

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTE of Meeting of the BERWICKSHIRE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Coldstream
Community Centre, Coldstream on Thursday
2 May 2019 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors J. A. Fullarton (Chair), C. Hamilton, H. Laing, D. Moffat, M. Rowley, together with 16 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community Councils and members of the public

Apologies:- Councillor Greenwell
In Attendance:- Communities & Partnership Manager, Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Locality Development Co-ordinator, Clerk to the Council, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Fullarton welcomed everyone to the Berwickshire Area Partnership and thanked the Community Councils, Partners and local organisations for their attendance. He outlined the programme for the evening and introduced the speakers.

2. **CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL IN PUBLIC SPACES**

2.1 The Chairman also extended a welcome to Nuala McKinlay, Chief Legal Officer, who advised on Scottish Borders Council's consultation on the Consumption of Alcohol in Public Places. The purpose of the consultation was to determine the views of Borders citizens, groups and interested parties on the impact of public consumption of alcohol in our communities. Mrs McKinlay explained that in 2013, Scottish Borders Council (SBC) had considered the introduction of byelaws to prohibit drinking in public places. The process resulted in a draft byelaw being drawn up which would have brought restrictions in place in a number of Border towns. The process had been very lengthy and only came to a conclusion at the end of last year. Following a consultation process, in 2018, the Council decided not to introduce byelaws due to a range of factors which included changes in licensing laws. The previous consultation received a fairly low level of response and SBC was keen to encourage participation and to ensure that views were received from a broad range of people and groups. The Council had however agreed to this new consultation which had been launched in Berwickshire with over 400 responses already received. The purpose of this consultation was to determine the views of Borders citizens, groups and communities to inform the Council in considering if there were areas in the Scottish Borders where drinking alcohol in public places was causing problems. Mrs McKinlay encouraged participation in the consultation, with copies of the questionnaire available on the tables at the meeting and on the Council's website. Details of the consultation had been sent out to a range of bodies and officers were attending each Area Partnership meeting. The closing date for responses was 30 June 2019. Following an analysis of the responses and subject to the responses received, a further consultation exercise may be carried out in the autumn, with a report back to Council by the end of 2019 to decide on whether the matter would be pursued.

2.2 Mrs McKinlay responded to a number of questions raised explaining that the byelaws would cover any public places not covered by a licence e.g. public parks. There could be exemptions for events such as Common Ridings and Rugby Sevens. Occasional licences could also be granted for special events. If introduced, the Police would enforce the byelaws; Police Scotland and NHS Borders were key partners in the consultation process. Regarding devolving the decision to Area Partnerships, Mrs McKinlay advised that Area Partnerships could make recommendations to Council, but ultimately the decision was made by Scottish Ministers. Mrs McKinlay went on to stress that the aim of this Phase 1

consultation was not to introduce a further byelaw but to determine whether there were problems regarding public alcohol consumption and if a byelaw would be helpful in addressing it or if there was a desire to look in more detail at the introduction of a byelaw.

- 2.3 The Alcohol & Drugs Partnership Co-ordinator, Susan Elliot, who was in attendance, made comment on the Council's consultation. Ms Elliot highlighted that one in four adults were drinking to excess and that children exposed to alcohol by parents were more likely to drink alcohol. NHS Borders' view was that the introduction of byelaws would be an effective tool to reduce consumption and could change the mind-set of the public around the availability of alcohol; restriction could also help in terms of people's overall health. Ms McKinlay stressed that participation in the consultation was being encouraged and to spread the word to take part, in particular to gain the views of groups within Scottish Borders. In response to a question, Mrs McKinlay explained that any premises with an occasional licence would not be affected and this would cover beer gardens, social events, festivals etc. and any event with no licence – i.e. cheese and wine parties held in gardens, would then require a licence. Mrs McKinlay advised that Police Scotland did not have the tools at present to deal with the drinking of alcohol in public places and criminal law was not sufficient and would benefit from a supplementary byelaw to interact with persons causing a nuisance/breach of peace whilst drinking alcohol. After further discussion, covering all aspects and areas of this consultation, the Chairman thanked Mrs McKinlay and Ms Elliot for their attendance and encouraged everyone to participate in the consultation.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

3. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 7 FEBRUARY 2019**

The Minute of the Meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership held on 7 February 2019 had been circulated along with a summary of the discussion attached as an appendix to the Minute. The Chairman gave some highlights from the feedback received at that meeting.

**DECISION
AGREED the Minute.**

4. **DRAFT BERWICKSHIRE LOCALITY PLAN**

The Communities & Partnership Manager, Shona Smith, explained that the Draft Locality Plan, which had been circulated with the agenda, took into account all the comments and feedback from discussions that had taken place at the previous four themed meetings of the Area Partnership. The priorities and key priorities about what was important and what would make a difference to the lives of people in the Berwickshire area, within each theme, had been identified and listed in the draft Plan. Those present were now asked to review the draft and assess whether the Plan had missed any significant areas of discussion and to consider if they agreed with the priorities and key priorities that had been identified. It was explained that there would be a 20 minute discussion on each of the four themes within the draft Plan with a facilitator responsible for that theme moving between each of the four tables to record the input. For each theme the questions were asked: 'Whether you agree with the priorities raised; had anything been missed; what would success look like; how could we work in partnership to achieve this; and how do I get involved?'. Feedback from the discussions on the draft Plan would be used to inform development of the final Berwickshire Locality Plan. It was noted that Local Community Action Plans and Learning Community Partnership Plans would also form part of the Locality Plan.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

5. **LOCALITIES BID FUND UPDATE**

Shona Smith gave an update on the Localities Bid Fund (LBF). There had been a good response to the process. All projects were on the website with all the required information available. Officers were now in the process of communicating with groups to go forward to a public vote. Ms Smith went on to explain the registration process and that voting would be online or at the one-day public event. Further details on the process and timescales would be confirmed soon and featured on SBC's website.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES

The Chairman referred to a note by the Service Director and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated to Members at the meeting. The note requested Members' approval to delegate authority to the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure to approve Small Scheme applications in 2019/20 subject to the criteria detailed in the note.

DECISION

AGREED to delegate authority to the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure to approve Small Scheme applications in 2019/20, subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

7. OPEN FORUM

In response to a question raised on the remit of the Council to train all community councillors, the Clerk to the Council, Jenny Wilkinson, advised that training would be made available and would be offered in the Berwickshire area if there were enough people attending. With regard to a question about teacher absence, as this was a very specific instance, Ms Wilkinson advised she would be happy to take this matter back to the Service Director, but it could not be discussed at a public meeting. The Chairman then advised that ownership of the Locality Plan rested with the community in the form of the whole Area Partnership. Actions would be developed and measures added to take forward the priorities. Shona Smith further advised that the Scottish Borders Community Plan would be led by the Community Planning Partnership, which had a multi-agency approach with communities. Councillor Rowley, Chair of the Community Planning Strategic Board, advised that while there was a Borders wide Community Plan, the Berwickshire Locality Plan took up local issues and would be a live document, constantly updated and reviewed. Actions would be developed and could be delivered by a number of agencies, but where possible a named lead would be included. A question was raised about a specific budget for the Partnership, and Ms Smith advised that no specific funds were allocated for the Plan, but a number of funding options were available which would vary depending on the action being taken forward. The Chairman thanked everyone for the time spent on the Plan and all comments from the meeting.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership was scheduled for Thursday 6 June 2019 at Whitsome Ark where there would be a briefing on the Community Fund and Area Partnership Reviews. Councillor Fullarton thanked all those who had attended the meeting for their participation and input.

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm