

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EILDON AREA FORUM

MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA FORUM held in the Waverley Chambers, Transport Interchange, Galashiels on Thursday, 8 December 2016 at 6.30 pm

- Present:- Councillors B White (Chairman), S. Aitchison, M Ballantyne (from para 2), G Edgar, I. Gillespie, B Herd, D. Parker, J. Torrance.
Community Council representatives:- J. Hazle (Galashiels), T Cotter (Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk & Midlem), D & R Purvis (Tweedbank), J. Paton-Day (Earlston), J. Mackenzie (Stow). A. Smith (Lauderdale), R. French (Newtown & Eildon), Inspector A. Hodges (Police Scotland), J McLaren, Employee Director (NHS Borders).
- Apologies:- Councillors V. M. Davidson, J. Mitchell. Stephen Mitchell (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service). Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council, R. Kenney.
- In Attendance:- Neighbourhood Area Manager (C Blackie), Democratic Services Officer (F Walling).
- 18 members of public.

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 8 September 2016.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **PARTNER UPDATES**

2.1 **NHS Borders**

In his update, Employee Director John McLaren firstly gave some statistics about waiting times for unscheduled care at the Borders General Hospital. For the most recent week for which data was available (w/e 27 November 2016) 94.3% patients were seen within 4 hours, which was slightly below the expected target of 95%. The equivalent figure for the previous week was 89.9%. Mr McLaren referred to the challenge of delayed discharge from the hospital and the pressures it created. He explained that delayed discharge was the term given to when a patient was clinically ready to move on to an appropriate care setting but where no such setting was available. During the w/e 27 November 2016 there were 34 patients unable to be discharged. The Health and Social Care Integrated Joint Board were carrying out a detailed piece of work to address this challenge. Mr McLaren went on to explain about the 'tree of light' at the Borders General Hospital. NHS Borders were inviting people to dedicate a light on the special Christmas tree outside the Chaplaincy Centre to honour those people who were in their thoughts and memories. In conclusion of his report Mr McLaren referred to the Scottish Health Awards 2016 held in November and congratulated three of the finalists who were from the Scottish Borders, namely Clare Gillespie (Therapist); Isobel Burton (Dentist); and Dr Ruth Dorward (Doctor). Mr McLaren answered questions which were in particular about the difficulty of recruiting doctors across the country and the development of allied health practitioners to complement the work of GPs.

2.2 **Police Scotland**

Inspector Tony Hodges gave a verbal report and answered questions on issues raised. In particular there were questions and discussion about the recently introduced smoking ban in cars where there were children aged 18 years or under present. Inspector Hodges confirmed that this ban did not include the smoking of e-cigarettes. Questions were also asked about policy in relation to the issue of parking tickets.

2.3 **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

Recently appointed Station Manager at Galashiels, Stephen Mitchell, was unable to attend the meeting but had forwarded a written report. This highlighted Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) activity in the Eildon area since the last meeting of the Area Forum. Following a summary of Response and Resilience activity the report went on to list and detail areas of partnership working and ongoing Prevention and Protection work in the Eildon area. As in all local stations SFRS staff provided home fire safety visits all year round. These focussed on identifying and reducing the risks of fire in the home. Smoke detectors with a 10 year battery life were provided as part of this free service. Following the partnership working with TD1 and Community Learning Development delivering the pilot diversionary project for youths through the holidays, which was referred to in the last report, SFRS were exploring the potential benefits to individuals involved through longer term mentoring. For Primary 6 pupils, the initiative Firesharp provided face to face education within local primary schools on matters of fire risk and prevention. Moving into winter the community safety calendar and thematic action plan would focus activities on the following areas: winter and festive safety; chimney safety, stoves and carbon monoxide; use of candles and tea lights; alcohol, cooking and smoking; and vulnerable persons.

DECISION

NOTED the updates.

3. **REQUEST FOR CONFIRMATION OF STOPPING UP ORDER FOR PART OF A708 AT CORBY LINN, SELKIRK**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure seeking approval of the Stopping-Up order for part of the A708 at Corby Linn, Selkirk. The report explained that part of the northern branch of the A708 by Corby Linn, Selkirk, had been removed as part of the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme. Traffic was now routed along the southern branch of the A708 following recent improvements to the local road network. The works detailed were not covered by the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 under which the Selkirk Flood Prevention Scheme was being undertaken, therefore a retrospective Stopping-Up Order was required to formalise the works which had been undertaken to date. A plan showing the area in question was included in an appendix to the report.

DECISION

AGREED:-

(a) to approve the stopping-up of part of the A708 at Corby Linn, Selkirk, this being a length of approximately 52 metres as shown in the appendix to the report.

(b) to delegate authority to confirm the Order to the Council's Chief Legal Officer, subject to there being no substantive objections.

4. **SPEED LIMIT REVIEW 2016**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Officer, Roads, proposing to extend the 30 mph speed limit on Haughhead Road, Earlston. The report explained that a Scottish Borders-wide Speed Limit Review had been carried out in 2015 to consider the representations which had been made or on sites which officers had identified as warranting investigation. Haughhead Road, Earlston was assessed and did not meet the criteria set out by the Scottish Government for a lower speed limit. However further

concerns were received from members of the public and it was agreed to re-engage with Police Scotland and recommend the extension of the 30 mph speed limit. The extent of the proposed speed limit was shown in Appendix A to the report and described in Appendix B. Statutory consultation on the proposals was carried out and no comments or objections were received during this period.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the amendment to The Scottish Borders Council Restricted Roads Order 1985 to include the section of road shown in Appendix A and described in Appendix B to the report.

5. DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PLACES - TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Officer, Roads, proposing amendments to The Scottish Borders Council (Disabled Persons Parking Places) Order 2015. The report explained that The Disabled Persons Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 imposed a duty on Local Authorities to provide advisory on-street parking places for disabled persons. Since the Traffic Regulation Order was prepared and advertised a number of disabled bays were not now required and had been brought to the Council's attention for removal. These bays would not be included in the final TRO and were shown as struck off in the draft schedule included as an appendix to the report. Statutory consultation on the proposals had been carried out and no adverse comments or objections were received.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the amendment to the Scottish Borders Council (Disabled Persons Parking Places) Order 2015 in respect of disabled parking places in the Eildon Area listed in Appendix A to the report (as amended by removals).

6. SMALL SCHEMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE PROJECTS

Neighbourhood Area Manager, Craig Blackie, gave a verbal update on the progress of schemes and projects under the Small Schemes and Quality of Life budgets. He advised that there was less than £1,700 remaining from the total of £74,000 in the Small Schemes budget for the Eildon area. With regard to the Quality of Life budget there remained £4,700, £640 and £900 in the Galashiels & District, Leaderdale & Melrose and the Selkirkshire wards, respectively. Councillor Parker welcomed the fact that Councillors and Community Councillors had identified worthwhile projects of community benefit on which to spend this money. It was noted that there were projects in mind on which to spend the remaining funds.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7. COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

Shona Smith, from the Communities and Partnerships Team, was in attendance to give a presentation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. In her introduction Ms Smith advised that although the Act received Royal Assent on 24 July 2015 it was recognised that further regulations and guidance were required for most parts of the legislation. The Act was made up of 11 parts. The presentation highlighted the main sections. Part 2 was about Community Planning and more specifically local organisations working to benefit the local community. This would be done through joint working, agreeing joint policies and making sure partners knew what each other was doing. Community Planning Partners who had a statutory duty in this regard were Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NHS Borders, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Borders Council. The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP), which replaced Single Outcome Agreements, would contain the outcomes for the Scottish Borders that were a priority for the Community Planning Partnership. Appropriate community groups must be consulted when developing the LOIP. Subject to the approval of the Scottish Parliament the legislation would come into force on 20 December 2016. Locality plans focused on

smaller areas, one of these being Eildon, and again appropriate community groups must be consulted as part of their development. Part 3 of the Act concerned Participation Requests. Ms Smith explained that a Participation Request was a request from the community that asked for them to be involved in a process that would improve an outcome about which they would specify. Under Part 4 of the Act communities with populations over 10,000, such as Hawick and Galashiels, would be able to use community right to buy. Although there was previously a right to buy the Act would enable more community groups to buy land in this way. Part 5 of the Act concerned Asset Transfer Requests. Public Authorities would be required to publish a register of their assets. Under the legislation a group would be able to make a request for the sale or lease of any land or building owned by a public authority. Subject to approval of the Scottish Parliament, the legislation would come into force on 23 January 2017. With regard to Common Good property, under Part 8 of the Act, all Councils would have to create and publish a list of all common good property. Councils would have to consult with Community Councils and other community groups before selling or changing the use of any common good property. Part 9 of the Act concerned allotments and set out a standard size of 250 square metres. Public decision making was covered in Part 10 of the Act. This would give Scottish Ministers the power to require that public authorities, such as Scottish Borders Council, promoted and supported the involvement of the community in the decisions and activities of the organisation. However, at present, the Ministers had not set out exactly what this would mean but reserved the right to do so at a later date. In response to a question about financial implications associated with implementation of the Act, Ms Smith explained that although there was no specific funding there was a recognised shift of funding from public bodies to community partners.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

8. ALLOCATION OF HOUSING IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS - EILDON AREA

The Lead Officer Plans and Research, Charles Johnston, gave a presentation to the Area Forum on the Council's response to the requirement from Scottish Government to propose sites to meet housing requirement. Mr Johnston explained that, following an examination report, there had been an identified shortfall of 916 units in the Scottish Borders. The reporter's recommendations had been incorporated in the Local Development Plan adopted in May 2016. There had been 165 sites assessed in total, including those put forward by third parties and those identified in the Local Development Plan. Following detailed assessment of potential sites and consultation with internal and external parties a number of "preferred" and "alternative" sites were identified. On 10 November 2016 Council had approved a draft Supplementary Guidance identifying proposed sites. There would be a public consultation period on the draft Supplementary Guidance running from 5 December 2016 to 30 January 2017 which would refer to preferred sites, alternative sites and proposed site requirements. The presentation went on to show the locations of the identified sites within the central areas of the Borders, giving details of the indicative capacity of each and the particular site requirements. In terms of preferred sites there were 3 in Galashiels providing a total of 50 units, 1 in Newstead providing 6 units, 2 in Selkirk providing 105 units and 1 at Tweedbank providing 300 units. In respect of alternative sites there was 1 in Galashiels providing 26 units, 1 in Newstead providing 23 units and 2 in Selkirk providing a total of 27 units. Mr Johnston advised that the full draft Supplementary Guidance and further information was available to view on the Council's website and he gave details of where to send responses to the public consultation, the principle way being by email to localplan@scotborders.gov.uk. He confirmed that all responses would be considered and an update of the findings and conclusions referred back to elected Members in the Summer of 2017. Mr Johnston then answered questions about the specific sites identified.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

9. **YOUTH RURAL POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS IN GALASHIELS**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Yvonne Smith and two young people from the Galashiels based TD1 Youth Hub. Ms Smith explained that she was a 4th year student at Queen Margaret's University and, with a scholarship from the Carnegie Trust, was carrying out a study of youth rural poverty and homelessness in Galashiels. She added that she was from Galashiels, although not currently living there at present. Ms Smith had worked closely with young people from TD1 and, as part of the study had given them a camera and asked them to take photographs of what they saw in Galashiels. The photographs taken were shown in a presentation. Whilst viewing the slides, which focused on areas of neglect around the town, Members noted the content but expressed concern, questioning how these were linked to the issues of rural poverty and homelessness. Ms Smith emphasised that the pictures were examples of what was seen in Galashiels through the eyes of the young people concerned and that the young people often felt that their voice was not heard. In the discussion that followed, the Galashiels Councillors offered to meet Ms Smith and the young people from TD1 Youth Hub to discuss, in an informal setting, the issues that they wished to raise about the town. It was agreed that the Democratic Services Officer would email Ms Smith asking her to contact the Councillors with a view to arranging a meeting with the young people.

DECISION

NOTED:-

- (a) **the presentation; and**
- (b) **that the Democratic Services Officer would email Ms Smith asking her to contact the Galashiels Councillors with a view to arranging an informal meeting with the young people from the TD1 Youth Hub to discuss the issues they wished to raise.**

10. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT**

Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk and Midlem Community Councillor, Tom Cotter, drew attention to concerns raised locally about excessive speed of vehicles through the village of Midlem and asked at what stage further action should be taken to address this. The Chairman suggested that Mr Cotter should contact the police in Selkirk and also raise the issue with the local elected Members. In response to a question from Newtown and Eildon Community Councillor Roger French, about the feasibility study being carried out in relation to the extension of the Borders Railway, Councillor Parker advised that work was being carried out by Transport Scotland and that it was hoped there would be a public consultation later next year.

DECISION

NOTED.

11. **OPEN QUESTIONS**

There were no open questions.

DECISION

NOTED.

12. **REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No items were brought forward.

DECISION

NOTED.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 9 March 2017 at 6.30 pm at the Transport Interchange, Galashiels.

The meeting concluded at 8.05 pm