

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM held in Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on Tuesday, 17th May, 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors G Turnbull (Chairman), A Cranston, W McAteer, S Marshall, D Paterson, R Smith, Community Councillors: Mr M Grieve (Burnfoot), Ms G Frew, (Denholm) Mr C Griffiths (Hobkirk), Mr T Stevenson (Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water), Mr F Wight (Hawick).

Apologies:- Mr W Roberts (Denholm), Mrs M Short (Hawick).

In Attendance:- Neighbourhood Area Manager (Mr F Dunlop), Inspector Carol Wood (Police Scotland), Station Manager Mr R Bell (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service) Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

Members of the Public:- 6 in attendance

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 19 April 2016.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

2. **DOG FOULING**

- 2.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr Craig Blackie, Neighbourhood Area Manager, who was in attendance to give a presentation on the Council's new strategy relating to responsible dog owners. Mr Blackie began his presentation by advising that through a recruitment process, a private contractor, 3GS, had been appointed and it was hoped that their enforcement officers would commence at the end of May or June. A pre-start survey had been carried out by customer services, of which 500 residents had taken part. The survey would be repeated throughout the trial, which would last for one year, and would be part of the evaluation of the strategy. Regular updates would also be presented to Area Forums with a full evaluation after one year. Another aspect of the new strategy was a poster campaign. The poster highlighted that anyone allowing their dog to foul and then not picking up prior to disposal into a suitable bin would be fined £80.00. The enforcement Officers would also be able to issue tickets for littering. Mr Blackie further advised that the scheme was the first in Scotland and other local authorities would be monitoring the trial. Mr Blackie acknowledged that two enforcement officers would be covering a large area. However, they would be working shifts to cover dawn to dusk and their patrol routes would not be published, deployment would be through intelligence led information.
- 2.2 Mr Blackie continued that a new Green Dog Walker (GDW) initiative had also been launched. The scheme was a non-confrontational, friendly way to change attitudes about dog fouling. Volunteers wore a GDW accessory to show they had taken the pledge to always: clean up after their dog; carry extra dog waste bags; be happy to be approached to give a dog waste bag to those without and be a friendly reminder to other dog walkers to clean up after their dogs. The Green Dog Walker scheme would also be evaluated throughout the trial period. Councillor Paterson, Executive Member for Environmental Services, stated that he hoped that the new schemes would be a success and encouraged responsible dog ownership.
- 2.3 Members asked for clarification on a number of points. Mr Blackie advised that officers would collate information received from 0300 100 1800 calls, through the dedicated website at www.scotborders.gov.uk/dogfouling, the public and Members. This information

would then be used to allocate the following weeks deployment of enforcement officers. The enforcement officers would issue tickets electronically and the fee could be paid to 3GS direct or at a contact centre. Any profit would be split between 3GS and the Council. Any unpaid fines would be pursued through the Procurator Fiscal for prosecution. The Chairman thanked Mr Blackie for attending the meeting and the informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

3. STREET CLEANING

With reference to paragraph 4 of the minute of 19 April 2016, 4Earth Solutions had provided a quotation for chewing gum removal and application of their Gum Stopper product for areas within the town centre. Members discussed the quotation, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Several Members expressed concern at the combined cost of the process and the financial sustainability on the Quality of Life budget. The Chairman expressed his disappointment, as following consideration of other processes which had implications for health and safety and lack of Council manpower, he had been working under the Forum's instructions to investigate options to improve the streets in the town centre. Following a further debate it was agreed not to proceed with the process.

DECISION

AGREED no further action.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

- 4.1 With reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of 19 April 2016 there had been circulated a report by Service Director Neighbourhood Services seeking approval for proposed new Neighbourhood Small Schemes and Quality of Life Schemes from the Area Forum. The following Neighbourhood Small Schemes had been requested for consideration by Teviot and Liddesdale Members: grass cutting at The Mote, Hawick, once in May and once in August; contribution towards the removal of a derelict garage at the rear of Lochpark Road, Hawick and removal of unwanted trees at Minto Churchyard, to allow regeneration at their bases. The following Quality of Life Schemes had been requested for consideration: provision of bus shelter at Newcastleton and a contribution to Hawick Welcome Initiative.
- 4.2 The Neighbourhood Area Manager, Mr Dunlop, was in attendance and advised that he was unable to give an update on the carry forward of the remaining Small Schemes budget from the last financial year, but would be able to do so at the next Area Forum. However, he advised that the carry forward of the unallocated Quality of Life budget from the previous financial year had been approved. Therefore, £3,019 would be carried forward to the Hawick and Hermitage ward budget and £190 to the Hawick and Denholm ward budget respectively.
- 4.3 Mr Dunlop further advised that the Hawick and Hermitage Ward councillors had requested removal of vegetation from the islands in the river Teviot between the Coble Cauld and Lawson Bridge be brought forward as a small scheme. Permission for the work was currently being sought from Scottish National Heritage and cost for the vegetation removal was being obtained. When approval was granted and costs were available he would bring forward for consideration at the Area Forum. Members requested that an update on the Pay & Display scheme 2015/16 be included in the report at the next meeting and this was noted.

DECISION

(a) AGREED the following new Neighbourhood Small Schemes for implementation:-

(i) Grass cutting at The Mote, Hawick

£600

(ii) Contribution towards the removal of a derelict garage at the rear of Lochpark Road, Hawick	£495
(iii) Removal of unwanted trees at Minto Churchyard.	£434

(b) **AGREED the following new Quality of Life Schemes for implementation:-**

(i) Supply and install bus shelter at Newcastleton	£7,755
(ii) Contribution to Hawick Welcome Initiative	£2,000

5. **POLICE SCOTLAND**

- 5.1 Inspector Carol Wood, Police Scotland was in attendance to present an update report on the Multi Member Ward Plan, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report highlighted that with regard to the Drug Dealing and Misuse priority, a number of stop and searches had been carried out in April. Of these, three individuals had been reported for possession of drugs. The Road Safety priority showed that a number of road checks had been carried out. Three conditional offers had been issued for speeding and two warnings for the anti-social use of a vehicle. Four drivers had been charged for driving without insurance and a number of other related drug offences. A male had also been arrested and charged with drink driving. With regard to the Violent Crime priority a man had been charged with possession of a lock-knife. With regard to the to the Anti-Social Behaviour priority, six police warnings had been administered.
- 5.2 Inspector Wood went on to refer to the new Air Weapon Legislation which came into effect on 1 July 2016. Any person who possessed, purchased, used or acquired an air weapon would be required to have a certificate to legally hold them. Police Scotland recognised that a number of these types of weapons would no longer be used or required. As a result an 'amnesty' would be held where people could surrender their air weapons at Galashiels police station. Provisional dates for the surrender campaign were Monday 23 May to Sunday 12 June 2016 between 8 am and 10 pm.
- 5.3 The Forum again expressed concern that the crime statistics were still not being reported at meetings. The Clerk was asked to write to the Chief Constable requesting that statistics be provided on a regular basis to ensure openness and transparency. The Forum also asked that PC Paterson be commended for establishing a good rapport with his local, rural community.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the report; and**
 (b) **AGREED that the Clerk write to the Chief Constable requesting crime statistics be provided to the Area Forum on a regular basis.**

6. **SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

Station Manager, Russell Bell, Hawick Fire Station, presented information on response and resilience activities since the last meeting. An update report had also been circulated prior to the meeting. Mr Bell advised that there had been three house fire incidents with one fatality. There had been two unwanted fire alarm signals, both domestic; six special service incidents with three casualties and one woodland fire. Mr Bell went on to advise that Hawick wholtime crews had completed their initial swift water training and now all staff were trained as boat operators. Mr Bell further advised that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, out of hospital cardiac arrest response trial, had been extended for a further six months. Hawick was now a live asset and was on standby to meet the needs of local communities. Since the trial began five lives had been saved. Mr Bell concluded his report by informing that the spring season thematic period was now active and focused on grass and wildland fires, rubbish and refuse fires and derelict property.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

7. **OPEN QUESTIONS**

Councillor McAteer advised that CCTV had been installed at the Common Haugh.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT**

- 8.1 Community Councillor, Chris Griffiths, (Hobkirk) advised that the Community Council had held their Annual General Meeting, all officers had been re-elected. Heart Start training was about to commence and would be live on 2 July 2016. Hobkirk Community Council would be celebrating the Queen's birthday with an afternoon picnic on 12 June at Laidlaw Hall.
- 8.2 Community Councillor Gwen Frew (Denholm) reported that they were to receive a presentation from the Hawick Flood Prevention Scheme on 18 May. On the 28 May it was the annual bogey race and May Fair and on 4 June they would be welcoming the Hawick Coronet. They were also celebrating the Queen's birthday by hosting a picnic on the village green. The Community Council had donated medallions to all school children in the village to commemorate the Queen's birthday.
- 8.3 Community Councillor Michael Grieve (Hawick) advised that their Treasurer, Mr Batten, had retired. The Coronet's night had been a success and this year they had made a small profit. They were presently planning the Carnival and the music line up would be announced shortly.
- 8.4 Community Councillor French Wight (Hawick) thanked everyone who had assisted with the clean-up.

**DECISION
NOTED the reports.**

9. **DATE OF NEXT TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM MEETING**

The next meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Forum would be held on Tuesday, 16 August 2016 at 6.30 pm in the Lesser Hall, Hawick.

The meeting concluded at 7.40 pm.