

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
BERWICKSHIRE LOCALITY COMMITTEE – INFORMAL MEETING**

NOTE of Informal Meeting of the
BERWICKSHIRE LOCALITY COMMITTEE
held in the Council Offices, Newtown Street,
Duns on Thursday, 12 October 2017 at 3.40
pm

Present:- Councillors J Fullarton (Chairman), J Greenwell, C Hamilton.
Apologies:- Councillors H Laing, D Moffat, M Rowley.
In Attendance:- Communities and Partnership Manager (S Smith), Lead Officer for Localities
(C Banks), Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

LOCALITIES BID FUND 2017-2018 – BERWICKSHIRE LOCALITY

1. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Scottish Borders Council Minute of 28 September 2017, the purpose of the informal meeting was to agree arrangements for the management of the Localities Bid Fund for the Berwickshire area. Communities and Partnership Manager, Shona Smith, referred to the report to Council and explained that the £500k fund was allocated per head of population giving a total of £91k for the Berwickshire area. The proposed model would be managed through Area Partnerships which would replace the existing Locality Committees. Prior to this being taken forward, the Berwickshire Locality Committee needed to make some decisions in respect of:-

- the number of funding releases in the year and the dates for each release;
- the funding allocation to each funding release;
- whether bids would be invited across all the Community Plan themes;
- whether there was a local priority theme identified for the Berickshire Locality;
- whether the Locality should organise any special promotions over and above the marketing and promotion of the fund on a generic Borders-wide level; and
- whether the voting process should include a voting event.

2. Before discussing arrangements for the Berwickshire area Members received further clarification about the bid process that had been agreed. It was confirmed that although there was no maximum bid for constituted groups there was a £5k cap for bids from non-constituted groups. It was emphasised that the Localities Bid Fund was seeking new and innovative projects and Ms Smith provided further details regarding the criteria that bids would be assessed against. It was agreed it should be made clear in the guidance that bids should not be to replace Council services that had been removed. Ms Smith confirmed that other funds such as the Community Grant Scheme, Small Schemes, Quality of Life and Events Fund remained in place at present and unsuccessful applications to the Locality Bid Fund could make application to one of these alternative sources of funding if appropriate. With regard to the process, Ms Smith explained that officers would provide advice and assistance to Members and applicants as appropriate. Projects would then be considered by the Borders Assessment Panel which would comprise the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services, Chairs of Area Partnerships and key officers. Bids would then be assessed against the agreed criteria. Ms Smith emphasised that no bids that met the criteria could be taken out of the bid process by either the Borders Assessment Panel or the Area Partnership and confirmed that all successful projects

would go forward to a public vote. Ms Smith advised Members that marketing materials ie posters, leaflets and a pop-up display board would be provided and that all Community Councils in the Berwickshire area would receive an information email explaining the process. Further publicity/materials would have to be paid from the allocation of funding.

3. Discussion followed and Members recognised that this Fund was offered as a one-off Pilot. On that basis, applications would need to consider sustainability of the projects as an important factor and not be reliant on future funding through grants or from SBC. Ms Smith suggested that if similar projects were put forward, applicants could be encouraged to combine the proposals into one bid if appropriate. Members asked whether there were ways of ensuring that bids across Berwickshire, and in particular between towns and the more rural areas, were fairly balanced, particularly in relation to the differences in the voting population. Ms Smith confirmed that, after discussions with the Democratic Society, it was clear there was no easy answer to this. The Area Partnership could, if it wished, ring fence the fund for rural or town areas, or change the themes for which bids were invited in the next round to encourage or facilitate a balance between rural and town projects. Members went on to agree that Community Transport should be added as a Local Priority for Berwickshire. Ms Smith confirmed that the Fund opened for bids from 15 October 2017 until 1 December 2017. Voting would take place in January 2018 and the public would be able to cast their votes online, by voting paper and by postal voting. Members agreed that, as the closing date for bids was 1 December, 2017, the next meeting of the Berwickshire Locality Committee (scheduled for 30 November 2017) would need to be brought forward in order to ratify the decisions made today. The next meeting of the Berwickshire Locality Committee would therefore take place on Thursday 9 November 2017. Consideration was then given to holding an open public event where applicants could make a short presentation and votes could be cast. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to this at the meeting of the Locality Committee on 9 November.

DECISION

AGREED that, subject to ratification on 9 November 2017:-

- (a) the Localities Bid Fund in the Berwickshire Area be organised into 2 funding rounds as suggested in the model within the report to Council, the first release being from the launch of the fund on 15 October 2017 to the close of applications on 1 December 2017;**
- (b) the first funding allocation be in the sum of £45k and the second release be in the sum of £46k ;**
- (c) the allocation be aligned to all themes contained within the Community Plan with the addition of 'Community Transport' as a local priority;**
- (d) no additional marketing of the Fund was required for the Berwickshire Area over and above that provided on a Borders-wide level by the Council; and**
- (e) a decision be made as to whether it would be appropriate to hold a 'voting event' as part of the public voting process after the closing date for bids on 1 December 2017.**

The meeting concluded at 4.40 pm