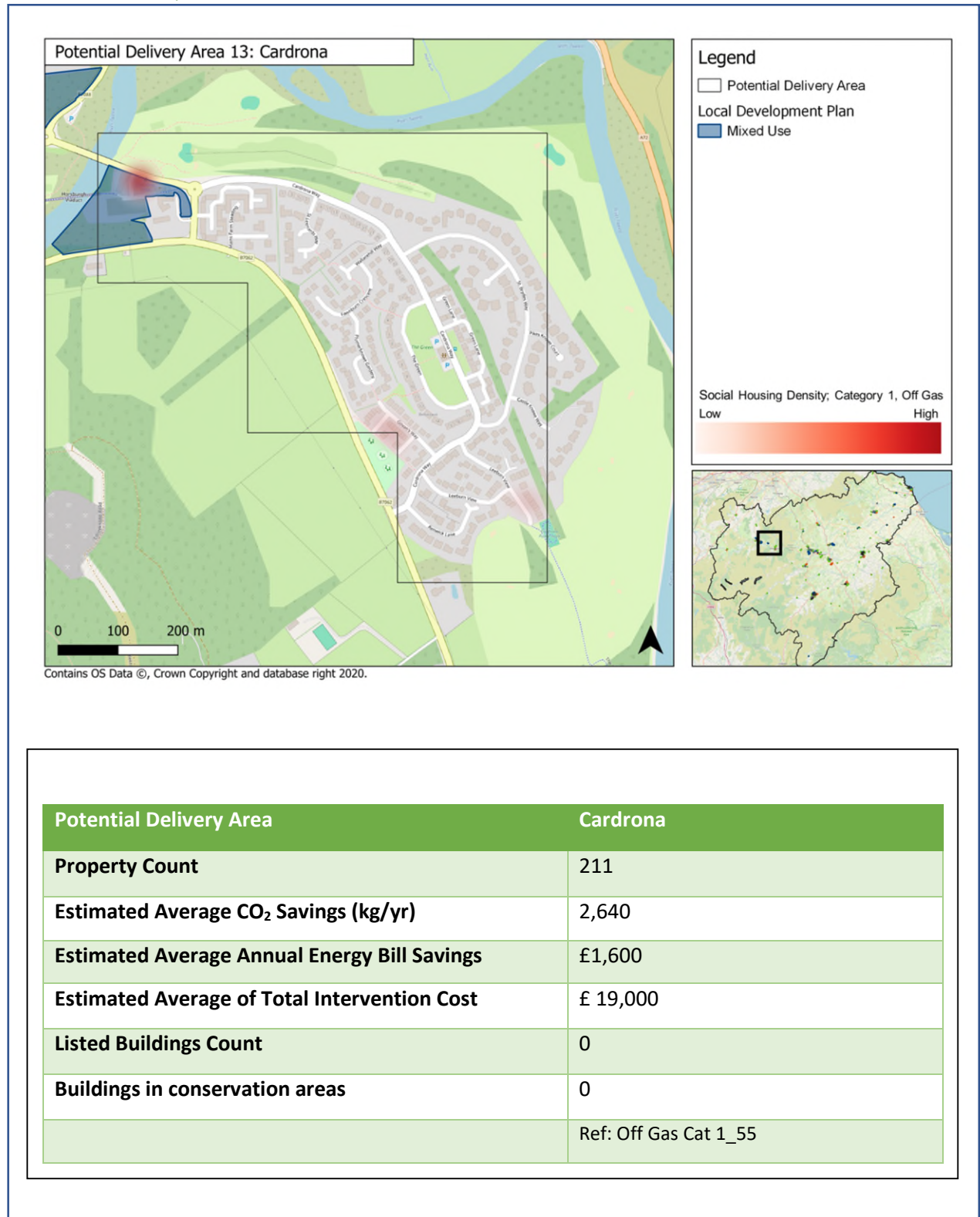
Potential Delivery Area	Chrinside
Property Count	250
Estimated Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)	3,030
Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings	£1220
Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost	£ 22,000
Listed Buildings Count	0
Buildings in conservation areas	0
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 1_10

Potential Delivery Area 12: West Linton

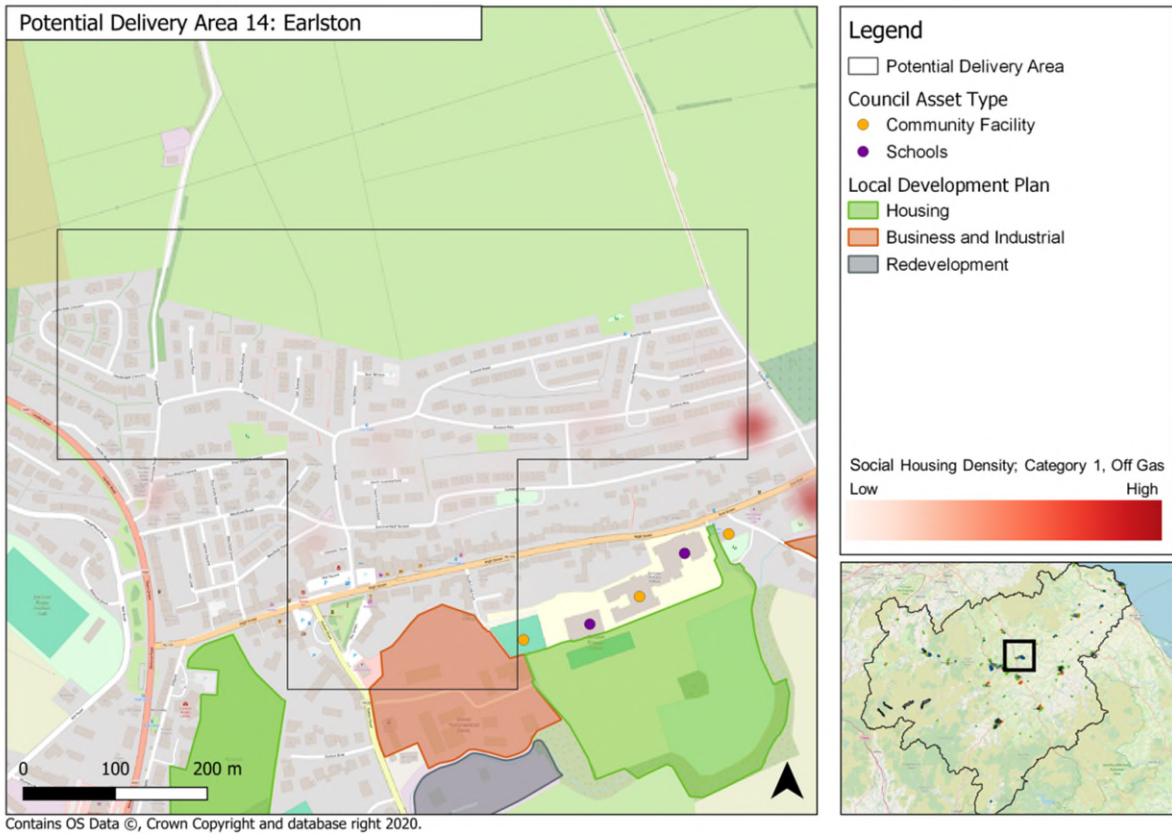


Potential Delivery Area	West Linton
Property Count	238
Estimated Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)	3,320
Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings	£899.31
Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost	£ 21,000
Listed Buildings Count	0
Buildings in conservation areas	0
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 1_13

Potential Delivery Area 13: Cardrona

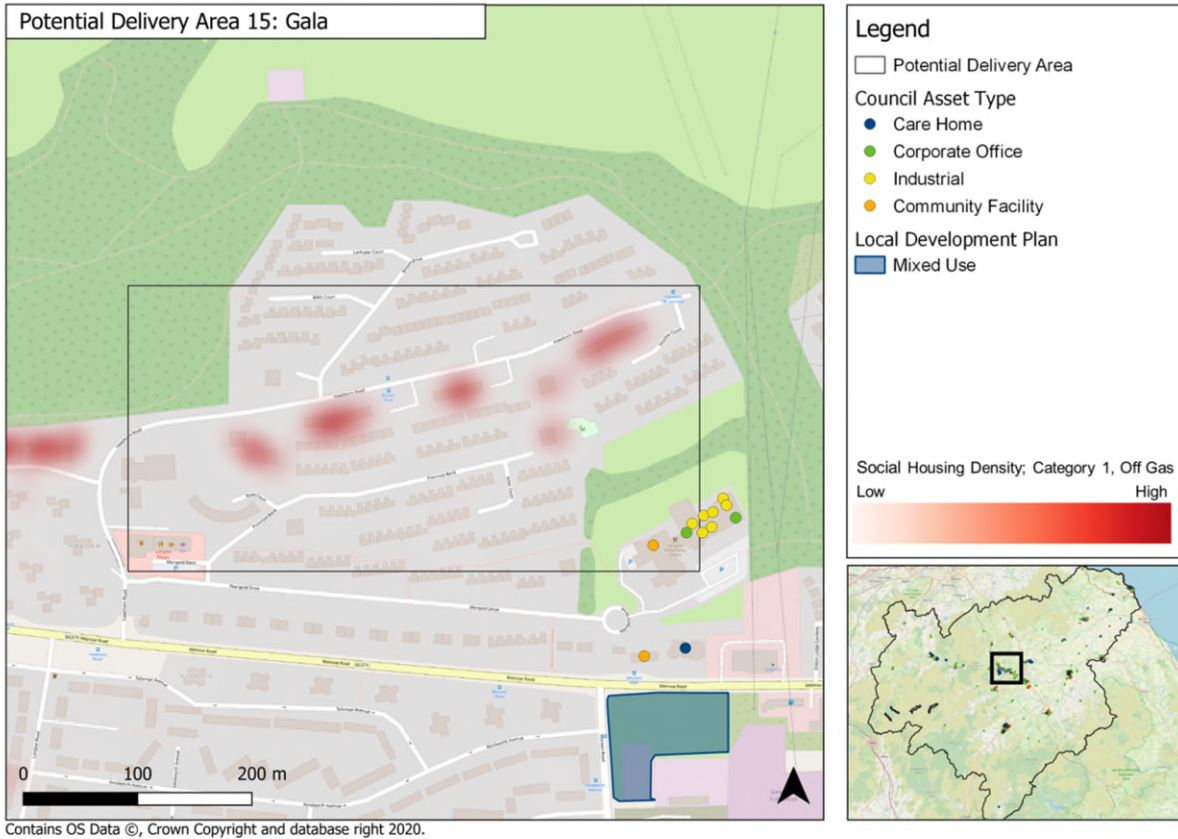


Potential Delivery Area 14: Earlston



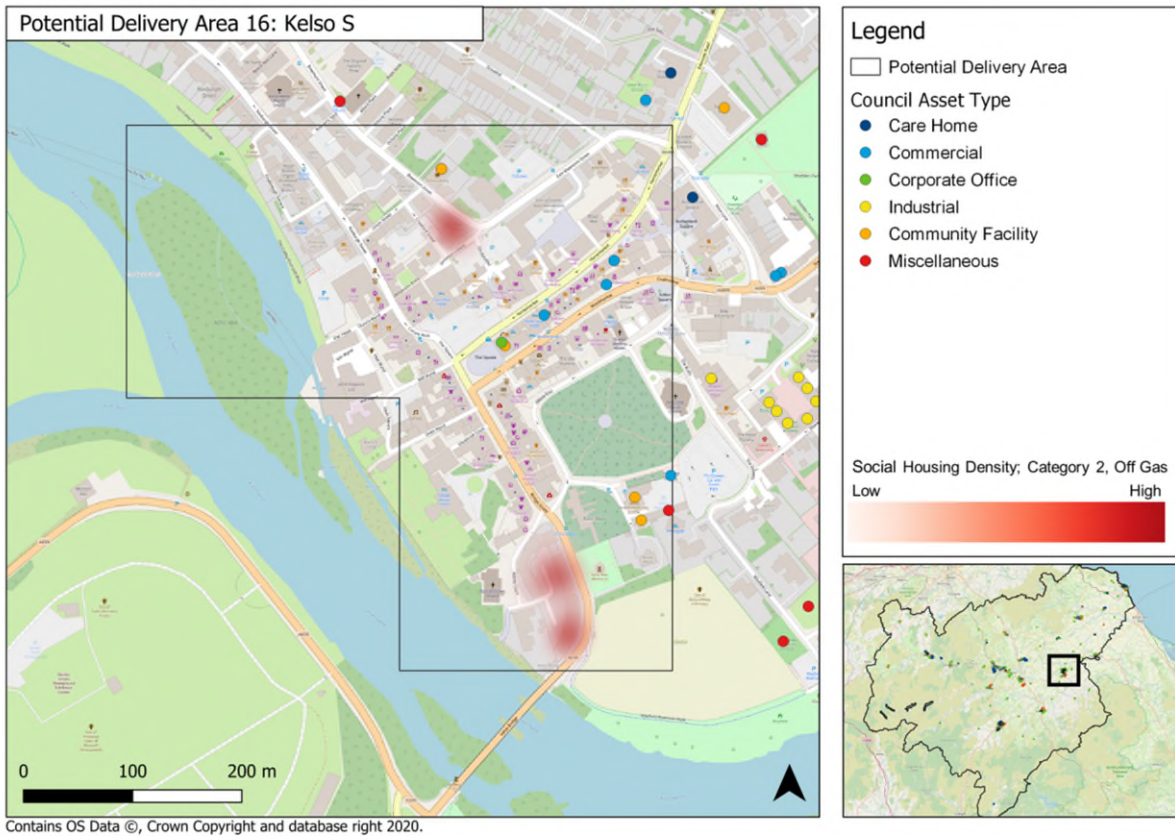
Potential Delivery Area	Earlston
<b>Property Count</b>	194
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	3,010
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£1,490
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 23,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 1_56

Potential Delivery Area 15: Gala



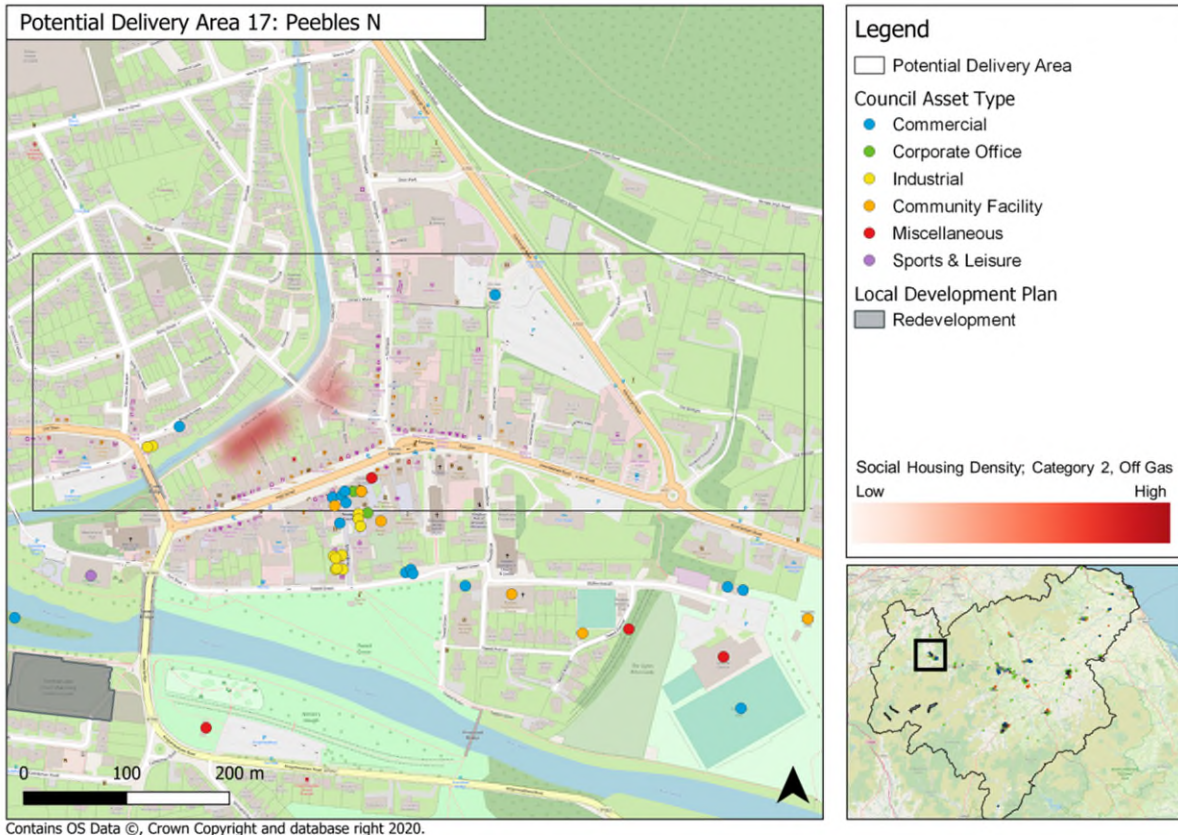
Potential Delivery Area	Gala
<b>Property Count</b>	138
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	1,510
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£1,140
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 16,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	0
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 1_06

Potential Delivery Area 16: Kelso S



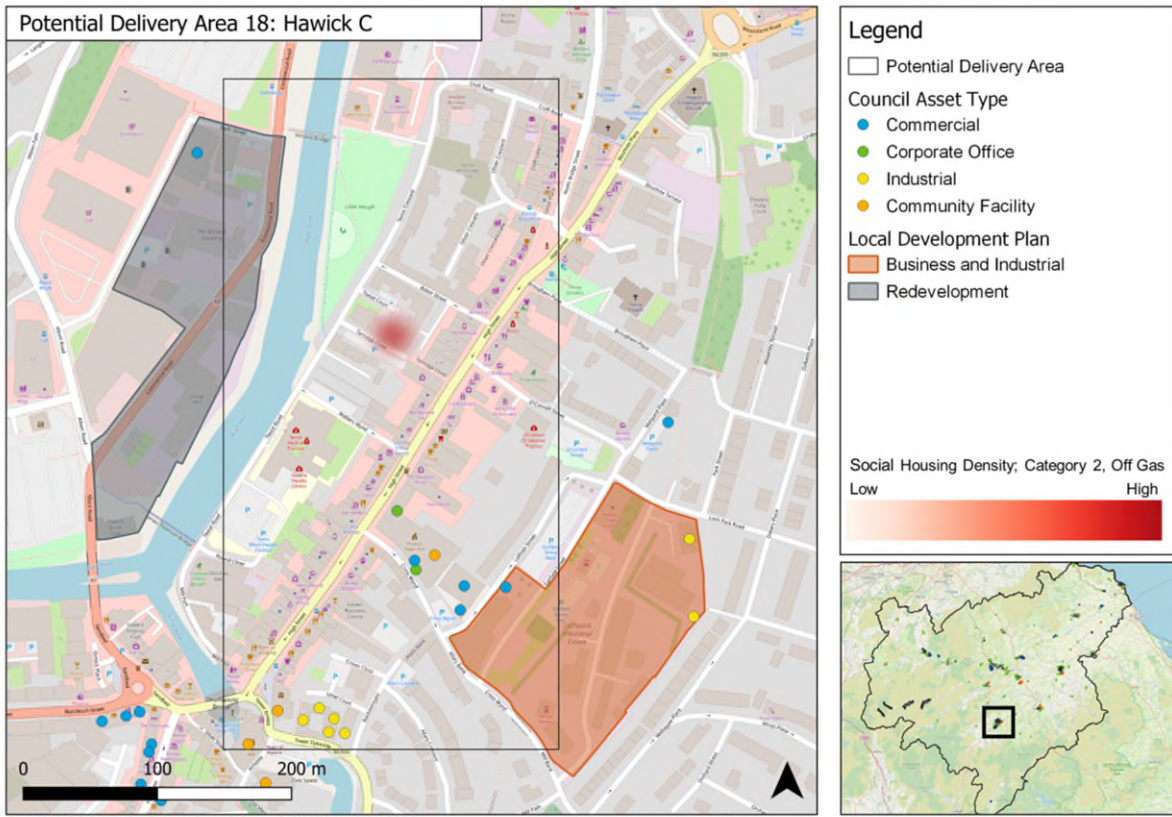
Potential Delivery Area	Kelso S
<b>Property Count</b>	132
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	314.60
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£293.86
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 4,456
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	12
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	132
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 2_05

Potential Delivery Area 17: Peebles N



Potential Delivery Area	Peebles N
<b>Property Count</b>	117
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	128.75
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£124.41
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 2,850
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	117
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 2_01

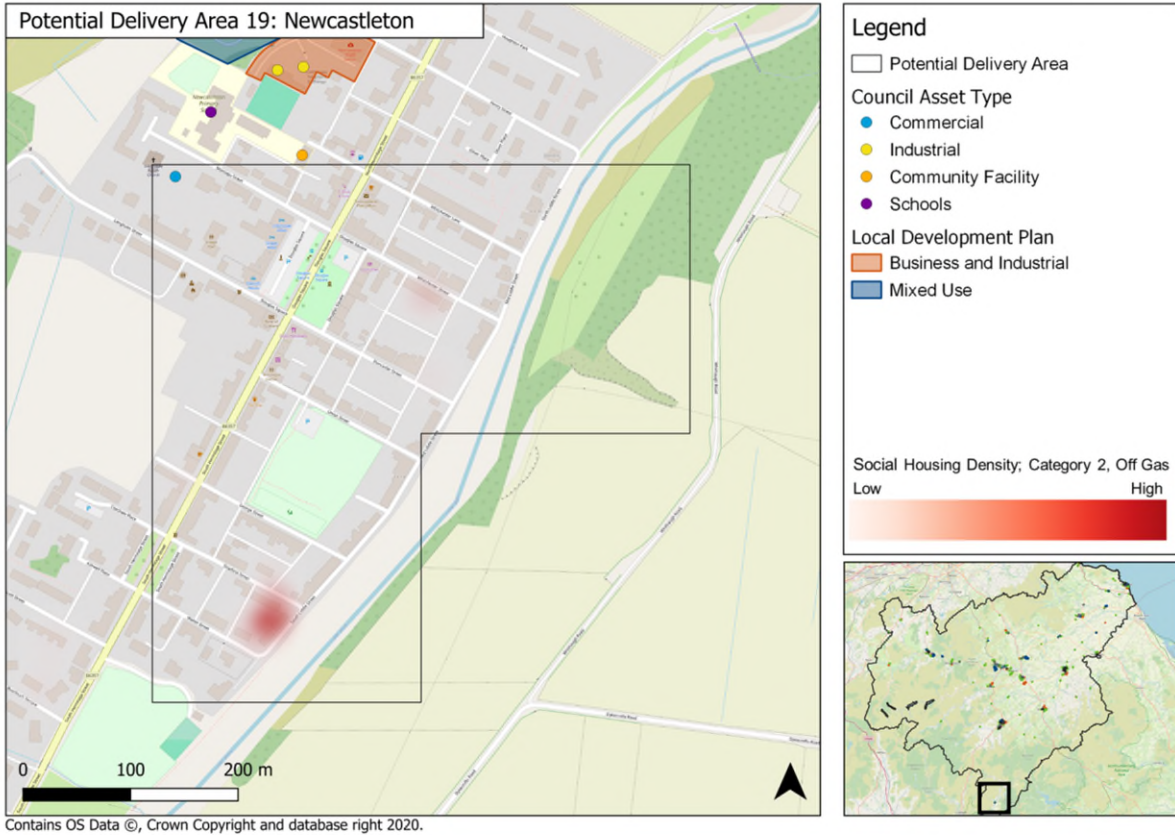
Potential Delivery Area 18: Hawick C



Potential Delivery Area	Hawick C
Property Count	60
Estimated Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)	285.50
Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings	£245.11
Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost	£ 5,270
Listed Buildings Count	1
Buildings in conservation areas	60
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 2_04

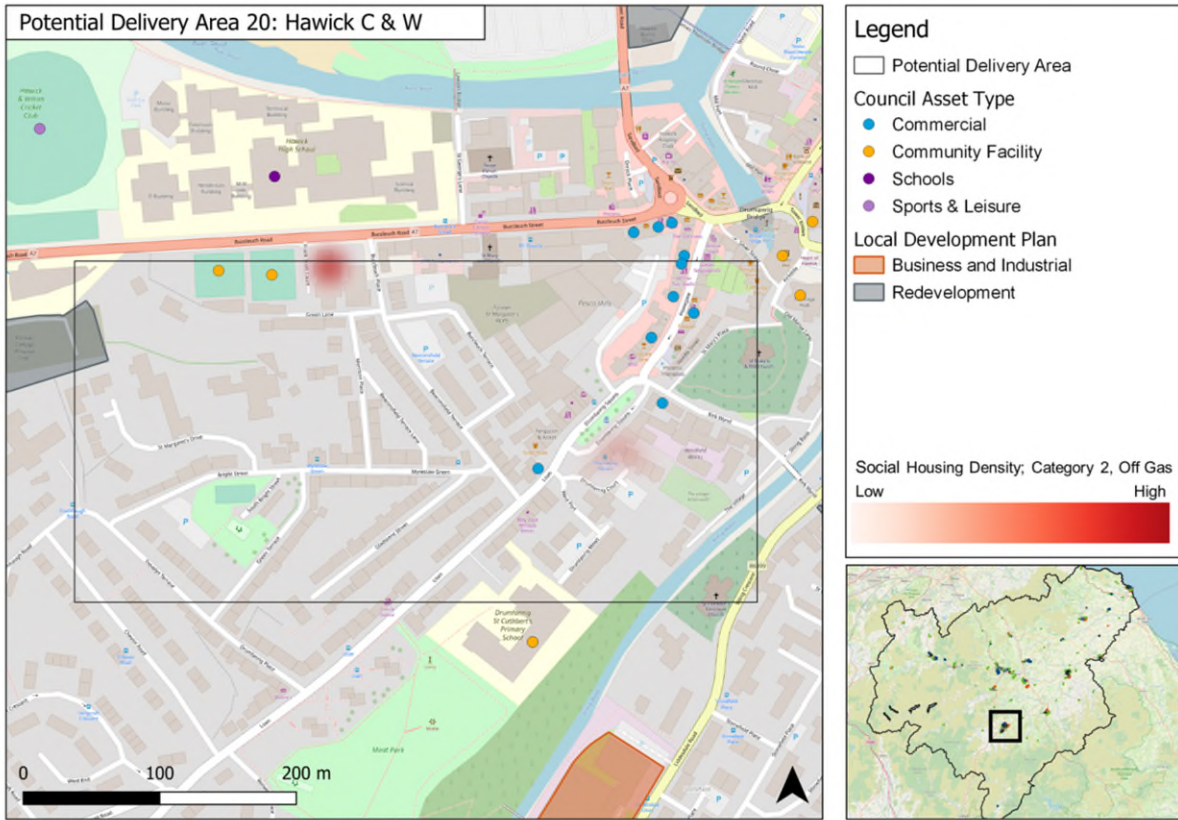


Potential Delivery Area 19: Newcastleton



Potential Delivery Area	Newcastleton
<b>Property Count</b>	56
<b>Estimated Average CO<sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)</b>	4,520
<b>Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings</b>	£1,140
<b>Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost</b>	£ 26,000
<b>Listed Buildings Count</b>	0
<b>Buildings in conservation areas</b>	53
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 2_02

Potential Delivery Area 20: Hawick C & W



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Potential Delivery Area	Hawick C & W
Property Count	45
Estimated Average CO <sub>2</sub> Savings (kg/yr)	419.63
Estimated Average Annual Energy Bill Savings	£369.87
Estimated Average of Total Intervention Cost	£ 6,940
Listed Buildings Count	0
Buildings in conservation areas	45
	Ref: Off Gas Cat 2_03

## 2.2 Potential Heat Networks and Communal Heating Systems

The council has identified 3 main Potential Heat Network Zones – Jedburgh, Duns and Galashiels. These 3 areas were identified following the LHEES methodology with a slight variation to select anchor loads which are in public or partially public ownership. This was to identify opportunities where the council and public sector may have the most leverage to enable the development of a heat network by offering guaranteed connections to anchor loads. The analysis shows that Jedburgh has the highest domestic heat demand of all heat networks at 3,047 MWh followed by Galashiels with 1,942 MWh and finally Duns with 146 MWh. However, Duns and Galashiels have higher estimated overall heat demand when including the anchor loads and non-domestic buildings. Additionally, all 3 clusters have a similar area of roughly 200,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

In addition to these heat networks, the council is already conducting feasibility work on a further two potential heat networks. Croft Street (in Galashiels) has significant potential heat demand which could be supplied by waste heat from wastewater mains pipes close to the area of demand. Tweedbank, east of Galashiels, contains the council's largest development site and represents a major opportunity for the council to facilitate the development of a heat network.

The Home Analytics data indicates that 912 properties in the Scottish Borders already have communal heating as their primary heating. The council conducted further analysis matching energy and heat use with building types to identify potential communal heating opportunities across the Scottish Borders. This produced several hundred potential opportunities which the council will take forward as a core component through the Heat Network Delivery Plan.

The Potential Heat Network Zones, ongoing feasibilities, and communal heating systems opportunities area mapped in Figure 6.

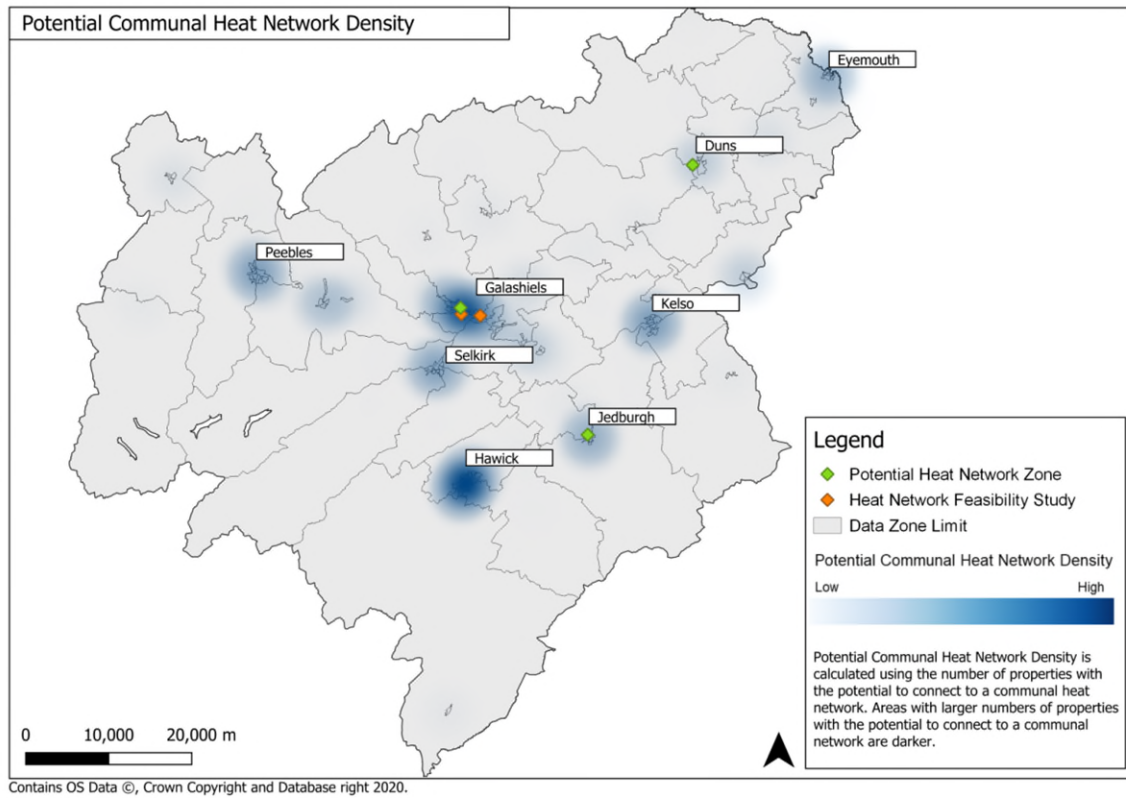
The data used for this analysis is based on a combination of surveys and modelling carried out over many years. Thus, it might be outdated when compared with current building use or characteristics. While this is not a major problem when identifying many properties in an area, it can have an impact when assessing feasibility of heat networks, the heat demand and especially the defined anchor loads which might have been repurposed.

The following sections show maps and table summaries of the decarbonisation pathways for individual Potential Delivery Areas. The maps display:

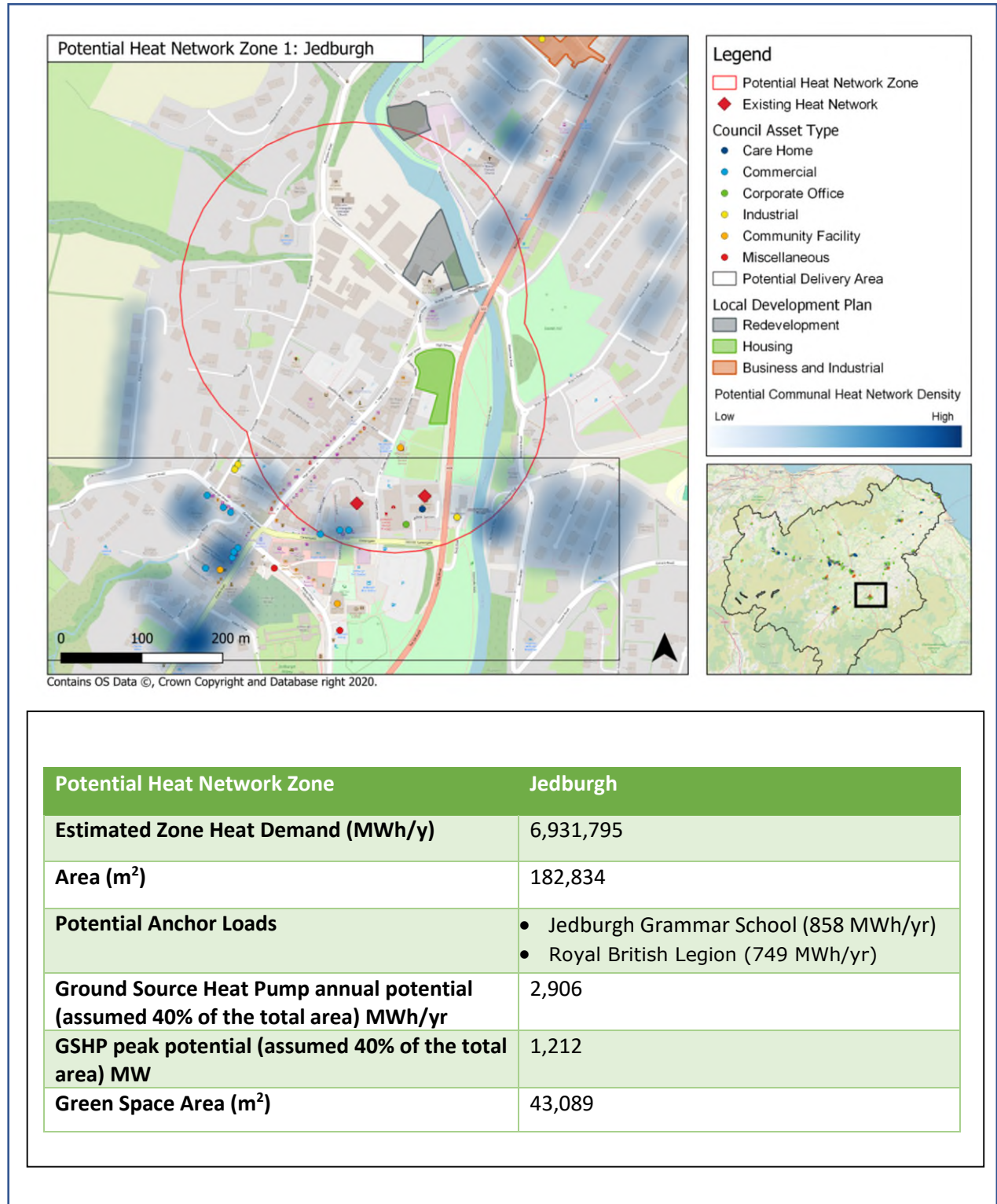
- The boundaries of a Potential Heat Network Zone based on an analysis of anchor load requirement coupled with linear heat density.
- Existing heat networks which might offer an opportunity for interconnectivity and expansion.
- A mapping of the various types of council assets to identify potential for these to improve the feasibility of a heat network.
- Local development plan sites, displaying potential opportunities to align programmes with development activities as part of a holistic approach to regenerate and decarbonise the area.
- Opportunities for potential communal heat networks.

Tabular data alongside each Potential Heat Network Zone also provides detailed information highlighting the heat demand profile, possible anchor loads and potential heat supply sources.

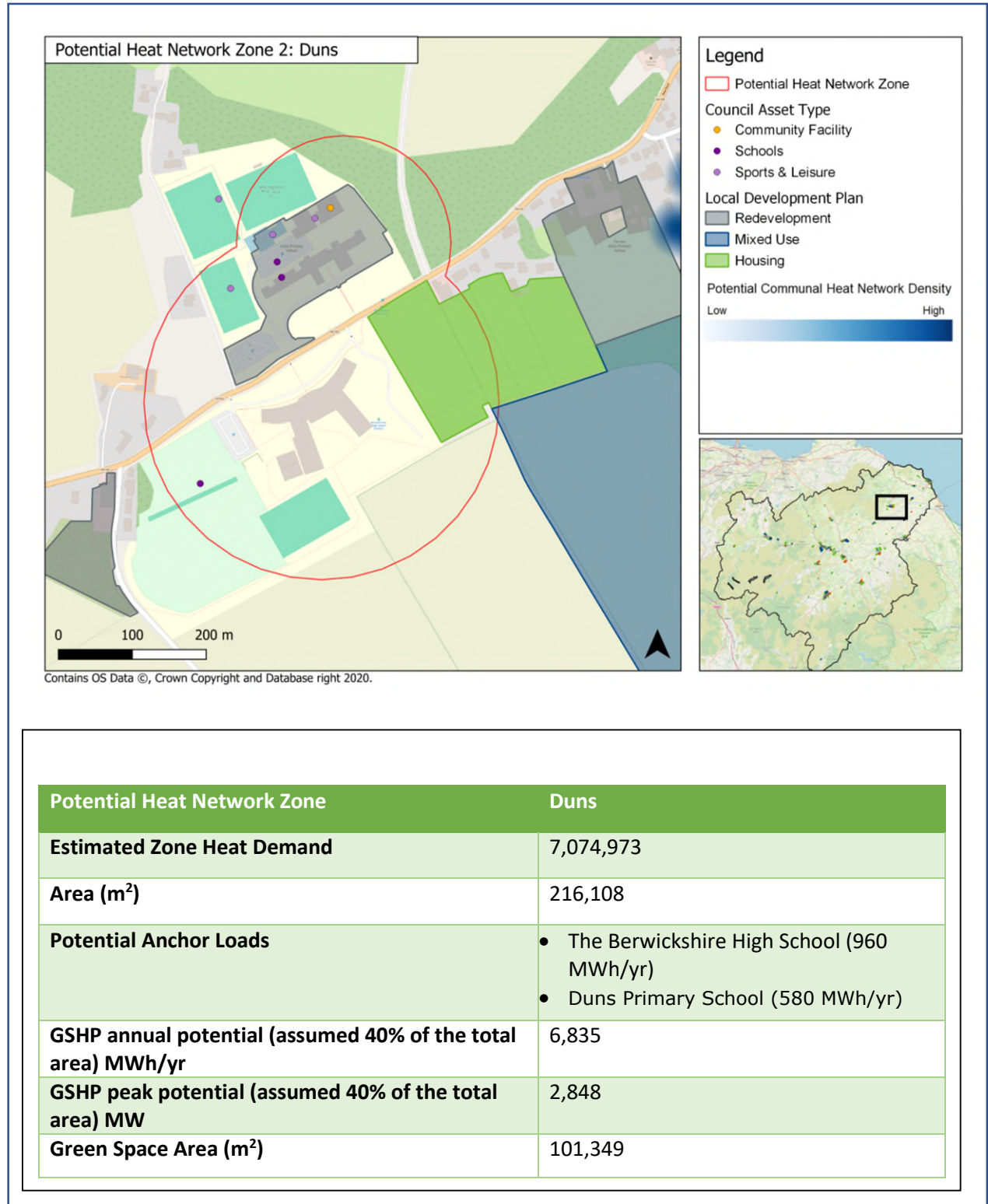
**Figure 6: This map pinpoints all heat network-related opportunities identified and being taken forward through this Delivery Plan.**



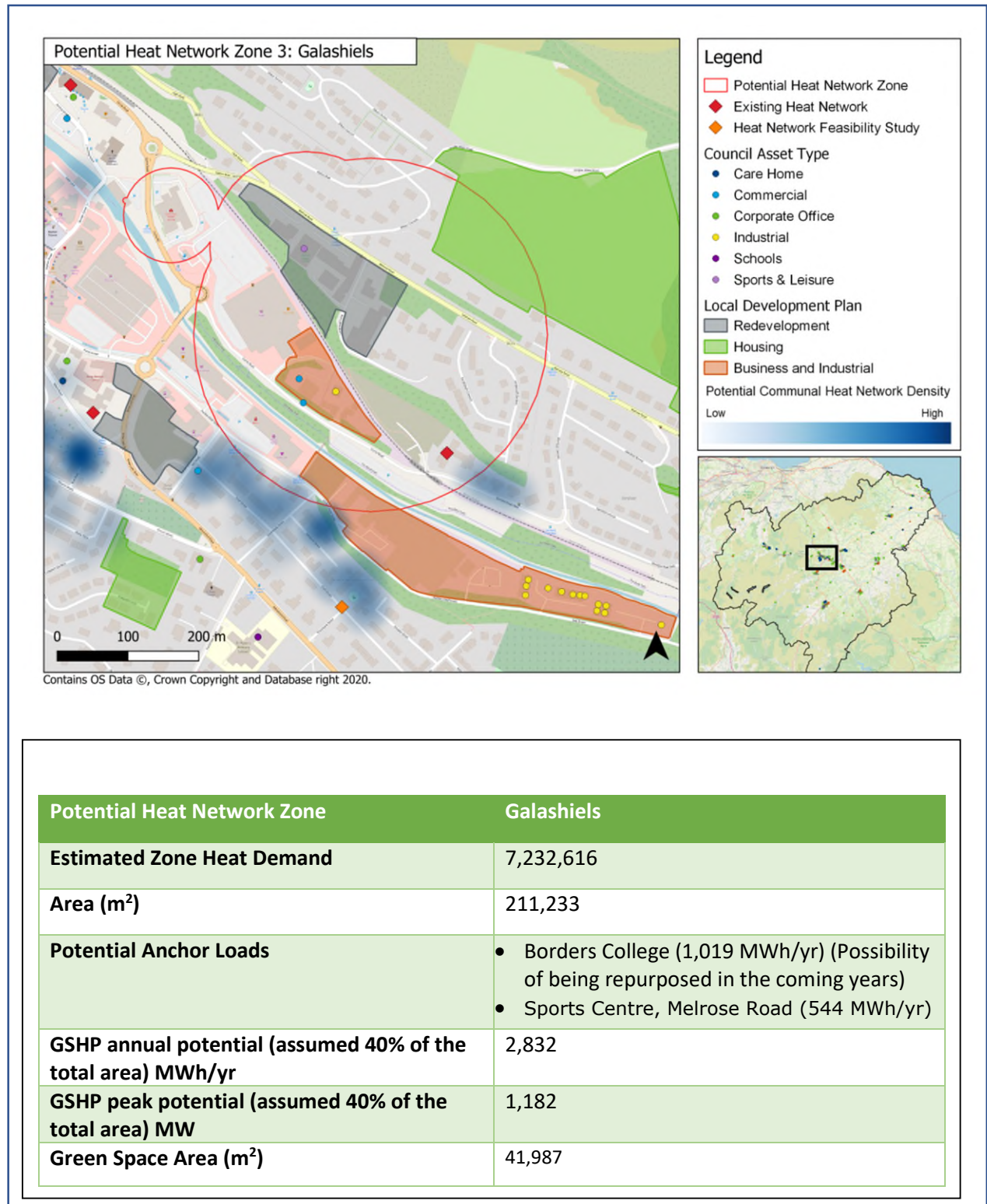
## Potential Heat Network Zone 1: Jedburgh



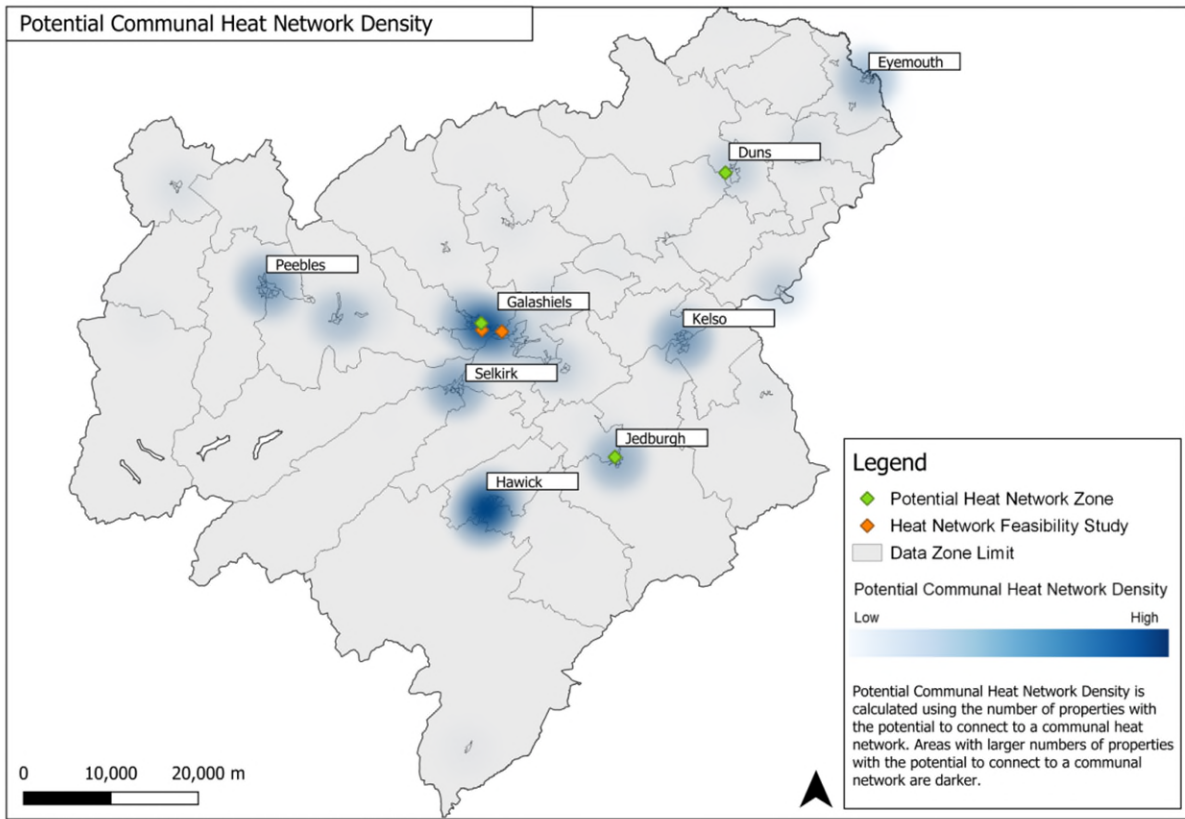
Potential Heat Network Zone 2: Duns



### Potential Heat Network Zone 3: Galashiels



## Potential Communal Heating Systems

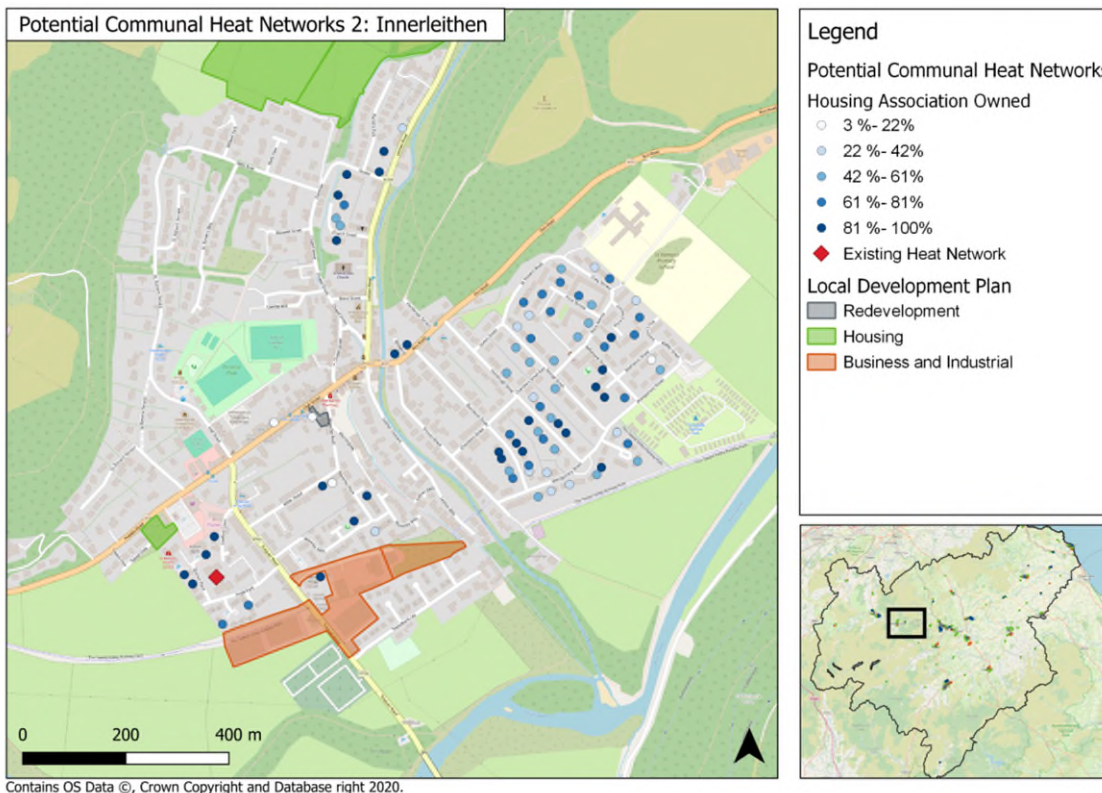
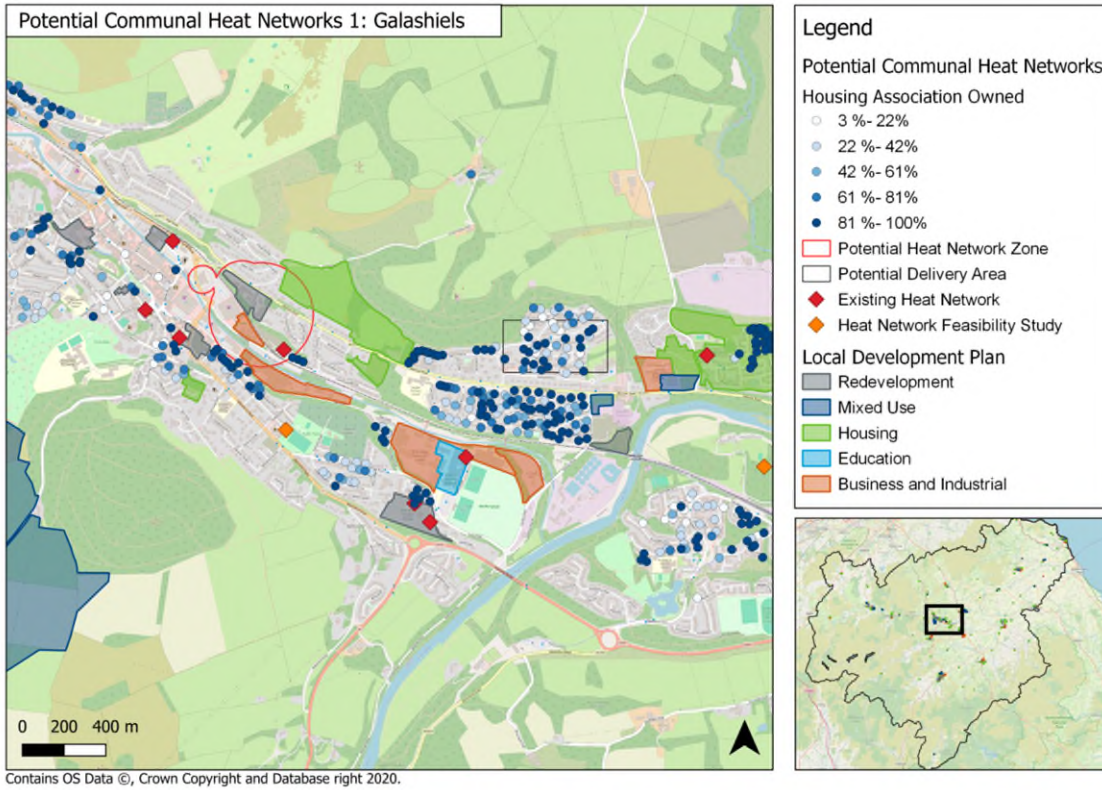


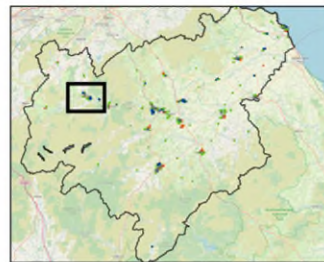
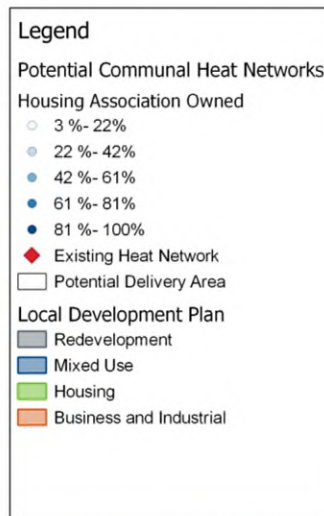
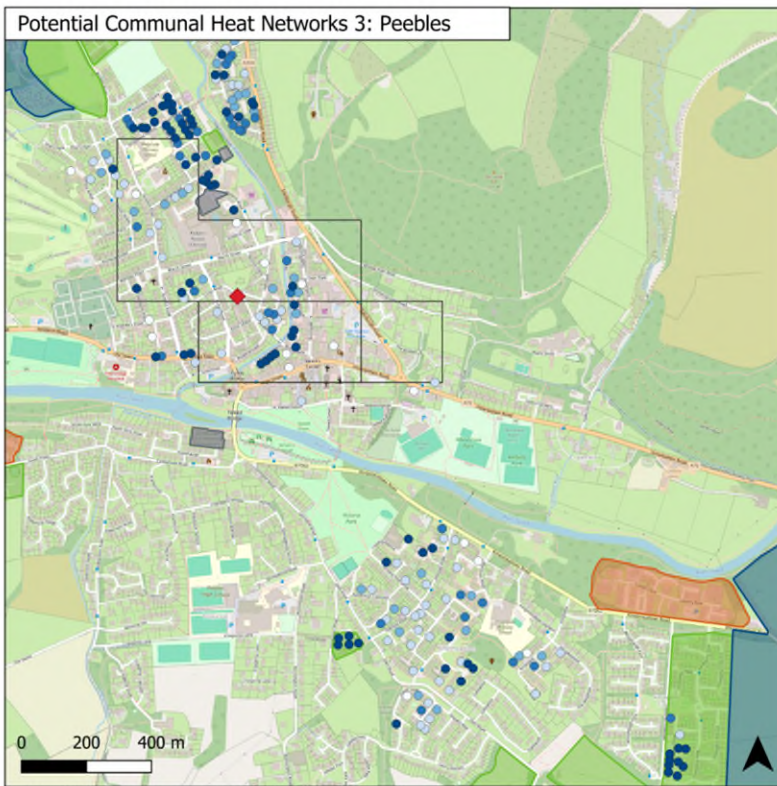
### Potential Communal Heating Systems

<b>Total Heat demand (MWh/y)</b>	139,332
<b>Total Heat demand on gas blocks (MWh/y)</b>	117,863
<b>Total Heat demand off gas blocks (MWh/y)</b>	21,469
<b>Total Number of Properties</b>	13,413 (in 2,459 blocks)
<b>Percentage owned by housing association</b>	66.4%

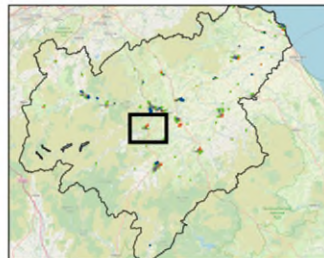
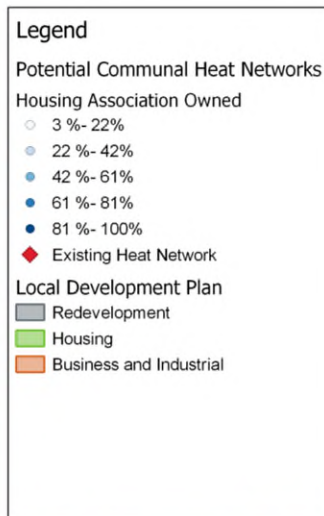
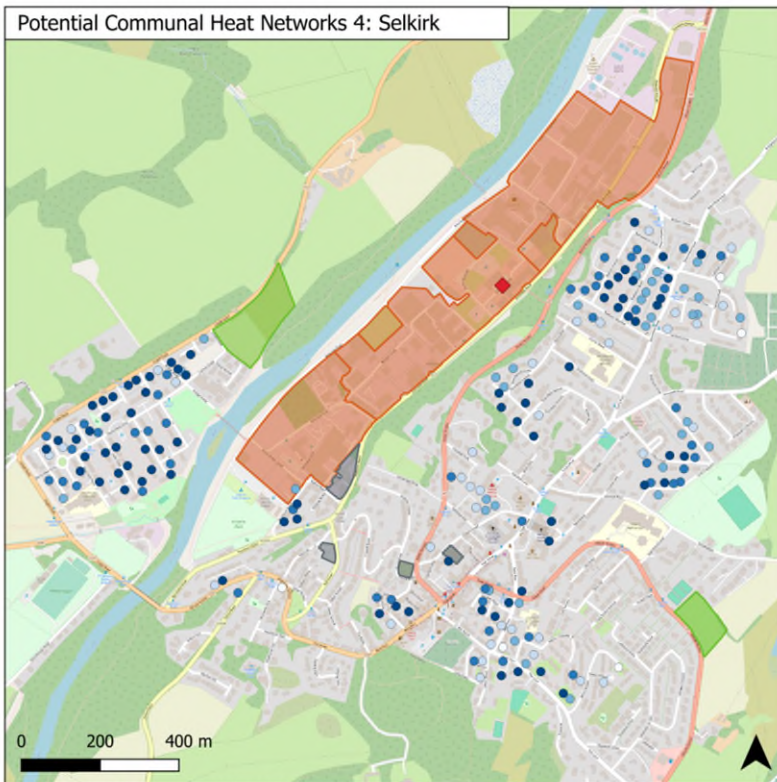


Detailed maps of potential communal heating system opportunities are presented below with each blue dot representing one system and coloured based on the proportion of social housing properties.

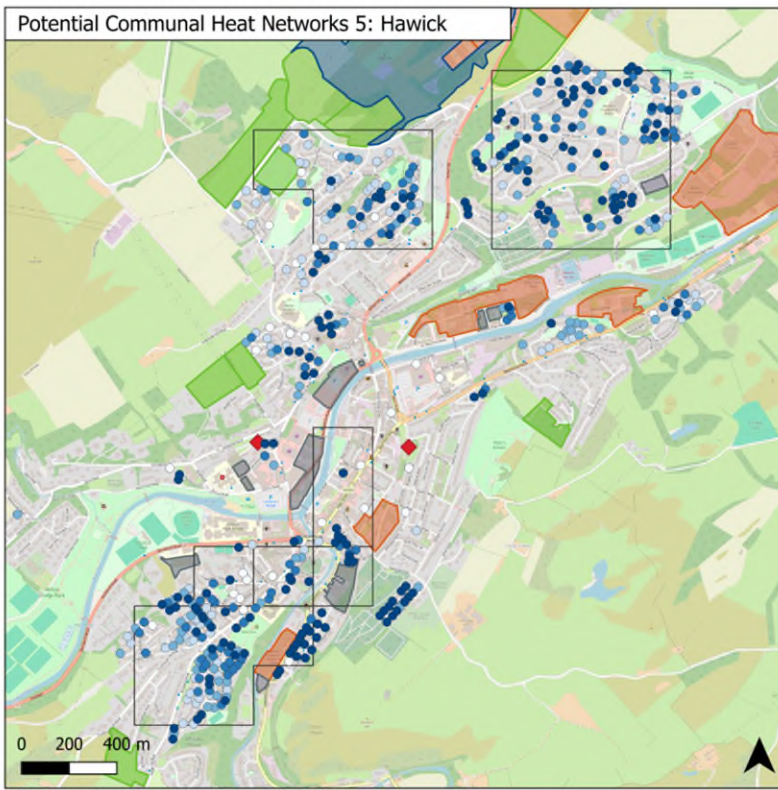




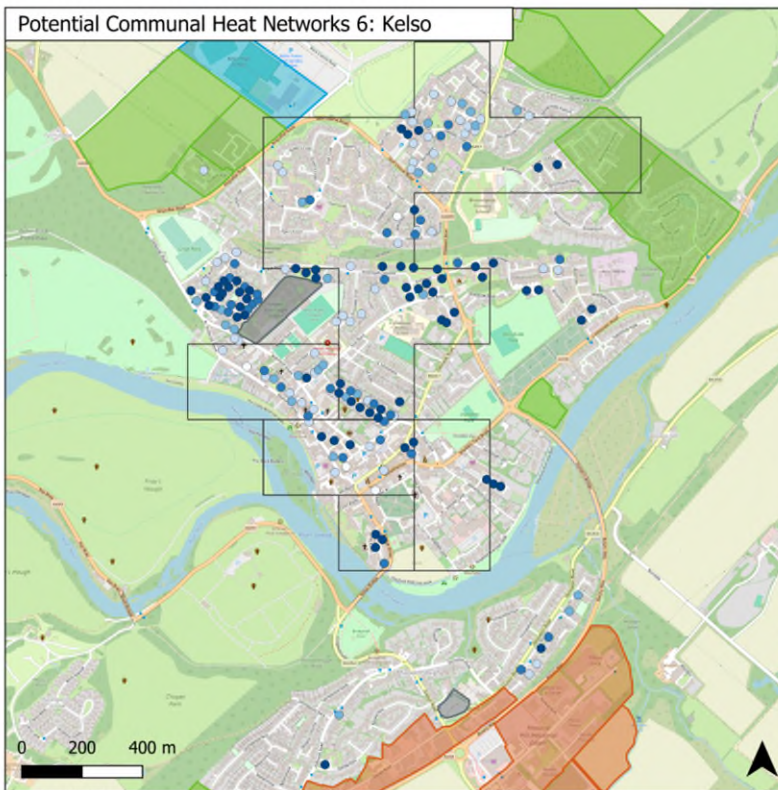
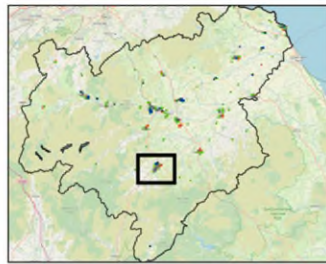
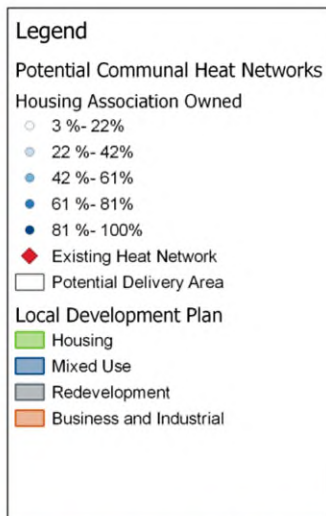
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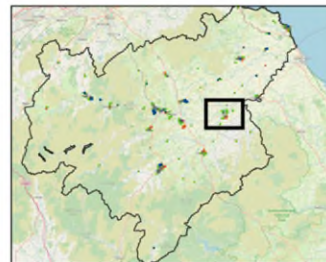
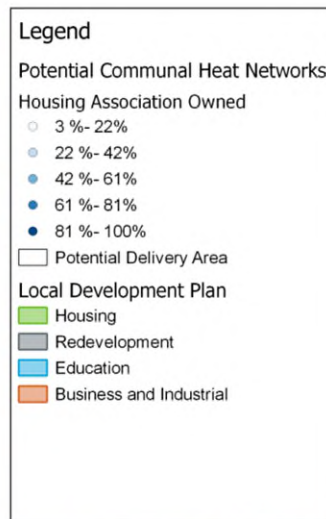
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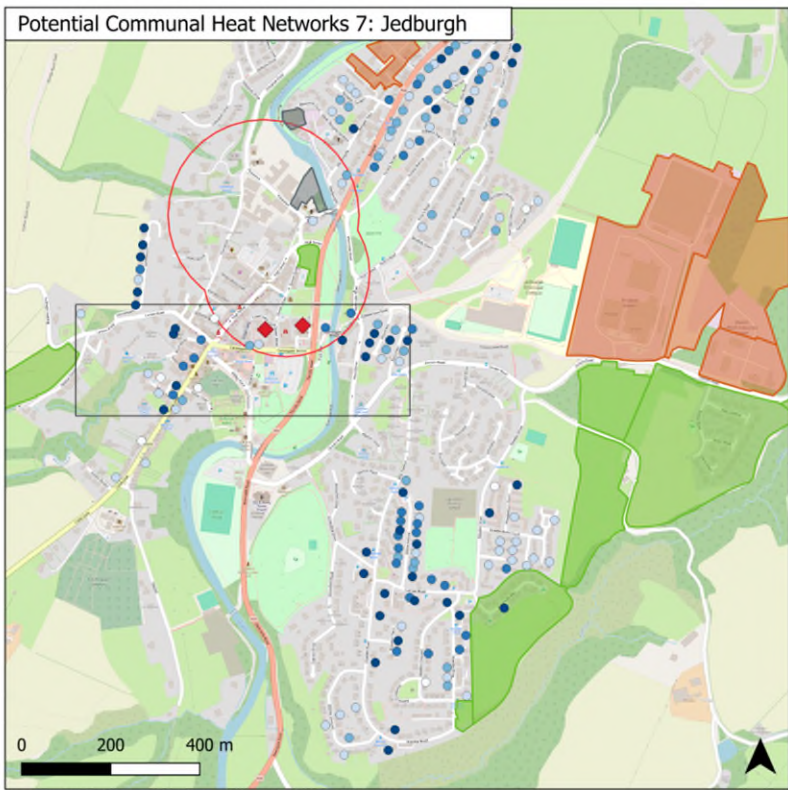


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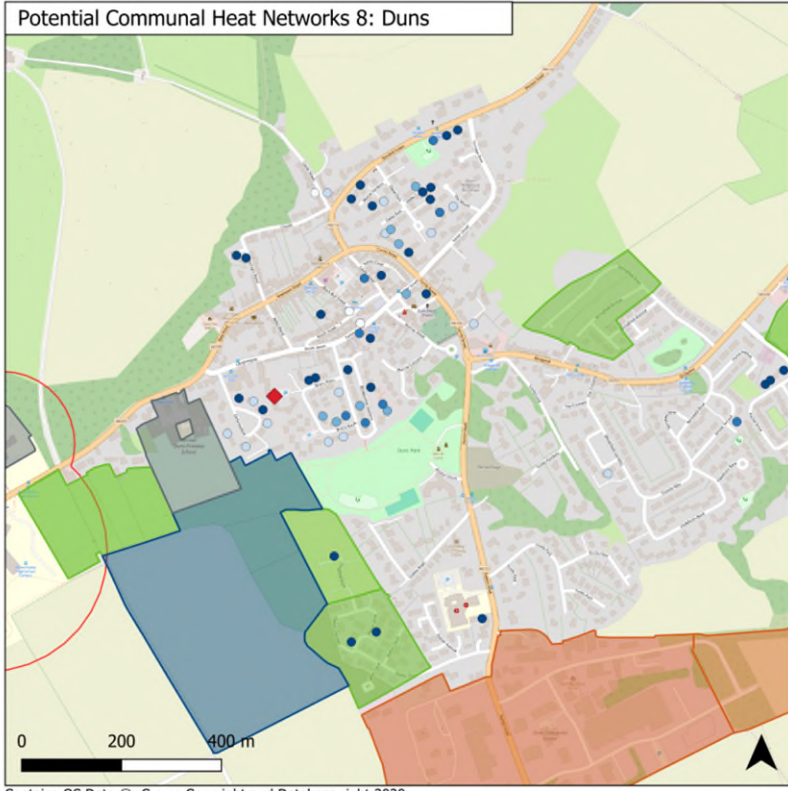
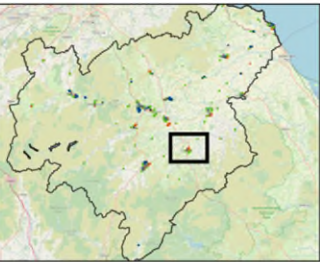


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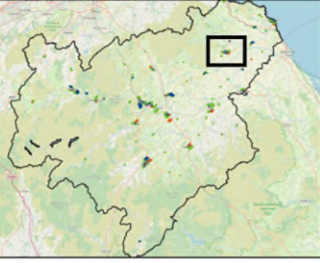
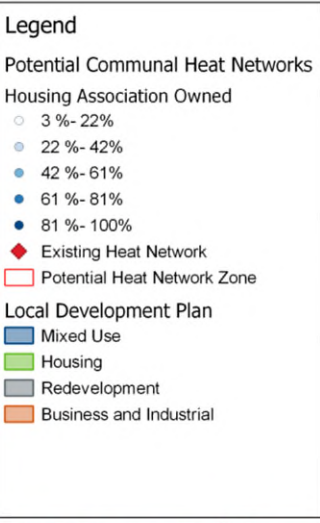




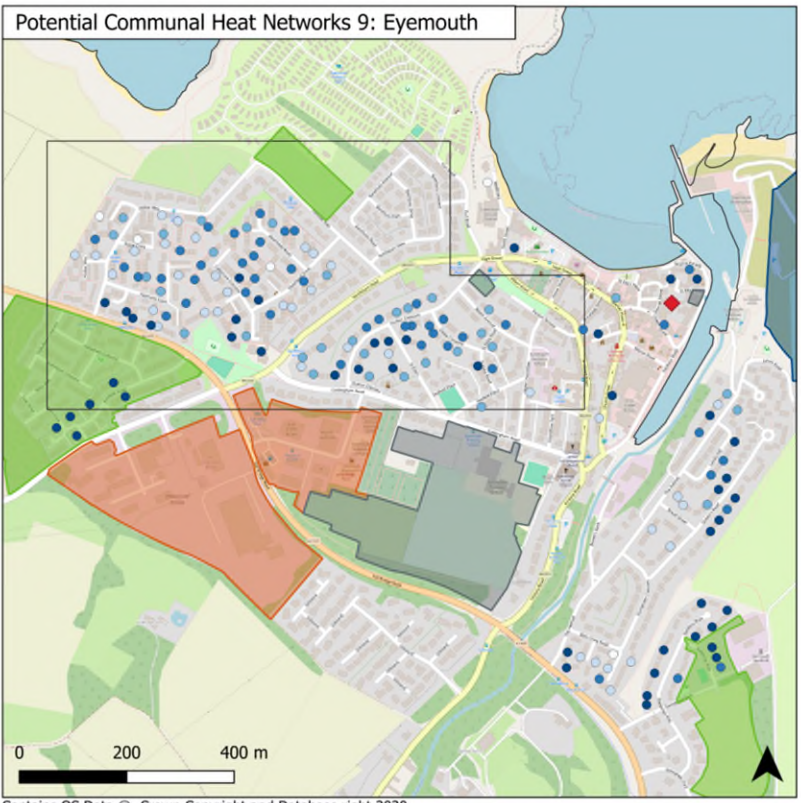
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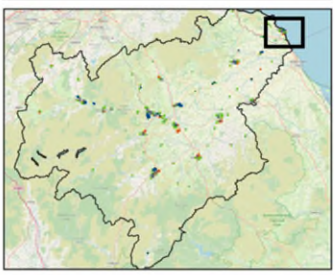
Potential Communal Heat Networks 9: Eyemouth



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Legend

- Potential Communal Heat Networks
- Housing Association Owned
- 3 %- 22%
  - 22 %- 42%
  - 42 %- 61%
  - 61 %- 81%
  - 81 %- 100%
- ◆ Existing Heat Network
  - Potential Delivery Area
- Local Development Plan
- Mixed Use
  - Housing
  - Redevelopment
  - Business and Industrial



## 3 Monitoring and reporting

### 3.1 Data for reporting and monitoring

The success of the LHEES will be measured through the ability to deliver the LHEES Vision and priorities set out in section 3. The LHEES will be monitored and evaluated annually against the national and the local targets for energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation, set out in the LHEES. The process will be undertaken by the Principal LHEES Officer, who will also ensure that the learning outcomes from initial stages are adopted and used to refine the longer-term plans and actions in the LHEES.

### 3.2 Impact assessment

A series of impact assessments were undertaken as part of developing the LHEES and this Delivery Plan.

- Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA)
- Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)
- Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)
- Health Inequality Impact Assessment (HIIA)
- Rural Proofing

The council will assess whether there is need for additional impact assessments and/or mitigating actions beyond the LHEES and Delivery Plan as work progresses toward implementation of projects activities. For activities involving the use of personal or identifiable data, a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be conducted.

The council will give due regard to equalities and shall not unfairly discriminate based on any protected characteristics.

## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

### Stage 1 Scoping and Assessing for Relevance

#### Section 1 Details of the Proposal

<b>A. Title of Proposal:</b>	Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy 2024-2029
<b>B. What is it?</b>	A new Policy/Strategy/Practice
<b>C. Description of the proposal:</b> (Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes, including the context within which it will operate))	<p>The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) is a locally led and tailored approach to set out a long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders area. The LHEES has been led by Scottish Borders Council (SBC) with input from numerous stakeholders and via a public consultation. However, the ambition applies to all buildings in the Scottish Borders area thus the LHEES is a shared vision of how all building owners can retrofit their properties. The Scottish Borders LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland’s statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net zero emissions by 2045 and 75% reduction by 2030.</li> <li>• In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.</li> </ul> <p>This strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.</li> <li>• identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone; and</li> <li>• prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.</li> </ul> <p>Accompanying the strategies is the Delivery Plan, which is developed in partnership with key stakeholders to set out the actions, initiatives, and programmes to support the delivery of this strategy.</p>

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	<p>The LHEES vision is:</p> <p><i>Increase the energy efficiency of our homes and buildings, offer affordable warmth via zero emission heat, and deliver this as a just transition which tackles fuel poverty and builds community wealth.</i></p> <p>The priorities that will help to achieve this vision are:</p> <p><u>Cost of heating</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty by focusing on areas with high fuel poverty, leveraging EES:ABS and social landlord commitments and regulations.</li> <li>• Drive energy efficiency to make warmth affordable for all.</li> </ul> <p><u>Heat Decarbonisation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the electrification of heat and renewable installation across buildings in the region.</li> <li>• Support the development of zero emission heat networks, communal heating &amp; renewables.</li> <li>• Target “low-regrets” heating opportunities in off-gas areas.</li> </ul> <p><u>Just Transition</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the local economy and improve the regional skills, employment and supply chain.</li> <li>• Utilise procurement, delivery models, planning, regulation, and other powers to make this transition work for the people.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D. Service Area:</b> <b>Department:</b></p>	<p>Infrastructure &amp; Environment Housing Strategy</p>
<p><b>E. Lead Officer:</b> (Name and job title)</p>	<p>Donna Bogdanovic – Lead Officer (Head of Housing Strategy and Development) Neil Robertson – Principal Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Coordinator</p>



<p><b>F. Other Officers/Partners involved:</b> (List names, job titles and organisations)</p>	<p>The LHEES is an area-wide plan for the whole of Scottish Borders and not just the Council, it is crucial for the success of the LHEES to prioritise cross-party engagement and collective working. Engagement allows key stakeholders to raise their concerns or opportunities during the development stages, ensuring smooth and effective implementation moving forwards. The Council has previously engaged with stakeholders to develop the local energy efficiency policies such as the Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency policy, and continued this engagement throughout the LHEES process.</p> <p>The LHEES Project group has been established to oversee the development of LHEES. Members of this group include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers in the Housing Strategy, Policy and Development Team</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Estates</li> <li>• Turner and Townsend</li> <li>• Changeworks</li> </ul> <p>The Borders Home Energy Forum is overseeing the development of the LHS, this group includes senior officers at SBC and chief executives of the four local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and a range of other external organisations</p>
<p><b>G. Date(s) IIA completed:</b></p>	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023</p>

**Section 2 Will there be any impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?**

Yes

If yes, - please state here:

LHEES is not a standalone strategy, it links to a number of other inter-agency strategies, policies and planning structures, including:

- Scottish Borders Council, Council Plan
- Scottish Borders Community Plan
- Scottish Borders Council: Delivering the Climate Change Route Map – ECCI May 2023
- Scottish Borders Council Estate Strategy 2022-2027/32
- Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-2028
- Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy (AWHEES) 2019-2023
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024-29
- Scottish Borders Local Development Plan
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Borderlands Strategic Low Carbon Masterplan
- Edinburgh and South East Scotland Regional Prosperity Framework
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Roadmap to Decarbonisation: Retrofit of Social Housing Stock in the South of Scotland
- Regional Prosperity Framework

**Section 3 Legislative Requirements**

<b>3.1 Relevance to the Equality Duty:</b>	
<p><b>Do you believe your proposal has any relevance under the Equality Act 2010?</b>  <i>(If you believe that your proposal may have some relevance – however small please indicate yes. If there is no effect, please enter “No” and go to Section 3.2.)</i></p>	
<b>Equality Duty</b>	<b>Reasoning:</b>
<p><b>A. Elimination of discrimination (both direct &amp; indirect), victimisation and harassment.</b> <i>(Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)</i></p>	<p>Yes. The implementation of LHEES will have an impact on the whole population of the Scottish Borders as the ambition applies to all buildings in the area</p>
<p><b>B. Promotion of equality of opportunity?</b>  <i>(Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)</i></p>	<p>Yes. The development and implementation of LHEES and the action plan will identify and promote equality of opportunity</p>
<p><b>C. Foster good relations?</b>  <i>(Will your proposal help to foster or encourage good relations between those who have different equality characteristics?)</i></p>	<p>Yes. The implementation of LHEES is dependent on partnership working and requires engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Through implementation there is also the potential to engage further and to build new relationships</p>

3.2 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal? (You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups)				
Please tick below as appropriate, outlining any potential impacts on the undernoted equality groups this proposal may have and how you know this.				
	Impact			Please explain the potential impacts and how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Age</b> Older or younger people or a specific age grouping		✓		<p>The Scottish Borders has an aging population with the projected growth of people over 75 is expected to increase by 30% over the period 2018-2028. This means there is a higher proportion of older people in the Scottish Borders.</p> <p>The LHEES aims to support people to understand what actions they can take to become more energy efficient and where they can get financial support. Those over a certain age can often be more susceptible to the cold and therefore be eligible for additional help. This can help people lower energy bills through improved energy efficiency and even adding solar panels on the roof to mitigate some of the increased electricity costs.</p>
<b>Disability</b> e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring		✓		<p>The LHEES aims to support people to understand what actions they can take to become more energy efficient and where they can get financial support. Those with certain disabilities can often be eligible for benefits such as DLA or PIP, making them eligible for Cold weather payment and other schemes. This can help people lower energy bills through improved energy efficiency and even adding solar panels on the roof to mitigate some of the increased electricity costs.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment/ Gender Identity</b> anybody whose gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth		✓		<p>The LHEES does not include any plans or actions that directly relate to, or will otherwise impact any of the equality groups, meaning the strategy is likely to have no impact on these groups. The LHEES 's ambition for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders will focus on improving all buildings across the area. So while there is no direct impact on these equality groups there will still be a positive impact by making homes and buildings more energy efficient and more affordable to heat, reducing fuel poverty.</p>
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> people who are married or in a civil partnership		✓		
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to <b>maternity</b> leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, <b>protection</b> against <b>maternity</b> discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),		✓		

<b>Race Groups:</b> including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)		✓		
<b>Religion or Belief:</b>		✓		
<b>Sex</b>		✓		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		✓		

### 3.3 Fairer Scotland Duty

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.

#### Is the proposal strategic?

Yes

#### If yes, please indicate any potential impact on the undernoted groups this proposal may have and how you know this:

	Impact			State here how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.		✓		The LHEES is driven by Scottish Government targets, including ‘In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty’ and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. By increasing the energy efficiency of all buildings, including all homes will mean people live in a warm home which if more affordable to heat.
<b>Material Deprivation</b> – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies		✓		The LHEES is driven by Scottish Government targets, including ‘In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty’ and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. By increasing the energy efficiency of all buildings, including all homes will mean people live in a warm home which if more affordable to heat.

<b>Area Deprivation</b> – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport)		✓		LHEES will have an impact on the whole population of the Scottish Borders as the ambition applies to all buildings in the area, including rural areas.
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> – social class i.e. parents’ education, employment and income		✓		LHEES should have a positive impact on employment in the Scottish Borders, creating jobs and opportunities for businesses.
<b>Looked after and accommodated children and young people</b>	✓			The LHEES ‘s will focus on improving all buildings across the Scottish Borders area. So there will be no direct impact on these groups
<b>Carers</b> paid and unpaid including family members	✓			
<b>Homelessness</b>	✓			
<b>Addictions and substance use</b>	✓			
<b>Those involved within the criminal justice system</b>	✓			

<b>3.4 Armed Forces Covenant Duty (<i>Education and Housing/ Homelessness proposals only</i>)</b>	
<p>This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to the three matters listed below in Education and Housing/ Homelessness matters.</p> <p>This relates to current and former armed forces personnel (regular or reserve) and their families.</p> <p><b>Is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty applicable?</b>  <b>No</b></p> <p>If “Yes”, please complete below</p>	
<b>Covenant Duty</b>	<b>How this has been considered and any specific provision made:</b>
<b>The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;</b>	
<b>The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces;</b>	
<b>The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.</b>	

## Section 4 Full Integrated Impact Assessment Required

Select No if you have answered “No” to all of Sections 3.1 – 3.3.

### Yes

If yes, please proceed to Stage 2 and complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment

**If a full impact assessment is not required briefly explain why there are no effects and provide justification for the decision.**

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<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	Neil Robertson and Donna Bogdanovic
<b>Designation:</b>	Principal Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Coordinator Head of Housing Strategy and Development
<b>Date:</b>	02/11/2023
<b>Counter Signature Director:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

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## Stage 2 Evidence Gathering and Consultation

<b>A. Title of Proposal:</b>	Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy 2024-2029
<b>B. Service Area:</b> <b>Department:</b>	Infrastructure & Environment Housing Strategy
<b>C. Lead Officer:</b> (Name and job title)	Donna Bogdanovic – Lead Officer (Head of Housing Strategy and Development) Neil Robertson – Principal Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Coordinator
<b>D. Other Officers/Partners involved:</b> (List names, job titles and organisations)	<p>The LHEES is an area-wide plan for the whole of Scottish Borders and not just the Council, it is crucial for the success of the LHEES to prioritise cross-party engagement and collective working. Engagement allows key stakeholders to raise their concerns or opportunities during the development stages, ensuring smooth and effective implementation moving forwards. The Council has previously engaged with stakeholders to develop the local energy efficiency policies such as the Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency policy, and continued this engagement throughout the LHEES process.</p> <p>The LHEES Project group has been established to oversee the development of LHEES. Members of this group include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers in the Housing Strategy, Policy and Development Team</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Estates</li> <li>• Turner and Townsend</li> <li>• Changeworks</li> </ul> <p>The Borders Home Energy Forum is overseeing the development of the LHS, this group includes senior officers at SBC and chief executives of the four local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and a range of other external organisations</p>
<b>E. Date(s) IIA completed:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023

## Section 1 Data and Information

### A. What evidence has been used to inform this proposal?

(Information can include, for example, surveys, databases, focus groups, in-depth interviews, pilot projects, reviews of complaints made, user feedback, academic publications and consultants' reports).

Developing the LHEES is at its core a data-driven process, although it is heavily informed by local knowledge and context, stakeholder engagement and building on existing local and national policies. The council has developed this LHEES in line with the LHEES Guidance issued by the Scottish Government as well as the LHEES Methodology issued by Zero Waste Scotland. These documents follow an eight-stage process summarised here:

#### Stage 1: Policy and strategy review

Identifying the local and national policies, targets and strategies that are linked to the LHEES and understanding how these will guide the development of the LHEES.

#### Stage 2: Data and tools library

Developing a library of all appropriate data and tools that supported analysis in subsequent stages of the LHEES.

#### Stage 3: Strategic zoning and pathways

First, establishing a baseline for the Scottish Borders region's existing building stock including: characteristics, energy efficiency levels and heat supply and performance. Second, this data was then analysed through the lens of the LHEES Considerations to develop a set of 'strategic zones'. Strategic zones provide an overview of the key challenges and opportunities across the region.

#### Stage 4: Generation of initial delivery areas

The data is used to generate potential delivery areas driven by the LHEES Considerations. These delivery areas define the opportunities in the form of potential projects which can be delivered by stakeholders with support from the council.

#### Stage 5: Building-level pathways assessment

Further analysis is carried out to assess the interventions required to decarbonise heating and improve energy efficiency in properties in each delivery area, including a quantification of financial costs and carbon reduction benefits. This is based on data analysis which defines interventions required and financial and carbon implications for buildings across the Scottish Borders.

## Stage 6: Finalisation of delivery areas

Using the outputs from stages 1-5, the delivery areas are finalised into a set of projects after giving consideration to local priorities and any existing local programmes works.

## Stage 7: LHEES Strategy

Based on the findings in stage 1-6, this LHEES Strategy document provides a short and long-term focus of LHEES at the strategic level.

## Stage 8: LHEES Delivery Plan

The accompanying Delivery Plan sets out how the council will implement the LHEES through the next 5 years, based on the priorities identified by the LHEES Vision and building on existing progress made by the council.

SBC participated in a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) pilot for Peebles in 2018/19. The LHEES pilot project proved to be an interesting and worthwhile undertaking and allowed officers to gain a greater understanding of the process involved in undertaking an LHEES. Previous experience and activity in relation to this LHEES will inform development. SBC appointed consultants to support development of the LHEES ahead of delivery phase commencing in 2024. To focus the delivery SBC will recruit a dedicated LHEES Coordinator in 2023.

SBC have been working with Scottish Government and internal colleagues to develop the LHEES in line with government timings and prescribed phased approach, taking due consideration of the LHEES priorities for delivery. SBC will be engaging with key regional stakeholders and ensuring that the LHEES aligns with ongoing and existing priorities and council strategies and areas of delivery such as Climate Change and Sustainability. SBC procured for and appointed a dedicated consultant to support with the data analysis and identification of opportunity zones that are core to a structured and data led LHEES. Changeworks are supporting SBC across both LHEES and the EES:ABS scheme. This is particularly useful and relevant when looking at fuel poverty and domestic properties.

**B. Describe any gaps in the available evidence,-then record this within the improvement plan together with all of the actions you are taking in relation to this (e.g. new research, further analysis, and when this is planned)**

There will be a requirement for ongoing refinement and updating of data sets. Where building use has changed and evolved or where energy use or retrofit improvements work has been carried out, if this is not already accurately reflected in the data it will need doing so by the LHEES delivery team and the relevant data holders. Similarly point data will need to be updated if it is not spatially accurate or reflective. These type of gaps will be addressed throughout the course of the delivery of LHEES, as specific projects or areas of focus allow closer scrutiny of data and evidence. This type of activity will be typical of the work required to ground proof a potential heat network opportunity.

As Building Assessment Reports are completed for non-domestic building in the region, a database will be created to manage, collate and review the content. This in time will build into a useful database which will augment the existing data and allow further potential analysis of Heat Network opportunities. The LHEES team have set up a BARS inbox to receive completed BARS from the region. This activity has commenced and will continue across the LHEES delivery period.

## Section 2 Consultation and Involvement

### A. Which groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement

- Initial workshops to determine the scope of LHEES.
- Establishment of a project steering group within SBC to ensure joined up supportive work around the SBC estates, schools, buildings, carbon reduction.
- Stakeholders' mapping to identify key stakeholders to support the development and implementation of LHEES.
- Ongoing meetings with Registered Social Landlords (RSL) to understand the existing building stock and scheduled work that relates to energy efficiency and decarbonisation, the LHEES milestones and the best means of communication to facilitate the creation of LHEES.
- Ongoing meetings with the Distribution Network Operators (DNO) to discuss the potential role of SPEN in supporting the delivery of LHEES.
- Ongoing meetings with local estates, NHS, Police about their focus and plans that are align with the LHEES.
- Conducted interactive workshop to explore and discuss initial Delivery Areas and recommendations alongside the wider policy, strategy and delivery environment.
- Conducted interactive workshop to ask for feedback on the finalised Delivery Areas (incorporating analysis to date). Explore key actions, enablers and challenges to support content for LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Developed a stakeholder engagement plan with scientific method such as deliberative approach to co-create the strategic long-term plan for decarbonise heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across and entire border areas; and gather interests from parties to act as the future drivers to support the delivery of plan.

### B. Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the process

Formal public consultation – This will take place between 29th January 2024 - 8th March 2024

### C. Describe the results of any involvement and how you have taken this into account.

A full report on the engagement and consultation will be carried out. This will include a full table of feedback and how this has helped inform the final LHEES 2024-2029.

### D. Describe any events held and views obtained (if applicable). Add or remove as needed.

Section A describes the meetings and workshops which were undertaken to gather views. A full report on the engagement and consultation will be carried out which will include a description of the engagement undertaken

## Stage 3 Summary and Next Steps

### Section 1 Summary

**Summarise what you have learned then develop this further.**

(Describe the conclusion(s) you have reached from the evidence, and state where the information can be found.)

**Please consider the following:**

**What have you learned from the evidence you have and the involvement undertaken? Does the initial assessment remain valid? What new (if any) impacts have become evident?**

**Is the proposal not to proceed because of a disproportionate impact on equality or Fairer Scotland characteristics?**

All evidence and engagement has been used to inform the final LHEES. This will be outlined in engagement and consultation report which provides a detail analysis of the feedback and how the feedback has been used to inform the final LHEES 2024-2029.

#### **A. Please indicate if the proposal will proceed**

Yes, please see below section 3 for next steps

## Section 2 Sign Off

<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	Neil Robertson and Donna Bogdanovic
<b>Designation:</b>	Principal Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Coordinator Head of Housing Strategy and Development
<b>Date:</b>	02/11/2023
<b>Counter Signature Director:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## Section 3 Monitoring and Review (complete if relevant, remove if not)

**B. State how the implementation and impact of the proposal will be monitored, including implementation of any amendments? For example what type of monitoring will there be? How frequent?**

A Delivery Plan will be developed in partnership with key stakeholders to set out the actions, initiatives, and programmes to support the delivery of LHEES. A LHS Monitoring Tool will be produced annually to monitor the outcomes and actions, which will monitor progress and status of actions.

This will be monitored on a regular basis and an annual progress report will be developed.

**C. What are the practical arrangements for monitoring? For example who will put this in place? When will it start?**

The Housing Strategy Team will develop the Delivery Plan in partnership with key stakeholders. An progress report will be produced annually following the end of the financial year within the period of the LHEES 2024-29, with the first reports being produced during the start of financial year 2025/26.

**D. When is the proposal due for review?**

2029

**E. Who is responsible for ensuring that this happens?**

The Housing Strategy Team.

**F. Please indicate if you have developed an Action Plan to take forward any remaining actions**

Yes



# LHEES 2024-2029 Health Inequalities Impact Assessment

## Introduction

Carrying out a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (HIIA) will help you to consider the impact of your policy\* on people. Using this workbook, alongside the [HIIA: Answers to frequently asked questions](#) guide, will help you to work through the process and strengthen your policy's contribution towards health equity.

The workshop is a core element of the HIIA and, together with a group of key stakeholders, you will work through six questions to identify any impacts your policy will have on: different population groups; health inequalities; and people's human rights. Policies do not impact on people in the same way – impact assessment is a way to consider how people will be affected differently. It will also help you to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty by considering those groups who are protected under the Duty (information about the Duty is available at [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/PublicEqualityDuties](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/PublicEqualityDuties)). During the workshop, the facilitator or lead for the impact assessment will take you through the process and outline the next steps.

The six questions in the workshop are:

- 1 Who will be affected by this policy?
- 2 How will the policy impact on people?
- 3 How will the policy impact on the causes of health inequalities?
- 4 How will the policy impact on people's human rights?
- 5 Will there be any cumulative impacts as a result of the relationship between this policy and others?
- 6 What sources of evidence have informed your impact assessment?

\*The word 'policy' represents any option, procedure, practice, strategy or proposal being assessed.

You should identify impacts as positive or negative, remembering that some policies may have no impacts for a population group.

**Positive impact:** would demonstrate the benefit the policy could have for a population group: how it advances equality, fosters good relations, contributes to tackling health inequalities or upholds human rights.

**Negative impact:** would mean that a population group is at risk of being disadvantaged by the policy, there is a risk of breaching the human rights of people or the requirements of the Equality Duty, or that there is a risk of widening health inequalities.

**No impact:** If you find that the policy will have no impacts for some groups, you do not need to record this information.

## Question 1: Who will be affected by this policy?

Example: Keep this brief, such as ‘Children aged 5–12 years’. There is no need to explore subgroups yet, just provide an indication of how well-defined the target group is at this stage.

The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) is a locally led and tailored approach to set out a long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders area. The LHEES has been led by Scottish Borders Council (SBC) with input from numerous stakeholders and via a public consultation. This strategy aims to:

- set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
- identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and set out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone; and
- prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy ambition for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders will focus on improving all buildings across and will affect everyone who lives in the Scottish Borders.

## Question 2: How will the policy impact on people?

When thinking about how the policy might impact on people, think about it in terms of the right for **everyone** to achieve the highest possible standard of health. The [Right to Health](#) includes both the right to healthcare and the right to a range of factors that can help us lead a healthy life (the determinants of health). Equality and non-discrimination are fundamental to this right. The Right to Health has four related concepts: goods, facilities and services should be available, accessible, acceptable and of good quality. When thinking about how the policy might impact on people, their human rights and the factors that help people to lead healthy lives, consider and discuss:

- Is the policy **available** to different population groups?
- Is the policy **accessible**, (e.g., in terms of physical access, communication needs, transport needs, health literacy, childcare needs, knowledge and confidence)?
- Is the policy **acceptable** to different population groups (e.g., is it sensitive to age, culture and sex)?
- Is the policy of good **quality**, enabling it to have its desired effects and support the above?

Apply these questions to each population group in the following table. Try to identify any factors which can contribute to poorer experiences of health and any potential positive or negative impacts of the policy. Think about people, not characteristics, such as how the policy impact on the right to health of a disabled older man with low literacy who lives in a deprived area.

Population groups & factors contributing to poorer health	Potential Impacts and explanation why
Age	Homes that are cold due to fuel poverty exacerbate health inequalities. Cold homes can cause and worsen respiratory conditions, cardiovascular diseases, poor mental health, dementia, hypothermia and problems with childhood development. The LHEES will have a positive impact on people of all ages and the biggest risk factor was the prospect of it not being delivered.

Population groups & factors contributing to poorer health	Potential Impacts and explanation why
	<p>For children, the major positive impact identified is the link between housing costs and child poverty. Improving the energy efficiency of homes will help to reduce energy costs and provide warm affordable homes. Addressing fuel poverty and quality of housing are important drivers in children’s overall health and wellbeing including physical health and educational attainment.</p> <p>For older adults, due to the changes in health, lifestyle and income which are often associated with, and experienced by, this age group there are a number of areas this strategy could impact upon. Older people, particularly if retired, spend more time in the home which can mean increased fuel bills resulting in households experiencing fuel poverty. Households reducing their fuel bills through energy efficiency measures was identified as important but there were a number of challenges to be tackled including how to encourage and support older owner occupiers who are often asset rich, but cash poor to invest in their homes. This highlighted a need to help owner occupiers of all ages and private landlords become knowledgeable about how to improve the energy efficiency of their home. This also applies to registered social landlord tenants for whom there is a need to balance investing in homes with rental increases so as to not place people in poverty due to increases in their housing costs to pay for the investment.</p>
Disability	<p>Homes that are cold due to fuel poverty exacerbate health inequalities. Cold homes can cause and worsen respiratory conditions, cardiovascular diseases, poor mental health, dementia, hypothermia and problems with childhood development. This also includes disabilities. The LHEES will have a positive impact on people with disabilities.</p> <p>Similar to reasons for age, people with disabilities often spend more time at home which can mean increased fuel bills resulting in households experiencing fuel poverty.</p>
Low income	The LHEES is driven by Scottish Government targets, including ‘In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty’ and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty. By increasing the energy efficiency of homes will mean people live in a warm home which if more affordable to heat.
Living in deprived areas	The LHEES ‘s will focus on improving all buildings across the Scottish Borders area. There is likely to be a positive impact on people on low incomes due to the increased availability of affordable housing. This seeks to ensure housing is affordable to rent/purchase and is affordable to heat, thus contributing to the wellbeing and health of occupants.
Living in remote, rural and island locations	The LHEES will have a positive impact on everyone living in the Scottish Borders as the ambition applies to all buildings in the area, the majority of which live in a rural location. Impacts linked to health include improvements in health, fuel poverty levels and availability of affordable housing in a variety of tenures. There will be more developments in more rural locations and in less accessible rural locations.
Gender Reassignment	<p>The LHEES does not include any plans or actions that directly relate to, or will otherwise impact any of these groups, meaning the strategy is likely to have no impact on these groups. The LHEES ‘s ambition for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders will focus on improving all buildings across the area. So while there is no direct impact on these groups there will still be a positive impact by making homes and buildings more energy efficient and more affordable to heat, reducing fuel poverty.</p> <p>The Scottish Government’s target to tackle fuel poverty will impact the most vulnerable – by improving the energy efficiency of all buildings in the Scottish Borders it will help people living in fuel poverty and help to provide warm affordable homes for all.</p>
Marriage & Civil Partnership	
Pregnancy and Maternity	
Race and ethnicity	
Religion and belief	
Sex	
Sexual orientation	
Looked after children & young people	
Carers	
Homelessness	
Involvement in the criminal justice system	
Addictions & substance misuse	
Staff	
Low literacy / Health Literacy	
Discrimination/stigma	
Refugees and asylum seekers	

Recommendations to reduce or enhance such impacts include:

- Implementing the LHEES and delivery Plan
- Delivering EES:ABS
- Continue to deliver advice on energy efficiency and fuel poverty through updating the website and engaging with a range of stakeholders
- Ongoing collaboration through the Borders Home Energy forum
- Home Energy Efficiency Programme, and other health and wellbeing initiatives are targeted in SIMD areas, or areas identified to be in fuel poverty.
- Rural Proofing Exercise has been undertaken and will be considered going forwards.

To comply with the general equality duty of the Equality Act 2010 when conducting impact assessment, you must demonstrate ‘due regard’ for the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

This means that you must identify, record and eliminate (through appropriate policy changes) any impacts that could amount to unlawful discrimination under the act. Wherever possible you should also try to identify, record and enhance any impacts that enable the policy to advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.

### Question 3: How will the policy impact on the causes of health inequalities?

The wider environmental and social conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age are shaped by the distribution of power, money and resources. These conditions can lead to health inequalities. While considering how your policy will impact on people and their right to health, it is also important to think about how it may impact on the causes of health inequalities (see the table below). Further information on the causes of health inequalities can be found in [NHS Health Scotland’s Health Inequalities Policy Review](#). Not all policies will be able to act or impact on these causes, but it will be useful to reflect on whether yours will. Think about any opportunity this policy might offer to reduce inequalities and also try to identify any ways in which it might inadvertently increase inequalities (you may find the prompts in Appendix 1 helpful). You may have discussed some of these issues when considering question 2.

Will the policy impact on?	Potential impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations to reduce or enhance such impacts
<p><b>Income, employment and work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability and accessibility of work, paid/unpaid employment, wage levels, job security.</li> <li>• Tax and benefits structures</li> <li>• Cost/price controls: housing, fuel, energy, food, clothes, alcohol, tobacco</li> <li>• Working conditions</li> </ul>	<p>Helping those in fuel poverty which includes information and advice on benefits.</p> <p>Through energy efficiency measures, reducing the cost and use of energy in the home and all buildings</p>	<p>Implement the LHEES.</p> <p>Continue to deliver EES:ABS</p> <p>Ongoing collaboration through the Borders Home Energy forum.</p>

Will the policy impact on?	Potential impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations to reduce or enhance such impacts
	Helping to creating jobs and opportunities for businesses.	
<b>The physical environment and local opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability and accessibility of housing, transport, healthy food, leisure activities, green spaces</li> <li>• Air quality and housing/living conditions, exposure to pollutants</li> <li>• Safety of neighbourhoods, exposure to crime.</li> <li>• Transmission of infection</li> <li>• Tobacco, alcohol and substance use</li> </ul>	More access to energy efficient housing and buildings for all	Implement the LHEES. Continue to deliver EES:ABS
<b>Education and learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability and accessibility to quality education, affordability of further education</li> <li>• Early years development, readiness for school, literacy and numeracy levels, qualifications</li> </ul>	Provide good quality energy efficient homes and buildings so children and young people have access to homes and buildings that helps with their development and education	Implement the LHEES
<b>Access to services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of health and social care services, transport, housing, education, cultural and leisure services</li> <li>• Ability to afford, access and navigate these services</li> <li>• Quality of services provided and received</li> </ul>	Provide good quality energy efficient homes and buildings for all  A warm home can help people with health conditions (older people, people with disabilities and health issues)	Implement the LHEES Continue to deliver EES:ABS
<b>Social, cultural and interpersonal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social status</li> <li>• Social norms and attitudes</li> <li>• Tackling discrimination</li> <li>• Community environment</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> <li>• Democratic engagement and representation</li> <li>• Resilience and coping mechanisms</li> </ul>	Not applicable	Implement the LHEES

#### Question 4: How will the policy impact on people's human rights?

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms which everyone is entitled to in order to live with dignity. They can be classified as **absolute**, **limited** or **qualified**. Absolute rights must not be restricted in any way. Other rights can be limited or restricted in certain circumstances where there is a need to take into account the rights of other individuals or wider society. Not all policies will be able to demonstrate an impact against human rights, but it will be useful to consider if yours will. Think about the potential impacts you have identified and consider whether these could help fulfil or breach legal obligations under the Human Rights Act. Can you think of any actions that might promote positive impacts or mitigate negative impacts? The following table includes rights that may be particularly relevant to health and social care policies.

Articles	Potential impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations to reduce or enhance such impacts
The right to life (Absolute right)	Housing is a human right – having access to a good quality energy efficient homes and buildings.	Implement the LHEES and Delivery Plan.

Articles	Potential impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations to reduce or enhance such impacts
The right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way (Absolute right)	Not applicable	
The right to liberty (Limited right)	Not applicable	
The right to a fair trial (Limited right)	Not applicable	
The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence (Qualified right)	Affordable housing Energy efficiency Sustainable community	Continue to deliver energy efficiency programmes.
The right to freedom of thought, belief and religion (Qualified right)	Not applicable	
The right to freedom of expression (Qualified right)	Not applicable	
The right not to be discriminated against	Not applicable	
Any other rights relevant to this policy	No further rights identified	

### Question 5: Will there be any cumulative impacts as a result of the relationship between this policy and others?

Consider the potential for a build-up of negative impacts on population groups as a result of this policy being combined with other policies, e.g. relocation of services at the same time as changes to public transport networks.

There are no negative impacts that will result from this policy.

### Question 6: What sources of evidence have informed your impact assessment?

Formal sources of evidence to consider include population data and statistics, consultation findings and other research. However, your professional or personal experience and knowledge of individuals and communities (and the potential impact of a policy on them) is equally as valuable. Further information can be found in the planning a workshop section. <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/planning-resources-hiia-scoping-workshop> What evidence have you used to support your impact assessment thinking? Have you identified any areas where more evidence is needed or where there are gaps in your current knowledge to inform the assessment?

Evidence type	Evidence available	Gaps in evidence
<b>Population data</b> E.g. demographic profile, service uptake.	Aging population Children and young people	N/A
<b>Consultation and involvement findings</b> E.g. any engagement with service users, local community, particular groups.	Wide range of engagement have been carried out	N/A
<b>Research</b> E.g. good practice guidelines, service evaluations, literature reviews.	Followed LHEES guidance. Collated a wide range of evidence and policies (both nationally and locally) to inform the LHEES	N/A
<b>Participant knowledge</b> E.g. experiences of working with different population groups, experiences of different policies.	Part of the LHEES includes consulting and engaging with everyone in the Scottish Borders, including all ages groups and people from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. It's important the LHEES	N/A

	is informed by different policies but it also impacts on other policies being developed	
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**Summary of discussion**

The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) 2024-2029 has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the population of the Scottish Borders. The LHEES delivers a positive impact on people and their right to health, the causes of health inequalities, and people’s human rights. The Public Sector Equality Duty has been considered and actions have been identified to ensure impacts are positive and all opportunities to improve health outcomes are pursued. There are no data gaps that have been identified.

The discussions and recommendations from this HIIA will form part of the evidence to inform the implementation of the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) 2024-2029

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# SCREENING REPORT

Scottish Government version

## STEP 1 – DETAILS OF THE PLAN

**Responsible Authority:**

Box 1. Scottish Borders Council (SBC)

**Title of the plan:**

Box 2. Scottish Borders Council's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy & Delivery Plan

**What prompted the plan:**

(e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)

Box 3. Scottish Statutory Instrument was passed by the Scottish Parliament which requires Scottish Borders Council to have Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy and delivery plan in place by the end of 2023. The Order is the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Scotland) Order 2022 and came into force on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

[Link to Scottish Statutory Instruments - The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies \(Scotland\) Order 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

**Plan subject:**

(e.g. transport)

Box 4. Energy (Energy Efficiency & Heat)

**Screening** is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Based on Boxes 3 and 4, our view is that:

**Scottish Borders Council will require to conduct an SEA, as the environmental effects are likely to be significant:** Please indicate below what Section of the 2005 Act this plan falls within

Section 5(3)

**Contact details:**

Neil Robertson  
Neil.Robertson@scotborders.gov.uk

**Date:**

15.11.23

## STEP 2 – CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

### Context of the Plan:

Box 5. The following strategies and policies define the targets and ambitions context for Scottish borders in relation to fuel poverty and energy efficiency.

#### **National Context for Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES)**

These are the key national plans & strategies underpinning the Scottish Government's ambitions around net zero, and implications for building energy efficiency & heating.

#### **Draft Energy Strategy & Just Transition Plan (2023)**

Plan for the whole energy system in Scotland including heating, transport, energy generation.

Vision: by 2045 a climate-friendly energy system that delivers affordable, resilient and clean energy supplies for Scotland's households, communities and businesses.

#### **Heat in Building Strategy (2021)**

Pathway to meet 2045 net zero emissions across all homes & buildings

Affordable heat & address fuel poverty.

Support economic investment & supply chain development.

Introduces LHEES (heat & energy efficiency) as a way to support the coordination of action in Scotland to help meet targets in relation to heat & energy efficiency.

#### **Heat Networks (Scotland) Act (2021)**

Regulation of heat networks to support growth of heat networks in Scotland.

Coming into effect in 2024.

#### **Key targets outlined in national plans/strategies:**

- Net zero emissions by **2045** and 75% reduction by **2030**.
- 2.6 Terawatt hours (TWh) of output by **2027** and 6 TWh by **2030**.
- **By 2030** emissions from buildings have to be 68% lower than 2020 levels, which requires zero emissions heating in:
  - The vast majority of 170,000 off-gas fossil fuel heated homes
  - At least 1 million on-gas homes
- By 2030 the large majority of buildings achieve a good standard of energy efficiency.
- By 2033 all homes have the equivalent of EPC C.
- **By 2045** our homes and buildings no longer contribute to climate change.

**Description of the Plan:**

LHEES specifically are expected to be primarily driven by Scotland’s statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty:

- Net zero emissions by 2045 and 75% reduction by 2030.
- In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.

LHEES – as outlined further below – is a new duty to support the coordination and delivery of the Scottish Government’s objectives & targets in relation to heat and energy efficiency. Specifically, LHEES is a key component of the Government’s Heat in Buildings Strategy.

The statutory duties around LHEES have been enacted by the Scottish Government to ensure consistent, comprehensive coverage of Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies across Scotland, and enable local planning, coordination and delivery of the decarbonisation of Scotland’s homes and buildings.

Box 6. LHEES will work as a long-term plan for Scottish Borders Council to decarbonise heat and improve energy efficiency within its domestic and non-domestic stock. By implementing the LHEES, SBC will:

- Set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to reach net zero.
- Identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and sets out the principal measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone.
- Prioritise areas for delivery of heat decarbonisation action.
- Act as a prospectus for where government funding and private investment for heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency investment should be targeted.

An LHEES is structured in two parts:

- A Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy
- A Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Delivery Plan

LHEES will underpin an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery. LHEES Strategies will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.

With the LHEES Strategy, SBC will identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and set out the principal opportunities and measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone; and with the Delivery Plan, SBC will prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

**Note the identification of Strategic Zones and Delivery Areas through the LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan will be indicative. Site specific recommendations regarding priorities for implementation are beyond the purpose and scope of this Strategy and Delivery Plan and will be dealt with at the more appropriate scale of site-specific proposals. Any site-specific impacts are equally more substantially assessed at this detailed planning and implementation stage where required.**

The scope of LHEES is focused on energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation. It does not extend to wider local energy system planning directly. Completion of the LHEES Strategies and Delivery Plans by Scottish Borders Council will support the Scottish Government to understand further the national landscape for the delivery of heat decarbonisation and where there are potential gaps to support the needs and aspirations of local authorities. It should also help to ensure that Scottish Borders Council is delivering changes to buildings and local infrastructure at a suitable rate to help achieve national targets as set out in the Heat in Buildings Strategy, and that there is a level of standardisation and consistency between Scottish Borders Council's LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Scottish Borders Council will recommend actions that include projects around decarbonised heat and energy efficiency improvements. This will cover both domestic and non-domestic sectors and include consideration of heat networks, heat decarbonisation (e.g. heat pumps) and energy efficiency improvement measures, including addressing poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty.

The Scottish Government has prepared Guidance to support the preparation of LHEES Strategies and Delivery Plans ([link](#)).

**What are the key components of the plan?**

Box 7. See full detail of the components of LHEES as contained in Section 1 of the LHEES Guidance ([link](#)).

LHEES Strategy – Sets out Scottish Border Council's long-term strategy for the improvement of the energy efficiency of buildings and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the heating of such buildings in the context of the relevant EPC and net zero targets.

LHEES Delivery Plan – sets out how Scottish Borders Council proposes to support implementation of its strategy, building on existing plans, programmes and targeting existing and near future funding in short to medium term (5 year).

LHEES priorities are listed in the table below:

Have any of the components of the plan been considered in previous SEA work?

	No.	LHEES considerations
Heat decarbonisation	1	Off-gas grid buildings
	2	On-gas grid buildings
	3	Heat networks
Energy efficiency and other outcomes	4	Poor building energy efficiency
	5	Poor building energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty
	6	Mixed-tenure, mixed-use and historic buildings

Box 8.

- Overall LHEES Strategy sits within the context of the Heat in Buildings Strategy (HiBS) (2021).
- **The HiBS SEA** already identifies a range of environmental issues related to energy, energy efficiency, and heat decarbonisation (e.g. challenging weather, poor energy efficiency and reduced heating options (especially in rural areas) can make fuel bills unaffordable, resulting in fuel poverty. The current trajectory is a reduction in carbon emissions from buildings and so the outcomes of LHEES therefore represent an acceleration of, and coordination of action to support, the ongoing trend rather a departure.
- The HiBS SEA concludes the:
  - Draft Strategy is likely to have significant positive effects on climatic factors, air, population and human health and material assets.
  - Potential for effects in combination with other plans, programmes and strategies has also been considered – HiBS has potential to positively and cumulatively contribute across a wide range of Scottish Government policy areas within the context in which it sits.
- The SEA notes that due to the high-level nature of the draft Strategy there is an inherent degree of uncertainty regarding the environmental impacts which may arise as a result of upscaling of strategically important energy efficiency measures and heat technologies now and in the future. Furthermore, it references that the roll-out of LHEES will provide an important platform to consider both local community and wider national infrastructure issues and their associated potential environmental effects.

- However, the first iteration of the LHEES will also be high-level in nature (at the regional rather than national level), and it is unlikely to have many building-level actions, with **generic impacts of energy efficiency/heat decarbonisation measures already considered in the HiBS SEA.**

It is important to note that specific building level actions are highly unlikely to be identified by the time the SEA is required to be drafted to meet the LHEES deadline for public consultations (Dec 2023) and **submission to, and approval by, Council Committees.**

#### **Building Level Pathways**

Scottish Borders Council Delivery Plan will include actions in relation to heat & energy efficiency including suggested building level pathways to meet associated net zero and EPC targets. As noted below, any localised effects from these actions are considered to be negligible and/or already be covered under separate regulatory regimes where environmental effects can be appropriately assessed.

**Heat Networks:** The Scottish Borders Council LHEES will include indicative areas for Heat Networks. However, designation of heat network zones falls outside the scope of LHEES, as noted in the Scottish Government’s LHEES Guidance. The outputs from LHEES can be used to start more detailed work on consideration of heat networks through follow on work for heat network zoning as required by the Heat Networks Act. Any SEA requirements of formally designating Heat Network Zones – as required under the Heat Networks (Scotland) – will be fully considered at that time of formal designation & review.

It is important to note that as well as the formal HN zoning designation/review taking in to account any SEA requirements, HN infrastructure proposals will likely require planning permission and any associated EIA requirements will be identified at that stage, alongside the proposal being considered against the local authority’s LDP as well as the Scottish Government’s NPF4 both of which have been subject to detailed SEA.

**Energy efficiency measures** do not require planning permission unless potentially involving listed buildings and/or could affect conservation area status i.e. external wall insulation. It is considered that if planning permission is not required then any environmental effects are considered to be negligible. If planning permission is required, then that provides an appropriate regime under which environmental effects would be considered against the LDP and NPF4 (both of which have been subject to detailed SEA).

**Heat decarbonisation technologies** e.g. heat pumps. Scotland’s planning system seeks to ensure that an area’s full potential for heat from renewable sources is achieved in line with national climate targets alongside relevant environmental and community impacts. minor and uncontroversial developments are often granted Permitted Development Rights. This allows

small alterations to be carried out without the need to submit an application for planning permission. For homes, Permitted Development Rights are already granted, to some extent at least, for a range of technologies including:

- Biomass heating systems
- Ground and water source heat pumps
- Air source heat pumps

For non-domestic properties Permitted Development Rights are in place and allow in many instances for the installation of a range of low and zero emissions heating technologies, including solar panels and ground and water source heat pumps.

**In terms of your response to Boxes 7 and 8 above, set out those components of the plan that are likely to require screening:**

Box 9.  
LHEES Strategies including Strategic Zoning.  
LHEES Delivery Plans including Delivery Plan Area Zoning.

<b>Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment</b> <small>refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)</small>	<b>Likely to have significant environmental effects?</b>  <b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)</b>
1(a) the degree to which the PPS sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	NO	<p>The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) articulates how the Scottish Borders will deliver the decarbonisation of heat in buildings and how the council will support local planning, coordination and delivery of heat transition across the Scottish Borders.</p> <p>The LHEES will prioritise Scottish Border’s long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the entire local authority area.</p> <p>The LHEES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an overview of how each segment of building stock needs to change to meet local and national objectives;</li> <li>• Identifies strategic heat decarbonisation zones, further identifying opportunities and measures for reducing building emissions in each zone;</li> <li>• Prioritise areas for delivery, against national and other local policies;</li> <li>• Set out the long-term decarbonisation plan framed around the LHEES considerations;</li> <li>• Take into consideration the Scottish Borders priorities such as reducing fuel poverty, improving resident’s wellbeing etc.</li> </ul> <p>The majority of sites will be identified through the Strategic Zones set out in the LHEES strategy, where there will be a visualisation of the potential pathways to decarbonise the building stock within the Scottish Borders. However, within the delivery plan there will be delivery areas with higher granularity. This will provide clusters within the Strategic Zones that will be a focus area for identifying solutions at a delivery level. All these clusters will be mapped against the priorities set out by Scottish Borders to identify the final delivery areas for decarbonisation projects to occur.</p>



<p>1(b) the degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in a hierarchy</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>The LHEES is the delivery mechanism for the Scottish Borders to reach their net zero target set locally and to achieve by the Emissions Reductions Targets set by the Scottish Government. As such, the LHEES has no influence on plans or strategies at a higher level but will allow the Scottish Borders to progress towards their existing commitments.</p> <p>The LHEES as mentioned before links with national policies including the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) and Heat in Buildings Strategy. The LHEES links with the local policies including the Scottish Borders Council Plan, Affordable Warmth and Home Energy Efficiency Strategy and the Local Housing Strategy. Decarbonisation projects have been prioritised according to need, deliverability, strategic fit, environmental, social and economic impact (including rurality) as determined by the Affordable Housing Project Priority Weighting Matrix (AHPPWM).</p> <p>The hierarchy of relevant strategies is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Plan</li> <li>2. Community Plan</li> <li>3. Local Development Plan</li> <li>4. Local Housing Strategy</li> <li>5. Corporate Priorities</li> <li>6. Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)</li> <li>7. Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLPA)</li> </ol>
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1(c) the relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	NO	<p>The LHEES provides the strategy and delivery plan as to how the Scottish Borders will transition heat and improve energy efficiency. All aspects of the LHEES will promote sustainable development in the area.</p> <p>The LHEES places the principles of locally-led sustainability improvements at the heart of the development process through its requirement for high quality data, local priorities and a tailored area-based approach.</p> <p>The LHEES identifies the importance of heat transition and energy efficiency for their own sustainable development to achieve their net zero targets and also the improvements to the quality of life for residents within the Scottish Borders.</p> <p>The LHEES contains a suite of environmental policies and sustainability principles that will apply to all projects carried out as a result of the delivery plan.</p> <p>The Council's Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners have in place design guides and sustainability policies that will help promote sustainable development.</p> <p>Sustainable development will be integral to the implementation of the LHEES, it is unlikely that there will be significant environmental effects due to the proportion of overall development within the Scottish Borders and the effects of long-term decarbonisation set out in this plan will benefit the local area.</p>
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the PPS	NO	<p>Delivery areas will be identified through the Delivery Plan, built on the Strategic Zones set out in the strategy process. When identifying delivery areas, constraints such as rurality, roads and railways, areas of biodiversity have been considered and will be considered in the LHEES to reduce environmental impacts.</p> <p>Environmental problems relevant to the LHEES are likely to be limited to short-term issues associated with construction. These are not considered as significant.</p>
1(e) the relevance of the PPS for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, PPS linked to waste management or water protection)	NO	<p>The LHEES is not directly relevant to the implementation of Community legislation on the environment.</p>

2 (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	NO	Short-term effects during construction activities will be mitigated through site management procedures.
2 (b) the cumulative nature of the effects	NO	<p>Cumulative effects from the implementation of the LHEES will be limited as the LHEES relates to existing buildings therefore the land will be adapted rather than being newly built on. Construction related to heat networks will be aligned with existing policies to minimise impacts.</p> <p>Issues associated with energy, water, and waste are addressed through a relevant policy review within the LHEES process or separate strategies such as the Waste Strategy.</p> <p>Development in regeneration areas is likely to have beneficial effects.</p>
2 (c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)	NO	None.
2 (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	NO	<p>Any risks associated with the construction phase will be addressed through Health and Safety legislation and contractual requirements placed upon those companies appointed to undertake construction works.</p> <p>This LHEES is positive to human health. Energy efficient homes and affordable warmth contribute to health and wellbeing of individuals and the community.</p>
2 (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	NO	<p>The LHEES covers the entire Scottish Borders area.</p> <p>The scale of effects will differ depending on location.</p> <p>Overall, the effects will not be significant.</p>

<p>2 (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to-</p> <p>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use.</p>	NO	<p>The majority of sites will be identified through the Delivery Plan and prioritised against environmental impacts being minimised and improvements to resident’s wellbeing with the long term goal resulting in the Scottish Borders being more sustainable and impacts on the environment being reduced.</p> <p>Sites allocated in the Delivery Plan are subject to rigorous environmental assessment.</p>
<p>2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	NO	<p>Sites will be identified through the Delivery Plan and all environmental concerns will be taken into consideration to minimise impacts. Rurality will be a key consideration with surrounding areas aiming to experience little environmental impact due to the focus being on existing developments.</p> <p>Sites allocated in the Delivery Plan are subject to rigorous environmental assessment.</p>

#### STEP 4 – CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

##### Summary of how environmental principles have been considered:

(including an outline of how the guiding principles, as set out in section 13 of the Continuity Act, are relevant to the plan)

The environmental principles are embedded within SEA, ensuring relevant delivery plans that are subject to SEA consider how best to avoid environmental damage and if damage does occur it is addressed. As the LHEES was subject to SEA the environmental principles would have been considered within this assessment. As the new Regulations have no or minimal environmental effects in their own right it is our view the original assessment ensures the principles are embedded in the LHEES Strategy and Delivery Plan documents. A meaningful SEA can address the environmental principles and ensure the aims to; protect the environment; adopt the precautionary principle; seek to prevent environmental damage, prepare to address environmental damage are adopted into policy.

## STEP 5 – STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING

### Summary of interactions with the environment and statement of the findings of the Screening:

(Including an outline of the likely significance of any interactions, positive or negative, and explanation of conclusion of the screening exercise.)

It is our opinion that the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy will have no significant environmental effects. This opinion is based on the guidance, methodology and Scottish Border's strategy and delivery plan which take into consideration any potential environmental effects. In addition, as every LHEES in Scotland will be subject to SEA the environmental effects from the delivery, on the ground, of these strategies and delivery plans will be captured meaningfully at a local level and steps taken to avoid, minimise or offset adverse effects and enhance positive ones can still be taken.

When completed send to: [SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or to the SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2H (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.

<sup>[1]</sup> Please note: (A) The plan has to fall into Section 5(4) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 & (B) you should apply the criteria specified within Schedule 2 of this Act to reach a conclusion on no or minimal environmental effects: [www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/15/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/15/contents) (*delete this note before submission*)

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# **BUSINESS AND REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

## **Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES)**

### **1. Title of proposal**

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and Delivery Plan for the Scottish Borders in response to the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (Scotland) Order 2022.

### **2. Purpose and intended effect**

LHEES should set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across an entire local authority area, framed around the following LHEES Considerations which are: Heat decarbonation covering on gas and off gas grid buildings alongside heat networks and Energy Efficiency covering poor energy efficiency as a driver for fuel poverty alongside mixed tenure, mixed use and historic buildings.

### **Objectives**

LHEES is primarily driven by Scotland's statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and fuel poverty:

- Net zero emissions by 2045 and 75% reduction by 2030.
- In 2040, as far as reasonably possible, no household in Scotland is in fuel poverty.

The LHEES Strategies:

- Set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector, and the removal of poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty;
- Identify strategic heat decarbonisation zones, and set out the principal opportunities and measures for reducing buildings emissions within each zone; and
- Prioritise areas for delivery, against national and local priorities.

### **Background**

Scotland has ambitious plans to transform its buildings. The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy makes clear the need to ensure that, by 2045, our homes and buildings no longer contribute to climate change, while also tackling fuel poverty. This means that our schools, hospitals, libraries, homes and businesses will need to improve their energy efficiency and install zero emissions heating. Delivering this transformation will require concerted effort across all local governments, as well as the wider public and private sectors. Locally-led planning will be key to ensuring that the decarbonisation of heat in buildings is delivered in a way that is relevant to the Scottish Borders and tailored to the specific needs of our communities. It will also need a strategic approach to allow delivery on a large scale. Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies will be the principal mechanism for this locally-led heat planning. They will support local planning, coordination and delivery of the heat transition across the Borders. The development of Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies

(LHEES) has required close cooperation between the Scottish Government and local authorities. The Scottish Borders has an absolutely critical role to play in the transformation of Scotland's building stock to deliver net zero.

### **3. Consultation**

#### **Within Scottish Borders Council**

Stakeholder mapping was initially completed to ensure all relevant persons were captured. A project steering group was established within Scottish Borders Council to ensure joined up supportive work around the council estates, with a view to using the estate as an exemplar and leader to demonstrate emission reductions. Within the council the internal stakeholders consulted are as follows:

- Estates team
- Council planning
- Voluntary sectors and community groups
- Private housing team
- Heritage and design team
- Economic development
- Climate change/sustainability
- Low carbon working group

#### **Public consultation**

This LHEES is subject to a public consultation to allow anyone in the Scottish Borders to provide their feedback. The council also intends to engage and present at area partnership meetings for further public engagement. The council will look to enter dialogue with community groups to build on previous discussions on energy and renewable opportunities, and to feed into the strategic long-term effort for decarbonizing heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across an entire local authority area.

#### **Business**

- Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)
- Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN)
- National Health Service (NHS)
- Police Scotland
- Historic Buildings Scotland
- Housing Associations such as;
- Scottish Borders Housing Association
- Eildon Housing Association
- Berwickshire Housing Association
- Waverly Housing Association



## 4. Options

### Option 1 - implement the LHEES across the Scottish Borders

The implementation of the LHEES in the Scottish Borders will allow for the decarbonisation of the areas building stock whilst alleviating fuel poverty levels in the area. This will bring many social benefits alongside climate benefits and will fulfil the LHEES purpose of:

- To set out how each segment of the building stock needs to change to meet national and local objectives, including achieving zero greenhouse gas emissions in the building sector.
- To remove poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.

### Option 2 – do nothing.

The LHEES not being implemented across Scottish Borders will result in higher fuel poverty rates. For small businesses and organisations to be economically viable in the area these costs would have to be reduced and in turn, consumers will have to have reduced costs in order to contribute to the local economy.

### Sectors and groups affected

The following are likely to be affected by the implementation of the LHEES in the Scottish Borders: Scottish Borders Council, local supply chain (both private and public sector), housing developers, housing associations, energy providers.

### Benefits – option 1

The implementation of the LHEES will ensure that all organisations and businesses in the Scottish Borders will have reduced energy costs and staff will work in a healthy environment. With saved finances from reduced energy costs this allows businesses to reinvest into their business or be able to expand bringing about job opportunities and enhancing local economies. This LHEES will allow for the opportunity of developing of and possible expansion of the local supply chain whilst implementing the measures. This would bring new jobs to the area and improve community wealth within the Scottish Borders.

### Benefits – option 2

By not implementing the LHEES this will save Scottish Borders Council time spent on planning the LHEES and applying for various funding streams to focus on other aspects of the area. However, other issues in the area such as fuel poverty and community wellbeing can be solved through the implementation. By not implementing the LHEES it would mean that Scottish Borders Council and stakeholders would not need to familiarise themselves with the LHEES process or make adaptation plans as to how their organisation would comply with the LHEES.

### **Costs – option 1**

The costs of implementing the LHEES will be that the council alongside stakeholders will have to dedicate time for the development of this LHEES and will take time to source funding for investments stated in the LHEES therefore this could be allocated to other issues within the area or organisation.

### **Costs – option 2**

By not implementing the LHEES it would mean that the standard of building stock in the Scottish Borders does not improve and could deteriorate. This means organisations need to invest large sums of money to improve the standard of their buildings. Another cost due to the decreased standard of buildings would be increased energy bills for all in the Scottish Borders therefore fuel poverty rates are likely to increase and pressure on organisations will worsen meaning reinvesting into their own organisation or local economy will reduce. Overall, community wealth will be reduced.

## **5. Summary and Recommendations**

In summary, the implementation of this Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy will be beneficial for multiple organisations in the Scottish Borders Area including housing associations, council bodies alongside the supply chain bringing about community wealth and opportunity.

The development of this LHEES and delivery plan are seen as necessary for the furthering of building stock and wellbeing in the Scottish Borders and presents an ample opportunity for organisations to implement money saving initiatives, freeing up finances for reinvestment and improving staff's wellbeing.

This LHEES will build a stronger economy on the whole for Scottish Borders whilst building community wealth in local economies. This LHEES will strengthen the Scottish Borders financial resilience whilst improving climate resilience.

## LHEES Rural Proofing Checklist

Consider all the questions below. Will your initiative encounter the challenges presented by rural circumstances? Some potential solutions are indicated to help you consider appropriate adjustments.

**Name of policy/ strategy:** Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy

**Date checklist completed:** 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

**Completed by:** Housing Strategy, Policy, and Development

### Steps to take.

1. Ensure you are clear about the objectives of the proposed policy, its intended impacts, or outcomes (including which areas, groups or organisations should benefit) and the means of delivery.
2. Run through each question in the checklist, identifying where the proposed policy is likely to have a different impact in rural areas.
3. Where there is uncertainty or a potentially different (worse) impact, this should be investigated further (and included in the overall assessment of the costs and benefits of the policy).
4. Where the impact in rural areas will be significantly different, explore policy options to produce the desired outcomes in rural areas or avoid/ reduce any undesirable impacts. This exercise may also highlight opportunities to maximise positive impacts in rural areas.
5. Feed the results of your appraisal, including solutions, into the decision-making process and ensure a record is kept, to be included in your department's annual proofing report.

RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
1. Will LHEES have a negative effect on the availability or delivery of services for people living in rural areas?		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> It is envisaged the LHEES will have a positive effect. There will be a wide range of positive outcomes through the implementation of the LHEES for rural communities, including improvements in health, fuel poverty levels, energy efficiency across all tenures and buildings and helping towards housing costs (helping with rising energy costs). There will be opportunities in the LHEES to help support rural areas.</p>

			<p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> The core “considerations” within LHEES specifically target “off gas” areas which are typically the more remote or rural areas within the region. Ensure identified delivery areas and considerations are also aligned with rural needs and focus.</p>
<b>RURAL ISSUE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT</b>
2. Will access to the service be restricted for people living in rural areas? (If yes, how will the service be made available to people living in rural areas?)			Not applicable.
<b>RURAL ISSUE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT</b>
3. Will the cost of delivery be higher in rural areas (where customers are more widely dispersed, or it is hard to be cost-effective)? (If yes, how will this extra cost be met or lessened)?	✓		<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> Yes, in respect to delivery of energy efficiency measures for housing there are increased building and management costs due to housing being located near to rural populations.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> Projects within the LHEES will allow for higher unit delivery costs when calculating costs or when specifying cost-efficiency criteria and encourage joint provision to reduce costs.</p> <p>Schemes such as EES:ABS specifically targeting rural or remote areas can often benefit from a remote rural uplift.</p>
<b>RURAL ISSUE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT</b>
4. Will the LHEES have a negative effect on the availability of affordable housing in rural areas?		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> The LHEES will have a positive outcome on affordable housing in rural areas as the ambition applies to all buildings in the Scottish Borders.</p> <p>With all buildings in scope, domestic and non-domestic, opportunity to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise heat in both domestic and buildings and communal buildings in rural communities.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b></p>

RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
5. Will the LHEES be delivered by the private sector, or through a public-private partnership or local institution that may limit provision in rural areas?			<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> The LHEES will be delivered through Scottish Borders Councils and partners. The ambition of LHEES applies to all buildings in the Scottish Borders area thus the LHEES is a shared vision of how all building owners can retrofit their properties. The private sector will have a significant role in meeting the ambitions, vision and actions of LHEES.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> Some aspects of the LHEES may have to be delivered through public/private partnerships – this will not limit impact in rural areas. SBC will look to work with social housing or other developers to align any proposed works to benefit from these happening in parallel. Represent a bigger project for utilities or wider support.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
6. Does the LHEES rely on infrastructure for delivery (e.g., mobile phone coverage, broadband ICT, main roads, utilities) that may be limited in rural areas?	✓		<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> Decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders area could be impacted as a result of infrastructure restraints which can affect development opportunities and timings of delivery.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> Utility companies and other infrastructure companies have been consulted throughout the development of the LHEES and will continue to be involved to ensure the delivery of LHEES. Infrastructure constraints will be considered in the Delivery Plan and Action Plan. SBC will look to work with social housing or other developers to align any proposed works to benefit from these happening in parallel. Represent a bigger project for utilities or wider support.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
7. Will the LHEES have a negative impact on rural businesses, or land-based businesses, (including the self-employed) and therefore, on rural economies and environments?		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> It is likely that the LHEES would have a positive impact as it helps sustain rural communities and energy efficiency priorities will have positive environmental impacts.</p> <p>Through LHEES, there will be opportunities to rural business and self-employed business.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> Through work in the LHEES, local business's will be supported and provided with advice and training where possible (looking at the local supply chain and providing opportunities for businesses to retrain for example).</p>

RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
8. Will the policy have a negative impact on employment in rural areas?		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> LHEES should have a positive impact on employment in rural areas, creating rural jobs and opportunities for rural businesses. The LHEES will aim to remove poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.</p> <p>By improving the energy efficiency of all buildings more people will be able to afford to live in rural areas – in terms of housing costs.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b></p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
9. Will the LHEES have a negative impact on people who are disadvantaged in rural areas? (If the policy is targeted at addressing disadvantage, how will it target rural disadvantage, which is not usually concentrated in neighbourhoods?)		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> The vision for the LHEES is <i>'Increase the energy efficiency of our homes and buildings, offer affordable warmth via zero emission heat, and deliver this as a just transition which tackles fuel poverty and builds community wealth'</i>. The priorities that will help to achieve this vision are:</p> <p>Cost of heating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty by focusing on areas with high fuel poverty, leveraging EES:ABS and social landlord commitments and regulations.</li> <li>• Drive energy efficiency to make warmth affordable for all.</li> </ul> <p>Heat Decarbonisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the electrification of heat and renewable installation across buildings in the region.</li> <li>• Support the development of zero emission heat networks, communal heating &amp; renewables.</li> <li>• Target “low-regrets” heating opportunities in off-gas areas.</li> </ul> <p>Just Transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the local economy and improve the regional skills, employment and supply chain.</li> <li>• Utilise procurement, delivery models, planning, regulation, and other powers to make this transition work for the people.</li> </ul>

			<p>These priorities are represented significantly by rural communities and supporting those identified as being disadvantaged through residing in a rural area. Data analysis will identify delivery areas, often this will prioritise rural areas as they can be impacted more by energy inefficient buildings and fuel poverty</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b> The LHEES covers all buildings in the Scottish Borders. The Delivery Plan, which is developed in partnership with key stakeholders will set out the actions, initiatives, and programmes to support the delivery of this strategy, including rural areas.</p>
<b>RURAL ISSUE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT</b>
10. Does the LHEES assume 'one size fits all', and fail to take into account the different size and specific circumstances of smaller rural schools and other isolated rural service facilities?		✓	<p><b>Summary of likely impacts:</b> The LHEES covers all buildings in the Scottish Borders, taking into account the different challenges within rural areas. There will not be one approach to covering all buildings in the Scottish Borders and a wide range of options and opportunities will be considered.</p> <p>The LHEES aligns with other plans and policies.</p> <p><b>Summary of adjustments made:</b></p>

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## **COUNCIL TAX – SECOND HOMES**

**Report by Director of Resilient Communities**

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**Scottish Borders Council**

**25 January 2024**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides information on the discretion available to Local Authorities to charge up to 200% Council Tax on second homes from 1 April 2024 and recommends a change in policy with effect from 1 April 2024.**
- 1.2 Legislation was approved 14 December 2023 giving Local Authorities the power to double Council Tax on second homes with the aim to prioritise housing for living in and to bring the Second Homes Policy in line with Long Term Empty Council Tax Policy.
- 1.3 There are currently around 1055, second homes within Scottish Borders Council which are charged 100% Council Tax. Introducing this policy could generate an additional annual income in the region of £1.5 million.
- 1.4 Given the increased administrative burden, officers suggest that some of the additional income to be raised is retained by Customer Advice & Support Service to allow the recruitment of one additional staff member.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the following recommendations and approves the policy change to take effect from 1 April 2024:-**
  - (a) Utilises the flexibility permitted to introduce a 200% Council Tax charge on second homes from 1 April 2024;**

- (b) Agrees that £30k of the additional income to be raised is used to fund an additional staff member to administer the new arrangements; and**
- (c) Notes the further discretionary provision and agrees not to extend the statutory 6 month relief timescale for properties undergoing repairs or renovations.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 A second home is a home which is furnished and lived in for at least 25 days in a 12 month period, but is not someone's sole or main residence.
- 3.2 In 2005 the Scottish Government passed regulations to enhance discretionary powers allowing Local Authorities to vary discounts awarded on second homes between 10% and 50%. This discretion was implemented by Scottish Borders Council from 1 April 2005 resulting in a 90% Council Tax charge on second homes. The increase of 40% generated from this amendment is ring-fenced for affordable housing and a return is submitted to Scottish Government in March each year.
- 3.3 In 2013 the discretionary powers were enhanced to allow local authorities to charge up to a maximum of 200% on long term empty dwellings. The aim being to encourage owners of long term empty properties to bring these back into use.
- 3.4 A long term empty property is one which has been empty for 12 months or more.
- 3.5 As part of the Council Tax Reform measures, legislation was laid in November 2016 which gave Local Authorities the further discretionary power to impose no variation on Council Tax for second homes. These dwellings were previously charged 90%, therefore exercising the discretionary power generated an additional 10% of income which the Council can use as they see fit. Scottish Borders Council agreed to make use of this provision which was implemented from 1 April 2017 and the income generated from this formed part of the Councils general funding.
- 3.6 The 2013 regulations have now been further amended by The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment regulations 2023, which now gives Local Authorities, from 1 April 2024, discretion to introduce a maximum increase of 100% on second homes, i.e. double the standard charge.
- 3.7 This would bring the Council Tax charges levied on second homes in line with that for long term unoccupied dwellings which have been in place since 1 April 2017.
- 3.8 Ongoing protection through a mandatory 50% discount is to remain in place for second homes that meet the definition of purpose-built holiday homes or job-related dwellings as provided in the 2013 regulations.

3.9 Further protection is being introduced for property undergoing repairs or renovations which will allow a 50% discount to be retained where :

- (a) It is undergoing repairs or renovations that contribute to the improvement of the property; and
- (b) It was purchased by the person who is liable to pay the Council Tax in respect of it less than 6 months ago or such longer period as may be agreed by the Local Authority.

3.10 It should also be noted that the powers conferred may be exercised to make different modifications for different cases or difference classes of cases, including different areas.

3.11 If a customer wishes to dispute their Council Tax liability, there are existing appeal procedures in place for officers to follow.

#### **4 CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 Based on our records on 27 October 2023, there were 1055 second homes in the Scottish Borders; this excludes the protected categories mentioned at 3.8.

4.2 A breakdown of second homes by ward and Council Tax Band is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

4.3 To give an indication of the result this may have, table 1 below shows how applying 100% increase, based on 2023/24 levels, could impact the Council Tax payable for current second homes. This change does not affect water or sewerages charge rates.

4.4 The use of this discretion will allow the Council to meet local housing needs and support thriving communities. If this is achieved, more second homes will become a main residence, which we would expect to have a positive impact on the local economy.

4.5 It is also important to note that not all will be collected, and an allowance for non-payment and write offs must be factored in using Scottish Borders Councils existing bad debt provisions. Only 1% of the current second home accounts have required further recovery action taken but it is recognised that the increase to the charge may increase the risk of non-payment.

Table 1

<b>Band</b>	<b>Number of second homes</b>	<b>Annual Increase (£)</b>	<b>Potential Income (£)</b>
A	219	904.07	197,991
B	200	1,054.75	210,950
C	226	1,205.43	272,427
D	131	1,356.11	177,650
E	112	1,781.78	199,559
F	68	2,203.68	149,850
G	71	2,655.72	188,556
H	28	3,322.47	93,029
<b>Total</b>	<b>1055</b>		<b>1,490,014</b>

## 5 PROPOSED CHARGES

- 5.1 Officers propose that the Council make use of the new powers and introduce a 100% increase (i.e. a 200% charge) for all second homes in the Scottish Borders, excluding those categories given specific protection through the regulations.
- 5.2 Officers propose that such charges are implemented commencing on 1 April 2024.
- 5.3 This would generate an annual sum of approximately £1.5 million, subject to the conditions referred to in 4.5 and 4.6. Any new income received through charging an additional 100% on second homes is not ring-fenced and can be used as general funding.
- 5.4 Officers propose that £30k of this additional income is used to fund additional staffing resources to address the increased work associated with administration and collection for this new policy.
- 5.5 A comprehensive communications plan has been drafted and those Council Tax payers impacted by the change will be contacted directly. Support and advice will be offered to those who wish to consider other uses of their properties.

## 6 DISCRETIONARY POWERS

- 6.1 As noted in 3.7, protection has been introduced for purchasers of dwellings that require repair or renovation works. This would prevent the imposition of any variation in the Council Tax charge from the statutory position.
- 6.2 The 2023 regulations also allow Councils to agree whether this should be extended for a further period. Officers propose that the statutory 6 months timescale be accepted as standard with no further period of discretion being considered.

- 6.3 Officers believe that such extended discretion on a case by case basis would cause an increased administrative burden on the service as evidenced in the current Long Term Empty Policy.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

It is anticipated that additional funding of around £1.5m will be generated through the policy change detailed in this report, which will form part of the financial planning process for 2024/25. This level of income may reduce in future years if there is a reduction to the number of second homes in the area. This will be monitored via normal financial monitoring processes. The Director of Finance & Procurement has been consulted and has indicated agreement with these proposals.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

There is a risk the change will result in non-payment of the additional balance due however this is mitigated by debt recovery arrangements in place and could be mitigated further by recruiting additional resource.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

Stage 1 of the IIA was completed and as this policy is strategic, we considered how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage. This highlighted that there could be a negative impact on Low and/or no Wealth as well as Material Deprivation and as a result stage 2 of the IIA was completed.

A procedure is already in place within CASS to deal with customers who are having difficulty meeting their monthly payments.

### **7.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

The sustainable development goals checklist has been completed and highlighted that by introducing this policy, we are working towards the following UN Sustainable Goals :

- (i) End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
- (ii) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

If second homes became occupied as a persons sole or main residence, this would contribute to both of these goals as permanent residents would encourage and support community enterprise and improve local income.

### 7.5 **Climate Change**

The climate change implications checklist has been completed and highlighted that the change to this policy could provide/enhance local amenities/services, as second homes could become the sole or main residence of a person which would result in the residents using local amenities and services throughout the year instead of part of the year.

### 7.6 **Rural Proofing**

There is no impact on rural proofing.

### 7.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 7.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There is no change to the scheme of administration or delegation.

## 8 **CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), Empty Homes Officer and Corporate Communications and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

### **Approved by**

#### **Name**

#### **Title**

Jenni Craig

Director of Resilient Communities

#### **Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Clare Pettie	Development Officer, 01835 824000 ext 8294
Katrina Wilkinson	Revenues & Benefits Delivery Manager, 01835 824000 ext 2630

#### **Background Papers:**

[Item No. 12 - Council Tax Removal of discount for Second Homes.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

**Previous Minute Reference:** N/A

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Clare Pettie can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at CASS Development Team, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0AS, 01835 824000 ext 8294,  
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**Appendix 1 – Breakdown of Council Tax properties classified as second homes per ward.**

Ward	Number of Second Homes in Ward	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Jedburgh & District	69	9	18	12	8	6	4	7	5
East Berwickshire	266	46	55	72	32	22	17	13	9
Tweeddale West	121	13	18	22	21	16	14	14	3
Tweeddale East	46	17	12	5	3	2	4	2	1
Mid Berwickshire	61	8	12	21	10	7	1	1	1
Lauderdale & East	9	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0
Hawick & Denholm	109	54	6	21	11	10	3	3	1
Galashiels & District	9	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	0
Hawick & Hermitage	23	3	10	7	1	2	0	0	0
Kelso & District	139	18	36	33	20	12	8	8	4
Lauderdale & Melrose	141	39	21	19	18	21	7	12	4
Selkirkshire	62	9	8	11	6	11	8	9	0
Totals	1055	219	200	226	131	112	68	71	28

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## **NON-DOMESTIC RATES EMPTY PROPERTY RELIEF**

**Report by Director of Resilient Communities**

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**Scottish Borders Council**

**25 January 2024**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

**1.1 This report updates the Council on the review of the Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Empty Property Relief Policy approved at Council on 16 February 2023, and sets out the recommendation for a revised policy to take effect from 1 April 2024.**

1.2 The Scottish Government has made an annual fixed sum available for the next three years to support the revised policy. Scottish Borders Council's allocation of this funding was £1.15m for 2023/24. Local Authorities can retain any income from business rates they charge on empty properties between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2026.

1.3 Across Scotland every Local Authority is looking at their own policy with the aim of bringing empty properties back into use, and a number are looking to reduce the relief they award on empty properties to support this aim.

1.4 There are 627 empty properties receiving relief as of 6 December 2023, from the 9,368 entries on the Valuation Roll for the Scottish Borders Valuation Area. 74% of these empty properties are in towns.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that the Council:**

**(a) Approves the amended Non Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief Policy at [Appendix 1](#) which reflects the changes outlined in section 5 of the report to award 50% relief for 3 months, followed by 10% for a maximum of 9 months after which no relief is awarded; and**

**(b) Agrees that the amended policy is effective from 1 April 2024.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local Authorities administered empty property relief for Non-Domestic properties on behalf of the Scottish Government until 31 March 2023. From that date the responsibility for determining empty property relief was devolved to Local Authorities under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.2 For the purpose of determining if a rateable entry is empty, Scottish Borders Council establish if the property is currently occupied and in active use and must be satisfied that it is empty of all movable fixtures and fittings having given regard to the underuse procedure.
- 3.3 An [Empty Property Relief Policy](#) was approved at Council on 16 February 2023 to take effect from 1 April 2023. This details all the current reliefs which mirror the former Scottish Government legislation. This approach was similar to most other Scottish Local Authorities.
- 3.4 Table 1 below indicates a breakdown of the 627 (7%) empty property reliefs currently awarded which lie within the scope of the devolved legislation, as of 6 December 2023, from the 9,370 entries on the Valuation Roll:

Table 1

Relief Type	Number	Value (£)
Empty Property - 10%	187	103,285
Empty Property - 50%	4	4,525
Empty Property - 100%	65	100,223
Empty Executor - 100%	6	18,277
Empty Industrial - 100%	3	134,985
Empty Listed Building - 100%	160	774,326
Empty Minimum Rateable Value - 100%	199	74,974
Empty sequestration/liquidation - 100%	3	4,044
<b>Total Empty Properties</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>1,210,595</b>

- 3.5 A breakdown of the locations of these properties can be found in [Appendix 2](#).
- 3.6 In September 2022 there were 480 empty business properties in the Scottish Borders, therefore the number of empty properties has increased by 30.6% over a 15 month period.

## **4 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

- 4.1 The Scottish Government has made an annual fixed sum available for the next three years amounting to £105 million across Scotland. Scottish Borders Councils share of this money is £1.15m for 2023/24.
- 4.2 Local Authorities can retain any income from business rates they charge on empty properties between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2026.
- 4.3 As at 11 September we had committed to spend £1.138 million on empty relief. In December, this figure increased to £1.21 million which is greater than Scottish Borders Council funding allocation. The actual spend will not be available until the end of the financial year and will continue to fluctuate each month until then.
- 4.4 It is important to understand that there are factors which have an impact on the cost of reliefs:
  - (i) The rate poundage set by the Scottish Government each year may impact in the amount of relief awarded, i.e. if the rate poundage increased, this will directly increase the relief award.
  - (ii) Any increase or decrease to the number of empty properties and their rateable value.

## **5. REVIEW OF POLICY**

- 5.1 Under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, Scottish Borders Council has the authority to amend the current policy and vary the levels and duration of any empty property reliefs currently offered.
- 5.2 Across Scotland every Local Authority is looking at their own policy with the aim of bringing empty properties back in to use.
- 5.3 Our South of Scotland partner, Dumfries & Galloway Council, had its policy approved in October 2023 to allow 50% relief for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months. No relief to be awarded after this 12-month period and there is no element of discretion on extending the relief award.
- 5.4 Several officers from across Scottish Borders Council, including Customer Advice & Support, Revenues & Benefits, Finance, Housing Strategy and Economic Development have met to explore the policy options.
- 5.5 The group were cognisant of the balance of the current economic challenges facing businesses with increased fuel/mortgage/running

costs, however also considered that for those properties that had 100% unlimited rates relief, there was little or no incentive to actively bring the premises back into use.

- 5.6 Empty premises, both domestic and non-domestic, are often a blight on local communities and town centres. They can often have detrimental impact on both residents and other businesses. It was therefore considered important to look at measures that could encourage owners to bring empty units back in to use.
- 5.7 Officers have considered a range of options which have been shared and discussed with elected members. The proposed option is to introduce a standardised level of relief of 50% for 3 months, followed by 10% for 9 months, after which no relief applies. This removes the exempt categories, with the exception of businesses that have gone into liquidation or properties where occupation is prohibited by law, and limits the current 10% relief to only nine months. This is reflected in the amended policy which is detailed at Appendix 1.
- 5.8 As the new policy would take effect from 1 April 2024, any business currently in receipt of 100% relief would be treated as empty from 1 April 2024 which would result in them being eligible for 50% relief for 3 months from 1 April 2024, followed by 10% for the remaining 9 months.
- 5.9 To allow a period of transition for those properties that are currently empty and receiving either 50% or 10% relief as at 31 March 2024, the following awards will be made :
- (i) Any business currently receiving 50% will continue to receive the balance of that award, up to 3 months, followed by 10% up to 31 March 2025.
  - (ii) Any business currently receiving 10% will retain this award until 31 March 2025.
- 5.10 Any business that becomes empty on or after 1 April 2024 would be eligible for 50% relief for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months other than those excluded in the policy.
- 5.11 Table 2 below demonstrates the financial impact of the proposed change to the policy for 2024/25. This is calculated solely on the properties that were empty as at 6 December 2023 as shown in table 1 above. The costs will reduce again in 2025/26 when the relief awarded reduces further.

Table 2

<b>Current description</b>	<b>Number of properties</b>	<b>2023/24 Current cost of relief</b>	<b>Relief description from 1 April 2024</b>	<b>2024/25 cost of relief under new policy</b>
Empty Property 10% indefinitely, (relief following 50% for 3 months)	187	£103.3k	10% for 9 months following 50% for 3 months	£103.3k No change as this is the current relief award
Empty Property 50% for 3 months (followed by 10% indefinitely)	4	£4.5	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£4.5k No change as this is the current relief award
Empty property (no building) - 100%	65	£100.2k	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£19.9k
Empty Executors - 100%	6	£18.3k	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£3.6k
Empty Industrial - 100% (6 months)	3	£134.9k	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£26.9k
Empty Listed - 100%	160	£774.3k	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£154.8k
Empty Minimum RV - 100%	199	£74.9k	Amended to 50% for 3 months followed by 10% for 9 months	£14.9k
Empty Sequestrated - 100%	3	£4.0k	Remains the same	£4.0k
<b>Totals</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>£1.21m</b>		<b>£0.33m</b>



- 5.12 All the figures in Table 1 and Table 2 are based on the number of empty properties at 6 December 2023, they do not take into consideration any new empty properties that may become entitled to relief on an ongoing basis.
- 5.13 The numbers of properties which are empty at any time fluctuates and therefore the costs of the relief will vary on an ongoing basis. The current costs going forward compared to the funding from Scottish Government, as well as the impact of Scottish Borders Council as an owner of some of the empty properties, will provide the Council a net increase in income of c£0.765m which it is recommended that Council consider in setting its budget.
- 5.14 When a business enters liquidation, assets are frozen, and the business is unable to continue trading. The liquidator assesses whether the business has enough assets to meet their financial obligations. Therefore, it would be unreasonable to continue to charge rates on an ongoing basis when the business has no opportunity to trade.
- 5.15 If a property is prohibited by law, they are unable to continue trading therefore it would be unreasonable to charge the business rates when they had no opportunity to trade.
- 5.16 Reconsiderations and appeals will be dealt with in line with the current procedure.

## **6 SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES**

- 6.1 The proposals contained in this report to reduce empty property relief and encourage investment in bringing these properties back into use would support the following Council Plan Outcomes:
- (i) Strong Inclusive Economy, Transport and Infrastructure - Regenerating our town centres and rural communities;
  - (ii) Empowered Vibrant Communities - Sustainable use of our land and buildings.
- 6.2 There are funding opportunities available via Scottish Borders Council's empty homes officer, should a business wish to change the use of their premises to a dwelling.
- 6.3 Support for businesses is also available from the Council's Business Gateway service, which is delivered in partnership by South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE). Regeneration grants may also be available to repurpose empty properties in town centres and other locations to bring them back into use.

- 6.4 A communications plan is being developed in advance of these changes coming into effect on 1 April 2024, to ensure property owners and businesses understand the changes to Non-Domestic Rates relief and are signposted to the correct advice and support.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

It is anticipated that based on current empty properties the Council will receive additional income of around £878k during 2024/25. The Council will also incur additional charges of around £113k due to the increased rates payable on our empty listed buildings giving a net increase of around £765k during 2024/25. This figure will increase during 2025/26 as the transitional relief on properties which continue to remain empty expires.

There will be some ancillary costs involved in proposing these changes to the policy including:

- (a) consideration for the administration of billing and collection of the chargeable Non-Domestic Rates;
- (b) consideration for the cost involved to amend, online forms, update procedures, train staff, update systems and update website content;
- (c) bad debts are assessed each year to ensure we have reasonable bad debt provision, and we will continue to do this. It is assumed that the level of collection will be similar to current levels of collection.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

If members do not agree to change the current policy, there would be no change to those businesses who receive relief and provides little incentive for those to bring these properties back in to use. It will also result in Scottish Borders Council subsidising the cost of the relief above the level of the Scottish Government funding allocation and after 2025/26 as we do not know what funding we will receive from the Scottish Government at that time.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed and this established that there were no impacts.

#### 7.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

This checklist was completed and highlighted that by introducing this policy, we are working towards promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all as a result of generating growth and employment through local economic development opportunities.

#### 7.5 **Climate Change**

By introducing this policy, there is potential to reduce the need for unnecessary car journeys depending on the location and type of business that makes use of the empty property. This policy could potentially have a positive impact on infrastructure and land usage should businesses use existing premises instead of building new premises.

#### 7.6 **Rural Proofing**

There is no impact on rural proofing.

#### 7.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

#### 7.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There is no change to the Scheme of Administration.

### **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council, The Assessor and Corporate Communications and Economic Development and comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

8.2 Others consulted – Corporate Equalities and Diversity Officer

#### **Approved by**

##### **Name**

Jenni Craig

##### **Title**

Director of Resilient Communities

##### **Author(s)**

Names	Designation and Contact Number
Clare Pettie	Development Officer 01835 824000 ext 8294

**Background Papers:** Agenda Item 9 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Scottish Borders Council, 16/02/2023 10:00 \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

**Previous Minute Reference:** Number 6 [Agenda for Scottish Borders Council on Thursday, 16th February, 2023, 10.00 am - Scottish Borders Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Clare Pettie can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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# EMPTY PROPERTY RELIEF POLICY

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Version	Comments	Owner
1.0	Policy approved by council 16 February 2023	Clare Pettie
1.1	Correction to charitable relief & rebranded	Clare Pettie
1.2	Updated policy based on recommendations from APWG	Clare Pettie
1.3	Update draft policy effective from 1 April 2024 to be considered at Council 25 January 2024	Clare Pettie
2.0	[Add outcome of Council here]	

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scottish Government devolved the right to award relief on empty non-domestic properties to Local Authorities from 1 April 2023.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the criteria for awarding relief on empty non-domestic properties, ending relief and the process for appealing a decision from 1 April 2024.
- 1.3 In all cases, staff will act in accordance with this policy and treat citizens fairly.

## 2. WHY WE NEED A POLICY

- 2.1 The policy is required to be put in place to allow relief to Non-Domestic Rates for Empty Rateable Subjects. Section 19 to the Non-Domestic Rates Act (Scotland) 2020 repeals the existing provisions for award of relief (Section 24 to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1966).
- 2.2 This policy is introduced in terms of Section 3A to the Local Government (Financial Provisions etc) (Scotland) Act 1962 as amended by Section 140 to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 2.3 Section 3A States:

### 2.3.1 “Schemes for reduction and remission of rates

- a. This section applies in relation to rates leviable for the year 2015-16 and any subsequent year.
- b. A rating authority may, in accordance with a scheme made by it for the purposes of this section, reduce or remit any rate leviable by it in respect of lands and heritages.
- c. Any reduction or remission under subsection (2) ceases to have effect at such time as may be determined by the rating authority.
- d. A scheme under subsection (2) may make provision for the rate to be reduced or remitted by reference to—
  - (i) such categories of lands and heritages as may be specified in the scheme,
  - (ii) such areas as may be so specified,
  - (iii) such activities as may be so specified,
  - (iv) such other matters as may be so specified.
- e. Any reduction or remission under subsection (2) ceases to have effect on a change in the occupation of the lands and heritages in respect of which it was granted.
- f. Before exercising the power conferred by subsection (2), or amending a scheme made under that subsection, the rating authority must have regard to the authority’s expenditure and income and the interests of persons liable to pay council tax set by the authority.”.

- 2.4 It is essential for the Council to demonstrate that it carries out administration of empty property relief on non-domestic properties efficiently, effectively and fairly. By doing this the Council:
  - a. helps reduce the cost of Non-Domestic Rates while a property is empty;
  - b. demonstrates a provision of a quality service to customers.
  - c. evidences fairness in awarding relief

## 3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 The main aim of this policy is to set out how Scottish Borders Council will interact with Non-Domestic Rates payers in the administration of empty property relief and.
  - 3.1.1 Ensure that all staff involved in awarding empty property relief operate a fair and consistent process;
  - 3.1.2 Demonstrate the Council’s commitment to the delivery of quality services to our customers;
  - 3.1.3 Minimise losses to the Council from incorrectly awarding empty property relief.

## 4. EMPTY PROPERTY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

- 4.1 Empty property relief will be awarded in respect of all applications that meet the eligibility criteria specified below, and fulfil all the requirements of the application process.
- 4.2 In order to be considered for empty property relief, an application must be fully completed and submitted with the appropriate supporting evidence. Applications are assessed by Customer Advice and Support Service staff. Customer Advice and Support Service staff are responsible for awarding and ending relief as well as administering any appeals and dealing with enquiries that arise.
- 4.3 Scottish Borders Council will award the new levels of relief to all existing empty properties which are in place on 31 March 2023 and continue to qualify under the revised conditions. The new award period will commence from 1 April 2024 no matter what level of relief was awarded previously.
- 4.4 For new awards of relief, the rateable occupier (or other who are held liable) will need to [make an application](#) to Scottish Borders Council for the relief to be applied.

## 5. EMPTY PROPERTY DEFINITION

- 5.1 Empty properties are defined as those rateable entries which are not currently occupied and in use and is empty of all movable fixtures and fittings. Consideration must be given to the underuse procedure. Part occupied properties, covered by Section 24A to the Local Government Scotland Act (1966) and certain new buildings covered by Non Domestic Rates (Relief for New and Improved Properties) (Scotland) Regulations 2022 as Amended are not included in this policy.

## 6. RATES OF EMPTY PROPERTY RELIEF

- 6.1 Empty property relief is awarded when a land and heritage is unoccupied. Relief can be awarded as follows.
- 6.1.1 50% reduction can be awarded for the first three months of the property being empty, after which time, the level of reduction awarded will reduce to 10% for a maximum period of 9 months. No relief is awarded following this 12 month period.
- 6.1.2 Properties unoccupied due to insolvency or where occupation is prohibited by law, will be awarded 100% relief indefinitely.
- 6.2 To allow a period of transition following the introduction of this policy, any property which was empty and in receipt of 50% relief on 31 March 2024, will continue to receive the remainder of the 3 month award followed by 10% relief until 31 March 2025 if the property remains empty during this period. Any property which was in receipt of 10% relief on 31 March 2024 and remains empty during 2024/25 will continue to receive this relief until 31 March 2025.
- 6.2 The person or company entitled to use the property will be the person liable to pay the bill.

## 7. UNDERUSE OR NON-USE OF LANDS AND HERITAGES

- 7.1 Where a ratepayer receives a reduction other than unoccupied property relief under section 24A and 24B of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1966 Act, we can consider under use or non-use, using the following 2 conditions:
- 7.1.1 the lands and heritages are not being used (suggesting that any unoccupied property relief that is available in respect of the lands and heritages ought to apply instead of whatever relief is being received).

7.1.2 the lands and heritages are being used only minimally, meaning the amount of relief being received is greater than would be received if any available unoccupied property relief applied, and the ratepayer's main reason for not leaving the lands and heritages empty is to obtain that greater amount of relief.

7.2 Where the lands and heritages are not being used or there is a significant difference between the actual use of the lands and heritages in comparison to the extent which they could reasonable be used, rates relief will not apply in respect of the lands and heritage.

7.3 Where an empty property becomes occupied for a period of 6 weeks or less and then becomes unoccupied again, the period of occupancy is ignored for the purpose of the calculation of entitlement to any reduction by way of empty property charges.

## 8. BACKDATING

8.1 An application for empty property relief can be backdated to the start of the financial year in which the application is made, provided the organisation satisfied the requirements at that time but only for the prior period during which the requirements continue to be met.

8.2 Applications for the immediately previous financial year may be considered provided sufficient evidence is submitted in support of the application however the decision whether to award is at the discretion of Council Officers. The award will be made based on the policy that was in place at that time.

## 9. RECONSIDERATIONS AND APPEALS

9.1 Once an application has been processed, the ratepayer will be notified in writing of the decision. If the ratepayer disagrees with the decision, they may ask for a reconsideration in the first instance by writing to the Customer Advice and Support Service Manager.

9.2 Reconsiderations must be made in writing within 28 days of the decision being notified.

9.3 If that reconsideration is unsuccessful, the ratepayer may then make an appeal to the Director of Resilient Communities where the appeal will be considered at an internal appeal hearing by a panel of no less than three senior Council Officers.

9.4 The appeal to the Director of Resilient Communities must be made in writing within 6 weeks of the outcome of the reconsideration decision.

9.5 An internal appeals hearing will take place within 2 months of the date of the appeal submission.



Empty Property by Town/Village (based on relief awarded at 6 December 2023)

Appendix 2

Town/Village	Empty Property/Land (BE10, BE50, EPR)		Listed Building/ Deceased/Sequestrated/Industrial/New (BEXEC, BLST, BIND, BSEQ)		Small Rateable Value (BMIN)		Total	
	Number	Value of Relief	Number	Value of Relief	Number	Value of Relief	Number	Value of Relief
Ayton	3	3,436	0	0	1	109	4	3,546
Berwick-Upon-Tweed	1	2,739	0	0	1	423	2	3,162
Bigger/Broughton	1	135	2	336	0	0	3	470
Cockburnspath	1	234	0	0	1	548	2	782
Coldingham	1	337	1	94	1	461	3	593
Coldstream	4	8,914	3	10,931	5	1,917	12	21,763
Duns	22	66,638	13	32,235	20	5,102	55	103,706
Earlston	6	15,986	0	0	3	827	9	16,812
Eyemouth	14	76,916	5	24,601	22	8,712	41	110,230
Galashiels	41	324,858	32	154,220	16	6,554	89	485,631
Gordon	4	12,375	0	0	1	194	5	12,570
Greenlaw	1	50	8	4,826	1	598	10	5,473
Hawick	38	129,031	31	156,410	20	7,632	89	293,073
Heriot/Stow	1	1,071	0	0	1	50	2	1,120
Innerleithen	6	19,173	1	28,616	2	354	9	48,142
Jedburgh	13	88,470	13	246,050	11	7,650	37	342,170
Kelso	16	117,813.10	13	42,703.50	19	5,799.21	48	166,315.81
Lauder	1	298.80	0	0	3	435.75	4	734.55
Liliesleaf	2	996.00	0	0	0	0	2	996.00
Melrose	11	52,588.80	3	62,494.40	11	3,672.75	25	118,755.95
Newcastleton	1	1,892.40	0	0	6	881.46	7	2,773.86
Newtown St Boswells	1	647.40	0	0	3	1,220.10	4	1,867.50
Peebles	30	81,246.21	16	152,159.05	17	7,158.75	63	240,564.01
Penicuik	0	0	1	6,374.40	4	883.95	5	7,258.35
Roxburghshire	3	18,376.20	0	0	0	0	3	18,376.20
Selkirk	22	147,877	30	122,358.60	24	9,337.50	76	279,573.10
St Boswells	3	7,719	0	0	0	0	3	7,719
Walkerburn	0	0	0	0	1	174.30	1	174.30
West Linton	9	116,03.40	0	0	5	1,170.30	14	12,773.70





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## **COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS 2023**

**Report by Director - Resilient Communities**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the feedback gathered from the nine separate Community Conversations which took place during September 2023 with Elected Members, Senior Officers and members of the Public and to seek approval on the next steps.**
- 1.2 The feedback from the Community Conversations is attached as an Appendix to this paper (Appendix 1). The main issues arising from the feedback have been captured along with the proposed service response.
- 1.3 The Conversations allowed the community members to share their thoughts about what really matters to them and their community and they form a key part of how the Council engages with communities and develops its plans.
- 1.4 A Community Engagement Strategy is being developed and will come to Council in due course for approval. In the meantime, planning is now underway for the Community Conversation programme for this year and it is proposed that this is developed with the input from Elected Members, Area Partnerships and other key stakeholders.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that Council:-**
  - a) notes the feedback received from the Community Conversations at Appendix 1 which will be considered in the development of the 2024/25 Council Plan which the Council will consider alongside its budget;**
  - b) agrees that the feedback is shared with each Area Partnerships Community Councils and with Schools;**

- c) agrees that different options should be considered to develop the programme for 2024 along with input from Elected Members and Area Partnerships; and**
- d) agrees to build upon the successful youth engagement and look to tie in with existing youth forums to continue conversations with young people.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council is committed to better understanding, and working with, communities and is currently developing a Community Engagement Strategy to ensure that the Councils priorities and plans are reflective of communities. The Community Conversations are just one part of a wide network where regular engagement activity takes place across the organisation and the strategy will be considered by Council at a later meeting.
- 3.2 Nine separate Community Conversations took place over the summer of 2023 with Elected Members and Senior Officers to discuss the priorities and concerns of communities with members of the public and High School pupils. In a change to the Community Conversations that took place in 2022, each Conversation was based in a High School which afforded the opportunity for a separate session with pupils.
- 3.3 The feedback from the Community Conversations is attached as an appendix to this report. The main issues arising from the feedback have also been included along with the proposed service response.
- 3.4 Not every issue has been addressed for various reasons; several are personal to individuals, not something that the Council can resolve, or are general comments. The Appendix adopts a "you said/ our response" approach. Some responses are still being gathered and will be added to the report when available.
- 3.5 Over the nine venues between 15 and 30 young people from across S1 to S6 engaged in each conversation. A similar number attended the open public sessions.
- 3.6 While the attendance of Senior Management staff varied across the nine sessions, the makeup consisted of; The Leader of the Council, Elected Members in each Ward area, up to 3 Directors/Chief Executive and Officers from SBC Communications as well as the Communities and Partnership team. Live Borders, the Councils strategic partner for Culture and Sport also attended each public session.

### **4 FEEDBACK**

- 4.1 The feedback presents a huge range of issues important to local people, of which some are easier to address than others.

The main themes of comments were:

- Concerns around public transport
- Lack of local facilities
- Capital projects – including new school builds
- Public Toilets

- 4.2 Place was identified as being important to those that attended the conversations and there is scope to feed these views into the current Place Making plans via the Town Teams.

4.3 The sessions demonstrated that youth voice was important and the sessions with High School pupils were engaging and informative. There is enthusiasm from all to continue these conversations with young people in our communities.

## **5 PROPOSED NEXT STEPS**

5.1 The issues raised within the Community Conversations will be noted and, where appropriate, actioned by the relevant services.

5.2 As an initial stage the feedback should be shared with Area Partnerships and Community Councils as well as being available in an easy read format on the SBC website.

5.3 The information gathered will help to form the priorities for the 2024/25 Council Plan and budget, as well as information gathered via the place-making process, the budget consultation and via our continuous engagement with the community.

5.4 For 2024 it is proposed that Officers look at options to maximise effective conversations with our communities. A lot of effort and resource went in to support the conversations in 2023 and although there were valuable conversations, especially with the school pupils, the public attendance at each was not as high as we would have liked. Potential options to consider for 2024 are detailed below and the proposal is for Officers to work with Elected Members, Area Partnerships and other key Stakeholders to plan the engagement programme for 2024.

5.5 Options that could be considered for this year, either on their own or in combination include:

- a) Continuing the 2023 format and having sessions across 9 school clusters.
- b) Using the 2022 format that visited each Ward allowing for 11 conversations.
- c) Community Conversations are scheduled over the course of the year, allowing for more space between each conversation.
- d) Combine Community Conversations with an Area Partnership meeting, utilising existing dates in the diary to have an open session to support a community conversation within each of the five localities.
- e) Utilise digital technology and develop an online conversation for the five localities.
- f) Build upon Live Borders attendance at the conversations and involve key partners in this process. Involving key partners in co-ordinated Community Conversations will help to reduce the number of times the public are being engaged with, potentially reducing costs and clearly demonstrating partnership working across organisations.

- 5.6 Notwithstanding the options detailed above it is critically important to continue to develop conversations with young people in our communities. It is therefore also proposed that we look to build upon existing partnerships that are being led by young people within our localities.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

There is likely to be some financial costs involved in establishing better links with existing Youth Networks. This may involve room rental, if SBC buildings are unavailable, travel costs and refreshments. Associated costs will be explored if proposal is agreed and will be met from existing budgets.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

There are clearly very high expectations of the Council within our local communities that, given the finite resources available, will require careful management, prioritisation and engagement to deliver. There is a reputational risk if local issues cannot be resolved. The way in which this is communicated and shared is therefore important.

### **6.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

An integrated impact assessment (IIA) will be undertaken if next steps are agreed and plans are developed.

### **6.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

There are no direct economic, social or environmental issues with this report but the Sustainable Development Goals will be considered in any plans that are agreed as a result of the feedback

### **6.5 Climate Change**

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report.

### **6.6 Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to a new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

### **6.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **6.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes required to the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation.

## 7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change) and Corporate Communications have all been consulted and comments included in this report.

### Approved by

**Name**

Jenni Craig

**Title**

Director – Resilient Communities

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation & Contact Number
Kenny Harrow	Communities and Partnership Manager

**Background Papers:** Nil

**Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Kenny Harrow can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Communities and Partnership Team, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA.



## Berwickshire

### Overall summary of issues

Overall concerns surrounding the inconsistent bus times/services, along with the Pingo app being unreliable. Issues have also been raised with the deterioration in paths, and public toilets not accessible.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Education</b>	
<b>Transport</b>	
Needs to improve, inconsistent bus times/services. Transport should be linked with trains etc. Bus Service non existent after 5pm.	Following the recent withdrawal of services, the council has been working with Borders Buses to enhance the service levels in Berwickshire with the introduction of an hourly frequency between Duns and Berwick and an improved service between Duns, Hutton, Paxton and Berwick. At the moment, evening services are struggling due to lack of demand. The recent network review has highlighted the importance of evening services and the council has introduced some later evening journeys with a view to stimulating growth. PINGO has been extended to 10pm in the evenings to cater for later journeys, the council is also trialling later evening services in other localities to establish demand
Pingo app not used as not reliable	The Passenger transport team are currently working with Borders Buses and the PINGO app provider to improve the service. Meetings are being held to run scenario testing with a view to improving the reliability of the service. A third Pingo bus has also been introduced into the cycle to increase journey opportunities. We have been trialling some changes through November and December to try and improve the availability of the service

<p>More access to gym outside of School - Lack of sports.</p>	<p>Live Borders has launched a Youth Membership. It does not include school sites but does include unlimited access to gym and swim in the local swimming pools and sports centres.</p>
<p>Greenlaw in need of new Play Park</p>	<p>Greenlaw play facility upgrade is on the radar, however SBC do not own this land therefore we are trying to speak with the landowner to enable replacement facilities by SBC.</p>
<p><b>Roads</b></p>	
<p>Potholes – Duns to Greenlaw to Kelso, Hawthorne Bank, Duns to Fogo.</p>	<p>All of the Council’s near 3000 kilometres of adopted road network is inspected regularly in accordance with the Council's Standards on Carriageway/Footway &amp; Footpath Safety Inspections.</p> <p>Each year a Planned Surface Treatment Works Programme is compiled from the Council’s records of identified sections of carriageway in need of surface treatment. Unfortunately, the overall condition of our road network means that the council is not in a position to treat all identified sections with a permanent form of treatment and must apply a prioritisation process to determine its annual programme in line with available budgets. All roads, both urban and rural, are prioritised on this needs basis commensurate with available budget. Where it is not possible to undertake permanent repairs safety defects are recorded and instructions issued for temporary repair.</p>

## Earlston

### Overall summary of issues

The issues highlighted are concerns around inconsistent bus times and lack of public transport. Behaviour on school and public buses has also been highlighted. Life skills being taught in Earlston High School has also been noted as important.

You Said	We Propose To
<p>More buses needed in the area – every 2 hours is not suitable</p> <p>Public transport improvements needed – actions from Area Partnership on public transport</p> <p>Public transport is poor and leaves people isolated – unable to get a bus later in the day.</p> <p>Public buses are infrequent. Pingo service would be good and better bus stop signposts and lighting.</p>	<p>On 23rd October, the Council in partnership with Borders Buses, made some changes to the network which improves the level of service, particularly for residents in the Earlston, Lauder, and Oxton areas. This increases the level of service ensuring better connectivity into Galashiels and the Borders General Hospital. Late evening services have been hit the hardest since the pandemic making it increasingly challenging for bus operators to run later evening services as the cost of operation has increased whilst passenger numbers have decreased after 7pm. The recent network review has highlighted the lack of evening services and infrastructure as being a barrier to travel in some areas. The Council has secured funding to trial later evening services in two localities to establish demand which will allow us to consider what level of service is required. We have also improved some of the infrastructure including bus stops and posts, and have started to roll out real-time information screens at a number of key sites across the region.</p>
<b>Parks &amp; Environment</b>	

Grass Cutting – can you arrange more regular cutting of cemeteries/ play areas and uplift of cut grass, even rake it up. Also painting of cemetery gates.	We are planning ahead to ensure that cemeteries and play areas do not experience any delays in the cutting frequency in 2024. Alongside this we also have a Grass Management Pilot underway throughout 2024 which is looking at a recalibration of frequencies across three operational routes in Hawick, Galashiels/Tweedbank, and Duns/Westruther. This will be monitored and if successful will be rolled out to other routes across our operations.
<b>School</b>	
School bus behaviour issues	S6 bus monitors reminded of their roles and assemblies have been held to reinforce the message of safe, respectful behaviour. Incidents when pupils who are reported as behaving poorly are followed up, often with the assistance of CCTV on the buses.
It would be good if you could use the school after hours – study area etc.	We are discussing this request with the Pupil Parliament and considering how we can support it. Senior members of the Pupil Parliament have had two meetings with Ms Turnbull, MSYP (Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament), and the Depute Head Teacher to discuss options. A presentation was delivered in assemblies and a pupil survey was completed to assess the need.
There is not enough space within the school to study due to the library being closed	A new librarian is now in post and the library is open. The Joint Transformational Change Programme that has commenced with Live Borders is looking to expand the strategic use for shared school/community use.
<b>Education</b>	
Would like British Sign Language (BSL) at school	We are unable to offer this at present as we do not have a qualified course leader. We have approached Leader Valley school for further information as they are delivering BSL courses.
<b>Amenities</b>	
Opening hours of the library need to be consistent	This issue should now be resolved with the appointment of a new librarian.

Foodshare in the village hall	Our Communities and Partnerships team are happy to work with any community group that wish to set up a Foodshare operation in their town.
<b>Roads</b>	
Speeding concerns in Bowden – Signs due	All Community Councils have been thanked for their feedback and updated that our Roads team is currently looking at a programme of additional signing and lining this financial year.

## Eyemouth

### Overall summary of issues

Highlighted concerns of limited public transport around Coldingham and St. Abbs. Roads have also been raised as an issue in particular potholes, speeding and speed limit. Playparks have also been raised as important.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Transport</b>	
Pingo difficult to book on APP and unreliable / difficult to book another bus	The Passenger transport team are currently working with Borders Buses and the PINGO app provider to improve the service. Meetings are being held to run scenario testing with a view to improving the reliability of the service. A third Pingo bus has also been introduced into the cycle to increase journey opportunities. We have been trialling some changes through November and December to try and improve the availability of the service
Extension of 253 - Achencrow 34 - until 3pm, it doesn't run through. Bus Transport from St Abbs to Coldingham from 3pm is limited, 7pm train last from Edinburgh.	The 253 is a commercial service operated by Borders Buses. We will raise this feedback with the operator although any increase in service will need to be commercially viable for the operator to consider any changes to the service
<b>Roads</b>	

<p>Request to move 20mph to other side of Duns Bridge - SBC didn't move due to no properties being there - can this be changed?</p>	<p>The Council has already carried out an extensive consultation and implementation exercise with all communities on appropriate speed limits and whilst it has not been possible to meet the expectations of all communities the Council is required to adhere to national guidance when considering the setting of local speed limits. Agreements on the extents of speed limits has been agreed with Police Scotland. and the volume of house frontages is a key factor to alert drivers as to why they should reduce their speed. The Council do not intend to review speed limits unless there is a material change in the area such as the addition of residential properties fronting onto the road.</p>
<p>Potholes</p>	
<p>Concerns around speeding in Allanton. Speeding on Victoria Road, The Avenue - drivers are adhering to 20mph on the main road but start speeding on the above roads.</p>	<p>At the start of the summer all community councils were emailed asking if they would like additional signs and lines associated with the 20mph project. To date we have not had a return from Allanton requesting dragon's teeth, painted roundels or repeater signing, and not all communities were keen to have additional signing or lining. The speed compliance tool shows average speeds through the village vary between 21mph in the centre and 26mph at the south end. We will email the community council again and ask if they would like to reconsider additional signing and lining. Allanton already benefits from an electronic sign. Victoria Road Eyemouth, the average vehicle speeds are 17mph. The Avenue: average vehicle speeds between 12mph and 17mph. Electronic signs already on A1107.</p>
<p>Education</p>	

Interested in being part of Eyemouth Primary School engagement, would like to be made of aware of oportunites to engage and more communication.	The architects have been working on feasible options and once agreed and the project starts to progress then engagement will be undertaken with key stakeholders and wider community. As plans progress the public will be kept informed and SBC commit to having the appropriate SBC officers included in the consultaion process. When appropriate, active groups within the community will also be updated.
Cost of extra curricular activity for schools getting far too expensive for outlying schools. £500 for a bus to attend games / sports events.	A cost of the school day network has been set up to look at how to mitigate the costs around the School Day. This is being led by Education but invovles key parnters across all sectors that work with young people and families.
<b>Partners</b>	
Tennis courts are not in use but laying dormant. Can we get them up and running again? Live Borders? Live Borders - Not effective. St Abbs - reduced diving / too expensive. Coldingham - need more facilities.	Live Borders has no responsibility for tennis courts in the Borders (with the exception of the Galashiels courts adjacent to Gala Academy when they were still in operation). All other courts are managed by the local tennis clubs.
<b>Play Parks</b>	
Play Parks in Coldingham / Eyemouth/Ayton need upgraded.	There is a play park replacement programme in place. There are several areas of Berwickshire which have just undergone the replacement play park and others in the plan, which currently include St Abbs and Eyemouth.



## Galashiels

### Overall summary of issues

Galashiels highlighted issues with the number of buses, in particular evening services and spaces on buses from areas such as Earlsoun and Melrose Gait. Issues with roads were also highlighted in terms of lack of major trunk roads, road signs and markings. Public toilets and other services such as waste bins were also noted as important.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Transport</b>	
Melrose Gait to Gala and Earlsoun = same issue  Public bus (2.9 miles) (Secondary & Primary) 600+ pupils, one school bus (30 seater) can't all get on so requires cars to get to school.  Bus is full of school pupils so older people can't get on.	Scottish Borders Council is currently reviewing the transport network and is closely monitoring passenger numbers at Melrose Gait. It is clear that there are a number of additional pupils travelling from the new settlement on the opposite side of the road from Melrose Gait. The Service 60 provides additional capacity into Galashiels from the Melrose Road at around 08:10. The Council is currently supporting an evening service into Melrose Gait utilising Borders Buses Service 70.
Transport links - After 6pm there is no public transport.  Taking part in activities is difficult if you don't drive.  Buses should connect with last train in to Galashiels / not enough taxis.	The network review has highlighted a need for increased evening services. The Council is also looking to improve interconnectivity between modes of transport however there will need to be sufficient demand in order to sustain late evening services. Patronage tends to tail off after 7pm which makes it challenging to operate a sustainable bus service. The Council is currently trialling two late evening services and will use the data from the trial to establish demand.
<b>Roads</b>	

<p>Scottish Borders needs a dual carriageway into the Borders to connect to the rest of Scotland and UK.</p> <p>Needs proper trunk road put in place on A68 Southbound and A7 Northbound.</p> <p>Trees, bushes, and potholes hazardous to road users.</p>	<p>The consideration of upgrading routes to dual carriageways would be for Transport Scotland as trunk road authority. This is an issue that has been looked at in the past but unfortunately the volumes of traffic using routes through the Scottish Borders tend to fall considerably below what would normally be considered for what would be a mammoth undertaking. All of the Council's near 3000 kilometres of adopted road network is inspected regularly in accordance with the Council's Standards on Carriageway/Footway &amp; Footpath Safety Inspections. Unfortunately potholes are by their nature random events, that are exacerbated by weather events and can occur at any time albeit it is particularly prevalent during and after the winter months. This can mean many tens of thousands of potholes appearing over a short period of time. Council resources are not infinite, and repairs must be prioritised and balanced with other priorities such as winter salting. Your support in managing the expectations and in directing reports of road defects through the online form on the Council website would be greatly appreciated.</p> <p><a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20031/roads_and_pavements/616/report_a_pothole_or_other_road_and_pavement_issue">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20031/roads_and_pavements/616/report_a_pothole_or_other_road_and_pavement_issue</a></p>
<p>Road signs: hedges and trees obscure road signs, similar for Gattonside, A7 and Melrose road. No road signs no road markings</p>	<p>This does tend to be an issue at certain times of the year. The Council works with landowners, who are responsible for the control of boundary hedges and trees, to try and avoid and/or remediate the worst situations but with narrow verges and the siting of signs being quite prescriptive (need to set signs back a minimum distance from the road edge and have minimum sight distances both prior to the sign itself and between the sign and a hazard) this is far from straightforward.</p>

Environment	
<p>Not enough bins.</p> <p>Upgrade bins in town for more recycling.</p>	<p>The Council introduced 'on the go' recycling bins in towns across the Scottish Borders a number of years ago. This was delivered with funding from Zero Waste Scotland. At this time we do not have capital funding available to provide additional bins and it is worth noting there have been challenges with contamination of bins with dog waste etc. We will however give further consideration to the number and location of 'on the go' recycling bins. We fully appreciate that there is a need for 'on the go' recycling if we are to maximise recycling performance.</p>
<p>Encourage people to recycle food waste</p>	<p>The Council regularly runs marketing campaigns to encourage residents across the Scottish Borders to recycle their food waste. The most recent campaign included input from the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.</p>
<p>Make better use of greenspaces. Encourage community food growing</p>	<p>The Council has appointed a Greenspace Programme Officer to actively encourage community food growing across the Scottish Borders. The Council has also created a Food Growers Network, which currently has more than 50 members.</p>

## Hawick

### Overall summary of issues

Overall issues highlighted are buses not being frequent enough and other transport going through Hawick. The refurbishment of the High School was also noted as new equipment is needed and building needs upgrading.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Transport</b>	
Buses not frequent enough and overcrowded. Would like to see the train run Tweedbank -Hawick – Newcastleton - Carlisle (but may lead to people leaving Hawick).	Scottish Borders Council has undertaken a network review which has given consideration to a number of factors including frequency of services. The X95 between Hawick and Galashiels currently runs at a 30 minute frequency however at present there are not enough passenger journeys South of Hawick and North of Galashiels to sustain an increase in the frequency of the service. Reinstating the train between Hawick and Carlisle may significantly impact the viability of the bus service as it did between Galashiels and Edinburgh.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
More social places- areas to meet up, more activities to do, bowling alley? More sports facilities- sports arenas	Hawick Town team via Place Making have appointed two consultants, one to further develop the Hawick Place Plan while the other will look at Town Investment plans. Further engagement to determine the needs and wants of the community will take place in February 2024.
<b>School</b>	
Hawick HS needing refurbished - newer equipment for the school.	A new build Hawick High School is in the current capital plan and concept designs are being undertaken. We need to consider any investment in the current school if not a H&S requirement then the focus being new build, new school.

<p>More learning opportunities and jobs for young people as many leave the area after school</p>	<p>This is a very important piece of work which schools are working closely with other services and agencies to support. The young people have a key role to play in helping shape this work and our youth engagement strategy will identify what will encourage and help young people to stay in the Borders if they choose to.</p>
<p><b>Partners</b></p>	
<p>3G is too expensive for youth training- £360 per year, per child</p>	<p>Prices for synthetic pitches are reviewed annually and benchmarked against sportscotland data</p>
<p>Refurbishment of the Leisure Centre with upgrades to equipment</p>	<p>Live Borders have undertaken a review of property and services and a plan will be in place to review leisure facilities.</p>
<p><b>Roads</b></p>	
<p>Hawick high street one way is causing issues</p>	<p>Hawick High Street was part of a streetscape project with stakeholders from the community and traders and oneway was the favourable direction of travel. To revert back to two way would have significant cost implications as well as a considerable loss of parking, which is unlikely to be supported by traders. At this time the Council do not support further change to Hawick High Street.</p>

## Jedburgh

### Overall summary of issues

Jedburgh has highlighted issues such as lack of bus routes and other public transport not linking with each other. Affordable housing has also been highlighted as important.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Transport</b>	
51 bus – Edinburgh onward – connections to Jedburgh. Jedburgh bus leaves one minute before the train arrives. Lack of bus routes/no late buses.	The Council has undertaken a review of the transport network which is looking at a number of factors including the connections between modes of transport. Even a small change to timings on one bus service can have a major impact on connections across the region. We will be discussing connections between bus and rail with Scotrail in the coming months.  The network review has also identified that the lack of buses, particularly in the evening in some areas, can make it challenging for people to move around. We are currently trialling late evening services in two localities across the region and have also added a later journey to the Service 20 between Hawick and Jedburgh. This will help us establish demand for later evening journeys.
Jedburgh not advertised at Tweedbank	We are currently reviewing our transport information. Since the pandemic there have been a number of changes to the local transport network which has made it challenging to keep timetables up to date. Now that the network is beginning to stabilise along key corridors, we will be working with transport operators to improve the information across the region.

Jedburgh Campus does not have a bus stop.	A conversation will take place with our Public Tansport Officer to establish if we can introduce a stop at the Campus.
<b>Roads</b>	
<b>School</b>	
School is too loud - needs walls and doors.	Campus users are respectful of others and school staff are able to adapt how they use learning spaces to reduce potential for distractions to others.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Mix of housing	In 2017 - 2022, the Housing Supply Target for the Scottish Borders was 128 affordable and 220 market housing (348 total) per year. The target for 2023-2028 is 141 affordable and 229 market housing (370 total) per year. This is a target for new supply housing in the Scottish Borders. There is an average of 111 new supply affordable housing that has been delivered in the past 10 years. An average of 139 over the past five years

**Kelso**

Overall summary of issues

The majority of concerns are surrounding public transport, with better connections and bus times. Sports facilities are not accessible and it has been highlighted that there is not enough for senior pupils to do in the town.

You Said	We Propose To
<p><b>School</b></p> <p>No discipline in the High school</p>	<p>Schools staff regularly engage with young people to gather views. Senior staff have worked closely with staff and pupils to revamp the Schools Positive behaviour Policy. The school also work closely with the Pupil Support team and partners so that we are best able to support young people. Being mindful that 'all behaviour is a form of communication'.</p>



<p>Career Advisor – give feedback to make things happen but not helpful enough, not direct enough.</p>	<p>At Kelso High School, we are very lucky to have an experienced <b>SDS</b> Team. They ensure that they offer a range of approaches - class presentations/discussions, 1:1 meetings along with targeted support for young people who may struggle to achieve a positive destination. 96.58% of our leavers achieved a positive destination and we are aware of the reasons for the other 3.42%</p>
<p>Not much for young people to do in the evenings</p>	<p>Cheviot Youth reopened for drop-in sessions on the 8th November 2023, 3:30-5:30pm.          There is a Youth Club within the town however their work is mainly aimed at our younger pupils. As a community school, through Live Borders, we do offer the sports facilities within the evenings although there would be charge.          SBC would be happy to support the community along with young people to look at developing spaces for young people in the town in evenings.</p>
<p><b>Transport</b></p>	
<p>Better bus times needed in rural areas.</p>	<p>The Council has recently undertaken a review of the transport network, the review has looked at how more rural areas of the region can be better connected into the core network. Borders Buses and Hoggs of Jedburgh have recently invested in new buses for operations in the Borders area.</p>

<p>Transport connections – better buses, later buses times – finish too early</p>	<p>The network review also includes looking at improved connections between buses and trains. Late evening travel has been impacted most since the pandemic although the Council is trialling later evening services in the region to establish demand.</p>
<p><b>Partners</b></p>	
<p>Sports Facilities are not that accessible when you are in a sports club. Pitch is taken over by Live Borders and they charge a lot – they are not getting used that often. Other pitches are not well kept. School doesn't really use the pitches (only 1-2 nights per week)</p>	<p>Live Borders has no responsibility for grass pitches. Costs charged for synthetic pitch use are benchmarked annually against sportscotland data.</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p></p>

## Peebles

### Overall summary of issues

Majority of concerns surrounding the management of Eastgate Theatre. Concerns over flood problems in certain areas in Innerleithen and Walkerburn and lack of investment in local facilities along with Victoria Park building.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>School</b>	
New high school design will not facilitate large concerts (small main hall).	SBC have already made significant adjustments to the design and layout of the building to reflect concerns made by the public following the engagement undertaken in February/ March. Construction work has begun on site based on these adjusted proposals.
Not enough subject choices or learning opportunities outside of PHS such as Inspire Learning building- other schools are offered wider choices due to being closer to Borders College but Peebles students miss out	A national review of the curriculum has recognised that the offering of choices for young people in secondary needs to be broader and this is a key priority for the education service. The new school will offer great opportunities to broaden the curriculum and will have spaces to replicate those offered in e.g. Inspire Tweedbank. We are currently reviewing the college programme to make this more accessible to pupils living further away and to seek partnerships with other colleges to broaden the offering.
Would prefer Victoria Park building (space in the building) with garden access- dementia friendly Tweeddale do also use Eastgate Theatre, but not ideal for their base. Victoria park- could be "Peebles meeting centre" group needs a base to operate from	The Peebles Town team have recently appointed a consultant. One of the roles will be to explore all venue spaces within Peebles and undertake a needs analysis on each property and venue.

<p>Drainage/Flood problems between Innerleithen and Walkerburn Bridge &amp; Rosetta Road/Kirkland street.</p>	<p>There is a local Tweeddale Flood Sub Group that has been set up to report in to the Tweeddale Area Parntership. This group will look to link in with all bodies that have a role to play in reducing flooding. The group will also explore practical solutions and work with local Reslience groups.</p>
<p>Lack of investment in local facilities/ assets: bridges, erosion of paths/riverbank between Innerleithen and Walkerburn, lack of parking in Innerleithen, bridge at bottom of Montgomery Street missing (when was last assessment), Wells' visitor sign removed for Wells Brae Visitor Centre. Wells Brae, conditions of Wells Brae housing = paint or dust and dirt</p>	<p>Unfortunately the increased ownership of cars means that it can, at times, be quite difficult to find parking in the immediate vicinity of a person's home, or even on the same street. This is not something that is easily addressed as, even if there was funding available, it is very unlikely that there would be suitable available land nearby to provide additional parking. There is no doubt that the growth of cycle tourism in the Innerleithen area has exacerbated this issue, but obviously that also brings many other benefits to the locality. As St Ronan's Wells is no longer a Visit Scotland approved attraction the Council was not permitted to include it as a "brown sign" when it was recently upgrading signage for the A72 junction. Unfortunately the Council needs to follow statutory guidance in this regard.</p>

<b>Amenities</b>	
Lack of toilet facilities for disabled people- unable to get into toilets	In terms of disabled public toilet provision in the Borders, there are currently facilities open at Eastgate, Haylodge Park (note: Sat & Sun, October to March; daily, April to September) and Kingsmeadow's Road

## Selkirk

### Overall summary of issues

Selkirk highlighted concerns about roads and High Street parking becoming unsafe. Public transport was also noted as important due to lack of buses. More waste bins and local amenities wanted in the town.

You Said	We Propose To
<b>Roads</b>	
High street parking becoming dangerous Pedestrians safety becoming a concern Double parking on main street makes crossing and driving harder	Scottish Borders Council has recently received a request to consider the High Street as one way and this will be added to the ongoing list of works to look at by the Traffic and Road Safety team. The local community has recently erected some advisory signing to remind drivers of the need to park considerately and concerns over poor parking will be directed to Police Scotland (the enforcing agency).
<b>Community Council</b>	
Community council network – dominated by one person – would like to help/ By moving all engagement online you are not engaging with those who don't use it	SBC officers are working with SBCCN to review its purpose and objectives in consultation with community councils and in line with comments received from them in a recent survey.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
More spaces for young people to hang about - not much to do	Live Borders will consider what can be done to make the Leisure Centre/Town Hall space more appealing for young people to book and use. The Selkirk Town team met 17th January - thoughts and views on how to improve Selkirk are encouraged and will help to develop ideas.
<b>Transport</b>	

<p>Lack of buses</p> <p>More frequent buses that run later to from Galashiels and the Valleys would be good</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council has undertaken a review of the local transport network which is looking at a number of factors including accessibility to public transport. Selkirk has a good frequency of buses between Galashiels and Hawick however we are looking at how we can improve the level of service from outlying areas into Selkirk. Consideration is being given to operating taxi buses which would link into the main bus network and we are currently exploring opportunities to trial this type of service in the Selkirk area.</p>
<p><b>School</b></p>	
<p>Better social area outside of school as currently have to gather at bus stops</p> <p>Request for covered Areas for all</p>	<p>We have been undertaking a feasibility study into making improvements to the environment at Selkirk High School and this has a focus on improving the social areas as well as outdoor space. The pupil parliament will be involved in the planning and design phases.</p>
<p>iPads are a great addition but:</p> <p>Concerns raised regarding pupils who may be unable to charge at home or do not have access to wifi so can't use them at home.</p> <p>iPads are still a distraction for pupils, easy to access YouTube and other apps during class time.</p>	<p>Any young person who is facing barriers to charging ipads at home should speak to their pastoral or class teacher who will be able to provide a solution to help. The cost of fully charging an ipad is very low however there is financial support available to families who need help with fuel costs and our benefits team can advise on this. All teachers will set clear boundaries for the use of the devices and Apple Classroom allows a teacher to see what pupils are doing on their screens and to close any programmes that are not to be used at the time.</p>

Buses supplied for school runs are overcrowded	There should always be a seat for every pupil on home to school transport contracts and we ask that any instances of this not being the case to report to the school. There are some public transport routes which may be used by pupils who are not entitled to school transport and we work closely with the operators of public buses so this is something that we can ask them about.
<b>Engagement</b>	
Most engagement now moving online. In doing so, you're not engaging with those who aren't online	Scottish Borders Council has invested in five Community Engagement Officers that each represent a locality in the Scottish Borders. The Communities and Partnerships team would be more than happy to work with individuals or community groups to increase engagement in a specific area so that the thoughts and views of everyone are captured.
Selkirk Town Team - what is happening?	Scottish Borders Council is currently supporting the ongoing development of the Selkirk Town Team in order to create a community-led Place Plan. The Town Team is a voluntary group made up of local Selkirk and the Valleys residents. Upcoming engagement events, led by the Town Team, are advertised through the Selkirk, Valleys and TD7 areas.





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## PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

**Report by Director - Resilient Communities**

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### SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

**25 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on the delivery of the Scottish Government Place Based Investment Programme which has allocated £23m of capital funding to Scottish Local Authorities, payable in the financial year 2023/24 to support town centre regeneration projects and community wealth building.**
- 1.2 Scottish Government and Council Leaders have agreed that Local Authorities will receive a share of funding to help support place-based investment over a five year period, with the current financial year being the third year of the programme. The Scottish Borders has been allocated £550k based on a combination of total population and existing deprivation levels. This allocation needs to be financially committed by the end of the current financial year.
- 1.3 Council Officers have identified four potential projects within the Scottish Borders that £147k of funding could be allocated to within the current financial year. These proposals have been recommended for approval by the Place Partnership which is an independent group of experienced partners from the public, private and third sectors. Details of the proposals are provided in Table 4.1.
- 1.4 Officers are also currently working with a number of groups and organisations to try and bring forward additional projects to a Committee later in the year with a view to fully allocating the funding from Scottish Government during the current financial year.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **2.1 It is recommended that Council:**

- a) Notes the progress made to deliver the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme which is intended to provide funding for Scottish Local Authorities over a five year period;**

- b) Agrees to commit £147k from the allocation in the current financial year to four projects throughout the Scottish Borders as detailed in Table 4.1;**
- c) Delegates authority to the Director of Resilient Communities and Director of Finance and Procurement in consultation with the Economic Development Elected Members Reference Group, the Convenor of the Council and the Leader of the Independent Group to approved local projects as required, taking account of the recommendations from the Place Partnership;**
- d) Notes that further papers will be brought back to an appropriate Committee at a suitable time which will provide further detail on proposed place based projects and future delivery.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Scottish Government and COSLA have agreed to adopt the 'Place Principle' to help encourage better collaboration and community involvement and to improve the impact of combined resources and investment. The Place Principle is where people, locations and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose and is at the heart of helping address the needs and realising the full potential of communities.
- 3.2 Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them. A more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approach to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enables better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives and to help drive a more circular local economy.
- 3.3 In 2021 the Scottish Government announced a five year programme of capital investment for place based investment projects with £550k being allocated to the Scottish Borders within the current financial year. All Local Authorities in Scotland have been provided with an allocation based on total population and deprivation levels.
- 3.4 The Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) is seen as the first step in creating coherent local strategies to guide investment priorities and to help implement the 'Place Principle' which is a key component of both the current Scottish and UK Government policy agenda.
- 3.5 Central to the delivery of this Scottish Government investment strategy will be the need to help ensure that decisions are shaped by the needs of our local communities, prioritising the regeneration and revitalisation of towns and villages, tackling inequality and helping to accelerate the South of Scotland towards 'net zero' emissions targets along with increased footfall within our town centres.
- 3.6 In recent years Scottish Borders Council has appointed a number of new officers to help deliver place making, enhanced community engagement, climate change and the development of green spaces. These Officers are all active in our local communities and have been helping to position schemes and projects within the current PBIP, but also with a view to future years.

### **4 PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The PBIP allocation for the current financial year has sought to deliver funding to projects that have the necessary permissions in place, signalling a financial commitment, or projects where the contractor is already on site and currently undertaking work. The proposed investment will hopefully provide additional benefits for the communities in the longer term.
- 4.2 Officers have identified a number of potential projects throughout the Scottish Borders that funding could be allocated to within the current financial year. The projects were highlighted through the Expression of Interest process which has sought to simplify the funding landscape and provide opportunities for local communities and organisation to deliver

suitable projects within their local area. A link providing additional information and advice on the Expression of Interest process has been provided below.

[Funding Support – Expression of Interest Form | Grant Funding for Community Projects | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#)

- 4.3 The suggested projects and associated financial allocations are detailed in Table 4.1 and have been considered by the Place Partnership Board, established for advising on the Shared Prosperity Funding, and are recommended for approval.

**Table 4.1 – Suggested PBIP Allocations**

<b>Town/Village</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Proposed Allocation</b>
<b>Selkirk</b>	<p><b>Selkirk Scout Hall – New Toilet Facilities</b></p> <p>Selkirk Scout Group are a registered charity that provides a programme of activities for young people between the ages of 6-18.</p> <p>The group are requesting funding from the Place Based Investment Programme to reconfigure and extend an existing single toilet in the hall, providing new improved facilities including showers and a disabled toilet/wet room.</p> <p>Previous plans to upgrade the facilities were put on hold as dry rot was discovered in the building. However, treatment of the dry rot was completed last summer at a significant cost to the group.</p> <p>It is understood that the hall is currently used by other organisations based in the town, therefore this will be an asset for the wider local community.</p> <p>The Scout Group have undertaken a range of fund-raising and there is wide spread support for this project throughout the town and the wider area.</p> <p>All permissions appear to be in place and the project is ready to be delivered.</p>	<b>£49k</b>
<b>St Boswells</b>	<p><b>St Boswells Village Hall – Energy Saving Project</b></p> <p>The St Boswells Village Hall Committee aims to maintain the hall and organise activities for the benefit of the inhabitants of St</p>	<b>£43k</b>

	<p>Boswells and surrounding area.</p> <p>The hall is used by a wide range of local groups on a regular basis and also as a warm space during the winter period. There is strong support for the committee within the local community.</p> <p>The Village Hall Committee has an ambitious 'greening' proposal for the hall which aims to significantly reduce the hall's energy costs and work towards a position of Net Zero.</p> <p>The Energy Saving Project has four key work packages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. fitting PV panels to the roof and installing storage batteries;</li> <li>2. installing air source heat pumps;</li> <li>3. fitting LED lighting throughout the building; and</li> <li>4. installing underfloor insulation in the main hall.</li> </ol> <p>Funding for two of the packages of work has already been secured and the Committee is requesting £43k from the Place Based Investment Programme to support work package four – the installation of underfloor insulation in the main hall.</p> <p>All permissions appear to be in place and the project is ready to be delivered.</p>	
<p><b>Jedburgh</b></p>	<p><b>Jedforest Instrumental Band – Hall Renovation Completion</b></p> <p>The Jedforest Instrumental Band provides musical entertainment and free tuition throughout the town of Jedburgh.</p> <p>The hall was purchased by the group in 1999 and the group are requesting £40k from the Place Based Investment Fund to help repair dry rot in the ceiling and fund the shortfall to complete roof repairs.</p> <p>It is understood that the hall is currently used by other organisations based in the town, therefore this will be an asset for the wider local community.</p> <p>The group have undertaken a range of fund-</p>	<p><b>£40k</b></p>

	<p>raising and there appears to be support for this project throughout the town.</p> <p>All permissions appear to be in place and the project is ready to be delivered.</p>	
<b>West Linton</b>	<p><b>Linton Hotspur Community Football Club</b></p> <p>Linton Hotspur are a community football club in West Linton providing a platform for male and female players aged 4+ to enjoy football. They have been active in their community since 2008, with over 200 members.</p> <p>The group are requesting £15k from the Place Based Investment Programme to help support and complete their phased works to improve facilities and infrastructure for members and visitors, including segregated changing facilities, storage and admin provisions, designated first aid facilities and new changing facilities.</p> <p>The grant would finish off the works by providing doors, internal finishings, drainage and a section of external fencing.</p> <p>The total cost of the project has been estimated at £69k and work carried out to date is £54k.</p> <p>All permissions appear to be in place and the project is ready to be delivered.</p>	<b>£15k</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£147k</b>

- 4.4 The proposed list of projects has only considered the current financial year in terms of the Place Based Investment Fund and Council Officers will be working with communities throughout the five locality areas within the Scottish Borders, with a view to developing suitable projects within the remaining two years of funding support within the existing programme.
- 4.5 Going forward it is proposed that to align with decisions on the Shared Prosperity Funding, that decisions on the Place Based Investment Fund are delegated to the Director of Resilient Communities and the Director of Finance and Procurement in consultation with those members that currently form the Economic Development Members Reference Group being Councillor Jardine, Councillor Scott Hamilton, Councillor Linehan, Councillor Robson, Councillor Thornton-Nicol and Councillor Mountford with the addition of the

Convener and the Leader of the Independent Group to provide additional oversight and scrutiny.

## 5 IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 Financial

- a) The Scottish Governments Place Based Investment Programme will provide funding over 5 years to support and advance place-based investment. Local Government will receive a share of this capital funding as detailed in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 – Proposed Financial Allocation**

Financial Year	Capital Funding
2023/24	£23.0m
2024/25	£23.0m
2025/26	£23.0m

- b) Scottish Borders Council’s allocation for 2023/24 is £550k and this allocation is based on a distribution methodology with 80% distributed on the total population and number of towns and 20% distributed on deprivation.

### 5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The key risk associated with this report is in the requirement for a suitable pipeline of projects to be available for subsequent years to help ensure the PBIP allocation from Scottish Government is fully subscribed. The new place making and community based staff will be working with local communities to help develop a suitable list of schemes and projects for future allocations.

### 5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is anticipated that there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religious belief arising from the proposals in this report.

### 5.4 Sustainable Development Goals

These projects are expected to deliver against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Economic Development team will carry out an evaluation of the benefits of the projects in partnership with the Place Planning Team in future years to help direct future investment opportunities.

### 5.5 Climate Change

The intension is for future investment in the PBIP to consider projects that contribute to a reduction in emissions and help deliver in terms of the race to net zero.

### 5.6 Rural Proofing

The primary focus in terms of Place has been on larger town centres in the Scottish Borders as outlined in the Town Centre Matrix. This is primarily

because town centres are at the heart of communities, generate income and spend in their local economies, and help to make distinctive and special locations for both residents and visitors. However, we recognise that smaller settlements are equally important to the Scottish Borders and therefore we have tried to incorporate appropriate projects in smaller villages and settlements where appropriate.

#### 5.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained within this report.

#### 5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no proposed changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation.

### **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Chief Executive and Corporate have been consulted and any comments will be reported to Council.

#### **Approved by**

**Name**  
**Jenni Craig**

**Title**  
**Director of Resilient Communities**

#### **Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Graeme Johnstone	Place and Enterprise Manager

**Background Papers:** Executive Committee – 6 December 2022  
Executive Committee – 1 March 2022  
Executive Committee – 5 October 2021  
Scottish Borders Council – 26 August 2021  
Executive Committee – 30 April 2019

#### **Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Information can also be given on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [gjohnstone@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:gjohnstone@scotborders.gov.uk) 01835 825138



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## **PENSION FUND EMPLOYERS (SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL) CONTRIBUTION RATE**

**Report by Director of Finance & Procurement**  
**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

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**25 January 2024**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report informs Scottish Borders Council of a decision taken by Scottish Borders Pension Fund Committee and Board setting the Scottish Borders Council employers contribution rate from 2024/25 onwards. That decision was taken on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 and the report supporting the decision is attached as an Appendix to this report.**
- 1.2 The report contained in the appendix explained that, following the most recent triennial actuarial revaluation of the fund, it is assessed that the fund is 134% funded. It recommended that the Scottish Borders Council contribution rate moves to 17% from 2024/25 through to 2027/28.
- 1.3 This recommendation – and all of the other recommendations in the Report were agreed by the Pension Fund Committee and Board.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that Council notes the content of the report contained in the Appendix and notes that the recommendations contained in that report were agreed by the Pensions Fund Committee and Board on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The background to this decisions made on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January is explained fully in the Appendix.

## 4 IMPLICATIONS

### 4.1 Financial

The financial implications are explained fully in the Appendix

### 4.2 Risk and Mitigations

Any risks and mitigations are explained fully in the Appendix.

### 4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

The Appendix notes that it is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 4.4 Sustainable Development Gals

The Appendix notes that there are no significant effects on the economy, community or environment.

### 4.5 Climate Change

The Appendix notes that the contribution rate strategies modelled have been tested against three climate change scenarios. The contribution rate strategies remain appropriate under the scenarios modelled.

### 4.6 Rural Proofing

The Appendix notes that it is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

### 4.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

The Appendix notes that there are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 4.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

The Appendix notes that there are no changes to the Schemes of Administration or Delegation as a result of this report.

## 5 CONSULTATION

The Appendix notes the Consultation which took place in respect of that report.

### Approved by

**Suzy Douglas**  
**Director of Finance & Procurement**

**Signature .....**

### Author(s)

Suzy Douglas	Director of Finance & Procurement 01835 824000 X5881
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**Background Papers:**

**Previous Minute Reference:** Pension Fund Committee & Board 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Suzy Douglas can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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## **PENSION FUND EMPLOYERS (SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL) CONTRIBUTION RATE**

**Report by Director of Finance & Procurement**

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### **PENSION FUND COMMITTEE AND PENSION BOARD**

**17 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report provides the Pension Fund Committee and Board with a proposal for setting the Scottish Borders Council employers contribution rate from 2024/25 onwards. The report will be referred on to Scottish Borders Council to be considered as part of the 2024/25 financial planning process.**
- 1.2 As part of the key risk management activities of the Pension Fund, a triennial actuarial revaluation exercise is undertaken. This exercise ensures the Fund complies with legislation, analyses actual experiences versus assumptions over the previous 3 year period, reviews the funding strategy statement, is part of the continual health check on the solvency of the Fund and is used to calculate the employer contribution rates.
- 1.3 The last triennial revaluation was undertaken by Hymans Robertson based on the position at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 when the fund was assessed as being 110% funded.
- 1.4 On commencing the revaluation process for 2023, an assessment has been made on asset and liability movements since 2020 up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The Fund has experienced significant asset returns in the first half of the inter-valuation period, due to the bounce-back from the Covid-19 market fall in February/March 2020. This positive picture has been compounded by a material fall in liability values in the second half of the inter-valuation period due to rising interest rates. **This most recent revaluation assessed the fund to be 134% funded.**
- 1.5 A range of scenarios considering contribution rates have been undertaken and based on these it is recommended that, in order to recognise the positive results from the triennial revaluation but to maintain an appropriate level of prudence, that the Scottish Borders Council contribution rate moves to 17% from 2024/25 through to 2027/28. The position will be kept under review annually.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **2.1 It is recommended that Pension Fund Committee:**

- (a) **Notes the revaluation process undertaken by Hymans Robertson;**
- (b) **Notes the contribution rate scenarios modelled; and**
- (c) **Agrees that the requested level of contribution from Scottish Borders Council from 2024/25 is 17%.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As part of the key risk management activities of the Pension Fund, a triennial actuarial revaluation exercise is undertaken by the Pension Fund Actuary, Hymans Robertson. The aim of the revaluation process is to assess the value of the Fund's assets (assets held today plus future investment returns and contributions) and liabilities (benefits earned to date and in the future) and to set a contribution rate for all participating employers in the fund. The fund needs to strike a balance between higher contributions and lower investment risk or lower contributions and higher investment risk. This is the key valuation decision.
- 3.2 The last triennial revaluation was undertaken at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 when the fund was assessed as being 110% funded. This most recent revaluation is based on the position at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 which assessed the fund as being 134% funded.

### 4 CHANGES SINCE 2020

- 4.1 On commencing the revaluation process for 2023, an assessment was made on asset and liability movements since 2020. The Fund has experienced significant asset returns in the first half of the inter-valuation period, due to the bounce-back from Covid-19 market fall in February/March 2020. This positive picture has been compounded by a material fall in liability values in the second half of the inter-valuation period due to rising interest rates.
- 4.2 Key assumptions are made on the following aspects of the Fund and include:
- Future investment return expectations including discount rate assumptions (assessing the present value of future benefits)
  - Benefit increases
  - Longevity trends
- 4.3 The following table shows the key revaluation assumptions for 2023.

Financial assumption	31 March 2023	Required for	31 March 2020
Discount rate	5.2% pa	To place a present value on all the benefits promised to scheme members at the valuation date. The Fund's assets are estimated to have a 80% likelihood of returning above the discount rate.	3.8% pa*
Benefit increases/CARE revaluation	2.3% pa	To determine the size of future benefit payments.	1.9% pa
Salary increases	3.0% pa	To determine the size of future final-salary linked benefit payments.	2.6% pa

\*Based on a 70% likelihood of success in 2020

	31 March 2023	31 March 2020
Male pensioner	20.6 years	20.9 years
Male non-pensioner	21.2 years	21.9 years
Female pensioner	23.3 years	23.5 years
Female non-pensioner	24.9 years	25.4 years

Pensioners are assumed to be aged 65 at the respective valuation date and non-pensioners are assumed to be aged 45.

**Robust and evidenced based approach to agreeing assumptions**

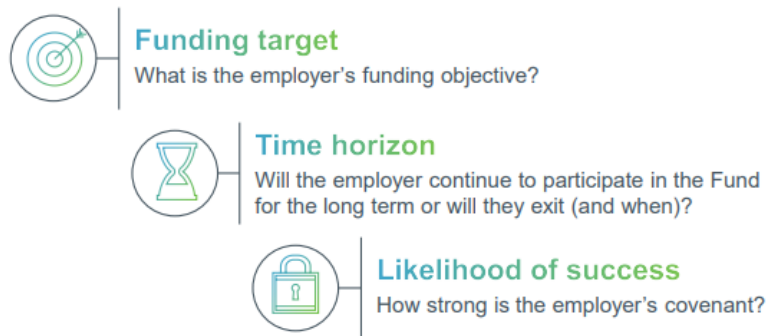
- 4.4 When assessing the impact of changes from 2020 to 2023, in net terms, the key change has been the change in assumed future investment returns as a result of the change in market conditions over the period.

### 5 CONTRIBUTION RATE

- 5.1 Following the agreed assumptions around investment income, consideration needs to be given to the appropriate contribution rate, over the following 3 year period, to meet the cost of benefits that continue to be earned and to ensure the fund will have sufficient assets to pay pensions over the long

term. The current contribution rate for Scottish Borders Council is 18.5%. Based on the results of the triennial revaluation contribution rates now need to be reviewed for the 3 financial years from 2024/25.

5.2 There are 3 steps to setting a funding strategy as shown below.



Reflects the circumstances of each employer and allows the Fund to manage risk

5.3 The Fund operates a Contribution Stability Mechanism (CSM) for its long-term secure employers. The CSM is designed to keep contributions stable through the peaks and troughs of market cycles. Any annual changes to contribution rates are therefore restricted to +/- 0.5% of pay. Stabilisation takes a long-term approach to setting contribution rates which cuts through short-term funding 'noise' ("underpay in the bad times, overpay in the good") and is an explicit mechanism documented in the FSS. At each revaluation, the Fund must check that the funding plan remains appropriate and use that plan to set contribution rates for the Pool.

5.4 The very high level of success measures confirmed by the current funded level of 134% suggests that there may be room for further reductions in contribution rates. This is due to the expectation that investment returns in the future will be higher than at the previous revaluation.

Modelling of contribution rates from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 has been undertaken utilising 4 scenarios:

- Maintain a rate of 18% until 2027
- 0.5% step down per annum until 2027
- 1% step down per annum until 2027
- Immediate reduction to 15% until 2027

This suggests that any of the contribution scenarios modelled for the next 3 years are appropriate with a likelihood of success of over 80%. The proposal to reduce the contribution also confirms that maintaining the contribution stability mechanism remains appropriate in the long-term.

5.5 Moving to a target funding level of 117% has also been modelled to consider the extent of surplus retention within the contribution rate strategies (ie retaining half of the current surplus to act as a buffer against future adverse experience). The first three contribution scenarios noted in 5.3 continue to meet the minimum likelihood of success threshold (80%). There is also no change in downside risk compared to a 100% funding target. This suggests that any of the first three contribution scenarios modelled for the next 3 years are appropriate and means the Fund can adopt any of the first three contribution rate scenarios to achieve:

- An explicit aim of retaining some surplus

- A reduction in contribution rates
  - Retaining a contribution rate stability mechanism
- 5.6 Based on the results above it is recommended that, in order to recognise the positive results from the triennial revaluation but to maintain an appropriate level of prudence, that the Scottish Borders Council contribution rate moves to 17% from 2024/25 through to 2027/28. Taking a cautious position at a contribution rate of 17% rather than moving straight to 15% provides an appropriately prudent level of annual income to pay the majority of pensioner benefits, thereby reducing the pressure on investment returns to pay current pensions. Contribution levels will be kept under review as we move forward.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

There are no additional anticipated financial implications on the Scottish Borders Council Pension Fund, with the recommended Scottish Borders Council contribution rate of 17% being assessed as sufficient to ensure a fully funded position over the 20 year horizon with a high degree of confidence as explained in 6.2 below. Financial implications for Scottish Borders Council will be reflected in the Council's 2024/25 financial planning process.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

There is a risk that the assumptions made to inform the Scottish Borders Council contribution rate may be incorrect resulting in a lower or higher contribution rate being applied than that required. This is mitigated by the Actuary's use of asset liability modelling, giving 5,000 different outcomes for future market and economic conditions giving a distribution of outcomes. The approach taken results in 80% of the 5,000 scenarios showing the Fund in a fully funded position in 20 years time.

This particular Risk is captured within the Funding risk category of the refreshed Pension Fund Risk Register, a summary of which was most recently presented to the Committee/Board in December 2023, along with the control measures and mitigation actions stated above that are designed to reduce the likelihood and impact of the risk materialising.

### **6.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **6.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

There are no significant effects on the economy, community or environment.

### **6.5 Climate Change**

The contribution rate strategies modelled have been tested against three climate change scenarios. The contribution rate strategies remain appropriate under the scenarios modelled.

### **6.6 Rural Proofing**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

### **6.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.



**6.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to the Schemes of Administration or Delegation as a result of this report.

**7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications are being consulted on this report and any comments will be incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Suzy Douglas**

**Signature .....**

**Director of Finance & Procurement**

**Author(s)**

Suzy Douglas	Director of Finance & Procurement 01835 824000 X5881
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**Background Papers:**

**Previous Minute Reference:** Pension Fund Committee & Board 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023

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## **Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Connectivity**

**Report by Director of Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 January 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

**1.1 The report updates members on progress made on developing the CCTV proposal and provides an overview on next steps around Borders wide connectivity including town centres, presented to Council on 28<sup>th</sup> of September and the timeline for a full business case being brought back to Council for approval in February 2024.**

1.2 The report from 28th September 2023 set out the potential options, benefits and future opportunities available to Scottish Borders for investment in Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi and gained agreement to proceed with a scheme for seven Borders towns for CCTV.

1.3 The report outlined the state of the current provision of CCTV and detailed the benefits and other considerations for potential investment.

##### 1.3.1 Benefits included:

- Many of the CCTV systems are approaching a point of disrepair.
- Current analogue systems will become obsolete as of 2025.
- Public safety and detection of crime.
- The ability to collect meaningful data, for both Police Scotland and the Council.
- Using the investment in CCTV to scope out further use cases for the technology and better understand the market, looking at solutions such as cloud-based CCTV and 5G connectivity.

##### 1.3.2 Considerations included:

- The options submitted by CGI, including the outline financial implications.
- A move to a principle of investment and modernisation to reflect community priorities.
- Development of a fully defined proposal and costed business case with funding arrangements coming back to a subsequent Council meeting for final approval.

- Consultation be undertaken with other towns and communities to determine views, practicalities and priorities for potential future CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi investment opportunities.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that the Committee:**

- (a) Note progress made in developing proposals with CGI and the receipt of comparative costs for CCTV for the Scottish Borders;**
- (b) Note progress on bench marking and understanding of the market, carried out with partner organisations, specialist advisors and other local authorities;**
- (c) Note engagement with community owned CCTV models in the Borders and proposals developed by Hawick Community Council; and**
- (d) Note development of the CCTV proposals to further Scottish Borders Council's aspirations as a "Smart, connected rural region" and considering Town Centre Wi-fi in a future connectivity plan to complement future investment opportunities in connectivity and technology offered through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Council currently operates sixty five\* Public Space CCTV cameras located in Duns, Hawick, Galashiels, Kelso, Peebles, Eyemouth and Melrose. Further to this, 2 mobile camera systems are also utilised and owned by Police Scotland.
- 3.2 Selkirk and Newcastleton have both established a different model, which Scottish Borders Council does not operate but is accessible to Police Scotland through access agreements with the community as the data controller
- 3.3 Hawick Community Council has been considering the town CCTV and have drafted an outline proposal which has been shared with Scottish Borders Council.

### **4 PROGRESS UPDATE - CCTV**

- 4.1 A cross departmental Project Team, including Police Scotland, has been stood up to interrogate the current proposals and understand the current usage and data arrangements for the system, and develop the use cases for the CCTV install.
- 4.2 Data Governance arrangements have been explored and a full Data Protection Impact Assessment will be developed if Council decides to proceed with upgrading CCTV systems. There has been consideration given to the learning available from the mobile CCTV deployment project led by Safer Communities & Homelessness and from other local authorities' data controller models. This will be further developed for current data use cases, with consideration of likely future opportunities beyond crime prevention.
- 4.3 Insights and understanding of the usage and set up of existing community operated installs have been gained through conversations with representatives from both Selkirk and Newcastleton.
- 4.4 Proposals developed by Hawick Community Council have been passed to Scottish Borders Council and are being reviewed and considered by CGI in the developed proposals.
- 4.4 Current CCTV locations overlaid with criminal and antisocial behaviour incidents has been requested from Police Scotland to inform the requirements of new cameras.
- 4.5 Officers have consulted Police Scotland's [national policy](#) to determine the agencies digital aspirations and confirmed with representatives that there are no standard specification requirements for CCTV or requirement to change the data access arrangements to an integrated digital solution at this time. Systems under consideration will provide scope for future

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\*previous reports cited seventy cameras – for clarification, this included five cameras in Selkirk, sixty five cameras are within scope in the seven towns

integration if required.

- 4.6 Publicly available reports have been consulted to inform the project and inform the CCTV functionality and specification, particularly with regards data usage in Machine Learning and AI applications, such as facial recognition. These include; The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) , Scottish Government and the Scottish Community Safety Network. Links to these reports can be found in the Background Papers section of this report.

An outline specification has been supplied to CGI to develop a proposal which outlines the cost and technical benefits of the proposal, and will come back to Council as a full business case at the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 Council meeting.

## **5 PROGRESS UPDATE – CONNECTIVITY**

- 5.1 Town Centre WIFI will be encapsulated into the wider connectivity project for further consideration.
- 5.2 Consultation has been undertaken with the Scotland 5G Centre as a strategic partner to the Digital Programme on the opportunities to maximise the investment from replacing the CCTV infrastructure and the use of video data beyond crime prevention.
- 5.3 Analysis of connectivity models, and the pros and cons of fibre connectivity versus advanced wireless technology, is being thoroughly investigated to ensure the proposal is fit for purpose now and for future usage.
- 5.4 Given Scottish Borders Council's unique opportunity to leverage further investment in connectivity through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, CCTV proposals are being considered as a "phase 1" on which connectivity can be built. It is proposed that Town Centre Wi-fi and additional connectivity benefits to the community will be developed as future phases to ensure a joined-up approach across the region and maximise the potential to support a range of digital interventions to benefit the region.
- 5.5 Scottish Borders Council is currently developing a project implementation strategy for a pilot site for 5G Small Cell technology as part of the successful Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal consortium bid to the DSIT 5G Innovation Region fund. Learning from this programme and that of our partner local authorities will be applied to future development of the foundational CCTV infrastructure.
- 5.6 Data Driven Innovation opportunities for the economic development of the Borders region were outlined in a paper by Edinburgh University under the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and the use of data derived from CCTV and how that could be utilised in the future will be developed as part of the scoping of the project.

## **6 SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**

- 6.1 Widespread engagement work that is being undertaken within the wider agenda of Place Making has been considered in the development of the solution, and how opportunities for IoT devices such as CCTV to support emerging priorities of communities in the future.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

A comprehensive business case is being developed and will encompass a robust financial business case including initial capital outlay and ongoing revenue costs as well as identifying other non-financial benefits. The costs indicated within the 28<sup>th</sup> September report are being interrogated and comparison of alternative suppliers is underway.

This investment would form part of the Council's delivery of the Digital Strategy and as such the business case requires to be prioritised against other potential digital investments to ensure value for money can be demonstrated.

Consideration is being given to the future investment opportunities through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal monies to support building upon the Council outlay.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The risks for Scottish Borders Council of not evolving the CCTV systems currently available are significant. Communities consistently raise the need to feel safer, and that CCTV is a key priority for them. Some of the CCTV systems in place are already at the end of their usefulness, and the current analogue system for the seven existing towns will be obsolete when the switch from to digital takes place in 2025.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

A full IIA will be undertaken prior to proceeding with proposals and will be brought with the full business case.

### **7.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

CCTV and town centre Wi-Fi should complement the Digital Strategy for SBC, which in turn seeks to promote and enhance the Council's commitment to Sustainable Development goals.

### **7.5 Climate Change**

The options being proposed within this report should allow an overall positive impact on climate change. In many cases, the availability of effective and widespread CCTV should reduce the need for a physical presence to undertake some surveillance, monitoring and inspection work. It may make targeted response more possible, reducing the need for travel. Cloud-based storage solutions reduce the need for physical storage space. Town centre Wi-Fi may enhance the ability of communities to access remote services and information.

Additional benefits in relation to climate action may be realised through future development of the CCTV system to provide insights into key indicators such as environmental monitoring, air quality analysis,

destination and traffic management and other reporting generated through video analytics.

## 7.6 Rural Proofing

The initial proposal is targeted at town centre locations across the Scottish Borders. However, further phases may include exploration of wider CCTV and Wi-Fi coverage to benefit more rural areas. Indeed, a major opportunity of these digital solutions, is that further scaling up could offer rural communities possibilities that have never been available or feasible previously.

The research and understanding gathered in the development of the proposals will help inform the opportunities for connectivity to deliver on our aspirations for the region and target inward investment to the areas of need in rural communities.

## 7.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

The enhancement of CCTV will need to be accompanied with a robust and thorough approach to data protection. Updated protocols will be required given the increased availability and volume of data, and also to ensure that any new Cloud-based solutions are consistent with the arrangements of SBC and any partners. Ultimately, there should be an overall improvement in the ability to securely manage CCTV-generated data. SBC will need to work closely with data protection professionals within associated partner agencies and with communities to ensure that the benefits from these proposals are delivered without any compromise to data protection standards. A full Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be undertaken, which will identify all additional measures that are required.

## 7.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

It is not anticipated that there will be any changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation arising from this report.

# 8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The following consultees have all been consulted: Director of Finance, the Director of Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director People Performance & Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications.

## Approved by

**Jen Holland**  
**Director of Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships**

## Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jason McDonald	Senior Manager Business Strategy & Resources
Naomi Sweeney	Portfolio Manager
Pamela Connor	Project Support

## Background Papers:



CCTV Provision in the Scottish Borders – Executive 16th April 2019

Closed Circuit Television Provision in the Scottish Borders, Consultation Report – Council 26th June 2019

Closed Circuit Television Provision in the Scottish Borders – Council 30 September 2020

Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi – Council 28th September 2023

The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) - <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/cctv-and-video-surveillance/guidance-on-video-surveillance-including-cctv/>

Scottish Community Safety Network. - <https://www.safercommunitiescotland.org/wp-content/uploads/SCSN-CCTV-Summary-Report-.pdf>

Scottish Government - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-space-cctv-scotland/>

**Previous Minute Reference:**

[Minute from 28 September 2023](#)

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jason McDonald can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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## **REPROVISIONING OF NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**

**Report by Director – Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships**

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**Scottish Borders Council**

**25 January 2024**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

**1.1 Further to the Night Support Service pathfinders in Tweeddale and Berwickshire, subsequent public consultation, this report proposes a reduction in the number of Night Support Service teams and also the introduction of dawn/twilight shifts. It is also proposed that these teams will provide a rapid response service for any TEC activations in addition to providing planned care for those with complex and critical care needs.**

**1.2** Given the outcome of both pathfinders, it is evident that a night support service continues to be required, but given the alternative means of providing this service, we now propose a reduction from 5 Night Support teams to 2 as described fully within the IJB paper. These 2 teams would continue to provide planned, critical overnight support to individuals with complex health needs, whilst also providing a Rapid Response service to TEC activations. We also propose to introduce a strict eligibility criterion for critical overnight support. Dawn (6am-noon) and Twilight (6pm-midnight) shifts will also be introduced.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that the Committee:- Note the contents of the attached IJB paper.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The pressure on care services nationally, is already taking its toll and it is likely to increase due to demographic change increase in the older people population and increasing complexity of care requirements along with a decreasing workforce pool. Continuing with current models of delivery is not going to be sustainable. New approaches and service delivery models need to be found that will deliver more efficient and effective care, whilst maintaining safe and good quality services.
- 3.2 The Adult Social Care department carried out pathfinders in Tweeddale in September 22 and Berwickshire in July 23. Following these pathfinders, it was evident that there were variations in level of need across the two localities and as such it was concluded that a night support service continues to be required. Given the alternative means of providing this service, we now propose a reduction from 5 Night Support teams to 2 as described fully within the IJB paper.

### **4 Consultation**

- 4.1 Following the completion of both pathfinders, public consultations were implemented in January 23 and Nov 23. The consultations were completed by Adult Social Care staff, service users and their representatives, members of the public and Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues. Full details of the consultation results can be found within the attached IJB paper.

### **5 IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1 Financial**

A total recurring saving will be generated amounting to £343,692. Full details of the financial implications can be found within the attached IJB paper.

#### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

As mentioned in the body of the IJB paper, no increased risks for clients were noted.

#### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

Full IIA's have been completed for both pathfinders and Borders wide rollout. Copies of the Duns Pathfinder and full Borders IIA are included in the attached IJB paper.

#### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

This project will positively impact on the following development goals –

- Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

#### **5.5 Climate Change**

There will be a positive impact on staff mileage and its associated environmental cost.

#### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

No negative impact noted.

### 5.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration of Scheme of delegation.

## 6 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 CMT have been consulted, along with service users, members of the public and Health and Social Care staff. All Night Support Staff are aware of the possible changes to the Night Support Service provision. In addition to these consultation and to increase the awareness of the availability of TEC its capabilities and functions a number of sessions have been held for social work colleagues and members of the public and NHS. These sessions will continue to be held in localities to ensure continued presence in the public domain.

6.2 Trade unions have been consulted and updated throughout the duration of this project at monthly Trades Union Consultation Meetings. They have also been invited to attend group staff meetings. Trade Unions are aware of the possible changes to the Night Support Service provision.

### **Approved by**

**Jen Holland**

**Director – Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships**

### **Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Daniel Smyth Julie Glen	[insert designation and contact telephone number]

**Background Papers:** [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

**Previous Minute Reference:** [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

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24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

## **REPROVISIONING OF NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**

Report by Julie Glen, Operations Director



### **1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1. **Further to the Night Support Service pathfinder in Duns and subsequent public consultation, this report proposes a reduction in the number of Night Support Service teams and also the introduction of dawn/twilight shifts. It is also proposed that teams will provide a rapid response service for any TEC activations in addition to providing planned care for those with complex and critical care needs.**
- 1.2. Following the Pathfinder in Peebles in September 2022 and subsequent consultation, a further pathfinder was undertaken in Duns during August 2023, at the request of the IJB.
- 1.3. The second pathfinder concluded that the needs of service users in Duns were very different to the needs of those in Peebles. It was established that overnight face to face support was still required for a small number of service users due to the level of complex care needs, which included palliative care. It also included a service user who was awaiting a 24-hour care placement.
- 1.4. These findings, and staff engagement sessions influenced the approach taken for the second public consultation that was carried out during November 2023. The consultation gained 70 responses.
- 1.5. The findings of this consultation demonstrated that participants had a better understanding of the proposals than in the previous consultation and were more positive about the proposed changes.
- 1.6. Given the outcome of both pilots, it is evident that a night support service continues to be required, but given the alternative means of providing this service, we now propose a reduction from 5 Night Support teams to 2 as described in section 5 of this report. These 2 teams would continue to provide planned, critical overnight support to individuals with complex health needs, whilst also providing a Rapid Response service to TEC activations. We also propose to introduce a strict eligibility criterion for critical overnight support. Dawn (6am-noon) and Twilight (6pm-midnight) shifts will also be introduced.
- 1.7. The redesign of the night support service would ensure that service users with complex health needs receive a service that meets their needs in a more person centred outcome focussed way. This along with a transition to a rapid response approach will allow the service to be more responsive to those who are requiring unplanned support overnight.
- 1.8. The proposal to introduce TEC and Twilight/Dawn shifts ensures a more person-centred approach to care can be promoted, which not only increases choice and a sense of control to service users but will also improve service user safety by providing constant monitoring and an immediate response if urgent support is required rather than a time-specific face to face visit.
- 1.9. Staff have been fully consulted throughout both pathfinders and the consultation periods.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1. The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board (IJB) is asked to:-

- a) Note the consultation results.
- b) Agree the proposal to reduce from 5 Night Support teams to 2 Rapid Response Teams.

## 3. ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND WAYS OF WORKING

3.1. It is expected that the proposal will impact on the Health and Social Care Strategic Framework Objectives and Ways of Working below:

Alignment to our strategic objectives					
Rising to the workforce challenge	Improving access	Focusing on early intervention and prevention	Supporting unpaid carers	Improving our effectiveness and thinking differently to meet need with less	Reducing poverty and inequalities
x			x	x	

Alignment to our ways of working					
People at the heart of everything we do	Good agile teamwork and ways of working – Team Borders approach	Delivering quality, sustainable, seamless services	Dignity and respect	Care and compassion	Inclusive co-productive and fair with openness, honesty and responsibility
x	x	x	x	x	x

## 4. INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD DIRECTION

4.1 A direction is required to Scottish Borders Council.

## 5. BACKGROUND

5.1. The pressure on care services nationally, is already taking its toll and it is likely to increase due to demographic change increase in the older people population and increasing complexity of care requirements along with a decreasing workforce pool. Continuing with current models of delivery is not going to be sustainable. New approaches and service delivery models need to be found that will deliver more efficient and effective care, whilst maintaining safe and good quality services.

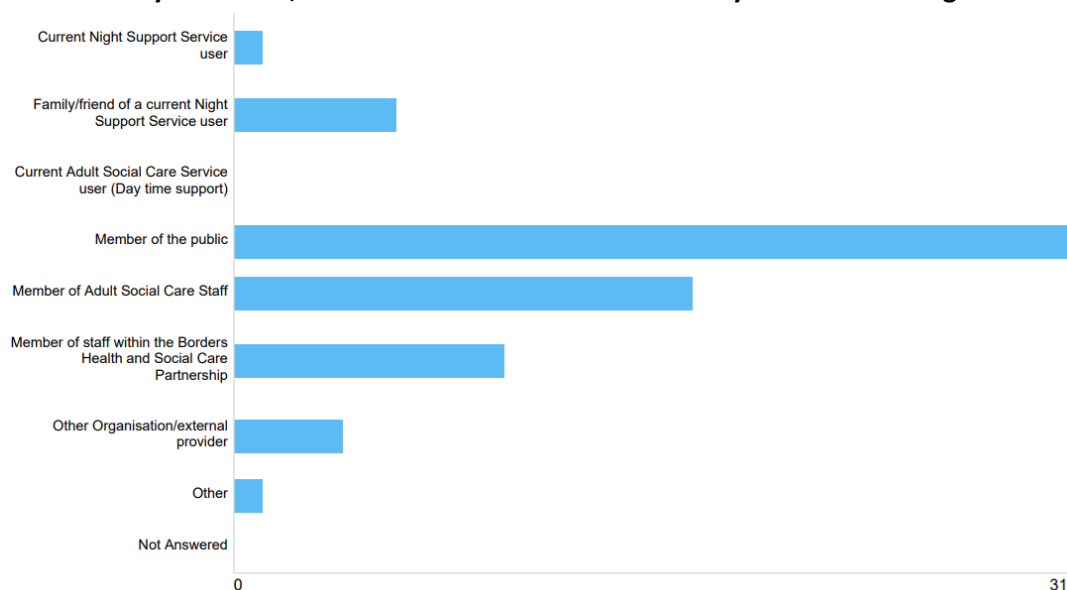
5.2. After removing 7.2FTE long term vacancies at the start of this financial year, saving £185,657, five Adult Social Care staff teams still operate across each Home Care locality area and currently provide night support to only approx. 27 home care service users, at a cost to the Council of £455,504 pa. This is a very expensive service, costing approx. £16,870 per service user. Many Council areas such as Mid Lothian and East Lothian have replaced face to face night support with the use of Assistive Technology/Technology Enabled Care (TEC) solutions.



- 5.3. Assistive Technology/TEC provides essential support using a person-centred approach; it gives increased choice and sense of control to service users; improves service user safety by providing constant monitoring rather than a time-limited face to face visit and allows for an immediate response in the event there is a serious concern with a service user in need of urgent assistance.
- 5.4. The Adult Social Care department undertook a pathfinder in the Peebles area in September 2022. The pathfinder concluded that in many cases, a physical visit was not actually required, or the care could be provided by a twilight shift. There was no increase of risk or accidents due to the removal of a physical visit. Following this, a public consultation was undertaken. The results of this consultation and the comments provided, highlighted that the consultation had not been clear enough. In May 2023 the Integration Joint Board requested that a further pathfinder be undertaken followed by clear consultation.
- 5.5. In July 2023, a further pathfinder was undertaken in Duns. The pathfinder followed the same process and engagement with both service users and staff as was undertaken in the Peebles pathfinder. The Duns pathfinder concluded that the Night Support service was still required for a small number of service users due to the level of complex care needs, which included palliative care. It also included a service user who was awaiting a 24-hour care placement.
- 5.6. In November 2023 a second public consultation was launched. The consultation clearly stated the changes proposed and confirmed understanding of each proposal prior to asking if the respondent was supportive of the proposal.

## 6. CONSULTATION RESULTS

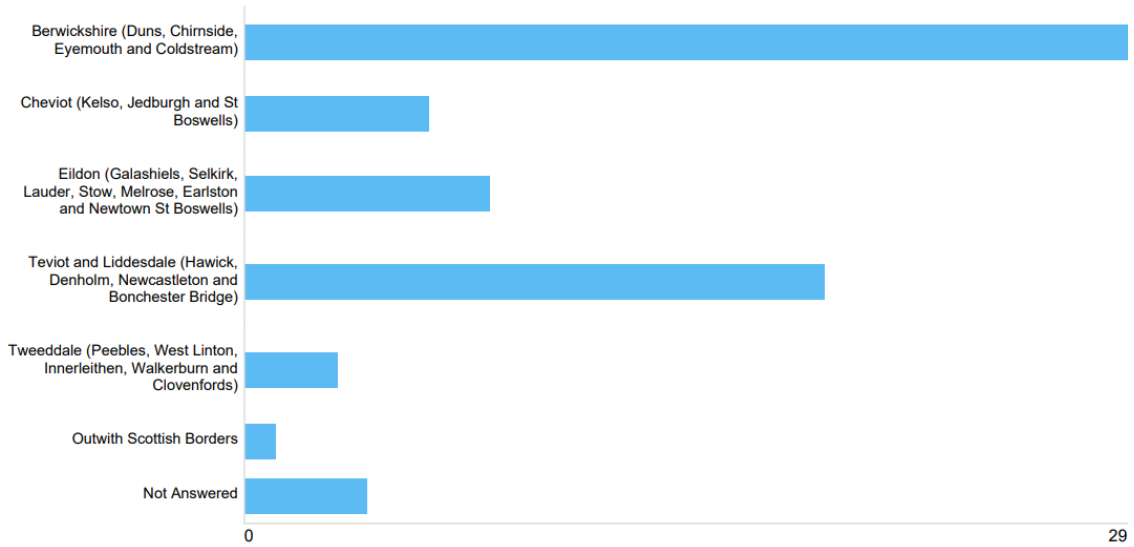
- 6.1. The consultation was completed by 70 people, ranging in age from 25-34yrs to 85+ years. This compares to 240 responses in the original consultation. The largest proportion of responses were from members of public (31), followed by staff (27). Only 7 respondents stated that they were answering as a current Night Support Service user or a member of a current night service **users' family. However, in a later section 15 stated that they were current Night Service users.**



17% of respondents stated that they had a disability and 33% reported that their day-to-day activities were limited by a health problem or disability. 80% of responses were from females.

41% of responses came from those that live within Berwickshire, 27% from Teviot and Liddesdale, 11% from Eildon, 9% from Cheviot and 4 % from Tweeddale. 6% did not answer and

2% were from out with Scottish Borders.

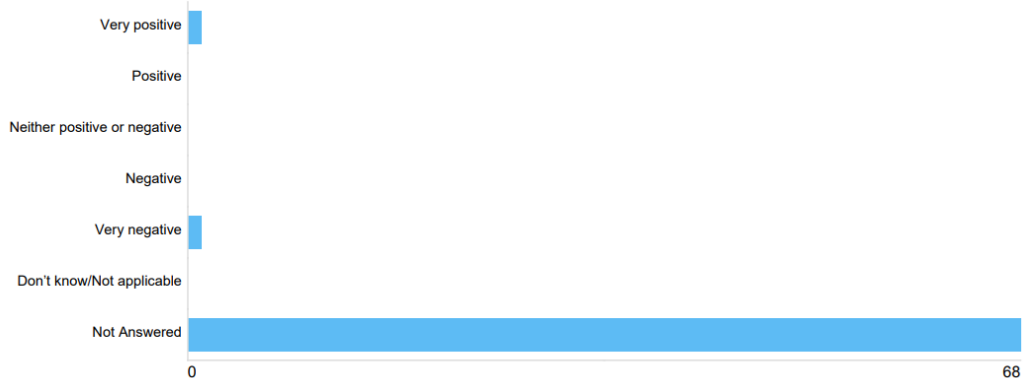


6.2. The results of the consultation are as follows –

Q1. Have you or the person that you are representing been directly impacted by the Pathfinder in Peebles or Berwickshire?



Q2. How have the changes impacted you, the current night service user or your family?



Q3. All current service users in receipt of the Night Support service will be invited to participate in the regular review process involving Social Work colleagues, where alternative options may be discussed. This may include consideration for moving overnight visits to dawn and/or twilight and establishing if use of TEC is a suitable option. If individual service users are assessed as requiring critical levels of support, such as those with palliative/end of life care needs, critical medication visits or with concerns relating to skin integrity, individuals will continue to receive face to face support from the team.

Is this explanation clear?

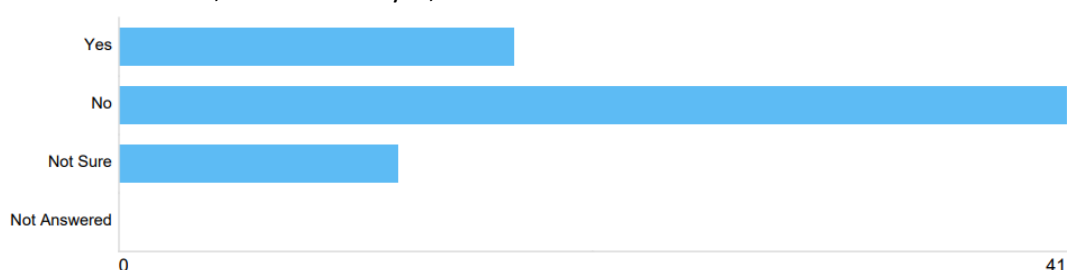
88.5 % stated that the explanation was clear, 5.7% stated that it was not clear and 5.7% stated that they were not sure.

The reasons for being unsure or stating “no” were noted as:

- Why would someone from social services assess need rather than suitably qualified health worker?
- Overnight care re: skin integrity and continence management is/has not been available routinely for some time, leading to care home/hospital admissions. Evaluating the current service will be limited by this prior change in service provision.
- ‘Regular review process’ Will feedback from service givers, clients, family, if DN/nurses/evening nurses involved - be taken into the review. Sounds like another ploy to reduce services by making it seem clients would benefit more than they will.

Are you supportive of this change?

58.5% stated no, 24.2% stated yes, and 17.14% stated not sure.



This breaks down as -

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	8	18	5
Member of adult SC staff	5	9	3
Member of H&SCP staff	3	3	4
Service user	0	7	0
Other	1	4	0

Q4. The use of TEC such as door sensors, bed sensors and falls alarms have been successfully used for many years to reduce the overnight disruption caused by a physical night time visit by carers in other Local Authority areas. They are used to monitor service users in real time, for the whole night, and alert staff, should they be required. Time-limited visits currently in place only provide a snapshot of individuals during the period of that visit, whereas TEC alternatives offer constant monitoring. During routine reviews involving Social Work colleagues, the use of TEC will be discussed, but will only be introduced if individuals are deemed suitable for this.

Is this explanation clear?

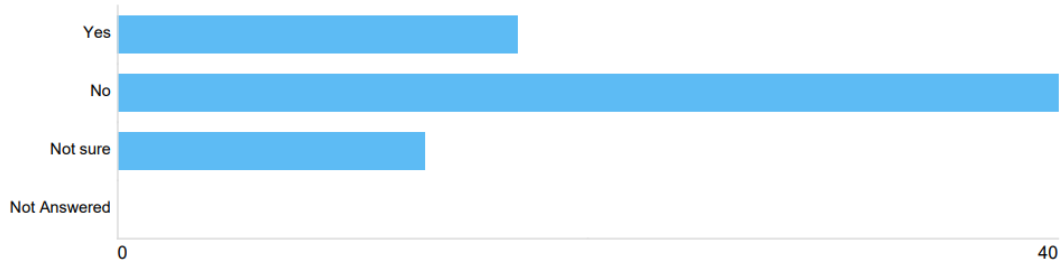
87.1 % stated that the explanation was clear, 7.14% stated that it was not clear and 5.71% stated that they were not sure.

The reasons for being unsure or answering “no” were noted as:

- Who will respond if an alarm is triggered?
- Timely response to act on an alert.
- Not using the service but feel if we need it should be there.

Are you supportive of this change?

57.14% stated no, 24.29% stated yes and 18.57% were not sure.



This breaks down as -

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	6	19	6
Member of adult SC staff	6	7	4
Member of H&SCP staff	2	6	2
Service user	2	5	0
Other	1	3	1

Q5. We are proposing that a team of staff continue to work overnight to respond to any alarm activations and to carry out any critical face to face visits.

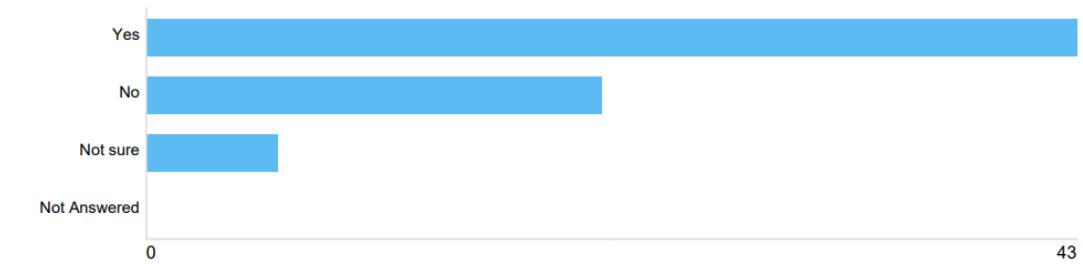
Is this explanation clear?

91.4% stated yes, 2.86% stated no and 5.71% were unsure. The reasons for being unsure or answering "no" were noted as:

- Where will the overnight staff be based, and what will the response time to alarms be?
- Team of staff/rural area/unable to predict amount of 'alerts' each night.
- No mention of where night team will be based.
- Teams reduced from 5 teams to 2 to cover the area you want them to cover is ridiculous!

Are you supportive of this change?

61.43% stated yes, 30% stated no and 8.57% were unsure.



This breaks down as -

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	13	15	3
Member of adult SC staff	13	3	1
Member of H&SCP staff	10	0	0

Service user	5	1	1
Other	2	2	1

Q6. We are proposing that rather than disturb people with a physical visit overnight when they are in the main, sleeping; that their visit is moved to a dawn and/or twilight time (e.g., moving a 2am visit to 11.30pm or moving a 4am visit to 6am) depending on the support required. This will be less disruptive for the service user and their family, promote sleep and improve wellbeing. However, if individual need is such that the overnight visit is required, this will continue to be provided.

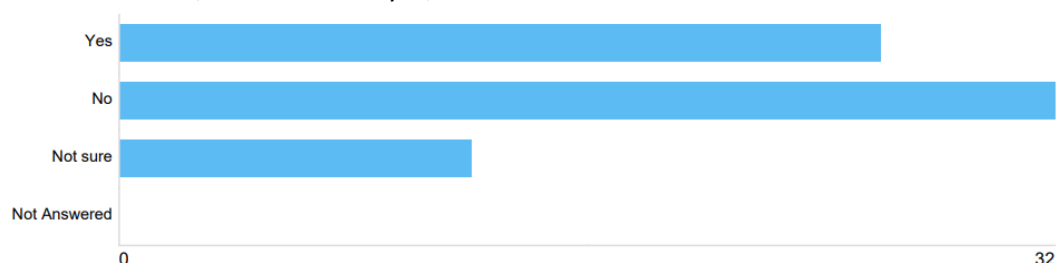
Is this explanation clear?

92.86% stated yes, 2.86% stated no and 4.29% were unsure. The reasons for being unsure or responding “no” were noted as:

- What are the conditions required for an overnight visit?
- Surely ‘during the night’ visits are already only when necessary to begin with

Are you supportive of this change?

45.7% stated no, 37.14% stated yes, 17.14% were not sure.



This breaks down as -

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	10	15	6
Member of adult SC staff	9	5	3
Member of H&SCP staff	5	3	2
Service user	1	5	1
Other	1	4	0

Q7. Staff currently working in the Night support team would be offered suitable alternative employment. This may include dawn (6am to 10am or midday) or twilight shifts (6pm to midnight/8pm to midnight), daytime shifts in Home Care, overnight rapid response shifts (providing critical support) with no change to their current shift patterns, and night shifts working in care homes. There are no proposals to make any staff member redundant. The reprovisioning of this resource will improve staffing across Care at Home and in the wider social care system.

Is this explanation clear?

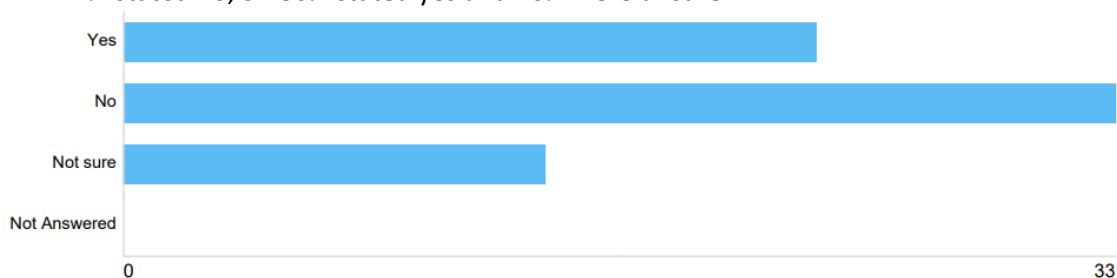
91.43% stated yes, 4.29% stated no and 4.29% were unsure. The reasons for being unsure or answering “no” were noted as:

- Not clear if staff are employed by SBC, NHS Borders or other employers.
- Little to no communication or update for staff affected.

- Will staff retain the same size of contracted hours, will they now have to travel further to place of work.

Are you supportive of this change?

47.14% stated no, 32.86% stated yes and 20% were unsure.



This breaks down as -

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	8	18	5
Member of adult SC staff	7	7	3
Member of H&SCP staff	3	2	5
Service user	3	4	0
Other	2	2	1

Q8. Do you have any other comments relevant to this proposal? There were 29 responses, 12 from members of the public, 13 from staff, 2 from night support service users or their families and 2 from organisations/other. The responses are grouped as below.

- Concerns for staff including - Staff location, contract and workload; changes to shift patterns; lone working; lack of staff; inability of RR team to cover borders wide and staff clarity on process.
- Concerns for service users including - Risk to service users; continence/skin integrity; not a person-centred approach; inability to cover borders wide; rurality and ageing population; palliative/end of life care needs; family anxiety; service user anxiety.
- Limited understanding of TEC capabilities and its function including - Reduced face to face contact/Not person centred; Inability of TEC to carry out tasks including personal care; Connectivity concerns.
- Miscellaneous/Other including – Rurality, not person centred/cost cutting, more joint partnership working.

### 6.3. Mitigating Actions

Concerns	Mitigating Actions
Concerns for staff including - Staff location, contract and workload; changes to shift	Staff location/ability to cover the borders – Given the very small number of service users

<p>patterns; lone working; lack of staff; inability of Rapid Response team to cover borders wide and staff clarity on process.</p>	<p>currently in receipt of the Night Support service who would likely be considered for use of TEC, we would take into account the geographical location and place teams in care homes within travelling distance to these locations. Furthermore, each member of both rapid response teams, will have access to a vehicle (4 in total) to ensure additional flexibility to respond. Both teams involved, will liaise throughout the night and ensure effective communication and have the ability to seek additional support as required. Reports will be provided to senior management, who will have constant oversight of the service.</p> <p>Contract and workload – Contracts for the majority of staff (6.4 FTE) will remain unchanged. The proposal will see a reduction in 3.6 FTE and HR policies will be followed in relation to finding suitable alternative roles for impacted employees. Employees will be supported by senior management, HR and TU colleagues in identifying suitable alternative roles, taking into account personal circumstances and commitments.</p> <p>Through individual consultations to date, Adult Social Care are confident that there are suitable alternative posts for all impacted staff. The service have held night support worker vacancies within Care Homes and the introduction of twilight/dawn shifts appeal to staff. Early indications also suggest that some staff may also wish to be deployed into day support roles and there are numerous vacancies to accommodate this. Movement of employees to other roles within Adult Social Care will also support with recruitment pressure in the service. There is the potential risk of redundancy, but to date, that has not been evident during staff consultation.</p> <p>Senior management will review workload/demand/capacity on an ongoing basis, to ensure no staff member is compromised. Shift patterns are non-contractual and can be amended at any time with reasonable notice. Staff will be provided with reasonable notice if there is a change to their current shift pattern.</p>
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	<p>Staff are provided with iPhone devices, with the PROTECT app and GPS activated, which has various functions to monitor staff whereabouts and with a function to request immediate assistance in an emergency situation.</p>
<p>Concerns for service users including - Risk to service users; continence/skin integrity; not a person-centred approach; inability to cover borders wide; rurality and ageing population; palliative/end of life care needs; family anxiety; service user anxiety.</p>	<p>Review would identify any risks to the service user.</p> <p>For those who require continence support overnight, these service users will be offered continence reassessment to identify more suitable aids, with the offer of a twilight and dawn visit, reducing the window for any episodes of incontinence and impact on skin integrity. If this approach is not suitable for some individuals, they will continue to receive a planned, face to face visit by care staff.</p> <p>Person centred approach - service users and their families will be included in the review of their care needs and their views and opinions will be sought. Any alternative means of care delivery will be done in consultation and with agreement of those involved.</p> <p>Inability to cover borders/rurality –I think this has already been covered off in the previous section?</p> <p>Ageing population - this only highlights the need to review the way in which we deliver care, as we know we aren't going to be able to deliver according to the demand? Not sure how you would want to word this though.</p> <p>Those service users with palliative and critical/end of life care needs will continue to be provided with a face-to-face visit. This is not intended to be removed.</p> <p>Service users also noted that this change may cause anxiety, worry and stress. This would be mitigated by robust engagement, communication and re-assessment approach.</p> <p>Any service user who does not meet the criteria for TEC or is not suitable for an alternative means of care delivery, will continue to receive a physical face to face visit.</p>



<p>Limited understanding of TEC capabilities and its function including - Reduced face to face contact/Not person centred; Inability of TEC to carry out tasks including personal care; Connectivity concerns.</p>	<p>To increase the awareness of the availability of TEC and its capabilities and functions a number of sessions have been held for social work colleagues, members of the public and NHS. These sessions will continue to be held in localities to ensure continued presence in the public domain.</p> <p>Reduced face to face contact – The majority of overnight visits are for the purpose of visual safety checks, which disturb service users unnecessarily. These visits last no more than 10 minutes, with limited or no social interaction. An unintended consequence of these visits often results in service users (particularly those with cognitive impairment) being disturbed and becoming increasingly disorientated/confused or alarmed by the level of disturbance. By replacing a physical visit with TEC, service users would benefit from constant monitoring of TEC activations, which is an improvement to the service currently provided, i.e., one visit during the night and no TEC in place to alert staff if assistance is required.</p> <p>TEC for personal care – There is no intention to provide TEC as an alternative to critical personal care needs. Any current service user with critical care needs, will continue to receive a planned, face to face visit.</p> <p>Only service users who meet the criteria for the introduction of TEC support will have this implemented within their homes. All others will continue to receive face to face support.</p> <p>CCRT will continue to regularly review service users to ensure that the care being provided through TEC is supporting them to safely stay at home.</p> <p>TEC within the home could support service users in being more involved within their communities through access to the internet and video calling.</p> <p>Connectivity concerns – These concerns are around clients being migrated to a digital phone line by their telecom provider. In the event of a power cut new digital phone lines will not work as traditional analogue phone lines have. We are mitigating this risk by upgrading our community alarms to digital ready units which come SIM enabled meaning</p>
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	if there is a power cut to the home the alarm will still be able to dial out through the mobile phone network.
Miscellaneous/Other including – Rurality, not person centred/cost cutting, more joint partnership working.	

#### 6.4 View of response

In the previous consultation which took place over January/February 2023, the view of all these proposed changes were asked in one question, with only 8.33% of responses being positive. In this most recent consultation, a question was asked for each proposed change.

Overall, the responses for this consultation were 36% positive. This will be due to a clearer consultation format and explanation, but also due to the level of consultation that has taken place with staff, service users and the wider public.

The public consultation took place over 5 weeks and attracted responses from only 70 respondents. This is a direct contrast to the consultation which took place between January and February 2023, where there were 240 respondents, and the outcome of the consultation was largely negative across all aspects.

44% of current respondents were members of public, 38% staff within ASC and N&SC partnership, 10% service users/families, and 8% other/external organisation.

The overall outcome of this most recent consultation demonstrates a more balanced response to the proposals mentioned within this report. There is notable improvement in overall supportive responses, particularly involving staff and service users, which will be a direct result of improved engagement/consultation. Furthermore, there are less unsupportive results, with a slight increase in the unsure category.

## 7. PROPOSAL

- 7.1. The proposal would see the redesign of the night support service from a reduction from 5 Night Support teams (10 FTE) to 2 Rapid Response teams (6.4 FTE).
- 7.2. The Rapid Response teams would provide planned and critical overnight care, as well as responding to any TEC activations.
- 7.3. The introduction of a strict eligibility criteria for essential overnight support provided by the Rapid Response teams will ensure that only visits are provided.
- 7.4. The Rapid Response staff would have access to 4 vehicles to provide increased ability to respond Borders wide. Staff would partner with another colleague when responding to remote/rural areas. Clear guidance will be issued to staff to support with this.
- 7.5. By using alternatives such TEC and Dawn/Twilight visits, a more person-centred approach to care can be promoted which not only increases choice and a sense of control to service users; but improves service user safety by providing constant monitoring and an immediate response if urgent support is required rather than a time-specific face to face visit.

## 8. IMPACTS

### Community Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

8.1. It is expected that the proposal will impact on the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes below:

N	Outcome description	Increase / Decrease / No impact
1	People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.	No impact
2	People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.	Increase
3	People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.	Increase
4	Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.	Increase
5	Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.	No impact
6	People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and well-being.	Increase
7	People who use health and social care services are safe from harm.	No impact
8	People who work in health and social care services feel engaged with the work they do and are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide.	Increase
9	Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.	Increase

### Financial impacts

8.2. From April 2023, the removal of long term vacant posts within the night support teams generated a saving of £185,657 – a reduction of 7.2 FTE posts. This still left 5 night support teams operating in the Scottish Borders. Reducing these remaining teams down to 2 teams of 2 people (6.4 FTE in total) will realise further savings of £158,035 – a further reduction of 3.6 FTE posts). A total recurring saving will therefore be generated amounting to £343,692.

### Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty

8.3. A full consultation has been undertaken to ensure the impact of this change has been fully considered.



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### Legislative considerations

8.4. No legislative considerations

### Climate Change and Sustainability

8.5. There will be a positive impact on staff mileage and its associated environmental cost.

### **Risk and Mitigations**

8.6. As mentioned in the body of this paper, no increased risks for clients were noted.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

### **Communities consulted**

- 9.1. CMT have been consulted, along with service users, members of the public and Health and Social Care staff. All Night Support Staff are aware of the possible changes to the Night Support Service provision. In addition to these consultation and to increase the awareness of the availability of TEC its capabilities and functions a number of sessions have been held for social work colleagues and members of the public and NHS. These sessions will continue to be held in localities to ensure continued presence in the public domain.
- 9.2. Trade unions have been consulted and updated throughout the duration of this project at monthly Trades Union Consultation Meetings. They have also been invited to attend group staff meetings. Trade Unions are aware of the possible changes to the Night Support Service provision.
- 9.3. Elected Members have been kept informed throughout the period of this project.

In addition, the following groups have been consulted:

- IJB Strategic Planning Group

### **Integration Joint Board Officers consulted**

- 9.4. The IJB Board Secretary, the IJB Chief Financial Officer, IJB Chief Officer, the IJB Human Rights & Diversity Lead and Corporate Communications have been consulted, and all comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

### **Approved by:**

Jen Holland, Director of Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships

### **Author(s)**

Julie Glen, Operations Director Adult Social Care

**Background Papers: N/A**

**Previous Minute Reference: N/A**

For more information on this report, contact us at Julie Glen, Operations Director, [julie.glen@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:julie.glen@scotborders.gov.uk)



## Reprovisioning of Night Support Service:

### Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

#### Stage 1 Proportionality and Relevance

What Integration Joint Board (IJB) report or Partnership decision does this proportionality and relevance assessment relate to:

#### Reprovision of Night Support service:

Reduction in the number of Night Support teams and the introduction of Rapid Response roles.  
Potential impact on staff with reduction of teams, introduction of Dawn and Twilight shifts and the introduction of the rapid response role. Service users may notice some changes to visit times, the introduction of TEC or removal of a visit if it's not actually required/doesn't meet the Night Support Service Criteria.

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Relevant protected characteristics materially impacted, or potentially impacted, by proposals (employees, clients, customers, people using services) indicate all that apply

Age	Disability Learning Disability, Learning Difficulty, Mental Health, Physical Neurodiversity	Gender	Gender Reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race	Religion and Belief (including non-belief)	Sexual Orientation
X	X	X				X		

Equality and Human Rights Measurement Framework – Reference those identified in Stage 1 (remove those that do not apply)

Living Standards	Health	Participation
Housing Social Care	Social Care Health outcomes	Family Life*

\*Supplementary indicators



<b>Main Impacts</b>	<b>Are these impacts positive or negative or a combination of both</b>	<b>Are the impacts significant or insignificant?</b>
Reduce overnight disruptions for service users improving quality of sleep, reducing disorientation and confusion	Positive	Significant
Providing essential support without disrupting service users in a less intrusive and person centred approach	Positive	Significant
Increase privacy	Positive	Significant
Increased choice and sense of control for service users	Positive	Significant
Reduce risks in terms of service user safety, by providing constant monitoring rather than a time limited visit which may in fact, increase confusion and disorientation	Positive	Significant
Quicker response in the event of a serious concern with a service user	Positive	Significant

<b>Is the proposal considered strategic under the Fairer Scotland Duty?</b>	Yes – socio-economic, but all new care packages that require TEC would be financially assessed to reduce impact. Current service users would not be impacted.
<b>E&amp;HRIA to be undertaken and submitted with the report – Yes</b>  <b>If no – please attach this form to the report being presented for sign off</b>	<b>Proportionality &amp; Relevance Assessment undertaken by:</b>  <b>Name of Officers:</b> Julie Glen (Operations Director Adult Social Care) Mark Williamson (HR Business Partner) Clare Richards (Programme Manager)



# Equality Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

## Stage 2 Empowering People - Capturing their Views



### Reprovision of Night Support service:

Reduction in the number of Night Support teams and the introduction of Rapid Response roles.

Potential impact on staff with reduction of teams, introduction of Dawn and Twilight shifts and the introduction of the rapid response role. Service users may notice some changes to visit times, the introduction of TEC or removal of a visit if it's not actually required/doesn't meet the Night Support Service Criteria.

### Equality Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment Team

Role	Name	Job title	Date of IA Training
HSCP Senior Mgt Team Member	Jen Holland	Director of Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships	
Responsible Officer	Julie Glen	Operations Director	
Mains Stakeholder (SBC)	Daniel Smyth	Service Manager	
	Mark Williamson	HR Business Partner	

	Clare Richards	Programme Manager	
Third/Independent Sector Rep			
Service User			

### Evidence Gathering (will also influence and support consultation/engagement/community empowerment events)

Evidence Type	Source	What does the evidence tell you about the protected characteristics affected?
What equalities information is routinely collected from people currently using the service or affected by the policy?	Age, Gender, Race, Religion, Disability.	There are 27 Night Service users. By the nature of the assessed need, these tend to be older adults with substantial support needs. Full service user details below.
Data on populations in need	<p>Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership Joint Strategic Needs Assessment September 2022:  <a href="https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/11690/hscp_joint_needs_assessment_report">https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/11690/hscp_joint_needs_assessment_report</a></p> <p>National Records of Scotland  <a href="https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/scottish-borders-council-profile.html">https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/scottish-borders-council-profile.html</a></p>	<p>Age –  16.5% of the Scottish Borders population is under the age of 15 (16.9% Scotland) 58.8% of the Scottish Borders population is aged 16 to 64 (64.1% Scotland) 24.8% of the Scottish Borders Population is aged 65 or older (19.1% Scotland)  An ageing population means more people in the Borders will be living with one or more complex conditions and therefore will require more support from health and social care as they age.</p> <p>Gender-</p>



		<p>There is a slightly higher female population in the Borders.</p> <p>Disability – 22.4% of the Scottish Borders population have a long term health condition (deaf or partially hearing impaired; blind or partially vision impaired; learning disability; learning difficulty; developmental disorder; physical disability; mental health condition; or Other Long-term health condition)</p> <p>Gender reassignment – Data states that 0.5% of population is Trans. Marriage and Civil Partnership - Not relevant</p> <p>Pregnancy and Maternity – Not relevant</p> <p>Race -</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnicity</th> <th>Scottish Borders</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White: Scottish</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White: Other British</td> <td>25.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White: Polish</td> <td>1.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Ethnic Group</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Religion or belief -</p>	Ethnicity	Scottish Borders	White: Scottish	70%	White: Other British	25.9%	White: Polish	1.3%	Asian	N/A	Other Ethnic Group	N/A
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Data on relevant protected characteristic	Scottish Borders Council Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes <a href="file:///G:/LLC%20SW%20IST/LLC%20SW%20Integrated%20Care%20Fund/TEC/SW%20review%20documents/SW%20review%20projects/Performance%20Board/Mainstreaming_Report_Equality_Outcomes_2021_25.pdf">file:///G:/LLC%20SW%20IST/LLC%20SW%20Integrated%20Care%20Fund/TEC/SW%20review%20documents/SW%20review%20projects/Performance%20Board/Mainstreaming_Report_Equality_Outcomes_2021_25.pdf</a>																	
Data on service uptake/access	Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Religion	<p>A total of 25 service users could be impacted by the proposal (Borders wide).</p> <p>Age – 64% of service users are over 80 years old.</p> <p>Gender – 52% are Female</p> <p>Race – 100% white</p> <p>Religion - 2 Atheist 1 Christian 1 Church of Scotland 21 Not disclosed</p>												
	76	Parkinson's dementia	Male	White	None disclosed													
	54	Scheuermann's Disease, Cervical spondylosis,	Female	White	None disclosed													
	70	dementia (Alzheimer's disease)	Female	White	None disclosed													
	90	Orthostatic hypotension	Female	White	None disclosed													
	91	Stoma care	Female	White	None disclosed													
	93	osteoporosis	Female	White	None disclosed													
	92	Lacks capacity safety check	male	White	None disclosed													

	71	spinal & cranioplasty surgery	male	White	None disclosed	15 Staff would be impacted (as noted in the staff section below)
	83	Vascular Dementia	Female	White	None disclosed	
	64	wheelchair, Autonomic Dysreflexia	Male	White	Atheist	
	86	Terminal Cancer	Female	White	None disclosed	
	82	Dementia, stroke	Male	White	None disclosed	
	91	Arthritis, old age frailty.	Female	White	Christian	
	55	Learning disabilities	Male	White	None disclosed	
	81	Dementia	Female	White	None disclosed	
	85	Terminal Cancer	Female	White	None disclosed	
	94	Dementia, Leg amputee	Female	white	Christian	
	93	Stroke, Poor mobility.	Male	White	None disclosed	
	83	Frailty, Osteoporosis, Kidney disease.	Male	White	None disclosed	
	89	Cancer	Male	White - Irish	None disclosed	
	68	Stroke	Male	White	None disclosed	
	95	Parkinsons	Female	White - Scottish	Church of Scotland	
	79	Stroke	Male	White - Englis	None disclosed	
	97	Arthritis	Male	White - English	None disclosed	
	75	Arthritis	Female	White	None disclosed	
Data on socio economic disadvantage	Not available					
Research/literature evidence						

Existing experiences of service information	Evaluation of Peebles pathfinder, evaluation of Duns Pathfinder. 2 Full consultations.	
Evidence of unmet need		
Good practice guidelines		
Other – please specify		
Risks Identified	<p>Service users and families unwilling to accept support provided in alternative ways</p> <p>Staff unwilling/unable to redeploy to daytime roles</p> <p>Staff unwilling/unable to redeploy to care home roles overnight</p> <p>Daytime staff unwilling/unable to work extended shift times</p> <p>Service users, staff, families see this as a cost cutting project</p> <p>Potential risk of redundancy for night-time support staff if unable to move to day support</p> <p>Risk of reduced financial efficiencies due to potential cost of redundancy</p> <p>Reputational risk to the Council</p> <p>Wider stakeholder communications</p>	
Additional evidence required		

### Online Public Consultation based on the final proposal.

Date	Venue	Number of People in attendance by category*	Protected Characteristics Represented
30/10/23 – 03/12/23	Online consultation shared with all current service users	70 Responses from –	Age Under 18 - 0

	and staff directly and with general public via social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Night Support Service user (1)</li> <li>• Family/friend of a current Night Support Service user (6)</li> <li>• Member of the public (31)</li> <li>• Member of Adult Social Care Staff (17)</li> <li>• Member of staff within the Borders Health and Social Care Partnership (10)</li> <li>• Organisation/external provider (4)</li> <li>• Other (1)</li> </ul>	<p>18-24 years old - 0  25-34 years old - 7  35-44 years old - 14  45-54 years old - 13  55-64 years old - 16  65-74 years old - 5  75-84 years old - 2  85 + years old - 3  Prefer not to say - 6  Not Answered - 4</p> <p><b>Gender</b>  Male - 8  Female - 56  Non Binary - 0  Other - 2  Not Answered - 4</p> <p><b>Trans gender</b>  Yes - 0  No - 62  Prefer not to say - 4  Not Answered - 4</p> <p><b>Disability</b>  Yes - 12  No - 54  Not answered - 4</p> <p><b>Type of condition</b>  Deafness or partial hearing loss - 2  Blindness or partial sight loss - 3  Physical disability - 6</p>
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			<p>Mental health condition (Including Dementia, Alzheimer's) - 6 Long-term illness, disease or condition - 13</p> <p><b>Race</b> Scottish - 58 Other British - 7 Irish - 1 Not Answered - 5</p> <p><b>Religion</b> None - 31 Church of Scotland - 22 Roman Catholic - 4 Other Christian - 6 Muslim -1 Other -1 Not Answered - 5</p> <p><b>Sexual orientation</b> Heterosexual/straight - 58 Gay/Lesbian - 1 Don't know/rather not answer - 4 Not Answered - 7</p>
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Views Expressed	Officer Response
<p><b>Locality of respondent –</b> Berwickshire 29 Cheviot 6 Eildon 8 Teviot and Liddesdale 19 Tweeddale 3</p>	<p>The majority of responses came from the Berwickshire area, which is the most recent pathfinder area.</p>

Out with Scottish Borders 1 Not Answered 4				
88.5% understood the question around assessing current night service users.				<p>In the previous consultation the view of all of these proposed changes were asked in one question, with only 8.33% of responses being positive. In this consultation a question was asked for each proposed change. Overall, the responses for this consultation were 36% positive. This will be due to a clearer consultation format and explanation, but also due to the level of staff engagement that has taken place.</p> <p>Service user – Whilst all responses provided by current service users demonstrate that they are unsupportive, the uncertainty around the method of care delivery potentially changing will be impacting on this result. Service users will be supported by Social Work colleagues, and they will be fully consulted in the process. This approach will not be imposed on any current service user.</p> <p>Staff – Collectively, 29% of staff respondents are supportive of this proposal, 26% were unsure, and 45% are not supportive. 35% less staff have contributed to the most recent consultation process, compared to the previous consultation in January/February 2023. This is largely due to improved consultation and engagement.</p>
24.29% were supportive, 58.57% were not supportive and 17.14% were not sure.				
This was broken down as				
Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure	
Member of the Public	8	18	5	
Member of adult SC staff	5	9	3	
Member of H&SCP staff	3	3	4	
Service user	0	7	0	
Other	1	4	0	

<p>87.14% Understood the question around the use of TEC.</p> <p>24.29% were supportive, 57.14% were not supportive and 18.57% were not sure.</p> <p>This was broken down as</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Respondent</th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> <th>Not sure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member of the Public</td> <td>6</td> <td>19</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Member of adult SC staff</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Member of H&amp;SCP staff</td> <td>2</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service user</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure	Member of the Public	6	19	6	Member of adult SC staff	6	7	4	Member of H&SCP staff	2	6	2	Service user	2	5	0	Other	1	3	1	<p>Service user – 28% of service users/their families were supportive of the use of TEC, whilst 72% were not supportive. Whilst this is an improvement in comparison to the previous consultation exercise, due to the concept of TEC being unfamiliar to service users, this may be attributing to the number of unsupportive responses. Having reviewed some of the comments contained within the consultation, it is worth noting that there is some misperception/misunderstanding that TEC will replace all face-to-face visits, however TEC will only be used if service users meet the criteria in place. Service users and their families will be supported by Social Work colleagues in this process, and no service user will be compromised or placed at risk.</p> <p>Staff – Collectively 30% of staff respondents were supportive of the use of TEC, 48% unsupportive, and 22% unsure. 46% of Adult Social Care staff were supportive, compared to only 20% of H&amp;SCP staff. This is felt to be attributed to the quality and frequency of the engagement and consultation process which took place with Adult Social Care staff.</p>
Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure																						
Member of the Public	6	19	6																						
Member of adult SC staff	6	7	4																						
Member of H&SCP staff	2	6	2																						
Service user	2	5	0																						
Other	1	3	1																						
<p>91.43% understood the proposal around a Rapid Response team.</p> <p>61.43% were supportive, 30% were not supportive and 8.57% were not sure.</p> <p>This was broken down as</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Respondent</th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> <th>Not sure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member of the Public</td> <td>13</td> <td>15</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Member of adult SC staff</td> <td>13</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Member of H&amp;SCP staff</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service user</td> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure	Member of the Public	13	15	3	Member of adult SC staff	13	3	1	Member of H&SCP staff	10	0	0	Service user	5	1	1	Other	2	2	1	<p>Service user– 71% of service users/their families were supportive of the proposal, with only 1 unsupportive response, and 1 who was unsure. The proposal to introduce this service is an improvement to the service currently in place. It must be noted however, that the responder service would be activated through use of TEC, yet use of TEC, attracted 72% unsupportive responses. This supports the suggestion that perhaps there is some misperception/misunderstanding of the use of TEC.</p> <p>Staff – Collectively, 85% of staff respondents (23 of 27) were supportive of this proposal, which is a direct result of quality and frequent consultation and engagement with staff.</p>
Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure																						
Member of the Public	13	15	3																						
Member of adult SC staff	13	3	1																						
Member of H&SCP staff	10	0	0																						
Service user	5	1	1																						
Other	2	2	1																						



92.86% understood the proposal to introduce Dawn and Twilight shifts. 37.14% were supportive, 45.71% were not supportive and 17.14% were unsure.

This was broken down as

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	10	15	6
Member of adult SC staff	9	5	3
Member of H&SCP staff	5	3	2
Service user	1	5	1
Other	1	4	0

Service user –

Only 1 service user was supportive of this approach. The introduction of dawn and twilight shifts is a new concept and involves a change to service users routines. There is perhaps some misperception/misunderstanding of the flexibility this new approach may offer. However, service users/their families will be supported by Social Work colleagues in the process.

Staff –

Collectively, 52% of staff respondents were supportive of this proposal. Given the potential impact on ASC staff, these results are not unexpected. Staff will be fully supported by HR colleagues, senior management and Trade Union colleagues in 1:1 meetings to identify suitable alternative posts.

91.43% understood the information around staff impact. 32.86% were supportive, 47.14% were not supportive and 20% were unsure.

This was broken down as –

Respondent	Yes	No	Not sure
Member of the Public	8	18	5
Member of adult SC staff	7	7	3
Member of H&SCP staff	3	2	5
Service user	3	4	0
Other	2	2	1

Service user –

43% of service users were supportive of this proposal. Service users form a close bond with care staff, and it is possible that the service user results are in support of staff whose roles could be subject to change.

Staff –

41% of ASC staff potentially impacted as a result of this proposal, were in support of it, with a further 41% unsupportive and 8% unsure. As this proposal is likely to impact on staff roles and working patterns, this result is not entirely unexpected. Staff will however, be fully supported by HR, senior management and Trade Union colleagues in the form of 1:1 meetings to identify suitable alternative posts

<p>Other comments noted involved concerns around the following – Concerns for staff including - Staff location, contract and workload; changes to shift patterns; lone working; lack of staff/redundancy; inability of RR team to cover borders wide and staff clarity on process.</p>	<p>Staff location/ability to cover the borders – Given the very small number of service users currently in receipt of the Night Support service who would likely be considered for use of TEC, we would take into account the geographical location and place teams in care homes within travelling distance to these locations. Furthermore, each member of both rapid response teams, will have access to a vehicle (4 in total) to ensure additional flexibility to respond. Both teams involved, will liaise throughout the night and ensure effective communication and have the ability to seek additional support as required. Reports will be provided to senior management, who will have constant oversight of the service.</p> <p>Contract and workload – Staff will be fully supported by senior management, HR and TU colleagues in identifying suitable roles, taking into account personal circumstances and commitments. Senior management will review workload/demand/capacity on an ongoing basis, to ensure no staff member is compromised.</p> <p>Changes to shift patterns- Shift patterns are non-contractual and can be amended at any time with reasonable notice. Staff will be provided with reasonable notice if there is a change to their current shift pattern.</p> <p>Staff are provided with iPhone devices, with the PROTECT app and GPS activated, which has various functions to monitor staff whereabouts and with a function to request immediate assistance in an emergency situation.</p> <p>Staff will be supported by HR, Senior Management and Trade Union colleagues in identifying alternative posts, including night shift posts in care homes, twilight and dawn shifts, and for home care posts (days). This will also support with recruitment pressure in the Home Care service. There is no risk of staff redundancy.</p>
<p>Concerns for service users including - Risk to service users; continence/skin integrity; not a person-centered approach; inability to cover borders wide; rurality and ageing population;</p>	<p>Review would identify any risks to the service user.</p>

<p>palliative/end of life care needs; family anxiety; service user anxiety.</p>	<p>For those who require continence support overnight, these service users will be offered continence reassessment to identify more suitable aids, with the offer of a twilight and dawn visit, reducing the window for any episodes of incontinence and impact on skin integrity. If this approach is not suitable for some individuals, they will continue to receive a planned, face to face visit by care staff.</p> <p>Person centered approach - service users and their families will be included in the review of their care needs and their views and opinions will be sought. Any alternative means of care delivery will be done in consultation and with agreement of those involved.</p> <p>Ageing population - this only highlights the need to review the way in which we deliver care, with the growth in the ageing population we are going to have to deliver care in different ways in order to meet demand.</p> <p>Those service users with palliative and critical/end of life care needs will continue to be provided with a face-to-face visit. This is not intended to be removed.</p> <p>Service users also noted that this change may cause anxiety, worry and stress. This would be mitigated by robust engagement, communication and re-assessment approach.</p> <p>Any service user who does not meet the criteria for TEC or is not suitable for an alternative means of care delivery, will continue to receive a physical face to face visit.</p>
<p>Limited understanding of TEC capabilities and its function including - Reduced face to face contact/Not person centred; Inability of TEC to carry out tasks including personal care; Connectivity concerns.</p>	<p>Reduced face to face contact – The majority of overnight visits are for the purpose of visual safety checks, which disturb service users unnecessarily. These visits last no more than 10 minutes, with limited or no social interaction. An unintended consequence of these visits often results in service users (particularly those with cognitive impairment) being disturbed and becoming increasingly disorientated/confused or alarmed by the level of disturbance. By replacing a physical visit with TEC, service users would benefit from constant monitoring of</p>

	<p>TEC activations, which is an improvement to the service currently provided, i.e., one visit during the night and no TEC in place to alert staff if assistance is required.</p> <p>TEC for personal care – There is no intention to provide TEC as an alternative to critical personal care needs. Any current service user with critical care needs, will continue to receive a planned, face to face visit.</p> <p>Only service users who meet the criteria for the introduction of TEC support will have this implemented within their homes. All others will continue to receive face to face support.</p> <p>CCRT will continue to regularly review service users to ensure that the care being provided through TEC is supporting them to safely stay at home.</p> <p>TEC within the home could support service users in being more involved within their communities through access to the internet and video calling.</p> <p>Connectivity concerns – These concerns are around service users being migrated to a digital phone line by their telecom provider. In the event of a power cut new digital phone lines will not work as traditional analogue phone lines have. We are mitigating this risk by upgrading our community alarms to digital ready units which come SIM enabled meaning if there is a power cut to the home the alarm will still be able to dial out through the mobile phone network.</p>
Miscellaneous/Other including – Rurality, not person centred/cost cutting, more joint partnership working.	

### Engagement with all staff on the final proposal

Date	Venue	Number of People in attendance by category*	Protected Characteristics Represented
There would be 15 staff impacted by this change across the Borders.			
Highlighted meetings were those completed for Duns pathfinder			Age

Date of meeting	venue	Brief overview of discussion	Attendees	
20/06/2022	MS Teams	initial staff meeting held with NS teams to discuss proposed changes to the service		60
11/7/22-12/7/22	MS Teams	individual staff consultations		47
4/11/2022	Ms Teams	staff meeting held to discuss findings from Peebles pathfinder and next planned steps	16 support staff	41
23/03/23	MS Teams	Update on NS paper progress following Peebles pathfinder	10 Support staff attended	46
31/05/2023	MS Teams	staff meeting held to update on NS working group progress, next steps and Q+A	6 support staff attended	49
14/06/2023	MS Teams	121 meetings with Duns NS staff to discuss upcoming pathfinder in the area	4 Staff attended	53
29/06/2023	MS Teams	Duns NS staff meeting to discuss upcoming pathfinder	4 Staff attended	63
25/07/2023	MS Teams	Duns NS meeting final meeting before pathfinder	3 Staff Attended	64
4/09/2023	MS Teams	Duns staff meeting following conclusion of pathfinder, feedback given at this call from staff	3 Staff attended	47
				50
				30
				65
				44
				41
				61
				13 Female 2 Male
				Nationality – Split White Scottish and White Other.
				Trans gender – no recorded Disability – Not recorded. Religion - not recorded Sexual orientation – not recorded

3/10/2023	MS Teams	night support meeting held for update following Duns pathfinder and discussion around next steps	3 Staff attended	
18/10/2023	Ms Teams	night support workshop held	6 Staff attended	
25/10/2023	MS Teams	night support workshop held	8 Staff attended	

Views Expressed	Officer Response
What will the new dawn and twilight shifts look like?	The dawn shift will operate between 6am to 12.00noon and the twilight shift 6pm to Midnight. These teams will provide continence support and personal care to individuals who would ordinarily have received overnight visits to support with continence needs. We believe this would offer increased flexibility to both Service Users and staff. If staff are working a twilight shift, they would not be asked to work a Dawn shift the next day, ensuring they get the correct rest between shifts.
If this model is rolled out permanently, will staff lose their jobs?	No. There are no plans to reduce staff through this. All existing night support staff would be offered alternative posts in a care home (days and nights) and home care (days, including option of dawn/twilight) shifts, supported by HR colleagues, senior management and Trade Union Colleagues. We believe this will increase staff capacity across the Heath & Social Care System and help to alleviate pressures.
What is the average length of a night support visit?	The average planned time of visits to service users receiving a service from the night support team at this time is 10 minutes.
What happens when technology alternatives such as bed sensors or falls alarms are not a suitable option for a current Night Support Service User, will this person continue to receive a face-to-face visit?	Every Service User is assessed based on their individual needs and suitable options are discussed with the individual and/or their family. Anyone for whom technology alternatives such as bed sensors or falls alarms are not a suitable option would continue to receive a face-to-face visit.
How will this impact individuals with palliative/end of life care needs?	The needs of Individuals with palliative/end of life care needs will not be compromised and will continue to receive face to face support.

What happens if someone falls in the night?	Within the current service delivery model, a face-to-face visit is planned for a set time. Once the visit has been completed, if the service user has a fall outside the window of this visit, there is the possibility that the service user would be lying on the floor for several hours until the next Carer visited. If a bed sensor or falls alarm were in place, staff would be alerted and respond within the hour. The process involves the Alarm Receiving Centre being alerted; they would then make contact with the Rapid Response Team who would be dispatched to provide care. If it was felt that the service user had been injured and required medical assistance, Emergency Services would be contacted.
Who will answer any alarm activations?	Alarm activations will go the Alarm Receiving Centre and onwards to Rapid Response staff, unless families choose to make alternative arrangements.
What will the new service look like?	If a service user is assessed as a suitable candidate for TEC, this will be discussed with the individual and their family. If TEC is put in place, it will be monitored by the Alarm Receiving Centre, who would in turn; contact the Rapid Response team. Family could also be alerted if this is the request of the service user and family. If the assessment demonstrates that the service user is not suitable for a TEC solution, a face-to-face visit will continue to be provided.
Will face to face visits still be provided?	Yes, in certain instances where TEC solutions are not feasible, including complex care needs such as advanced Dementia/Palliative and critical/End of Life Care
Where will Rapid Response staff be based?	Staff would be based in SBC care home which will be identified based on the location of the Night Support Service Users.
How will we ensure the safety of our lone working staff?	Lone working staff will be equipped with mobile devices with the PROTECT app installed. This allows them to be located and call for urgent assistance if required. During the pathfinder in Peebles staff were also offered personal alarms.
What steps have we taken to understand the impact of the proposal on individuals that currently use the service?	A full public consultation was completed in February 2023. The results have prompted the need for a further Pathfinder in the Duns area to assess the full impact of this change. To fully understand the impact, all current service users will be reassessed individually, and options discussed with service users and their families.
How will Service Users requiring continence and skin care be supported?	Every Service User is assessed based on their individual needs. Dawn & twilight shifts will be introduced for those where it is deemed to be a suitable alternative, to provide support with continence needs, reducing the likelihood of any potential skin breakdown. Furthermore, service users identified with continence needs

	overnight, will have their continence needs reviewed to ensure appropriate aids are prescribed. Anyone whose needs cannot be met in this way, or through introduction of TEC would continue to receive this support face to face.
Why is this change to the Night Support Service being proposed, is this about saving money?	This approach would align Scottish Borders Council with other Local Authorities such as East Lothian. Following a successful pathfinder in Peebles where Service Users reported they benefited from no staff disturbance through the night, Scottish Borders Council are reviewing alternative ways of providing night support. This may include items such as alarms, movement sensors, bed sensors and door activation monitors. Given national recruitment challenges, the ageing population, and the pressure on care services nationally, we need to identify new approaches to deliver more efficient and effective care to ensure service users aren't compromised.
Concerns expressed about distances travelled when driving alone, particularly in poor weather conditions.	Senior management offered to feed back to the team with a proposal at the next meeting. Proposal was agreed that staff working in rural areas, would travel 5 miles from base, however in the event of adverse weather conditions or being required to travel in excess of 5 miles, they would be accompanied by their partner and work in pairs. Key to this arrangement, it was agreed that both teams would liaise with each other, and have access to all essential contact details, including senior manager on call and EDT.
SSSC registration concerns as staff are only Care at Home registered but asked to work in a Care Home.	During the pathfinder there was no requirement for staff to be dual registered with the SSSC. Moving forward there are planned changes to the SSSC register where staff registration will change from support worker in a care at home service to social care workforce, staff will only have to inform the SSSC of the services that they are based in. All staff will be supported with this by their direct line manager.
Staff noted that travelling additional miles would be challenging in the vehicles as they have a limited travel distance. There has been an occasion in the past where the EV ran out of charge and the team were unable to lock the vehicle.	It was agreed that the staff would be allocated a hybrid or fuel car to carry out their overnight work.
Questions about if it's a scheduled visit that requires a double up – what would happen if they got a call out at the same time.	It was agreed that on these occasions, contact would be made to colleagues in the other team on duty to request their assistance. In the event that both teams were committed to other duties, contact would be made with the Alarm Receiving



	Centre, who would then deploy alternative support as identified in the individual service user's records.
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# Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

## Stage 3



### Analysis of findings and recommendations

#### Reprovisioning of Night Support Service:

Reduction in the number of Night Support teams and the introduction of Rapid Response roles.

Potential impact on staff with reduction of teams, introduction of Dawn and Twilight shifts and the introduction of the rapid response role. Service users may notice some changes to visit times, the introduction of TEC or removal of a visit if it's not actually required/doesn't meet the Night Support Service Criteria.

**Please detail a summary of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed including the aims, objectives and intended outcomes**

Following the review of two pathfinders, Peebles and Duns, and two full consultations, it is evident that a night support service continues to be required. We now propose a reduction from 5 Night Support teams (10 FTE) to 2 teams (6.4 FTE). These 2 teams would continue to provide planned, critical overnight support to individuals with complex health needs, whilst also providing a Rapid Response service to TEC activations. We also propose to

introduce a strict eligibility criterion for critical overnight support. Dawn (6am-noon) and Twilight (6pm-midnight) shifts will also be introduced. The expected benefits are:

- Greater independence, health benefits resulting from good quality sleep, privacy, and freedom for people with high support needs, while minimising support costs.
- The release of night support staff to join daytime home care teams will help ease the pressure on daytime care, reducing the time people wait for care and reducing delayed discharges that are due to the unavailability of care.
- Increased availability to respond to assistive technology/TEC activations or end of life/palliative care requests.
- Reduction in CO2 emissions and aligning with the strategic vision as outlined in the SBC Council plan 22/23 for a clean, green future.

**Equality Act 2010 – Relevant Protected Characteristics as identified in Stage 1 or during Stage 2 (include none identified at this stage)**

Protected Characteristic	Equality Duty	What impact and or difference will the proposal have	Measures to evaluate/mitigating actions
Age	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	Due to the nature of the service, the change predominantly affects older people. They may feel that they are being discriminated against by this change. Older people may be less confident or have less knowledge of TEC.	The review of the care currently provided uses a person-centred approach which takes onto account individual preferences and capabilities. TEC awareness sessions have been held to increase awareness of types and uses of TEC.
	Advancing equality of opportunity	None identified at this stage.	
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding	Any changes to care provision are clearly communicated and discussed with service users and their families.	Clear communication and engagement with service users and their families.
Disability	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	Due to the nature of the service, the change predominantly affects people with disabilities and support needs. They may feel that they are being discriminated against by this change.	Provision of care for all service users is agreed based on a clear criterion.

	Advancing equality of opportunity	The use of TEC or a Dawn/Twilight visit allows for undisturbed sleep, improving the wellbeing of all.	
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding	Care is provided for all, based on a clear criterion.	Clear communication and engagement with service users and their families.
Gender Reassignment	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	N/A	
	Advancing equality of opportunity		
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	N/A	
	Advancing equality of opportunity		
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	N/A	
	Advancing equality of opportunity		
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding		
Race	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct		The care provided will be individual and sensitive to any needs that differ depending on race.

	Advancing equality of opportunity		Language barriers for any non-English speakers will be addressed.
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding	None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage
Religion & Belief including non-belief	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	N/A	
	Advancing equality of opportunity		
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding		
Sex (Gender)	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	There are more female service users than male. They may feel that they are being discriminated against. The individual receiving care is able to present in their preferred gender.	There is a clear criterion for support. The gender of the service user is not a deciding factor in support.
	Advancing equality of opportunity	The individual receiving care is able to present in their preferred gender.	
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding	Individuals will co-produce a care plan that recognises their gender preferences and document sensitives around care giving.	
Sexual Orientation	Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other prohibited conduct	N/A	
	Advancing equality of opportunity		
	Fostering good relations by reducing prejudice and promoting understanding		

**Equality and Human Rights Measurement Framework Human– Reference those identified in Stage 1 (remove those that do not apply)**

Article	Indicator	Enhancing or Infringing	Impact and or difference will the proposal have	Measures to evaluate/mitigating actions
Living Standards	Housing Social Care	Enhancing	Living standards of those in receipt of Night Support will improve as their care needs will be provided in a less intrusive way.	
Health	Social Care Health outcomes	Enhancing	The wellbeing of the individual receiving Night Support and their family members will improve due to undisturbed sleep.	
Participation	Family Life	Enhancing	Family life will improve for the individual and family carers who are currently disturbed overnight. The undisturbed sleep will benefit wellbeing.	

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**Fairer Scotland Duty**

Identify changes to the strategic programme/proposal/decision to be made to reduce negative impacts on equality of outcome and or improving health inequalities.	The initial proposal was to replace the Night Support visits with TEC and dawn/twilight shifts. Following the Pathfinders it was clear that a modified night support service is still required by a number of service users across the Borders to ensure equality of outcome. Therefore the night support service will be delivered in a responsive approach whilst also continuing to deliver face to face care for those with critical and substantial needs. All service users needs will be met in an outcome focussed, person centred way.
Identify the opportunities the strategic programme/proposal/decision provides to reduce or further reduce inequalities of outcome and or improving health inequalities.	The proposal could improve health inequalities of those that move from a physical visit to the use of TEC as the use of TEC would promote sleep and improve wellbeing.

Are there any negative impacts with no identified mitigating actions? If yes, please detail these below:

None noted.

**Equality, Human Rights & Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment Recommendations**

What recommendations were identified during the impact assessment process:

Recommendation	Recommendation owned by: (Name and job title)	Date recommendation will be implemented by	Review Date
Person Centred approach to be used during reviews	CCRT team and SW locality teams		
TEC awareness sessions to continue for staff and the general public.	Derek Boyle, Service Manager		
Criteria for NS service to be shared with all SW ad SC staff to ensure consistency.	Julie Glen, Operations Director Gwyneth Lennox, Chief Officer		

**Monitoring Impact – Internal Verification of Outcomes**

How will you monitor the impact this proposal has on different groups, including people with protected characteristics?

The impact of the proposal will be monitored through service user, family and staff feedback.
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**Procured, Tendered or Commissioned Services (SSPSED)**

Is any part of this policy/service to be carried out wholly or partly by contactors and if so, how will equality, human rights including children’s rights and the Fairer Scotland duties be addressed?

No.

**Communication Plan (SSPSED)**

Please provide a summary of the communication plan which details how the information about this policy/service to young people, those with a visual or hearing sensory impairment, difficulty with reading or numbers, learning difficulties or English as a second language will be communicated.

Service Users and staff will be communicated with directly and in person, ensuring that they have full understanding of any changes. If support is required to aid understanding this will be arranged.

**Signed Off By: Julie Glen**

**Name Strategic Lead – Julie Glen**

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## **Antisocial Behaviour**

### **Report by Chief Executive**

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## **Scottish Borders Council**

**25 January 2024**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides Scottish Borders Council with a summary of what is being done to prevent and where necessary, address antisocial behaviour among young people. This report is submitted in response to a motion by Councillor Pirone agreed by Council on 26 October 2023 whereby members recognised the importance of addressing anti-social behaviour among our young people in our communities, valued positive youth engagement and acknowledged the need for a safe environment that promotes the growth of our young residents. In approving the motion Members sought information as to what the Council is currently doing to address anti-social behaviour among our young people and whether there is more we can do within the Scottish Borders in partnership with others.
- 1.2 Antisocial behaviour involving young people recorded by Police Scotland is expected to account for fewer than 13% of total calls during 2023/24. Youth warning letters issued by the council funded police Community Action Team (CAT) have been on a downward trend, and the council's Antisocial Behaviour Unit have had very few referrals involving young people.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Committee:-**
- (a) Note the content of the report.**
  - (b) Endorse the suggested enhancements and improvements across engagements with young people to expand diversionary activities within communities.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This report is in response to the question raised by Councillor Pirone, *"Scottish Borders Council recognises the importance of addressing anti-social behaviour among our young people in our communities and that we value positive youth engagement. We acknowledge the need for a safe environment that promotes the growth of our young residents. We therefore ask the Chief Executive to bring a report to Council detailing what the Council is currently doing to address anti-social behaviour among our young people and if there is more we can do within the Scottish Borders in partnership with others."*
- 3.2 There are approximately 8600 young people aged between 12 and 18 residing in Scottish Borders, the vast majority of whom engage positively in their communities however there are small pockets of behaviours which cause nuisance, harm or distress to communities.
- 3.3 In most instances, issues are dealt with effectively through positive interventions with partnership working and engagement with young people and their families to redirect behaviours and provide supports however where these are not sufficient to resolve the issue, there are a range of further measures which can be effected as set out in the following paper.
- 3.4 The reasons behind anti-social behaviour are wide ranging and can be complex, ranging from a simple lack of positive activities and opportunities leading through to mental health issues, family instability and trauma experience. Understanding the root cause of a behaviour is critical in providing appropriate preventions, supports and interventions.

### **4 Education**

- 4.1 Curriculum for Excellence sets out the purpose to enable each young person to achieve 4 capacities which include being responsible citizens and effective contributors. These principles guide staff to provide an engaging curriculum with a wide range of activities/opportunities in and out of the school day.
- 4.2 Personal and Social Education focuses on citizenship and safe choices while supporting pupils to develop positive relationships and good mental health and wellbeing, while specific programmes teach children and young people to understand how to stay safe and explain the dangers relating to for example, fire, water or substance use.
- 4.3 Targeted programmes and school-based interventions such as the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme, Quarriers Resilience Practitioners and Youth Work provide an early intervention and prevention approach to young people who are identified as needing further supports or advice.
- 4.4 Parent supports are important in recognising and supporting the challenge of positive parenting and programmes such as "Raising Teens" offer all families a structured and effective toolbox to ensure young people are appropriately guided.

- 4.5 Joint working with Police Scotland, and youth engagement officers, contribute to education and the identification of vulnerability and where appropriate, this extends to close work with families. There are established close working relationships with other partner agencies whether to deliver specific programmes such as fire safety with SFRS or to deliver targeted interventions with individuals.
- 4.6 This partnership working extends into community-based activity, for example TD1 Youth in Galashiels work in school to support and educate young people at risk of antisocial behaviour and provide a range of activities and opportunities in the evening, weekends and holidays offering both support and positive diversions.
- 4.7 The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership takes a network approach to delivering key outcomes for young people through key areas such as providing a good childhood and whole family support. The partnership commission supports for young people including youth work across all localities, trauma support and advocacy. Through the partnership approach, a robust programme of holiday activity and wellbeing support is effective in supporting families during periods when the structure of school is not available.
- 4.8 Clear boundaries and expectations are necessary to ensure young people understand and are held responsible for their behaviours, risks and impact of negative behaviour. A strong example of the effectiveness of this approach is the charter for school transport. This sets out the expected behaviours when travelling to and from school, the reason these are implemented and highlights actions which can and will be taken where behaviour falls short of expectation. This is shared with all families and agreement to adhere to the charter is required from all pupils and parents.

## **5 INTERVENTION**

- 5.1 Where education and preventative measures have not been successful in supporting young people to behave positively and responsibly, there are a range of interventions, of hierarchical formality which can be implemented. Often having a relationship with a trusted adult such as a youth worker, social worker or police liaison officer can be successful in redirecting behaviours. Likewise a programme of activity through volunteering for example, can provide a positive focus and bring about a sense of worth through making a contribution to the community for a young person to change their behaviours.
- 5.2 Where all preventative measures are not sufficient to bring about a change to a situation, it may be necessary for a young person to be referred to the youth justice system.
- 5.3 Early intervention offence referrals for all those aged 12-18 are considered by the Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) process. Representation and diversionary options vary by age. For those under 16

responses from education, Police warning letters, Police Restorative Justice Warnings, or referrals to the Offence Resolution Programme (ORP) are considered.

- 5.4 For those aged 16 and 17, the EEI process seeks to divert young people away from the judicial process and potential contact with adults involved in the Justice system. Diversionary options for this group include diversion through Skills Development Scotland, Youth Justice, Police warnings or referral to Quarriers Wellbeing service for substance use concerns. ORP intervention is voluntary, the criteria being a third charge for low level offending behaviour or first serious offence.
- 5.5 In the last twelve months 27 children have been referred to Youth Justice for ORP intervention. The ORP Programme involves four sessions of work with young people on a focus on consequential thinking and victim empathy. Where both parties agree, a Restorative meeting may take place or letter of apology offered to the alleged victim with the aim of repairing the harm caused by the alleged offence(s).
- 5.6 More serious offences fall within the Lord Advocates Guidelines and must be referred to the Children's Reporter or Procurator Fiscal (PF), however, Youth Justice aim to offer support whilst awaiting a decision. Where the PF is of the view it is not in the public interest to prosecute the child, Diversion from Prosecution suitability will be assessed, 16 young people were assessed for Diversion from Prosecution in the last 12 months. Those suitable are offered support to address their alleged behaviour as well as other needs that may be linked to their behaviour, examples include referral for substance use support or employability support.

## **6 Council Funded Police Community Action Team**

- 6.1 The financial years from 2021/22 show that youth incidents compared to all incidents reported to Police in the Scottish Borders are circa 13% and projected to be lower in 2023/24 than the previous 2-year average.
- 6.2 The number of youth warning letters issued by the council funded police CAT has reduced, from 143 in 2021/22, to 56 in 2022/23, and to November 2023 currently totals 27, it is projected that by year end the number will be circa 40. For those young people whose parent or guardian receives a letter very few go on to receive further contact from the police.
- 6.3 Through the CAT monthly tasking process the number of youth related issues have increased, 2021/22 26%, 2022/23 29%, and 2023/24 (Apr-Oct) 41%. Areas for additional police attention are identified through the council partnership analyst.
- 6.4 To date 2023/24 there have been 3 young people involved with the council Antisocial Behaviour Unit.
- 6.5 The existing CAT SLA expires on 31/03/24.

## **7 Town Centre CCTV and Mobile Cameras**

- 7.1 Members will be aware that a report is due back to Council on the replacement of the town centre CCTV. This is an opportunity to align any new system to hot spots for crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 7.2 Budget was set aside for deployable cameras that can be moved to areas that are not covered by the fixed CCTV system. Work is underway to finalise the Data Protection Impact Assessment with Police Scotland.
- 7.3 Both elements complement each other and should act as a deterrent and evidence gathering tool.

## **8 What More Can be Done**

- 8.1 There is scope for all public agencies, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to work more closely together, at a local school cluster level, to target resource at the areas of greatest need in relation to young people, and in particular diversionary activities for those involved in ASB. The development of the Team Around the Cluster model in education offers a platform for all agencies to work together to identify and plan support and interventions for young people at risk of becoming disengaged or who are experiencing challenges.
- 8.2 In some areas there are a lack of activities in the evening and at weekends or holiday periods for young people or a mechanism to capture young people's views on what might be suitable. Work is underway to make consultation material more accessible to young people and the best practice model of partnership approaches to youth work demonstrated in Galashiels with TD1 will be used as the benchmark for development in all areas.
- 8.3 Engagement of young people to ensure that they have an active voice in identifying the types of activities and environments needed to support positive engagements in their community as well as to identify target issues and supports is essential. The CYPPP has a key priority to develop the youth engagement strategy with a focus on the most marginalised and at-risk groups of young people and the appointment of an education officer to develop stronger representation of young people at school, community and Council levels will complement this work.
- 8.4 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child grants all people under the age of 18 a comprehensive set of rights including rights to health, education, family life, play and recreation and protection from abuse and harm. There is now a legal requirement for all public authorities in Scotland to comply with these. Taking a rights-based approach to developing strategies and interventions around anti-social behaviour will ensure that young people are supported to reach their full potential.
- 8.5 Following recent research published by the Centre for Child and Youth Justice (CYCJ, May 2023) in relation to National Referral Mechanism use and emerging national concerns regarding Children Criminal Exploitation

(CCE), the Community Justice Partnership plan to consider how this may impact on children in the Scottish Borders and whether any actions are necessary in relation to identification or responses to those at risk of CCE.

## **9 IMPLICATIONS**

### **9.1 Financial**

There are no specific additional costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

- (a) Proposals for the police CAT post 31/03/24 will come before Council for a decision.
- (b) Proposals to replace the existing town centre CCTV will come before Council for a decision on specification and cost.
- (c) Budget has been set aside already for the deployable cameras.
- (d) There may be cost associated with additional activities for young people and the budget consequences can be assessed once a more detailed assessment is undertaken.

### **9.2 Risk and Mitigations**

As highlighted in the report the current service level agreement for the police CAT funding expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. These officers deal with a significant amount of reported youth related issues. Should the funding not be maintained then some of the capacity to deal with low level antisocial behaviour would be lost. It could be argued that additional activities for young people might mitigate some of the impact.

### **9.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

This report sets out what is currently in place to reduce instances of antisocial behaviour involving young people and suggestions to engage with them to improve activities and diversionary options that are available.

### **9.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

N/A

### **9.5 Climate Change**

N/A

### **9.6 Rural Proofing**

N/A

### **9.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **9.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

N/A



## 10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change) and Corporate Communications have been consulted and comments will be tabled at the meeting.

### Approved by

**Name David Robertson**

**Title Chief Executive**

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Graham Jones	Group Manager Safer Communities & Homelessness

**Background Papers: N/A**

**Previous Minute Reference: N/A**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Graham Jones can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS REVISED ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**Report by Director of Education and Lifelong Learning**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 JANUARY 2024**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

**1.1 This report seeks approval of the revised Admissions Policy (2024).**

1.2 The Policy covers the following:

- 1.2.1 Enrolment to Primary and Secondary Schools
- 1.2.2 Placement requests.
- 1.2.3 Class sizes and composite classes.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council: -**

- (a) Agree the changes to the Policy.**
- (b) Agree that the revised Policy will be implemented as of February 2024.**
- (c) Agree to the Policy being reviewed and updated, if required, in 2026.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This Policy responds to and sits within the context of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, along with the associated amendments and guidance for these Acts.
- 3.2 Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended, it is the duty of the Education and Lifelong Learning Service to provide an adequate and efficient school education for all children living within the Scottish Borders Council area.

### **4 SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO PREVIOUS POLICY**

- 4.1 Children and Young Peoples Services changed to Education and Lifelong Learning throughout the policy to reflect the current name of the directorate.
- 4.2 Sections 7.4.4 and 7.4.5 updated to reflect online enrolment and placement request processes which came into effect in November 2020. This allows parents to complete enrolment and placing request forms online, including uploading documents for example birth certificate and proof of address.
- 4.3 Section 7.17.8 updated to reflect increase in minimum number of children from a year group in a composite class from 4 to 5 and removal of reference to gender balance. This ensures the headteacher can create a class that best meets the needs for the children for example, it could be a mixed gender group or 5 boys or 5 girls.
- 4.4 Section 7.17.9 removal of section regarding Continuing Composite Class. Sections 7.17.3 and 7.17.4 detail creation of a composite class where required. In some cases, the children in a composite class would remain unchanged for the following year in others it may change, for example where there were 31 Primary 3 children this cohort would be split but when they moved to Primary 4, they may become one class.
- 4.5 Section 7.17.13 removal of section regarding 'management of classes'. While it is good practice to share as much information with parents in advance outlining general principles for year group activities, planning of all of this at the start of the session can become restrictive and inflexible in meeting the needs of the children.
- 4.6 Section 7.17.19 removal of this section, if a parent is unhappy with the class the child is placed in and has discussed this with the headteacher they would follow the SBC complaints procedure. This provides an independent review of whether the policy has been adhered to. If the policy has been followed the complaint would not be upheld if not, then the headteacher would be asked to review the classes and ensure the policy is adhered to.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to the current recommendations.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The Authority has a legal duty in respect of admissions to provide suitable education opportunities for children and young people. This Policy provides clarity of expectation for parents when enrolling their child in a school in the Scottish Borders.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no significant effects on the Integrated Impact Assessment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

There are no significant effects on climate change arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

There are no significant effects on rural proofing arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposal contained in this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications and any comments received will need to be incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Lesley Munro**

**Director – Education and Lifelong Learning**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Gillian McKenzie	Quality Improvement Officer (01835 824000 Ext 8006)

**Background Papers:** Admissions Policy (Approved January 2018)

**Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Gillian McKenzie can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA (Tel 01835 24000).

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## **Education and Lifelong Learning**

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### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

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#### **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This document replaces Scottish Borders Council's previous policy on admissions approved in January 2018.
- 1.2 This document details Scottish Borders Council's policy with regard to admissions to all schools (excluding Early Learning and Childcare) under the management of Scottish Borders Council's Education and Lifelong Learning Service.
- 1.3 There is a separate policy for Early Learning and Childcare.
- 1.4 An impact assessment, to ensure all aspects of equalities legislation and principles are upheld within this policy, has been undertaken.

#### **2 CORPORATE CONTEXT**

- 2.1 This policy supports Scottish Borders Council Plan, Fulfilling our Potential.

#### **3 ACCESSIBILITY**

- 3.1 This document can be made available in large print, on tape or in other languages on request.

#### **4 IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 The Authority has a legal duty in respect of admissions to:
  - 4.1.1 Provide suitable education opportunities for children and young people.
  - 4.1.2 Provide parents, children and young people information on their local schools. Details on all schools are included on Scottish Borders Council website ([www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)) and more detailed information is available directly from individual schools.
  - 4.1.3 Provide parents information on admission arrangements for children to the Authority's primary and secondary schools.

- 4.1.4 Advise parents of their right to choose a school, for their child, which is not in their catchment area by making a placement request.
- 4.1.5 Accept placement requests except where the Council has the right to refuse the request and chooses to exercise this right.
- 4.1.6 Advise parents of their rights to appeal if a placement request is refused.

## **5 INDEX/TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 7.1 Catchment Area
- 7.2 Denominational Primary Schools
- 7.3 Enrolment
- 7.4 Process for Admission to Primary One
- 7.5 Prioritising Requests for Enrolment to a Catchment School
- 7.6 Admissions Throughout the School Year
- 7.7 Transfer from P7 to S1
- 7.8 Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools
- 7.9 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools
- 7.10 Admission of pupils from out with Scottish Borders Council
- 7.11 Refusal of a Placing Request
- 7.12 Standing List
- 7.13 Transport for Placement Request
- 7.14 Appealing the Refusal of a placement request
- 7.15 Class Sizes and Composition
- 7.16 Class Composition

## **6 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 This policy responds to and sits within the context of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, along with the associated amendments and guidance for these Acts. The Curriculum for Excellence establishes health and wellbeing, including developing positive and healthy relationships, as a core part of the learning experience.
- 6.2 Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended (which will be referred to as the Act throughout this document), it is the duty of the Education and Lifelong Learning Service to provide an adequate and efficient school education for all children living within the Scottish Borders Council area.

## **7 CONTENT**

### **7.1 Catchment Area**

The Council has identified a catchment area for each of its non-denominational primary schools and secondary schools. Each catchment area has a secondary school and a number of associated non-denominational primary schools. A catchment area can be changed to



reflect movement in school rolls or to take into account significant new housing developments but before the change can be implemented a statutory consultation must be undertaken and any proposed change would need to be approved by the Authority. In certain circumstances approval of the Scottish Government may also be required.

## 7.2 **Denominational Primary Schools**

The Council also has denominational primary schools. Where a denominational primary school is oversubscribed, priority will be given to children of that denomination.

## 7.3 **Enrolment**

### 7.3.1 **School Age**

Under Section 30 of the Act, it is the duty of every parent who has a child of school age to provide that child with an education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and ability. Every parent must do this either by ensuring their child attends a public school regularly or by any other means for example by home education.

### 7.3.2 **The Act States that:**

"A parent includes a guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities in relation to, or has care of, a child or young person".

### 7.3.3 **After Divorce or Separation**

Both parents will retain parental responsibilities unless the court has specifically removed those responsibilities. In relation to placement requests, both parents will normally have equal rights. However, for purposes of making a placement request, the application form must be completed with the details of the parent with whom the child is ordinarily resident.

### 7.3.4 **The Act describes who a person of school age is**

That is a child or young person who has reached the age of five years but has not yet reached the age of sixteen years.

## 7.4 **Process for Admission to Primary 1**

7.4.1 There is a legal requirement on parents to ensure that their child attends school from the start of the session in the August following the child's fifth birthday, unless suitable alternative arrangements for education have been made.

7.4.2 Attendance at a private school or a decision to educate a child at home may replace registration at one of the Authorities' primary schools. Parents are requested to notify the Authority in advance of enrolling their child in a private school or of starting to educate their child at home.

7.4.3 To be eligible for entry to Primary 1 at the start of the school year in August, a child must attain their fifth birthday between 1st March of that year and the last day in February of the following year, both dates inclusive. Each year the Authority will advertise details of the enrolment process for parents considering enrolment for their child for the following August. Enrolment week will be the last full week in November.

7.4.4 Parents will be asked to complete an online enrolment form. This ensures that a place is allocated to their child.

7.4.5 Parents who wish to make a placement request will be asked to complete an online enrolment form at their catchment primary

school to ensure a place is available for their child. They should also make a placement request.

## **7.5 Prioritising requests for enrolment to a catchment school**

7.5.1 Where there are insufficient places for children living in a catchment area to attend their catchment school then the following priority order will be used to allocate places:

- (a) Children identified as being in need of educational provision available at a particular school.
- (b) Children with siblings already attending the school.
- (c) Children living furthest from their nearest alternative school with an available place. Distances will be determined by Passenger Transport.

If all other factors are equal a ballot will be used to determine places.

7.5.2 Some children, based on the above criteria, will be required to attend the nearest alternative school that has places. In this case they will then be given a higher priority than a child making a placing request to the alternative school. The child can transfer back to their catchment school as soon as a place becomes available, if they wish.

7.5.3 Transport costs will be met if the child is distance entitled. If a place subsequently becomes available at the child's catchment school, parents will be responsible for school transport costs if they decide to retain their child at the alternative school. This will commence from the beginning of the subsequent school session.

7.5.4 If parents choose to send siblings to the same alternative school then a placement request will be required and they will be responsible for transport costs.

## **7.6 Admissions throughout the School Year**

7.6.1 Children moving into the catchment area may be admitted at any time of the school year if there are places available. If no places are available the same process described in section 7.5 applies.

## **7.7 Transfer from P7 to S1**

7.7.1 Most children will attend the catchment secondary school for their home address and will transfer there once they have completed their primary school education.

7.7.2 Parents of a child who is to transfer from primary education to secondary education in August will receive from their primary Head Teacher the name of the relevant secondary school. Each school will also arrange a transition programme to assist children through the transfer from primary to secondary education.

7.7.3 Where there are insufficient places for children living in a catchment area to attend their catchment school then the process detailed in section 7.5 will be applied.

7.7.4 Where a child attends a primary school as a result of a successful placement request to a non-catchment school, that child will not automatically transfer to the associated secondary school, for that primary school, unless they also live within the catchment area for that secondary school. If they do not live within the catchment area, a further placement request will have to be made.

## 7.8 Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

- 7.8.1 The Authority has a duty to accept placement requests from parents to facilitate parental choice where and when this is possible. Where a placement request is received by Education and Lifelong Service prior to 15th March in any year relating to a request to start a school in the following August, then the Authority will provide parents with a written decision by 30th April.
- 7.8.2 In any other case, the Authority has a period of two months from the date of receipt of the request to provide parents with a written decision about the placing request.
- 7.8.3 If the Council refuses to grant the request, reasons will be given in the written decision.
- 7.8.4 When a placement request is being made, parents must be informed that they must also register their child with their catchment school. This ensures that should the placement request be refused the child will have an allocated place at their catchment school.
- 7.8.5 If during the course of a school session, a family moves house to another catchment area a placement request must be made if they wish their child to remain at the original school. The parents would be liable for any transport costs.
- 7.8.6 Once a child has been offered a placement, it will not be withdrawn unless the Council becomes aware that granting the placement was based on false information.
- 7.8.7 It should be noted that, **where a child or young person has additional support needs, any placing request made should be made and will be responded to under the Education (Additional Support for Learning (S) Act 2004.**

## 7.9 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools

- 7.9.1 Prioritising Placement Requests: Primary and Secondary Schools The priority order which will be considered is:
- (a) Pupils having been refused a place at their local catchment schools because it is at capacity and the placement request is the nearest alternative school.
  - (b) Recommendations from Education and Lifelong Education Service.
  - (c) Children with siblings already attending the school.
  - (d) Children living furthest from their nearest alternative school.

## 7.10 Admission of pupils from out with Scottish Borders Council

- 7.10.1 There are three categories of pupils potentially involved:
- (a) Children living with their parents or carers who are permanently resident out with Scottish Borders Council.
  - (b) Children who are looked after and accommodated.
  - (c) Children who are resident within Scottish Borders Council as a result of arrangements made by parents or carers but whose parents or carers are permanently resident out with Scottish Borders.
- 7.10.2 **Children in Category (a)**  
Parents or carers living out with Scottish Borders may ask for a placement request for their child to attend a Scottish Borders school. Such placement requests will be treated in the same way as other placement requests.

There is no payment of out with fees between Authorities for primary and secondary education. Charges will be made only for any additional provision required to meet the child's additional support needs. If additional support is required Head Teachers must notify the Local Authority in order that the home authority agrees to pay for the additional support. Enrolment must not take place until an agreement has taken place. The Buffering Policy should be applied.

#### **Children in Category (b)**

Where a child is in the care of a foster parent, the child should be enrolled at the catchment school for the address of the foster parent. The home authority is responsible for the costs of any additional support required. Enrolment at any out with catchment school should be made through a placement request.

Head Teachers should:

- (a) Record the pupil on SEEMIS as Looked After Away From Home.
- (b) Contact the Virtual School Headteacher and give the child's details.
- (c) Contact the Group Manager, Resources, Children & Families Social Work.

#### **Children in Category (c)**

Such pupils may only be enrolled on production of clear proof of address within Scottish Borders.

### **7.11 Refusal of a Placing Request**

7.11.1 The Authority is entitled to refuse a placement request under the Act only where one or more of the grounds of refusal summarised below applies:

- (a) If placing the child in the specified school would-
  - (i) Make it necessary for the Authority to take an additional teacher into employment.
  - (ii) Give rise to significant expenditure on extending or otherwise altering the accommodation at or facilities provided in connection with the school.
  - (iii) Be seriously detrimental to the continuity of the child's education.
  - (iv) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or
  - (v) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the educational well-being of pupils attending the school.
  - (vi) Assuming that pupil numbers remain constant, make it necessary, at the commencement of a future stage of the child's primary education, for the Authority to create an additional class at the school.
  - (vii) If as a consequence of acceptance the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers.
- (b) If the education normally provided at the school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child.
- (c) If the Authority has already required the child to discontinue his attendance at the specified school.
- (d) If the child in question is resident out with the school's catchment area, and the acceptance of that child would entail

using one of the places reserved for pupils moving into the catchment area on a permanent basis (secondary schools only, 1 reserved place per S1 class)).

#### **7.12 Standing List**

7.12.1 The Standing List is a list of refused placement requests made during the normal round of placement requests.

7.12.2 A child whose placement request is refused during the normal round of requests from 1 December to 15 March will be entered on a list. This will be held from 30 April or the date of decision, if earlier, to the last day of the academic year applied for. This list will be called the Standing List. Any places which become available between 30 April and the last day of the new academic year will be offered to those children on the Standing List in priority order. See Section 7.5.

#### **7.13 Transport for Placement Requests**

7.13.1 Under the Act, an education authority has a discretionary power rather than a duty to provide school transport for pupils attending schools as a result of a successful placement request. Accordingly, Scottish Borders Council does not normally provide school transport in such circumstances.

7.13.2 Placement requests made in circumstances where Education and Lifelong Services agree that a change of school is necessary to protect the emotional, physical or educational wellbeing of the child may be considered for transport costs at the discretion of the Service Director.

7.13.3 In considering whether or not to provide transport, Scottish Borders Council will take safety issues into account.

#### **7.14 Appealing the Refusal of a placement request**

7.14.1 Under section 28C(1) of the Act parents whose placement request has been refused are entitled to appeal the Education and Lifelong Learning services decision.

7.14.2 This right of appeal only applies to placement requests made to Primary and Secondary schools. It does not apply to Early Learning and Childcare settings.

7.14.3 In the first instance the parent should make an appeal to the Clerk to the Council. The appeal should take the form of a letter stating that a placement request has been refused and that the parent wishes to appeal the decision stating their grounds of appeal.

7.14.4 An appeal must be made within 28 days of receipt of the refusal, or, in the case of a deemed refusal, within 28 days of either 30 April for requests made during the normal round of placing requests, or the expiry of two months following the date of the request, as the case may be.

7.14.5 A parent may request an informal meeting with an officer of Education and Lifelong Learning Services at any time, either before or after a placing request is refused. At this meeting the officer will explain the position of the Education and Lifelong Learning Service to the parent. This is entirely without prejudice to the parent's statutory rights of appeal.

7.14.6 Only one appeal, in respect of any child, will be considered in any twelve month period, although more than one placing request can be made in that period.

- 7.14.7 Where an appeal has been submitted to the Education Appeals Committee or the Sheriff Court, available places at school will continue to be allocated based on the criteria in sections 7.5.
- 7.14.8 In cases where a placing request has been made under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (S) Act 2004, appeals against refusal will, in some cases, be made to Education Appeals Committee and in other cases be made to the Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (formerly the Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland). Advice should be sought on the appropriate body to deal with such appeal. In either case the appeal must be lodged within 28 days of the refusal. In the case of an appeal to the tribunal, an appeal from that body can be made to the Upper Tribunal rather than to the Sheriff Court.

### 7.15 **Class Sizes and Composition**

- 7.15.1 Teachers are allocated to each school according to the total number of children on the school roll and not on the number of children in any one year group.

#### 7.15.2 **The National Agreement on maximum class sizes is:**

##### **Primary Schools**

P1	25 children
P2 and P3	30 children
P4-P7	33 children
Composite Class	25 children

Single Class Primary School 25 children but may be lower at the discretion of the service Director.

##### **Secondary Schools**

Practical Classes	20 pupils
S1 and S2	33 pupils
S3-S6	30 pupils

In Primary Schools class compositions will be fixed for the academic year on the Monday of the week of the Scottish Executive Census in September.

#### 7.15.3 **Exceptions To Class Sizes**

The regulations allow for exceptions to the number of pupils in an individual P1, P2 or P3 class to be more than 25 or 30 up to a maximum of 33 where an 'ordinary teaching session' is conducted by a single qualified teacher. Pupils who are treated as 'excepted pupils', for the purpose of the regulations, do not count towards the limit of 25 or 30.

#### 7.15.4 **Excepted Pupils**

A child may only be treated as an 'excepted pupil' if:

- He/she cannot be educated at the school in a class in which the class size limit is not exceeded without measures being taken which would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources, and
- He/she falls into one of the five categories below.

- 7.15.5 The five categories of 'excepted pupils' fall into two groupings. Those who are placed outside a 'normal placing round' and those who have additional support needs but receive part of their education in a mainstream school.

- 7.15.6 For the purposes of the regulations a child is placed in a school, whether by request or otherwise, outside the normal placing

arrangements if the decision to place him/her is taken after 30 April in the year in which he/she is to start attending school.

- 7.15.7 **Excepted Pupils** - Those who are placed outside the 'normal placing round'
- (a) Children whose Co-ordinated Support Plan specifies that they should be educated at the school concerned or children for whom the Authority has recommended this school as an alternative placement.
  - (b) Children initially refused a place at the school, but subsequently on appeal offered a place outside a normal placing round or because the Authority recognise that an error was made in implementing their placing arrangements for the school.
  - (c) Children who cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home when they first move into the area.
  - (d) Children initially refused a place at the school, but subsequently on appeal offered a place outside a normal placing round or because the Authority recognise that an error was made in implementing their placing arrangements for the school.
  - (e) Children who cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home when they first move into the area.

#### 7.16 **Composite Classes**

- 7.16.1 A composite class is a class which includes children from more than one year group.
- 7.16.2 Where the creation of composite classes is new to a school the Head Teacher will ensure that parents/carers are provided with information and/or opportunities to discuss the likely arrangement of classes before decisions are taken, in order that parents are clear about the reasons for compositing and what the criteria will be, before class allocations are announced.
- 7.16.3 Where possible, whole year groups will be included in the same class. In small schools it may be possible to include more than 2 whole year groups within one composite class eg P4/P5/P6.
- 7.16.4 When it is necessary to divide a year group to make one or more composite classes, places will be allocated based on age. For example if a school had 40 children in P4 and 45 children in P5 then one possible way to split the classes would be to put the oldest 11 children from P4 in a composite class with the youngest 13 children from P5. This would give:
- a P4 class of 29
  - a P4/5 class of 24
  - a P5 class of 32

There are other minor variations on the above class allocations but they all involve a composite P4/5.

- 7.16.5 The reasons for using age are:
- It allows the Head Teacher to create classes which most closely resemble those of single year groups.
  - It is a clear and transparent criteria which is easily understood.
  - It is objective.

- 7.16.6 The placement of siblings within the year group will be discussed with parents and their views will be taken into account where possible. In smaller schools in particular, it may be necessary for siblings to be in the same composite class.
- 7.16.7 Schools will be expected to provide opportunities for children to develop relationships with their year group as well as with their composite class.

### **Small Numbers in a Composite Class**

- 7.16.8 At times it may be necessary for a small group of children from one year group to be separated from their year group and join a composite class. When this is necessary it is essential that the Head Teacher ensures that each stage being created in the composite class has no fewer than 5 children.

### **Information Sharing With Parents**

- 7.16.9 Composite class arrangements work most smoothly in schools where parents/carers understand the reasons why the composite classes are required, the rationale for their formation and the way in which children will be taught within the composite class.
- 7.16.10 Head Teachers will provide parents with information about composite classes, how they work and how children are taught in a composite setting, prior to the time when class arrangements are being made. It is likely that this will be in the form of parental leaflets and through the school handbook.
- 7.16.11 Once teacher allocations have been confirmed, class structures should be published as early as possible.
- 7.16.12 In certain circumstances class restructuring may have to take place during the summer break or shortly after the new school session has started. This could be caused by children enrolling or leaving the school. If this happens, Head Teachers will:
- Inform parents/carers as quickly as possible that changes have become necessary.
- 7.16.13 It will only be in exceptional circumstances that a school will be asked to restructure their classes after the census in September of the new school year. For example a parent/carer tries to enrol her/her child at the catchment school but the appropriate class is full and there is no capacity in the surrounding primary schools. Or in the event of an extraordinary incident which results in the medium term closure of a school building resulting in children from another school being temporarily located within a neighbouring school.

### **Dealing with Disagreements**

- 7.16.14 If a parent/carer wishes to discuss the class arrangements made for their child, they should speak to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will provide them with the rationale for her/his decision.
- 7.16.15 If a parent/carer believes that their child has specific needs which have not been taken into account, they should discuss these with the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher agrees with the parent/carer's views, she/he will discuss how these specific needs can be addressed in the class to which the child has been allocated. The Head Teacher would not necessarily be expected to move the child to another class.



7.16.16 If a parent/carer believes a Head Teacher has not adhered to this policy in allocating his/her child to a particular class, they should raise this concern with the Head Teacher, who will provide them with the rationale for her/his decision.

7.16.17 If the parent/carer remains unhappy with the class arrangements made for their child and any adjustments made to address their concerns, they may follow the Scottish Borders Council complaints procedure.

## 8 EQUALITIES

8.1 The Council is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity that underpin the Equality Act 2010, both in the provision of services and in its role as an employer. In pursuing these commitments the Council acknowledges its statutory duties under the Act, which specifically protects people who may experience discrimination, whether direct or indirect; harassment or victimisation in the workplace.

8.2 The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Gender and Sexual Orientation.

## 9 VERSION CONTROL

<b>Name of Document:</b> Admissions Policy (2024)		<b>Version Number:</b>
<b>Approved by:</b> Lesley Munro		
<b>Date first approved:</b> 4 January 2018		<b>Date of Review:</b> January 2021
<b>Name of Officer responsible for the Review:</b> Gillian McKenzie		
<b>Changes to the Policy</b>		
<i>Paragraph No:</i>	<i>Change made and reason for</i>	

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## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

### Stage 1 Scoping and Assessing for Relevance

#### Section 1 Details of the Proposal

<p><b>A. Title of Proposal:</b></p>	<p>Education and Lifelong Learning Admissions Policy</p>
<p><b>B. What is it?</b></p>	<p>A new Policy/Strategy/Practice <input type="checkbox"/> A revised Policy/Strategy/Practice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>C. Description of the proposal:</b> (Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes, including the context within which it will operate)</p>	<p><b>Aim:</b> To update Scottish Borders Council's policy with regard to Admissions to all schools (excluding Early Learning and Childcare) under its management.</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> The Authority has a legal duty in respect of admissions to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide suitable education opportunities for children and young people.</li> <li>• Provide parents, children and young people information on their local schools.</li> <li>• Provide parents information on admission arrangements for children to the Authorities', primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>• Advise parents of their right to choose a school, for their child, which is not in</li> </ul>

	<p>their catchment area by making a placement request.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept placement requests except where the Council has the right to refuse the request and chooses to exercise this right.</li> <li>• Advise parents of their rights to appeal if a placement request is refused.</li> </ul> <p><b>Context:</b> This policy responds to and sits within the context of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, along with the associated amendments and guidance for these Acts. The Curriculum for Excellence establishes health and wellbeing, including developing positive and healthy relationships, as a core part of the learning experience.</p> <p>Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended (which will be referred to as the Act throughout the document), it is the duty of the Education and Lifelong Learning Service to provide an adequate and efficient school education for all children living within the Scottish Borders Council area.</p>
<p><b>D. Service Area:</b> <b>Department:</b></p>	<p>People Education and Lifelong Learning</p>
<p><b>E. Lead Officer:</b></p>	<p>Gillian McKenzie Quality Improvement Officer</p>

(Name and job title)	
<b>F. Other Officers/Partners involved:</b> (List names, job titles and organisations)	Headteachers
<b>G. Date(s) IIA completed:</b>	3 January 2024

**Section 2 Will there be any impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?**

No
If yes, - please state here:.

**Section 3 Legislative Requirements**

<b>3.1 Relevance to the Equality Duty:</b>	
Do you believe your proposal has any relevance under the Equality Act 2010? No	
<b>Equality Duty</b>	<b>Reasoning:</b>
<b>A. Elimination of discrimination (both direct &amp; indirect), victimisation and harassment. (Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)</b>	
<b>B. Promotion of equality of opportunity?</b>	

<i>(Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)</i>	
<b>C. Foster good relations?</b> <i>(Will your proposal help to foster or encourage good relations between those who have different equality characteristics?)</i>	

<b>3.2 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal? (You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups)</b>				
Please tick below as appropriate, outlining any potential impacts on the undernoted equality groups this proposal may have and how you know this.				
	Impact			Please explain the potential impacts and how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Age</b> Older or younger people or a specific age grouping	x			
<b>Disability</b> e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring	x			
<b>Gender Reassignment/ Gender Identity</b> anybody whose gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth	x			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> people who are married or in a civil partnership	x			

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to <b>maternity</b> leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, <b>protection</b> against <b>maternity</b> discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),	x			
<b>Race Groups:</b> including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)	x			
<b>Religion or Belief:</b> different beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief)	x			
<b>Sex</b> women and men (girls and boys)	x			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> , e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual	x			
<p><b>3.3 Fairer Scotland Duty</b></p> <p>This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making <u>strategic</u> decisions.</p> <p>The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.</p>				
<p><b>Is the proposal strategic?</b></p> <p>No</p> <p><b>If No go to Section 4</b></p>				

If yes, please indicate any potential impact on the undernoted groups this proposal may have and how you know this:				
	Impact			State here how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.				
<b>Material Deprivation</b> – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies				
<b>Area Deprivation</b> – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport)				
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> – social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income				
<b>Looked after and accommodated children and young people</b>				
<b>Carers</b> paid and unpaid including family members				
<b>Homelessness</b>				
<b>Addictions and substance use</b>				
<b>Those involved within the criminal justice system</b>				



### **3.4 Armed Forces Covenant Duty (*Education and Housing/ Homelessness proposals only*)**

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to the three matters listed below in Education and Housing/ Homelessness matters.

This relates to current and former armed forces personnel (regular or reserve) and their families.

**Is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty applicable?**

**No**

If "Yes", please complete below

<b>Covenant Duty</b>	<b>How this has been considered and any specific provision made:</b>
<b>The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;</b>	
<b>The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces;</b>	
<b>The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.</b>	

## Section 4 Full Integrated Impact Assessment Required

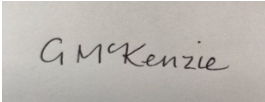
Select No if you have answered “No” to all of Sections 3.1 – 3.3.

**No** *(please delete as applicable)*

If yes, please proceed to Stage 2 and complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment

**If a full impact assessment is not required, briefly explain why there are no effects and provide justification for the decision.**

This policy responds to the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. This update mainly reflects changes to SBC processes for example online enrolment and complaints procedures. It also provides clarity of process while empowering headteachers to make decisions to meet the needs of their children and young people within the parameters of the policy.

<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	 <b>Gillian McKenzie</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Quality Improvement Officer</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>3 January 2024</b>
<b>Counter Signature Director:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>				
<b>CALENDAR OF MEETINGS</b>				
<b>AUGUST 2024 - JULY 2025</b>				
<b>Aug-24</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
MON (SH)	29	JUL		
TUES (SH)	30	JUL		
WED (SH)	31	JUL		
THUR (SH)	1	AUG		
FRI (SH)	2	AUG		
SAT	3	AUG		
SUN	4	AUG		
MON (SH)	5	AUG		
TUES (SH)	6	AUG		
WED (SH)	7	AUG		
THUR (SH)	8	AUG		
FRI (SH)	9	AUG		
SAT	10	AUG		
SUN	11	AUG		
MON (SH)	12	AUG	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
MON (SH)	12	AUG	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUE (SH)	13	AUG	EXECUTIVE - Finance	10.00 a.m.
WED	14	AUG	HAWICK COMMON GOOD	10.00 a.m.
WED	14	AUG	COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAMME BOARD	2.00 pm
THURS	15	AUG	SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
FRI	16	AUG		
SAT	17	AUG		
SUN	18	AUG		
MON	19	AUG	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	20	AUG	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
TUES	20	AUG	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 pm
WED	21	AUG	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND	5.00 pm
THURS	22	AUG	COLLEAGUE COMMUNITY	3.30 p.m.
FRI	23	AUG	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	23	AUG	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	24	AUG		
SUN	25	AUG		
MON	26	AUG	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	27	AUG	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
TUES	27	AUG	WILLIAM HILL TRUST	1.30 p.m.
TUES	27	AUG	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND	2.00 p.m.
WED	28	AUG	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	28	AUG	SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 p.m.
THURS	29	AUG	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
THURS	29	AUG	INNERLEITHEN COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 pm
THURS	22	AUG	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	30	AUG		
SAT	31	AUG		
<b>Sep-24</b>				
SUN	1	SEPT		
MON	2	SEPT		
TUES	3	SEPT	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
WED	4	SEPT		
THURS	5	SEPT	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 pm
THURS	5	SEPT	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	6	SEPT		
SAT	7	SEPT		
SUN	8	SEPT		
MON	9	SEPT	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
MON	9	SEPT	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	10	SEPT	EXECUTIVE - Ec Dev	10.00 a.m.
TUES	11	SEPT	TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	11	SEPT		
THURS	12	SEPT	GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
FRI	13	SEPT		
SAT	14	SEPT		
SUN	15	SEPT		
MON	16	SEPT	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
MON	16	SEPT	JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND	4.30 p.m.
TUES	17	SEPT	KELSO COMMON GOOD FUND	5.15 p.m.
WED	18	SEPT	WELLBEING & SAFETY	9.30 am
WED	18	SEPT	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THURS	19	SEPT	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	20	SEPT	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	20	SEPT	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	21	SEPT		

SUN	22	SEPT		
MON	23	SEPT	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	24	SEPT		
WED	25	SEPT	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	25	SEPT	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	5.00 pm
THURS	26	SEPT	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI	27	SEPT		
SAT	28	SEPT		
SUN	29	SEPT		
MON	30	SEPT		
<b>Oct-24</b>				
TUES	1	OCT		
WED	2	OCT		
THURS	3	OCT	JCG:STAFF	2.00 p.m.
FRI	4	OCT		
SAT	5	OCT		
SUN	6	OCT		
MON	7	OCT	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
MON	7	OCT	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
TUES	8	OCT	EXECUTIVE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	8	OCT	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
WED	9	OCT		
THURS	10	OCT		
FRI	11	OCT		
SAT	12	OCT		
SUN	13	OCT		
MON (SH)	14	OCT		
TUES (SH)	15	OCT		
WED (SH)	16	OCT		
THUR (SH)	17	OCT		
FRI (SH)	18	OCT		
SAT	19	OCT		
SUN	20	OCT		
MON (SH)	21	OCT	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	22	OCT		
WED	23	OCT	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	23	OCT	COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAMME BOARD	2.00 pm
THUR	24	OCT	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	OCT	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	OCT	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	26	OCT		
SUN	27	OCT		
MON	28	OCT	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00a.m.
TUES	29	OCT	EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	29	OCT	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 pm
WED	30	OCT	JCG:TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
THUR	31	OCT	SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
<b>Nov-24</b>				
FRI	1	NOV		
SAT	2	NOV		
SUN	3	NOV		
MON	4	NOV	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	5	NOV		
TUES	5	NOV	TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30p.m.
WED	6	NOV		
THUR	7	NOV	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
FRI	8	NOV		
SAT	9	NOV		
SUN	10	NOV		
MON	11	NOV	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	12	NOV	EXECUTIVE - Finance	10.00 a.m.
TUES	12	NOV		
WED	13	NOV		
THUR	14	NOV	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 pm
THUR	14	NOV	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	15	NOV		
SAT	16	NOV		
SUN	17	NOV		
MON	18	NOV	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
MON	18	NOV	JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND	4.30 p.m.
TUES	19	NOV	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
TUES	19	NOV	KELSO COMMON GOOD FUND	5.15 p.m.
WED	20	NOV	HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
WED	20	NOV	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	20	NOV	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND	5.00 pm
WED	20	NOV	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	21	NOV	LICENSING BAORD/LOCAL LICENSING FORUM JOINT MEETING	4.00 p.m..
FRI	22	NOV	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	22	NOV	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.

SAT	23	NOV		
SUN	24	NOV		
MON (SH)	25	NOV		
TUES	26	NOV	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
WED	27	NOV	WELLBEING & SAFETY	9.30 am
WED	27	NOV	SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 p.m.
THUR	28	NOV	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
THUR	28	NOV	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	29	NOV	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	5.00 pm
SAT	30	NOV		
<b>Dec-24</b>				
SUN	1	DEC		
MON (SH)	2	DEC		
TUES	3	DEC	EXECUTIVE - Ec Dev	10.00 a.m.
TUES	3	DEC		
WED	4	DEC	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE, SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
THUR	5	DEC	GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
THUR	5	DEC	COLLEAGUE COMMUNITY	3.30 p.m.
FRI	6	DEC		
SAT	7	DEC		
SUN	8	DEC		
MON	9	DEC	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
MON	9	DEC	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	10	DEC	EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP	10.00 a.m.
TUES	10	DEC	WILLIAM HILL TRUST	1.30 p.m.
TUES	10	DEC	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND	2.00 p.m.
WED	11	DEC	SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	12	DEC	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	13	DEC	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	13	DEC	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	14	DEC		
SUN	15	DEC		
MON	16	DEC	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	17	DEC		
WED	18	DEC		
THUR	19	DEC	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	20	DEC		
SAT	21	DEC		
SUN	22	DEC		
MON (SH)	23	DEC		
TUES (SH)	24	DEC		
WED (SH)	25	DEC	<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAY</b>	
THUR (SH)	26	DEC	<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAY</b>	
FRI (SH)	27	DEC	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	
SAT	28	DEC		
SUN	29	DEC		
MON	30	DEC	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	
TUES	31	DEC	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	
<b>Jan-25</b>				
WED (SH)	1	JAN	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	
THUR (SH)	2	JAN	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	
FRI (SH)	3	JAN		
SAT	4	JAN		
SUN	5	JAN		
MON	6	JAN	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	7	JAN		
WED	8	JAN		
THUR	9	JAN	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
FRI	10	JAN		
SAT	11	JAN		
SUN	12	JAN		
MON	13	JAN		
TUES	14	JAN	EXECUTIVE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	14	JAN		
WED	15	JAN		
THURS	16	JAN	STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
THUR	16	JAN	JCG:STAFF	2.00 p.m.
FRI	17	JAN		
SAT	18	JAN		
SUN	19	JAN		
MON	20	JAN	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	21	JAN	EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
WED	22	JAN	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	5.00 pm
THUR	23	JAN	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	24	JAN	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	24	JAN	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	25	JAN		
SUN	26	JAN		
MON	27	JAN	JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND	4.30 p.m.
TUES	28	JAN		

TUES	28	JAN	KELSO COMMON GOOD FUND	5.15 p.m.
WED	29	JAN	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	30	JAN	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI	31	JAN		
<b>Feb-25</b>				
SAT	1	FEB		
SUN	2	FEB		
MON	3	FEB	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
MON	3	FEB	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	4	FEB	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 pm
WED	5	FEB		
THURS	6	FEB	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
THUR	6	FEB	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	7	FEB		
SAT	8	FEB		
SUN	9	FEB		
MON	10	FEB	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	11	FEB	EXECUTIVE - Finance	10.00 a.m.
TUES	11	FEB		
WED	12	FEB	COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAMME BOARD	2.00 pm
WED	12	FEB	SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 p.m.
THUR	13	FEB	JCG:TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
FRI	14	FEB		
SAT	15	FEB		
SUN	16	FEB		
MON (SH)	17	FEB		
TUES (SH)	18	FEB		
WED (SH)	19	FEB		
THUR (SH)	20	FEB	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	21	FEB	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	21	FEB	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	22	FEB		
SUN	23	FEB		
MON (SH)	24	FEB	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	25	FEB		
TUES	25	FEB	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND	2.00 p.m.
TUES	25	FEB	TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	26	FEB	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	26	FEB	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND	5.00 pm
THUR	27	FEB	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL (Budget)</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI	28	FEB		
<b>Mar-25</b>				
SAT	1	MAR		
SUN	2	MAR		
MON	3	MAR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
TUES	4	MAR		
WED	5	MAR	WELLBEING & SAFETY	9.30 am
THURS	6	MAR	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
THUR	6	MAR	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 pm
FRI	7	MAR		
SAT	8	MAR		
SUN	9	MAR		
MON	10	MAR	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
MON	10	MAR	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	11	MAR	EXECUTIVE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	11	MAR		
WED	12	MAR		
THUR	13	MAR	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	14	MAR		
SAT	15	MAR		
SUN	16	MAR		
MON	17	MAR		
TUES	18	MAR	GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
WED	19	MAR	HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
WED	19	MAR	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	5.00 pm
THURS	20	MAR	SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THURS	20	MAR	COLLEAGUE COMMUNITY	3.30 p.m.
FRI	21	MAR	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	21	MAR	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	22	MAR		
SUN	23	MAR		
MON	24	MAR		
TUES	25	MAR		
TUES	25	MAR	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 pm
WED	26	MAR	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	26	MAR	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	27	MAR	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
THUR	27	MAR	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI (SH)	28	MAR		
SAT	29	MAR		

SUN	30	MAR		
MON	31	MAR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
<b>Apr-25</b>				
TUES	1	APR		
WED	2	APR		
THUR	3	APR		
FRI	4	APR		
SAT	5	APR		
SUN	6	APR		
MON (SH)	7	APR		
TUES (SH)	8	APR		
WED (SH)	9	APR	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP - VIRTUAL	9.30 a.m.
THUR (SH)	10	APR		
FRI (SH)	11	APR		
SAT	12	APR		
SUN	13	APR		
MON (SH)	14	APR		
TUES (SH)	15	APR	EXECUTIVE - Ec Dev	10.00 a.m.
TUES	15	APR		
WED (SH)	16	APR		
THUR (SH)	17	APR		
FRI (SH)	18	APR		
SAT	19	APR		
SUN	20	APR		
MON	21	APR	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
MON	21	APR	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
TUES	22	APR	TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	23	APR	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
THUR	24	APR	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	APR	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	25	APR	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	26	APR		
SUN	27	APR		
MON	28	APR	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	29	APR	EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	29	APR		
WED	30	APR		
<b>May-25</b>				
THUR	1	MAY		
FRI	2	MAY		
SAT	3	MAY		
SUN	4	MAY		
MON (SH)	5	MAY	<b>MAY DAY</b>	
TUES (SH)	6	MAY		
WED	7	MAY		
THUR	8	MAY	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	9.30 a.m.
FRI	9	MAY		
SAT	10	MAY		
SUN	11	MAY		
MON	12	MAY	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	13	MAY	EXECUTIVE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	13	MAY		
WED	14	MAY	COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAMME BOARD	2.00 pm
THUR	15	MAY		
FRI	16	MAY		
SAT	17	MAY		
SUN	18	MAY		
MON	19	MAY		
TUES	20	MAY		
WED	21	MAY	HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
WED	21	MAY	CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST	5.00 pm
THUR	22	MAY	SCRUTINY & PETITIONS COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
THUR	22	MAY	INNERLEITHEN COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 pm
FRI	23	MAY	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
fri	23	MAY	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	24	MAY		
SUN	25	MAY		
MON	26	MAY	DUNS COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
MON	26	MAY	JEDBURGH COMMON GOOD FUND	4.30 p.m.
TUES	27	MAY		
TUES	27	MAY	JCG: TEACHERS	2.00 p.m.
WED	28	MAY	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
WED	28	MAY	CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
THUR	29	MAY	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
THUR	29	MAY	BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
FRI	30	MAY		
SAT	31	MAY		
<b>Jun-25</b>				
SUN	1	JUN		
MON	2	JUN	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.

TUES	3	JUN	TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.30 p.m.
WED	3	JUN	POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE, SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD	9.30 a.m.
WED	4	JUN	SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND	3.00 p.m.
THUR	5	JUN	COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD	2.00 pm
FRI	6	JUN		
SAT	7	JUN		
SUN	8	JUN		
MON	9	JUN	EYEMOUTH COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
MON	9	JUN	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP	2.00 p.m.
TUES	10	JUN	EXECUTIVE - Finance	10.00 a.m.
TUES	10	JUN		
TUES	10	JUN	TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP	7.00 pm
WED	11	JUN	JCG:STAFF	2.00 p.m.
WED	11	JUN	PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND	5.00 pm
THUR	12	JUN	GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
THUR	12	JUN	EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP	6.00 p.m.
FRI	13	JUN		
SAT	14	JUN		
SUN	15	JUN		
MON	16	JUN	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES	17	JUN	EDUCATION SUB-SOMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	17	JUN	WILLIAM HILL TRUST	1.30 p.m.
TUES	17	JUN	LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND	2.00 p.m.
TUES	17	JUN	MELROSE COMMON GOOD FUND	3.30 p.m.
WED	18	JUN	WELLBEING & SAFETY	9.30 am
THUR	19	JUN	PENSION FUND COMMITTEE/PENSION BOARD	10.00 a.m.
THUR	19	JUN	COLLEAGUE COMMUNITY	3.30 p.m.
FRI	20	JUN	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI	20	JUN	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	21	JUN		
SUN	22	JUN		
MON	23	JUN	PENSION FUND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE SUB-COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
MON	23	JUN	LOCAL LICENSING FORUM	4.00 p.m.
TUES	24	JUN	AUDIT COMMITTEE	10.00 a.m.
TUES	24	JUN	KELSO COMMON GOOD FUND	5.15 p.m.
WED	25	JUN	COLDSTREAM COMMON GOOD FUND	10.00 a.m.
WED	25	JUN	ANTI-POVERTY MRG	11.00 am
THUR (SH)	26	JUN	<b>SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL</b>	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	27	JUN		10.00 a.m.
SAT	28	JUN		
SUN	29	JUN		
MON (SH)	30	JUN	PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS	10.00 a.m.
<b>Jul-25</b>				
TUES (SH)	1	JUL		
WED (SH)	2	JUL		
THUR (SH)	3	JUL		
FRI (SH)	4	JUL		
SAT	5	JUL		
SUN	6	JUL		
MON (SH)	7	JUL		
TUES (SH)	8	JUL	POLICE CAT MEMBER/OFFICER STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT GROUP - VIRTUAL	9.30 a.m.
WED (SH)	9	JUL		
THUR (SH)	10	JUL		
FRI (SH)	11	JUL		
SAT	12	JUL		
SUN	13	JUL		
MON (SH)	14	JUL	LOCAL REVIEW BODY	10.00 a.m.
TUES (SH)	15	JUL		
WED (SH)	16	JUL		
THUR (SH)	17	JUL		
FRI (SH)	18	JUL	LICENSING BOARD	10.00 a.m.
FRI (SH)	18	JUL	CIVIC GOVERNMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE	11.00 a.m.
SAT	19	JUL		
SUN	20	JUL		
MON (SH)	21	JUL		
TUES (SH)	22	JUL		
WED (SH)	23	JUL		
THUR (SH)	24	JUL		
FRI (SH)	25	JUL		
SAT	26	JUL		
SUN	27	JUL		
MON (SH)	28	JUL		
TUES (SH)	29	JUL		
WED (SH)	30	JUL		
THUR (SH)	31	JUL		
(SH) School Holiday				



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