

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT
AREA PARTNERSHIP held in The
Assembly Room, Jedburgh Grammar
School on Wednesday, 19 June 2019 at
6.30 pm.

Present:- Councillors S. Hamilton (Chairman), J. Brown, S. Mountford, E. Robson, S. Scott, T. Weatherston together with 16 Representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils and Members of the Public.

In attendance:- Communities and Partnership Manager, Locality Development Co-ordinators (Colin Banks and Gillian Jardine), Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Community Police Officer (Gina Dickson), Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

Members of the Public:- 1

1.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Cheviot Area Partnership and thanked the Community Councils, Partners and local organisations for their attendance, and for participating and putting forward ideas.

2.0 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 Trainer, Ali Taylor, 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. Ms Taylor 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, Ms Taylor 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. She confirmed that there would be a team of teachers to work as digital leaders throughout the roll-out programme. In response to a question about the health and safety implications of pupils continually using Wifi, Ms Thomson advised that Bluetooth had been used for the demonstration so the equipment did not necessarily need Wifi.

3.0 PROVISION OF OUTDOOR COMMUNITY SPACES

3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure setting out guidance and recommendations for the Cheviot 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. Neighbourhoods Operation Manager, Jason Hedley and Neighbourhood Senior Asst Manager, Fraser Dunlop, were in attendance at the meeting to present the report and to ask for feedback from communities on the proposals. Mr Hedley 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.

3.2 Mr Hedley 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 Cheviot area being listed in a table within the report.

- 3.3 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 other sources of funding. This would be subject to the group accepting ongoing responsibility for maintenance. Mr Hedley confirmed that the Council would engage with any community group that met the criteria, with regard to a land/asset transfer. 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. Local knowledge and the importance of communities providing feedback on the proposals was invaluable and feedback could be provided via the Council's website.

DECISION

(a) AGREED:-

- (i) to acknowledge the proposals contained in the report; and**
- (ii) that Officers request feedback on any specific aspects the Area Partnership wished to be considered prior to the implementation of the report as outlined;**

(b) NOTED that no play park would be decommissioned until the investment in the new play park had been completed.

4.0 FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 17 APRIL 2019

- 4.1 The minute of the meeting of the Cheviot Area Partnership held on 17 April 2019 had been circulated. A summary of the discussion and review of the priorities identified in the draft Cheviot Locality Plan was attached as an appendix to the Minute.

5.0 RURAL TRANSPORT: AREA PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

- 5.1 The Chairman referred to the Rural Transport Conference being held on 28 June 2019 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 Cheviot 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 was attached as an appendix to this Minute.

6.0 NOMINATIONS FOR SBC ELECTED MEMBER FOR THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW WORKING GROUP

- 6.1 Nominations were invited for an Elected Member from the Cheviot Area Partnership to join the Community Council Scheme Working Group. Councillor Scott, seconded by

Councillor Brown, nominated Councillor Robson. There being no further nominations, Councillor Robson was duly appointed.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Robson represent Cheviot Area Partnership on the Community Council Scheme Review Working Group.

7.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES

7.1 There were circulated at the meeting copies of a note by the Service Director – Asset and Infrastructure which sought approval from Members for delegated powers for future applications for Small Schemes. The report explained that to ensure applications for Small Schemes are dealt with timeously, Members were asked to delegate authority to the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure to approve future applications in 2019/20 subject to conditions.

DECISION

AGREED that authority to approve future applications in 2019/20, be delegated to the Service Director – Assets & Infrastructure subject to the following:

- (a) Application(s) for projects to be carried out from Small Schemes were received, assessed and costed by Council Officers;**
- (b) Officers would then send details of the project(s) to Elected Members 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;**
- (e) Details of projects funded from the Small Schemes budget would be presented to the Cheviot Area Partnership as part of any future updates on Grants and Funding; and**
- (f) Any application for Community Fund funded projects be directed to the Communities and Partnership Team.**

8.0 CHEVIOT COMMUNITY FUND 2019-20 APPLICATIONS

8.1 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 groups 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 Smith referred to the Interim

Assessment forms, circulated at the meeting and summarised below, which gave details of an application for Cheviot Area Partnership to consider:-

8.2 Kalewater Community Company

Funding of £2,625 had been requested by the organisation Kalewater Community Company to fund archaeological work (planning condition) and associated wider community engagement of that work on an area of land which was now in the ownership of Morebattle community. The total cost of the project was £2,925 and £300 in-kind volunteer time (2-3 days @ £50 per day) to support the archaeological investigation and presentation to the Community. The recommendation to the Cheviot Area Partnership was to approve the funding request in full.

DECISION

AGREED to grant £2,625 from the 2019/20 Community Fund to Kalewater Community Company to fund archaeological work (planning condition) and associated wider community engagement of that work on an area of land which was now in the ownership of Morebattle community.

9.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 25 September 2019 in Kelso at 6.30 p.m. The theme of the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.