

MEETING

- Date:** 9 March 2017 from 2.10 to 3.35 p.m.
- Location:** Council Chamber, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells
- Attendees:** Councillor Jim Brown (SBC) [Chair]
Det. Superintendent Pat Campbell (Police Scotland)
Mr Tony Jakimciw (Borders College)
Mr Alistair McKinnon (Scottish Enterprise)
Mr Tim Patterson (NHS Borders)
Councillor Frances Renton (SBC) [from para.6]
Mrs Rita Stenhouse (RSL representative – Waverley Housing)
Mr Brian Sweeney (Third Sector).
- Also in attendance:** Philip Barr (SBC), Nile Istephan (Eildon Housing), Bryan McGrath (SBC), Tracey Logan (SBC), Sarah Watters (SBC), Jenny Wilkinson (SBC).

MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS

- 1. Apologies**
Apologies had been received from Councillor Stuart Bell, LSO David Farries, Mrs Marjorie Hume, Superintendent Bryan Rodgers, Mr John Raine, Dr Doreen Steele.
- 2. Quorum**
The Clerk advised the Chairman that the meeting was inquorate as Councillor Renton had been delayed at a previous engagement. The Board agreed to continue the meeting informally until Councillor Renton could join them.
- 3. Minute of Meeting of Community Planning Strategic Board – 24 November 2016**
The Minute of the previous meeting of the Community Planning Strategic Board had been circulated.
AGREED to RECOMMEND the Minute for formal approval at the next Strategic Board meeting to be held on 22 June 2017.
- 4. Action Tracker**
The Action Tracker had been circulated.
Noted.
- 5. Economy and Low Carbon: Economic Performance and Performance Indicators**
Bryan McGrath, SBC Chief Officer - Economic Development, and Sarah Watters, SBC Function Manager – Business Management, gave a presentation on Economic Performance Indicators for the Borders. A paper was issued at the

meeting giving details of quarterly and annual data on the Single Outcome Agreement 2013: Priority One "Grow Our Economy", indicating the current position and commentary along with the short and long term trends. Members of the Board commented on some of the measures including GVA, new business start-up rates, and VAT registered business survival. In terms of the Town Centre vacancy rate, Alistair McKinnon commented that it would be useful to add in the vacancy rates for industrial property as well, and officers undertook to include that data.

Noted the presentation.

Note: Councillor Renton joined the meeting during consideration of the following item of business. The meeting was thus quorate from this point onwards.

6. Economy and Low Carbon: Economic Strategy Action Plan

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting, giving an update on progress with the Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023 – Action Plan. Appendix 1 of the report gave the status (red/amber/green) of each action. Bryan McGrath, SBC Chief Officer – Economic Development, advised members that there were currently no red actions; partners had delivered well on actions and good progress was being made e.g. fibre cabinets for superfast broadband. The action plan was in a positive place, although there were challenges with resources for broadband coverage, with the last 5 – 6% of coverage for digital connectivity being the most challenging technically. While there had been a programme of publicity to say the fibre cabinets were live, and there was good information on the website, further awareness-raising was required with the public to increase the take up rate, and this would be fed back to the programme. In response to a question about bus services, Tracey Logan advised that the recent announcement about the transfer of bus services from First Group to West Coast Motors could put services in a positive position. It was necessary to maximise the opportunities brought by the railway and an indication of early success was Rabbie's Tours now being run commercially after their pilot project the previous summer.

Noted.

7. Economy and Low Carbon: South of Scotland Vehicle

7.1 Copies of a report to SBC Executive Committee on the "Scottish Government Enterprise and Skills Review – Phase 2 Progress" had been circulated prior to the meeting. Bryan McGrath, SBC Chief Officer Economic Development, gave a presentation from the South of Scotland Alliance on the South of Scotland Enterprise and Skills Vehicle, which was part of Phase 2 of the Enterprise and Skills Review. The South of Scotland had a number of challenges to consider including the lowest population density outside the Highlands and Islands; low wealth creation; low average work-based weekly wages; out-migration of young people and shrinking workforce; relatively high proportions of its workforce in agriculture, manufacturing and services; and both transport and digital connectivity issues. Further details were given of the strategic economic policy context, along with the need to work closely with neighbouring areas such as cross-border authorities (building on the Borderlands initiative) and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. The proposed South of Scotland vehicle should cover the boundaries of Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway Council areas, a view that was supported by COSLA Leaders Group and a South of Scotland Stakeholder session. Details were given of the proposed guiding principles, role of the Vehicle, feedback on the role and remit from the Stakeholder session held on 17 February 2017, priorities for the Vehicle, preferred governance model, and resources required. In terms of next

steps, both Councils were due to consider reports on the proposed approach to the Vehicle. The agreed guiding principles and the agreed proposals gave a framework for development of the Vehicle over the next few months with partner engagement. Submissions would then be made to Scottish Government and work would continue to progress the setting up of the new Vehicle as soon as possible, including the establishment of a business stakeholder group and a core stakeholder group.

- 7.2 Members of the Board discussed the Vehicle and asked a number of questions. In terms of the number of jobs with the Vehicle, there could be some new jobs but also some transferring from existing organisations. Much would depend on whether further funding was available, but the sheer fact of bringing together staff/work would produce cohesion. Alistair McKinnon commented that much would depend on the detail of the Vehicle and strategy but it would need to do something different and should not be about each partner continuing to do what they had always done. Scottish Government would have expectations linked to any additional funding. It would be important that the focus would be on towns in the area catching up with Scotland as a whole, not simply one town catching up with another town within the area. Tony Jakimciw offered congratulations to the South of Scotland Alliance and officers for getting to this stage with the project, but expressed some concern about the proposed governance model, which, as a joint committee of both Councils could become very political and cumbersome. An independent body could still have the same membership but be autonomous. It had to be recognised that the South of Scotland was not a region but 2 areas with different interests. Tracey Logan confirmed that a visit had already been made to the Highlands and Islands Development Board to see how it operated and a further visit was planned.

Noted.

8. Economy and Low Carbon: City Deal

Bryan McGrath, SBC Chief Officer Economic Development, gave a presentation on the proposed Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal, which covered the Council areas in the Borders, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Edinburgh and Fife. While the region on the whole was successful - responsible for over 30% of the Scottish economy - the wealth was not distributed equally across the region. Potential for economic growth could be unlocked through a new relationship between UK Government, Scottish Government, local authorities, High and Further Education, and private sector partners. Recent progress included refining the position with regard to the details and phasing of projects submitted to both governments in early November 2016; continuing series of workshops from December 2016 onwards; ongoing discussions with both governments on innovation, infrastructure, skills, culture/tourism, and housing/regeneration; ongoing stakeholder engagement; and some challenging feedback received. The City Deal proposition was based on innovation (driving economic growth), infrastructure (physical and digital) and inclusion (growth for all), encompassing skills and housing/regeneration. The next steps included ongoing negotiations with both governments and a possible announcement by the end of April 2017. Tracey Logan confirmed that the Tweedbank Business Park had been put forward for the Borders, and, if agreed, resources could only be directed here. The intention was that City Deal and the proposed South of Scotland Vehicle would work in tandem, with one not superseding or obviating the other.

Noted.

9. Reducing Inequalities Group: Highlight report

Sarah Watters presented the highlight report which covered progress with

employment and income; attainment, achievement and inclusion; health and wellbeing; housing and neighbourhoods; and keeping people safe.

Noted.

10. Future Services Group: Highlight report

Nile Istephan, Eildon Housing Chief Executive, presented the highlight report which covered progress with the work of the main Group and the Property & Assets and Procurement & Community Benefit Sub-Groups. The Future Services Group had a slightly different way of working to the other Themed Groups to ensure there was no duplication. An example was given of the intention of using CPP branding on generic recruitment material which could be used by all partners to recruit from outside the Borders. In response to a question, it was explained that health and social care integration was still settling in and the provision of shared services was a challenge, with not many examples of this happening elsewhere in the country.

Noted.

11. Development Session for Community Planning Strategic Board

An update from Shona Smith, SBC Communities & Partnership Manager, on the proposed development session for the Strategic Board was circulated at the meeting. It was proposed that the next meeting of the Strategic Board on 22 June 2017 be allocated to a development session for the Board, focussing on an overview of Community Planning, the Community Empowerment Act and the sections of the Act in force and what that meant for the Strategic Board. Alistair McKinnon asked that the potential impact of the proposed South of Scotland Vehicle and Strategy on the Community Planning Partnership be included in the session to ensure there was no duplication of effort; and Tony Jakimciw asked for clarification of the pro-active role of the Strategic Board.

Action: AGREED -

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| (a) a development session for the Strategic Board would be held on 22 June 2017 from 11am to 2.00 pm, with a working lunch provided, followed by a brief formal Board meeting if required; and | Shona Smith | 22 Jun 17 |
| (b) details of the agenda be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Delivery Team and issued to the Strategic Board for input. | Shona Smith | 24 May 17 |

12. AOCB

No items were raised.