Eildon
Area Partnership

Our Scottish Borders
Your community

MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP held in the Main Hall, Galashiels Academy. on Thursday, 27 June 2019 at 6.00 pm

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Present:-   Councillors S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, K. Drum, G. Edgar, D. Parker, H. Scott and E. Thornton-Nicol, 32 Partner representatives, Community Councillors, officers and members of the public.

1.   **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
      The Chairman, Councillor Edgar, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership and thanked Community Councillors, Partners and local organisations for their attendance. Councillor Edgar explained that the discussion of Area Partnership Priorities at the meeting would focus on Rural Transport. He also referred to the number of items on the agenda and indicated that out of necessity he would be limiting the time spent on each.

2.   **INSPIRE LEARNING**
2.1   Senior Lead Education Officer, Catherine Thomson, was in attendance to give a presentation on the Inspire Learning Programme being implemented by Scottish Borders Council (SBC), which would transform teaching and learning in schools to the benefit of all pupils and teachers. A key part of the Digital Learning Strategy, the programme was a £16m investment in a world-class digital learning environment for all pupils. It included plans for Apple iPads to be provided to all P6-S6 pupils and shared devices at a ratio of one for every five P1-P5 pupils. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Thomson emphasised that technology had changed how we communicate, live, work and how we learn. A mobile digital learning device was an effective tool in engaging students in reading to improve literacy, support them with creative ways of producing content and help deepen their understanding and research skills. An iPad would also provide students with access to web resources, raise attainment and support equity and inclusion for all children and young people. Ms Thomson advised that the deployment of iPads to teachers was taking place through the month of June. In terms of teacher support, introductory training would be provided to staff to provide information about how to use the iPads in a classroom setting. In addition to the Project team and Inspire Executive Board, the programme had 2 dedicated Apple trainers and Inspire Cluster Leaders and Inspire School Leaders to provide additional support. The roll-out of iPads to pupils would start with Secondary Schools in Selkirk, Kelso and Hawick from August to December 2019; Earlston, Peebles and Eyemouth from January to March 2020; and Galashiels, Jedburgh and Berwickshire from April to June 2020.

2.2   Ms Thomson then introduced Inspire Learning Consultant, Andrew Jewell, to give a practical demonstrate of how the iPads could be used in the classroom. Volunteers were invited to join in a mock classroom interactive exercise using the iPads provided on the tables. Mr Jewell explained how teachers could maintain control through the facility to lock and unlock the iPads and demonstrated how they would be able to view any iPad in the class, project work onto a screen and provide instant feedback. The iPads allowed teachers and parents to view live examples of pupils work and provide useful and timely

feedback. In response to questions, Mr Jewell advised that pupils would not have keyboards to accompany the iPads but that there would be peripheral equipment such as projectors and Apple TVs to support their use and there would also be network upgrade. He confirmed that there would be a team of teachers to work as digital leaders throughout the roll-out programme.

3. **CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL IN PUBLIC PLACES**
The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Chief Legal Officer, Nuala McKinlay, Chief Legal Officer, to provide the background to the current SBC's consultation on the Consumption of Alcohol in Public Places and to encourage participation. There were in fact just a few days remaining in which to respond to this consultation which was due to end on 30 June 2019. Copies of the questionnaire were available at the meeting and responses could also be made on the Council's website. Mrs McKinlay explained that in 2013, SBC had considered the introduction of byelaws to prohibit drinking in public places, which would have brought restrictions in place in a number of Border towns. The process had been very lengthy and following a consultation process which received a fairly low level of response, the Council decided in December 2018 to abort the process due to a range of factors and carry out a new and more detailed consultation. SBC was keen to encourage participation and to ensure that views were received from a broad range of people and groups. This time the response had been good with almost 500 responses having been received to date. Mrs McKinlay went on to address some of the misunderstandings about the purpose and effect of the byelaws. These would apply only in certain identified local zones. Any event, for example a local festival/common riding, covered by an Occasional Liquor License would not be affected. Also unaffected would be drinking in designated outside areas associated with public bars and restaurants.   In response to a question about how byelaws would be enforced, if introduced, Mrs McKinlay stressed that Police Scotland was in favour of introducing such byelaws as these would provide a useful tool through which drinking in town centres and associated anti-social behaviour could be controlled. Mrs McKinlay encouraged those present to visit the Consultation Hub on the SBC website and submit a response if they had not already done so.

4. **PROVISION OF OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SPACES**
4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure setting out guidance and recommendations for the Eildon Area for future investment in Public Play facilities and proposals for the removal of obsolete play areas. The proposals referred to were agreed as part of the Council's 2018/19 Capital Investment Plan and updated within the Capital Investment Plan of 2019/20. The Service Director, Martin Joyce, and Eildon Neighbourhood Area Manager, Craig Blackie, were in attendance at the meeting to present the report and to ask for feedback from communities on the proposals. Mr Joyce explained that the 2019/20 Capital Investment Plan had funding of £5.036m for investment within Outdoor Community Spaces over the next 10 years. This presented a tremendous asset for communities, but 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.

The removal of obsolete facilities was required to ensure there was a cost neutral impact on established budgets within the service.

4.2 Mr Blackie explained that the Scottish Borders currently had 243 play parks, including those located within schools, ranging from smaller local areas for play (LAPs) to strategic destination play parks.   In comparison with other Local Authorities in Scotland who had

similar characteristics, the Scottish Borders had significantly more play parks per head of population than the average; however, the average play value of the facilities (i.e. quality of provision) was significantly lower than the average.   In recent years a more significant level of investment in play across the Scottish Borders had been delivered through the Council's capital programme supplemented by a range of different opportunities that have been realised by community led initiatives. These were shown in an appendix to the report and included, most recently, facilities in Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick and in the Public Park, Galashiels. The strategy was to now provide further additional high quality facilities in a range of other locations across the region. Alongside these strategic sites, the Council was committed to reviewing the wider network to ensure that local play provision continued to best serve communities. The review had considered Play Value (a standard assessment based on Fields in Trust criteria); In-house inspection; and proximity to other similar or better facilities. As a result of the assessment, 74 play parks had been identified as meeting the criteria for being decommissioned, those within the Eildon area being listed in a table within the report.

4.3   The officers responded to questions and noted feedback from those present at the meeting. It was confirmed that a community group could take over and develop a play park if it wished to do so (as had occurred at Selkirk and Stow). In fact community groups were at an advantage in that they had access to access other sources of funding. This would be subject to the group accepting ongoing responsibility for maintenance. Mr Joyce confirmed that the Council would engage with any community group that met the criteria, with regard to a land/asset transfer. Points were raised about the distances between some of the play parks identified in Galashiels for decommissioning and the location of the new high quality play facility in the Public Park (the park at Lee Brae was given as an example). It was considered unreasonable for families to be expected to walk that distance to the nearest play park. Mr Blackie stressed that this was the type of feedback that the Council wanted and would take this into account before any final decisions were made. It was emphasised that no play park would be decommissioned until a reasonable alternative had been identified and investment completed. In further discussion, issues of social disadvantage were raised, it being pointed out that some of the recent investment into play facilities were at locations which required access by car. Mr Joyce reiterated the value of local knowledge and the importance of communities providing feedback on the proposals. He confirmed that feedback could be provided via the Council's website.

MEMBER
Councillor Parker left the meeting.

5.   **SMALL SCHEME PROJECTS**
There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure seeking approval from Members for delegated powers for future applications for Small Scheme projects. Mr Blackie gave a reminder that elected Members, Community Councils and members of the public could request potential Small Scheme projects by contacting him direct, as Eildon Area Manager. To ensure that applications for Small Schemes were dealt with timeously, Members agreed to delegate authority to the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure to approve future applications in 2019/20, subject to the following:

(a)   Application(s) for projects to be carried out from the Small Scheme budget were received, assessed and costed by Council Officers;

(b)   Officers would then send details of the project(s) to Elected Members in the Eildon Area along with a recommendation for their consideration;

(c)   Elected Members would advise appropriate Council Officers of their support or otherwise for a particular project – support would be required from a majority of Elected Members for a project to proceed;

(d)   Should support by the majority of Members not be given for a project, this application would be refused; and

(e)   Details of projects funded from the Small Scheme budget would be presented to the Eildon Area Partnership as part of any future updates on Grants and Funding.

DECISION
AGREED to delegate authority to the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure to allocate funds for Neighbourhood Small Schemes and Quality of Life projects in the Eildon Area in 2019/20, subject to consultation with all ten Eildon Elected Members and approval by at least five Eildon Elected Members.

6.   **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 7 MARCH 2019**
      The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 7 March 2019 had been circulated. A summary of the discussion and review of the priorities identified in the draft Eildon Locality Plan was attached as an appendix to the Minute.

7.   **RURAL TRANSPORT: AREA PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES**
      The Chairman referred to the Rural Transport Conference being held the following day at Council Headquarters. There had been a huge amount of interest in the conference to the extent that it was over-subscribed. However he invited those present to take part in a round table discussion on rural transport and confirmed that views and any specific rural related issues and priorities identified would be raised at the conference on behalf of Eildon Area Partnership. The Locality Development Co-ordinator provided a template to aid the discussion and on which points could be recorded. A summary of the output of the discussion is attached as an appendix to this Minute.

8.   **NOMINATIONS FOR SBC ELECTED MEMBER FOR THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW WORKING GROUP**
      Nominations were invited for an Elected Member from the Eildon Area to join the Community Council Scheme Working Group. Councillor Aitchison, seconded by Councillor Drum, nominated Councillor Edgar. Councillor Scott, seconded by Councillor Anderson, nominated Councillor Thornton-Nicol. As Councillor Thornton- Nicol subsequently declined to stand, Councillor Edgar was duly appointed.

      DECISION
      AGREED that Councillor Edgar represent Eildon Area Partnership on the Community Council Scheme Review Working Group.

9.   **EILDON COMMUNITY FUND 2019-20 APPLICATIONS**
9.1   An explanation of the SBC's Community Fund application process was included in the information on the tables at the meeting. This was a fund available to community and voluntary groups to help support community activity. Grants of up to £5k for non-constituted group and £10k for constituted groups were available. In exceptional cases up to £30k was available for constituted groups. Applications submitted to SBC were assessed by the Communities and Partnership team and if they met the fund criteria, would go forward to Area Partnership meetings with an officer recommendation. Assessments would be included in agenda papers and those who attended the Area Partnership meetings would be asked if they agreed with the recommendation made by the SBC officer. Ms Jardine referred to the Interim Assessment forms, circulated at the meeting and summarised below, which gave details of two applications for Eildon Area Partnership to consider:-

9.2   **Friends and Family of Newtown Primary School**
      Funding of £4438.40 was requested by the organisation Friends and Family of Newtown Primary School (FFA NPS) to purchase and install a second ball wall within the grounds of Newtown Primary School to increase sporting activities and improve health and well-being of children and community residents. The total cost of the project was £5438.40,

the balance being provided by FFA NPS. It was explained that Newtown Primary School had a school roll of 111 pupils and a nursery of 24 children. There were also 35 young people from Newtown in the S1-S2 age group. The existing ball wall, which was Lottery funded, was well used by children and young people in the village during both the school day as well as evenings and weekends. FFA NPS were requesting a second ball wall which would be placed at the opposite end of the playground to create a full pitch playing facility, enabling team games to be played and a greater number of children and young people to use the ball walls. The recommendation to Eildon Area Partnership was to approve the funding request in full.

DECISION
AGREED to grant £4438.40 from the 2019/20 Community Fund to Friends and Family of Newtown Primary School for the purchase and installation of a second ball wall within the grounds of the School.

9.3   **TD1 Youth Hub**
Funding of £4,500 was requested, by TD1 Youth Hub, to furnish a Digital Learning Suite at the TD1 Youth Hub centre with 3 tables, 6 chairs and a sofa and purchase 3 PCs and a printer/scanner, creating a digital learning resource for 11 – 26 year olds. A contribution would also be made towards the cost of replacement flooring for the suite. The total cost of the project was £5,280, the balance being provided by TD1 Youth Hub. Further information was provided on the form in response to the questions asked as part of the assessment of the application. Research carried out by TD1 identified that 16% of 128 young people asked had no internet access at home, 55% said they had no one to teach them about computer use or software and 82% had at some point felt unsafe online. The Digital Learning Suite would be available during all sessions, groups and clubs that TD1 ran. Young people would be supported in their learning with help to progress to further education, training or work opportunities and the suite could be used to complete learner portfolios such as Youth Achievement Awards and SQA awards. The suite would also be available for use by the whole community including TD1 partners such as Apex Scotland, Aberlour, Borders College, Addaction and Works+. The recommendation to Eildon Area Partnership was to approve the funding request in full.

DECISION
AGREED to grant £4,500 from the 2019/20 Community Fund to TD1 Youth Hub to furnish a Digital Learning Suite.

10.   **OTHER BUSINESS**
Pauline Grigor, a third sector Community Worker in Galashiels, was introduced to the meeting. Ms Grigor gave a brief update about the development of a Communities Network in Galashiels. She explained that consultation with various groups in the town, e.g. voluntary organisations, church groups, uniform organisations etc. had revealed that community groups often felt isolated and that it would be advantageous to all involved to bring these together into a network. Local elected Members, Energise Galashiels and the Development Trust were very supportive of the initiative. The process of bringing together groups which were currently disconnected could be repeated in other areas and also in rural communities. Members of the Area Partnership welcomed the networking proposals.

11.   **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and, before closing the meeting, advised that Eildon Area Partnership would next meet on Thursday, 12 September 2019.

The meeting concluded at 8.35 pm

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Eildon Area Partnership

Eildon Transport Discussion

   <u>Impacts</u>

- Rural Transport – affects transport to work, education and further afield
- Borders Railway – people going to Edinburgh but less visiting Borders, Textile Heritage
- not apparent when getting off the train. Extending route needed
- Rail and transport needs to access smaller towns where there are business premises?
- Transport (for older, younger, everyone) for; doctor hospital; shopping; social events
- Public transport needs to link up villages and areas of significant deprivation
- Availability of public transport – depending where you are – limited leisure facilities – rural loneliness – stricter regulations around voluntary working – transporting and working with children and vulnerable groups
- I have a bus pass but there is no bus
- No co-ordination between buses & trains – not enough public transport – too expensive
- Local transport provision beyond scope of public transport

<u>Solutions</u>

- Travel – Look at Moped scheme – loan/hire scheme, electric bike scheme, align to apprenticeships/transport to work scheme
- Travel – Roads safe for cycling? Cycle paths? Make use of old branch lines?
- Transport – opportunities for people to access – provide services to people to get home after school etc.
- Central transport hub to co-ordinate transport needs (e.g. Gala Wheels)
- Reliable transport service – time & stops – operator policy
- Improve verges on cycle/walking tracks – could CPO unpaid work assist?
- Transport: bus pass – cannot get to bus; Young Scot discount on return tickets; connected transport; being able to attend after-school and evening events
- Transport: scope the issues; negotiate with providers; community bus; community car; speak to the people – don't assume
- Cycle/walking tracks off road
- Transport planning: rural accessibility, timetabling, understanding residents' needs, extension of Borders Railway etc.
- Local patient transport system- CC cover cost of Petrol. CC area and will cover neighbouring areas
- Support the railway linking to Carlisle – increasing connectivity

Rural Transport Discussion Points	Comments	Suggestions
Rural bus network How could rural bus networks better meet the needs of users? What role could technology have in providing a better service? Examples of good rural networks?	It would be good to go back to bus timetable pre-Borders Railway as rural community has been negatively impacted by a reduced bus service. The lack of buses to rural areas impacts tourism and the ability of people to travel to tourist destinations Accurate electronic bus information is available Bus tracking app/tracking of buses and other services Not qualified to comment Melrose Gate last bus is at 5pm There are social economic issues. Some communities are completely cut need to prevent social isolation It's cheaper for a family to take a taxi than use buses There is no Young Scot discount on Borders Buses or Peter Hogg In theory you can buy a single ticket for a journey that involves more than one bus company although it is difficult in practice	North bound service timetable (X95) needs to be revised to meet the needs of local residents. Electric solar panel driven bus information complete with phone charge points. Post bus/River bus concept should be reintroduced if bus passes could be used. Better integration of services and destinations/integrate all Borders transport in an app – display boards at stops

Community transport Examples or ideas of flexible and innovative community transport solutions? Could communities play more of a role in providing transport solutions / opportunities? Are there other transport schemes we could learn from?	It would be good to have a bus to transport visitors at the weekends to tourist destinations Stow volunteer drive scheme – good practice Post buses were a good idea – maybe bring them back Electric buses – subject to costs (environmental benefit) South Ayrshire, Pembrokeshire and Western Isles – example of community solutions E-bike/bicycle hubs (e.g. Mid Lothian) Funding is too restrictive More flexibility needed in community transport Borders College/SBC minibuses sit unused during the day.	Residents should be involved in review, to give their local knowledge, when services are being changed. How well are tourist destinations serviced by transport?
Other transport solutions What role could the new SBC E-Car club scheme & other car club schemes, and South of Scotland Economic Partnership, play in improving transport opportunities in the area?	Better signposting of car parks and places where buses and cars can park. What are these? We have no information.	E-car in every village community with range of sizes available e.g. 7/9 seater option. SBC E-cars are not available when people need them (during the day on weekdays). Need transport on key routes – connect the high schools

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