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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on Tuesday, 13 November 2018 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors N Richards (Chairman), C Ramage and G Turnbull.
Apologies:- Councillor D Paterson, S Marshall and W McAteer.
In Attendance:- 15 partners, Community Councillors, officers and members of the public.

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman, Councillor Richards, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership and thanked Community Councils, Partners and local organisations for their attendance. Councillor Richards explained that this was an additional meeting to the four themed Area Partnership meetings. Quality of Life would now be covered at the February meeting. The theme of this evening's discussion was Council Budget.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 11 SEPTEMBER 2018**

The Minute of the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership held on 11 September 2018 had been circulated, along with a summary of the discussion attached as an appendix to the Minute. Councillor Richards advised that town centre regeneration had been identified as the top priority; comments had included: alternative use of empty buildings for housing, dividing large buildings into smaller units, leisure activities in town centres, and events and displays that would encourage people on to the High Street. The second priority identified was climate change, with views that a long term vision was required, planning future settlements which were eco-friendly. The third priority was infrastructure/services with a need to improve road infrastructure in Hawick and increase connectivity with rural areas

3. **THEME: COUNCIL BUDGET - ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES 2019/20**

3.1 The Chair provided an introduction to the theme for the meeting – Council Budget - then introduced Suzi Douglas, Financial Services Manager, SBC. Ms Douglas was in attendance to give a presentation on the Council's budget for 2019/24. Ms Douglas began by advising that over the five year period from 2013/14 to 2017/18 the Council had delivered savings of over £35m. Over the next five year it was estimated that further savings of £32m would be required from a projected spend of £1.3 billion. Ms Douglas referred to a bar chart, detailing the Council's revenue funding for 2018/19 was £272.7m, which would reduce to £267.6m by 2022/23. Ms Douglas then explained how the revenue budget was allocated by department; highlighting children and young people would receive 43% of the allocation. The 10 year departmental capital spend was also referred to, which showed that Assets & Infrastructure would be given 67% of the £294m allocation.

3.2 Ms Douglas went on to advise that with less money to fund public services and demand growing, the Council had to be more efficient and redesign services. Over the next five years the Council planned investment in digital technology, preventing strategies, economic growth, assets and roads infrastructure. The Council also proposed to provide a quality learning experience; promote future employment opportunities; build the

resilience and emotional well-being and health of young people; keep older adults more active and living independently for longer; join up services with NHS Borders; and create a thriving economy. Area Partnerships would play an important role by building community based solutions to problems and be involved in decisions about how the Council spend public money.

- 3.3 In response to questions, Ms Douglas advised that the Council were operating on the basis that Council Tax would remain capped at 3% for 2019/20. With regard to the unallocated reserve, Ms Douglas advised that this was projected to be £6.3m at 31 March 2019. Any adjustment approved through the budget would amend this position. To conclude, Ms Douglas encouraged feedback on the proposed approach to the budget. There was a community engagement tool on the Council's website at <https://scotborders.dialogue-applcom>. Officers were also happy to answer any questions and these should be emailed to: budgetteam@scotborders.gov.uk
- 3.4 Following the presentation, officers joined Elected Members, partners and the public at their tables for a discussion on the main issues relating to the Council's budget. A pack of information had been provided at each table to aid the discussion as were post it notes to record emerging points which would be taken forward. A summary of the output of the discussion is provided as an appendix to this minute.

4. **LOCALITIES BID FUND ASSESSMENT PANEL**

Ms Smith advised that Council had agreed – “that membership of the assessment panel be proposed for each Area Partnership, up to a maximum of two members per locality with a view to improving gender balance.” Councillor Richards, seconded by Councillor Ramage proposed that Councillor Turnbull be appointed to the Assessment Panel and this was agreed.

DECISION

AGREED To appoint Councillor Turnbull to the Localities Bid Fund – Assessment Panel.

5. **LOCALITIES BID FUNDING**

- 5.1 Ms Smith gave a briefing on the Localities Bid Fund (LBF), explaining from the first round of LBF, £204k had been allocated, with 15 projects awarded funding. SBC had also supported a further four organisations to enable them to take up their funding and start their projects. One group had been unable to take up their funding and another group had withdrawn. Ms Smith explained that if a project had not matched the criteria, officers had worked with groups to identify alternative sources of funding.
- 5.2 Ms Smith advised that the second round of LBF had been launched on 1 July with a total of £296k available for projects. £40,080.30 had been allocated to the Teviot and Liddesdale area. In total, 28 applications had being received. However, the Borders Assessment Panel had agreed that there was not enough, sustainable, bids to go forward to the public vote in all five areas. It had therefore been proposed to revise the criteria for LBF2 and this would be considered by Council on 29 November. If Council approved the amended criteria, LBF2 would be relaunched in January with voting scheduled for April 2019.
- 5.3 In response to questions, Ms Smith advised that LBF2 public voting would be via an online voting tool, there would also be voting events in the community. With regard to a concern that organisations would be disappointed that their application had not been considered, Ms Smith clarified that groups that had applied for LBF2 would have the option to resubmit their application, or, to revise their application under the new criteria. Ms Smith also advised that weighting would not be amended, as many smaller communities; for example, Newcastleton had received funding from LBF1. With regard to the cost of administering the fund, Ms Smith advised that the cost had been absorbed within the Community and Partnerships Team. Reference was made to mainstreaming

and Ms Smith confirmed that there was a COSLA agreement in place and that this would be considered as part of the Council's budget with a move towards mainstreaming by 2021. The Chair thanked Ms Smith for the update and advised that any groups interested in LBF2 should contact the Community Partnership Team for guidance.

6. **OPEN FORUM**

The Chair then invited questions from the public. Regarding public conveniences, Councillor Turnbull advised that the Council would be considering a report at the next Council meeting; options included transferring to a private company, facilities remaining open or being closed. Councillor Ramage added that Scottish Government funding from the rural infrastructure fund was also being considered. With regard to changes to the refuse collection, Councillor Turnbull advised that there were a number of savings that had been suggested. However, decisions would not be made until the Council meeting in February 2019.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS - CENTENARY FIELDS INITIATIVE**

- 7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure which set out the aims of the Centenary Fields initiative to commemorate World War 1 and recommended the nomination as a Centenary Field of Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick. The report explained that Centenary Fields (CF) was a partnership programme led by Fields in Trust and the Royal British Legion to commemorate World War 1 through protecting green spaces. It had been launched by HRS The Earl of Strathearn in 2014 and would close in 2018. CF aimed to protect at least one site (containing WW1 war memorial(s)) and was aimed at creating a long lasting legacy of WW1, protection, promoting green space for recreation, increasing physical activity, promoting social cohesion and improving the environment. Upon a successful application to Fields in Trust for Centenary Fields status, sites were subject to a Minute of Agreement, similar to those which were in place on all King George V Playing Fields. This would safeguard the sites for recreational used as protected green space.
- 7.2 The report advised that following a regional appraisal and in consultation with communities and Fields In Trust, three sites had been identified in the Scottish Borders as potentially appropriate – Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick; Lower Green at West Linton; and Duns Park. Upon designation a commemorative plaque would be installed. The site name would not change and there were no funds associated with CF status. Designation as a Centenary Field would not only protect the historic and conservation value of these sites, but would also strengthen the case to attract external funding. The management of these sites would be retained by the local authority.

DECISION

AGREED the nomination of Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick for Fields in Trust Centenary Field status.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership was scheduled for Tuesday, 19 February 2019 and the theme for the meeting would be 'Quality of Life'. The venue for the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

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Scottish Borders Council Budget			
Question/Issue/Challenge	Proposed Solution (opportunities for area partnerships/communities?)	Consequence/Impact (positive and negative)	Priority rating
<p>Efficiencies Can we do things in a more streamlined way?</p>	<p>Increasing education on how people can use waste services more efficient ie (composting going plastic free etc) SBC need strategy on managing waste Reduce amount of paperwork sent to residents (communications about rent)</p> <p>Maker use of Hawick Police station Make better use of the Borders College Hawick campus Bus companies should align time tables Bus services on rural areas</p>		
<p>Identifying priorities Are there services, which in your view, should be prioritised?</p>	<p>Early intervention & prevention investment and protecting the most venerable. Considering long term sustainability in all service planning Keeping money in the Borders rather than funding external services to the region where possible.</p> <p>Refuse collection – do not move to 3 weekly Mobile library</p>		
<p>Different models of delivering services Are there services which we could deliver differently, or that communities could take responsibility for to maintain them in the long term?</p>	<p>Communities and social enterprises can help but they cant be the answer to providing services and growing communities. Can't always achieve sustainable funding.</p> <p>Invest in prevention services to make services affordable in the long run. Schools can be used as a community asset during evenings and weekends. Reduce physical library spaces and work with community partners to take on library duties. Cafes could provide books and reading facilities Or use school libraries Future roll out of health hubs Post office bus Community 3rd sector public sector Decriminalise parking Internet cafes 3rd sector who can access grants</p>		

Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership

Increased charges to service users Should we be charging more for some services?	Link charges to what services are a priority ie reduce charges for prioritised services to encourage growth. Charge for bus passes for those that pay tax		
Other funding options What services in your area do you value most which could be retained, expanded or enhanced through the use of additional funds?	Invest in economic development to grow economies and communities (long term plan needed) Decriminalised parking		