

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTE of Meeting of the BERWICKSHIRE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Berwickshire
High School on Thursday 6 June 2019 at
6.30 pm

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

Also present:- Councillor S. Aitchison

Apologies:- Councillor M. Rowley

In Attendance:- Service Director Customer & Communities, Communities & Partnership Manager, 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. **INSPIRE LEARNING**

- 2.1 The Chairman also extended a welcome to Catherine Thomson, Quality Improvement Officer, who gave a presentation on the Inspire Learning Programme and explained how the programme would benefit all teachers and pupils across the Scottish Borders. Ms Thomson advised that the programme was a £16m investment in a world-class digital learning environment for all pupils. The programme was a key part of the Digital Learning Strategy and would transform teaching and learning in schools for the benefit of children and young people now and into the future. It included plans for iPads to be provided to all P6-S6 pupils and shared devices at a ratio of one for every five P1-P5 pupils. The rationale was aimed at raising attainment and to support equity and inclusion for all children and young people and putting them at the heart of education with improved outcomes and success. The effective deployment of digital technology in schools would ensure children and young people developed a level of general and specialised digital skills that were vital for learning, life and work in an increased digital world. It would not be about having an iPad as a device, but a tool used to enhanced learning, teaching and assessment. The national expectation of this new digital solution would allow learners to select and make use of the high-quality resources and equipment; a deployed wide variety of innovative and creative resources and teaching approach; increased responsibility to become more independent in learning; and increased employability skills.
- 2.2 The partnership with CGI throughout the programme brought benefit of having expert knowledge of the wider IT marketplace and the Apple iPad was chosen because the project team had researched a number of current devices and platforms for learning and had also looked at the pros and cons of each one and as a result the iPad was the best value option. Ms Thomson went on to explain that the introduced Inspire Learning would be more current and more up to date in a very connected world. It would improve how we communicate, change the way we communicate with each other and within families and would change how we live. Inspire Learning would be adaptable, flexible and impact on how we learn and work. It would collaborate change in the way we connect in the classroom with the teachers and other schools, in Scotland and the world and put Scottish Borders on the global map. Inspire Learning was personal, collaborative and mobile to bring excellence. The feedback given to youngsters would move quicker through their learning and would be used to improve teaching. Ms Thomson also explained that this

would be a big drive towards bringing forward digital strategy. It was not just about iPads, it was about piecing all things together through the Pillars of Inspire Learning through: professional learning and teaching, strategic planning, correct infrastructure and environment, the clusters and school leaders. Ms Thomson advised that the teacher iPad deployment programme would commence on Monday 17 June in Selkirk and continue until Friday 28 June 2019 to Hawick, Kelso, Berwickshire, Eyemouth, Earlston, Jedburgh, Peebles, Galashiels and Peebles. Pupil deployment would be August/December; Selkirk, Kelso and Hawick; January/March: Earlston, Peebles, Eyemouth; April/June: Galashiels, Jedburgh, Berwickshire. Ms Thomson also clarified the next steps through the training plan for secondary schools, with the Apple teacher sign up and the digital learning strategy in place. The Inspire teams would include CGI and Apple and would allow secondment opportunities for teaching staff for 23 months, with project teams, clusters and school leads, an executive board and an education strategic group formed.

- 2.3 Inspire Learning Consultant, Andrew Jewell, was welcomed to the meeting and continued the presentation. iPads were passed around and it was explained how technology could best enhance education. Volunteers took part in an interactive exercise with the iPads, taking photographs of angles in the room, which Mr Jewell later showed on the main screen, demonstrating how individual iPads could be locked, how they could be locked in one app, and an example of a text book which had been produced by a teacher using an app. Mr Jewell gave many examples on how the iPads would be used in schools and at home. The facility to lock and unlock the iPad was available and teachers would be able to view any iPad in the class. The iPads would allow teachers and parents to view live examples of pupils work. Teachers would have the facility to give instant feedback, the lessons would be more active, be interactive and direct learning would be carried out during the course of the lessons. This Inspire Learning Programme would make technology in schools a better experience in learning. The Chairman thanked the speakers for the very comprehensive presentation and wished them well in the implementation of the project.

3. **PROVISION OF OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SPACES**

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure setting out guidance and recommendations for the Berwickshire Area for future investment in Public Play facilities and proposals for the removal of obsolete play areas, agreed as part of the 2018/19 Capital Investment Plan and updated within the Capital Investment Plan 2019/20. The 2019/20 Capital Investment Plan had funding of £5.036m for investment within Outdoor Community Spaces over the 10 years. This presented a tremendous asset for communities, however also brought a maintenance burden, for which no additional revenue resources were being provided. As part of the original investment within the 2018/19 Capital Investment Plan, it was simultaneously agreed by Council to review the distribution of play equipment provision across play parks in the Borders which could: (1) inform decision making around future investment in communities; and (2) guide the rationalisation of obsolete play facilities which were deemed no longer fit for purpose, ensuring a cost neutral impact on established budgets with the Service.
- 3.2 The programme of investment in play facilities aimed to improve community wellbeing and enhance activity levels for all ages with a beneficial impact on the health of the population. The programme of proposed projects across the Scottish Borders and an indicative timescale for delivery for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23 was provided within the report. The programme proposed a range of provision including Children's Playparks, Pump bike/Skate tracks and Fitness/Youth Shelter provision as well as the rationalisation of obsolete equipment, where this was no longer fit for purpose. In conjunction with the strategic investment across the Region, Members previously agreed to: change the Scheme of Delegation to give authority to the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure and create a reference group which would include the remit to "make recommendations to the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure or Executive Committee on which obsolete play areas should be removed, particularly in areas where there had been significant

investment. The Neighbourhood Operations Manager, Mr Craig Blackie explained that in this context, officers had undertaken an appraisal of the wider network of play equipment aimed at responding to the issue of low play value, which Scottish Borders Council (SBC) had within its play facilities assets. The evaluation had been undertaken to ensure SBC retained and developed a network of valued, well equipped spaces for local communities. In the Scottish Borders currently the quantity of play provision was high per head of population, but the quality was very low (compared to national benchmarking) and this diminished the wider benefits of these facilities to communities. This programme of investment would address the challenge of balancing quantity against quality, ensuring optimal provision of play facilities across the network. Areas of low value play facilities where there was a recognised need i.e. the only play park in the locality, would be identified as priorities for potential future investment. As no additional revenue resources were being provided to support the long term management and maintenance of the new play parks being created, the removal of obsolete facilities was essential to ensure there was a cost neutral impact on established budgets with the service. Mr Blackie advised that no play facility would be decommissioned until the appropriate investment in new facilities in the locality had been completed. Scottish Borders currently had 243 play parks, including those located within schools, ranging from smaller local areas for play to strategic destination play parks. The programme set the context for refining and rationalising the wider network within Berwickshire sites which included the Public Park in Duns and The Bantry in Eyemouth scheduled for 2020/21. The installation of new facilities was underway in Home Park, Coldstream with an estimated completion date of June/July 2019. Mr Blackie explained that a review of the whole network of play parks had been carried out and sites of low and medium value, based on the Fields in Trust national criteria for play park assessment, had been identified. As a result of this assessment, 74 play parks had been identified to be decommissioned, of which eight are in the Berwickshire area. A full discussion was held, in particular relating to the Lower Burnmouth Site and the alternative location as Upper Burnmouth, covering child safety, previous underspend on play park facilities, the use of developer contributions and planning requirements in new build estates for play park provision, and the consultation process for the new enhanced play parks. Mr Blackie gave examples of work undertaken by groups in Stow and Selkirk and explained that alternative funding/grants could be available to community groups for enhancing play parks and assistance would be given with regard to the submission of applications for any funding. Councillor Aitchison advised that the Council was trying to invest in play parks and that no change would be made to existing play parks until the new ones were in place; as revenue budgets were tight for the Council it had to work within its means. In response to the feedback and various questions raised, it was agreed that Mr Blackie would investigate and respond, in particular to the funding availability for play parks, planning process undertaken, the maintenance of facilities and the small schemes projects. Mr Blackie would welcome any feedback from communities and individuals in the Berwickshire area, confirming that these would be included in a report to Council.

4. **JIM CLARK RALLY 2019**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director and Service Director Assets and Infrastructure to provide the Area Partnership and the local community an opportunity to consider and comment on the proposals submitted by the event organisers of the Jim Clark Rally to hold a rally on closed roads in Berwickshire on 8 and 9 November 2019. The revised legislation had been introduced to allow motor sports events to take place on closed public roads. The new regulations built upon previous experience through the Jim Clark Rally and other events and were intended to introduce increased rigor to the procedure for organising and running such events. The new regulations introduced a two stage procedure where organisers must first successfully apply to an "authorised body" for a permit before applying to the local roads authority for a Motor Sports Order. In determining whether to make a motor sports order Scottish Borders Council, as local roads authority, had to consider a number of factors that were laid out in the regulations. The report outlined those factors and provided an opportunity to, in particular, examine the proposals submitted by the rally organisers in

respect of the routes and timings for the rally on 8 and 9 November 2019. The Infrastructure Manager, Mr Brian Young, advised that the updated Appendices would be circulated and that the information circulated was to raise awareness that the organisers of the Jim Clark Rally had successfully applied for a permit and had lodged an application for a Motor Sports Order to Scottish Borders Council. As part of the new legislation the Council had launched a public consultation, which included the timings and layout, and was available online until 28 June. He further advised that the format would be the same as previous and that there would be no overnight schedule. The organisers had also intimated that they would have a stand at the Duns Agricultural Show on 3 August 2019. It was agreed that Mr Young would also make available the contact details of the organisers from the Jim Clark Rally website.

5. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 2 MAY 2019**

The Minute of the Meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership held on 2 May 2019 had been circulated along with a summary of the discussion. Colin Banks, Locality Development Co-ordinator, gave a brief outline of the previous discussion.

DECISION

AGREED the Minute.

6. **RURAL TRANSPORT: AREA PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES**

Those present at the Area Partnership meeting then split into groups to discuss specific rural transport related issues and priorities to be raised at the planned rural transport conference to be held on 28 June 2019. The flyer for the conference and the transport related discussion output document would be circulated for response back by 14 June 2019.

7. **NOMINATION FOR SBC ELECTED MEMBER FOR THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

The Clerk to the Council advised that nominations were required for the SBC elected member for the Community Council Scheme Review Working Group. Councillor Helen Laing was nominated by Councillor Fullarton and seconded by Councillor Carol Hamilton. Councillor Laing was happy to accept and this was unanimously approved.

8. **BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY FUND 2019/20 APPLICATIONS**

The Communities & Partnership Manager, Shona Smith, explained that the Berwickshire Community Fund 2019/20 guidance and application forms were available on the SBC website. An application would be assessed and officers would make a recommendation to either proceed to Area Partnership for approval; to hold until further information received; or that the application would not progress any further. If the application was agreed at the Area Partnership meeting, an award letter and payment would be processed in accordance with the terms and conditions along with a monitoring and evaluation form for completion at the end of the project. Ms Smith advised on the two applications received:-

- (a) Connect Berwickshire Youth Project – funding requested £6,099 to provide support towards premises costs including a complete redecoration of the facilities, a contribution towards rent and the cost of essential new software for updating financial systems.
- (b) A Heart for Duns – funding requested £1,925 to replace four existing old and worn wooden planter in the Duns Market Square with new planters, along with top soil/compost with the existing Summer bedding plans to be transferred and would explore opportunities with the local Men's Shed in the supply/provision of wooden planters for other suitable sites in the town

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) to approve a grant from the Community Fund of up to £6,099 to Connect Berwickshire Youth Project, on the basis that if the quote for redecoration was less than the requested amount, the award would be adjusted accordingly; and
- (b) to approve a grant from the Community Fund of £1,925 to Heart of Duns, on the basis that opportunities would be explored with the local Men's Shed in the supply/provision of wooden planters for other suitable sites in the town.

9. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr Cronin addressed the meeting making reference to a letter from David Carpenter dated 3 August 2016 and to ask the Council to reconsider the use of wi-fi in schools. This was noted.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership was scheduled for Thursday 5 September – venue to be agreed. Councillor Fullarton thanked all those who had attended the meeting for their participation and input.

The meeting concluded at 8.35pm