

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells on 26 September 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Convener), H. Anderson, S. Bell, K. Drum. G. Edgar, J. A. Fullarton, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, S. Haslam, E. Jardine, H. Laing, S. Marshall, W. McAteer, T. Miers, D. Moffat, S. Mountford, D. Paterson, C. Penman, C. Ramage, N. Richards, E. Robson, M. Rowley, H. Scott, S. Scott, E. Small, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol, G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston

Apologies:- Councillors S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, J. Brown, K. Chapman.

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Service Director Assets and Infrastructure, Interim Service Director Children & Young People, Service Director Customer and Communities, Service Director Human Resources and Communications, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Officer Adult Social Work Transformation, Clerk to the Council.

1. CONVENER'S REMARKS

The Convener reminded everyone that the Friends of Cancer Research UK Tartan Gifts had a stand in the main reception area.

DECISION NOTED.

2. MINUTE

- 2.1 The Minute of the Meeting held on 29 August 2019 was considered.
- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 29 August 2019, Councillor Haslam suggested that, although the Minute was accurate, for clarity the words "tackling climate change" in the final sentence of (b)(ii) be changed to read "promoting sustainable development" and this was unanimously agreed.

DECISION

AGREED that the Minute be approved, subject to the amendment detailed above, and signed by the Convener.

3. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the following Committees had been circulated:-

Local Review Body	19 August 2019
Executive	20 August 2019
Hawick Common Good Fund	20 August 2019
Chambers Institution Trust	21 August 2019
Peebles Common Good Fund	21 August 2019
Audit & Scrutiny	22 August 2019
Innerleithen Common Good Fund	22 August 2019
Civic Government Licensing	23 August 2019
Planning & Building Standards	2 September 2019
Selkirk Common Good Fund	9 September 2019

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes listed above.

4. **CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer on the activities of the Child Protection Committee during the period 1 August 2018 – 31 July 2019 aimed at protecting children and young people in the Scottish Borders from abuse and neglect. The Annual Report, which was appended to the report, covered the main activities of the multi-agency Child Protection Committee (CPC) and its Sub Committees. The report detailed the continuing work being undertaken in the Scottish Borders to meet the Council's statutory duties to protect children and young people at risk of harm. This included information on the work of the Child Protection Committee, the statistical information collated and the significant training and development that had been provided in this area. Mr Michael Batty, Independent Chair of the Child Protection Committee, was present at the meeting and highlighted the main areas of the report including the #AlwaysBeWary project where young people had been involved in developing the materials to raise awareness of child exploitation and grooming. Members welcomed the report and asked a number of questions relating to levels of staff training, interaction with public health aims around adverse childhood events, the process for removing children from the At Risk Register and learning lessons from events in other areas. The Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer, Mr Easingwood assured Members that child protection was a multi-agency service with robust processes in place although lessons could always be learned both from internal and external experiences. Removing a child from the register was not the end of the journey and work would continue with the family concerned. With regard to training, Mr Batty advised that the figure was just a snapshot in time and 100% would never be achieved due to staff turnover. The Chief Executive confirmed that mandatory training was monitored on an ongoing basis with those who had not completed training contacted about this. In response to a question on recruitment it was noted that there was a scheme in partnership with the Open University to train new social workers.

DECISION

NOTED the Child Protection Committee Annual Report for 2018/19, as contained in the appendix to the report.

5. **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2018/19**

5.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Audit Scotland, the Council's Auditors, together with a report by the Chief Financial Officer and a copy of the Annual Accounts 2018/19. The Chief Financial Officer's report explained that this was the third year of Audit Scotland undertaking the external audit of the Council's Annual Accounts. They also covered the Council's related charities. Audit Scotland had now completed the audit of the Council's 2018/19 Annual Accounts and had provided an unqualified independent audit opinion. The Annual Audit Report summarised Audit Scotland's conclusions, including:

- An unqualified audit opinion
- They concurred with management's accounting treatment and judgements;
- They concluded positively in respect of financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money.

Audit Scotland had identified two recommendations requiring action and these had been accepted by management and would be enacted within the agreed timescales. As required under the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, the audited Annual Accounts for Scottish Borders Council, Scottish Borders Council's Pension Fund, SBC Common Good Funds, the SBC Charitable Trusts and Bridge Homes LLP, copies of which had also been circulated, had been presented to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee prior to signature and no issues had been raised.

5.2 With reference to the KPMG Audit of SB Cares and SB Supports an amended recommendation was circulated and the Chief Financial Officer made the following statement:-

"Late in the 2018/19 Audit process for SBcares KPMG the LLP Auditors identified that the actuarial valuation obtained from the pension fund actuary Hymans Robertson with respect

to the 2018/19 valuation of the pension fund liabilities of SBcares LLP had been prepared on a different basis to the 2017/18 pension fund liability figures . A revised report has been obtained from the Actuary this week and the impact of the updated figures is to improve the actuarial valuation of pension fund liabilities in SB Cares accounts by £250,000. This adjustment due to timing is not however reflected in the accounts for SB cares in your agenda pack. I am drawing this to your attention because the draft unadjusted Sbcare accounts do however form part of the Council's 2018/19 consolidated group financial statements which are submitted to you today as part of the council agenda for approval.

I can confirm to the best of my knowledge, that the adjustments required to the SBcares accounts will not require any amendments which will have a material impact on the Council's Group financial statements for 2018/19. I have concluded, based on the information available to me, that the amendments required should not require Audit Scotland to amend their opinion on the Council's group accounts. I propose to note this issue in my standard letter of representation to the Mrs Woolman as the Council's appointed auditor following your approval of the financial statements. Depending on the decision you take at Item 11 regarding the future of SBcares this may amend the status of the draft SBcares accounts from them being classified as a going concern with material uncertainty to not a going concern. This technical change would not however impact on the council's group statements for 2018/19 and therefore does not affect ability to approve the audited accounts (excluding SBcares) this morning. My recommendation is that in considering item 8 you therefore note the SBcares 2018/19 accounts and proceed to approve the Council's group accounts for 2018/19 accordingly."

- 5.3 Councillor Tatler commended the Chief Financial Officer and his team for their diligent work in preparing the accounts, which showed the Council had made good progress against a tough background of funding. Councillor Bell, as Chairman of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, also spoke in support of the accounts and the recommendations made by the Auditors.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **approve the following audited Accounts:**
- (i) **the Scottish Borders Council's audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (ii) **the Scottish Borders Council's Pension Fund audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (iii) **the Scottish Borders Council Common Good Funds' (Charity SC031538) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (iv) **the SBC Welfare Trust (Charity SC044765) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (v) **the SBC Education Trust (Charity SC044762) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (vi) **the SBC Community Enhancement Trust (Charity SC044764) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (vii) **the Ormiston Trust for Institute Fund (Charity SC019162) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (viii) **the Scottish Borders Council Charity Funds' (Charity SC043896) audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019;**
 - (ix) **the Bridge Homes LLP audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019; and**
 - (x) **Lowood Tweedbank Ltd Annual Accounts for the 30th November 2018 to the 31 March 2019 (part year).**
- (b) **note the following audited Accounts:**
- (i) **the SB Supports LLP audited Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2019; and**

(ii) the SB Cares LLP audited Annual Accounts for the year to the 31 March 2019;

(c) note the basis of the preparation of the accounts at (b)(i) and (ii) above may change from there being material uncertainty that SB Cares is a 'going concern' to a 'not a going concern' depending on decisions taken at paragraph 9 below.

6. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2018/19

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer presenting the annual treasury management activities undertaken during the 2018/19 financial year. The report explained that the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services (the Code) required an annual report on treasury management to be submitted to Council following the end of each financial year. This report highlighted the Council's treasury activity undertaken in the year ended 31 March 2019 and the performance of the Treasury function. Appendix 1 contained the annual report of treasury management activities for 2018/19 and provided an analysis of performance against targets set in relation to Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators. The performance comparisons reported were based on the revised indicators agreed as part of the mid-year report approved on 29 November 2018. The Appendix showed the Council's borrowing requirement to fund the capital investment undertaken during 2018/19, how much the Council actually borrowed against the sums budgeted, and the level of external debt within approved limits. During the year the Council had again, where possible, deferred borrowing using surplus cash rather than undertaking new borrowing. However, the Council did undertake long term borrowing of £10m during the year, for the purposes of debt rescheduling. Treasury management activity for the year had been undertaken in compliance with approved policy and the Code. The Council remained under-borrowed against its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at 31 March 2019. The Chief Financial Officer advised that in order to achieve an optimal return this would require a 5th Money Market Fund, and an increase in the Sector Limit to £25m. It was recommended that this change was made to the current Treasury Strategy

DECISION

AGREED to:-

(a) note that treasury management activity in the year to 31 March 2019 was carried out in compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy and Policy as detailed in this report and in Appendix 1; and

(b) increase the investment limit for AAA Money Market Funds from £20m to £25m.

7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 29 August 2019, there had been circulated copies of the proposed remit of the new Sustainable Development Committee. Councillor Haslam nominated Councillors Aitchison, Edgar, Greenwell, S. Scott and herself. She further proposed that Councillor Aitchison be appointed as the Chairman. Councillor Bell nominated Councillors H. Anderson, Laing, Robson and Paterson. All nominations were unanimously accepted.

DECISION

AGREED that:-

(a) the Committee comprise Councillors Aitchison, H. Anderson, Edgar, Greenwell, Haslam, Laing, Paterson, Robson and S. Scott; and

(b) that Councillor Aitchison be appointed as the Chairman

8. PRIVATE BUSINESS

The Convener advised that although the report dealing with the future of SB Cares had been circulated as a public report the discussion would be taken in private to enable Members to properly debate all the issues.

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in paragraph 9 below on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act. However, the Minute would be made public

9. STRATEGIC REVIEW OF SB CARES – FUTURE PROVISION OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive on the future of SB Cares. The report explained that Scottish Borders Council transferred the majority of its adult care services to a new Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) following approval of a report which included a detailed business case on 26 June 2014. The LLP, trading under the name of SB Cares, was established on 1 April 2015. The LLP currently employed 570 full time equivalent staff with the same terms and conditions, including pension benefits, as staff directly employed by the Council. SB Cares had its own Board, consisting of the Managing Director, Chief Operating Officer, Operations Director, and Chair along with two independent members. The activities of the LLP were overseen by the Council's Major Contracts Governance Group, comprising seven Elected Members. The use of arm's-length external organisations (ALEOs) was widespread across Scotland with a number of Councils establishing ALEOs in recent years to manage a range of Services from Culture and Leisure Services to Adult Social Care. Given the increasing numbers of ALEOs that were being established, Audit Scotland published a report "Councils' use of arm's-length organisations" in May 2018 which outlined how Councils were using ALEOs. The key messages from this report highlighted that Councils should keep their ALEOs under regular review. Audit Scotland also noted that the operating context under which ALEOs delivered services did change, and that the original rationale for their establishment may weaken over time. Audit Scotland also concluded that the establishment of an arms-length ALEO was a major strategic consideration for any Council. Elected Members should therefore have a clear understanding of how their ALEOs were performing and how they fitted with the Council's culture, its overall strategic priorities and those of the local community. These priorities could change over the years in response to changing demographic, financial, market and political considerations. It was essential therefore that Councils regularly reviewed their ALEOs to ensure they delivered the benefits expected and that their continued operation delivered demonstrable best value. Where this was not the case alternatives should be considered. The report assessed the current operational performance, the management structures, and the effectiveness of the governance mechanisms in place to monitor SB Cares. The report evaluated the additional costs and financial benefits directly attributed to the current service delivery model, with SB Cares operating as a separately managed LLP. It also identified and evaluated the mechanisms in place to review how SB Cares was performing, to oversee the quality and safety of its services, and how the current arrangements fitted with the Council's culture and priorities and those of its partners and communities. It was noted that the original financial savings envisaged from the establishment of the ALEO covered the period 2015/16 – 2019/20. No further financial savings from SB Cares were assumed within future years of the current Financial Plan. The report considered the changing operating context of the Council, particularly following the establishment of the Health and Social Care Partnership, and the risks which were impacting sustainability of the current business model for SB Cares. It was concluded that while the LLP had delivered financial and service benefits since inception it had struggled to realise the full potential of the model originally envisaged. After careful consideration it was the view of the Council management team that the benefits of the ALEO structure for SB Cares no longer outweighed the challenges and risks now facing the business. These risks, which were likely to increase in future, made it appropriate for the Council to now reintegrate SB Cares LLP and SB Supports LLP into the Council. The Chief Executive emphasised that there was no suggestion that SB Cares had failed as an organisation and that significant savings had been achieved. SB Cares had been created in 2014 based on a business case at the time which included a requirement for a review in 5 years. This review had started at the end of 2018, and included financial analysis as well as

audits, with results reported to the Corporate Management Team. It was clear that, over time, circumstances had changed, and given the changes to the health and social care environment and future financial challenges, it was considered this was the right time to bring this service back into Council control. The Chief Executive answered Members' questions including the practical aspects with regard to staff and clients. The Chief Financial Officer outlined the financial savings and confirmed that the administrative activity required to wind up the LLP would be managed from within existing resources. Members were generally supportive of the proposals.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) note the contents of the report;**
- (b) voluntarily terminate SB Cares LLP and SB Supports LLP on 1 December 2019 and reintegrate all of the services presently directly delivered by the ALEO into the Council from that date; and**
- (c) authorise the Chief Executive to:**
 - (i) take all necessary steps to reintegrate SB Cares within the Council management structure; including the necessary changes to personnel, financial, pensions, procurement, IT, property and legal agreements;**
 - (ii) write to the Board of Management of SB Cares informing them of this decision; and**
 - (iii) write to the Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board informing the Board of this decision.**

10. DEANFIELD CARE HOME – INVESTMENT TO REMODEL AND UPGRADE FACILITY

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive proposing urgent investment, not currently included within the Council's capital programme, to upgrade and remodel Deanfield Care Home in Hawick. The investment was required as a matter of urgency given significant shortcomings in the condition, internal fabric and configuration of the current facility which had been operated by SBcares since 2015. The Chief Executive advised that following concerns raised with her, she had undertaken a personal inspection of Deanfield with a team of officers and while this had identified a need to improve the fabric of the building, no health and safety or risk to individual clients had been found, simply a tired care home. The investment proposed would not only improve the quality of the home but also facilitate a revised model of care, including the development of new respite care facilities in an underutilised wing of the current building. This would require the re-allocation of £2.8m within the current capital plan 2019/20 – 2028/29. It was proposed that this funding would come specifically from the budget presently allocated for the proposed development of a new Residential Dementia Care facility within the Borders. The new dementia facility was still in the planning phase and compensatory funding would need to be reinstated in the capital programme to deliver the dementia project as part of the budget process for 2020/21. In the meantime, this budget provided an appropriate source of funding for the enhancement of services at Deanfield. Deanfield Care Home in Hawick was a 35 bed 1980's built traditional care home now in urgent need of upgrading. The configuration of the care home lent itself to re-modelling into 5 domestic style and sized homes which would support a revised model of care. This model of care was based on the care village approach used successfully in the Netherlands. This approach provided specialist dementia care in a homely setting for people with complex needs but was flexible in supporting people with a range of needs and would importantly include much needed respite care facilities. The care home presented an urgent need to improve due to its current condition. Fixture and fittings throughout were aged. Kitchens were in need of replacement. Individual bedrooms required a complete overhaul to meet modern care standards. New furniture was required throughout as well as up-grades to

new “wet room” bathrooms. The investment proposed would include appropriate elements of the building plant, plumbing and wiring with significant improvements made to the energy efficiency of the home. Cumulatively, the works proposed to the fabric of the home would extend the life of the Deanfield Care Home up to an estimated 25 years. Members welcomed the proposed renovations and proposed care model. Councillor Bell requested that the report mentioned in recommendation (c) be brought back in October and this was agreed.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) approve the reallocation of £2.8m from the current Capital Investment Plan from the budget currently allocated for Residential Dementia Care to finance the upgrade of Deanfield;**
- (b) note the requirement to prioritise the re-instatement of this funding to the residential dementia project in the roll forward capital plan 2020/30; and**
- (c) request that a report from the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure be brought forward to the Council meeting in October, outlining the prioritised investment requirements in the care home estate for consideration as part of the forthcoming budget process. This report needed to include capital upgrade requirements and a robust estimate of the annual revenue budget required to maintain the interior fabric of Council’s Care Homes to an appropriate standard.**

11. OPEN QUESTIONS

The questions submitted by Councillors Marshall, McAteer, Ramage and Robson were answered.

DECISION

NOTED the replies as detailed in Appendix I to this Minute.

12. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRADING STANDARDS BETWEEN MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL AND SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services proposing a partnership arrangement between Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils to oversee the management of Midlothian Council’s Trading Standards service until 31 March 2020 and to consider opportunities for a wider exploration of joint working activities and benefits. The report explained that the opportunity had arisen to develop a partnership agreement to sustain and deliver the Trading Standards Service between Midlothian Council and Scottish Borders Council. Initially this would involve Scottish Borders Council’s Protective Manager leading both the Midlothian and Scottish Borders Trading Standards teams on a strategic level, supported operationally and on a day to day basis by Principal Officers in each Council. It was proposed that this arrangement be for an initial period until March 31 2020 providing an opportunity to allow for the wider exploration of joint working activities and benefits. This partnership arrangement would provide a platform for continuous improvement, leadership and direction to both teams. In response to a query regarding the possible opportunities for joint working the Chief Legal officer clarified that this related to work within Protective Services.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) proceed with a partnership arrangement between Midlothian and Scottish Borders Council Trading Standards Services with immediate effect until 31 March 2020;**
- (b) a wider exploration of joint working activities and benefits; and**

- (c) receive a further report from the Service Director Regulatory Services prior to 31 March 2020.

12. **PRIVATE BUSINESS
DECISION**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in Appendix II to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 6, 8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

13. **Minute**

The private section of the Council Minute of 29 August 2019 was approved.

14. **Committee Minutes**

The private sections of the Committee Minutes as detailed in paragraph 3 of this Minute were approved.

The meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
26 SEPTEMBER 2019
APPENDIX I

Question from Councillor Marshall

To the Executive Member for Children & Young People

Given the recent announcement by the Scottish Government that Scottish Borders Council are not to be included on the list to receive funding from an additional £1billion to support the Schools Estate within our region.

- (a) Can the Portfolio Holder update us as to what level of discussions are now taking place regarding this latest funding blow?
- (b) Can the Portfolio Holder also confirm that Hawick is still very much on track to receive a new School by 2024?
- (c) Can she also update members on where her department is in terms of securing a site for this new school?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

Officers have requested feedback from both Scottish Government and SFT with regard to the allocation of the Phase 1 Pilot funding associated with the Government's new Learning Estate Strategy. Although 11 Council's received support across a range of projects, this first phase was always intended to be relatively small scale in order to pilot the revised funding model and implementation of the new Learning Estate Strategy (which has replaced the former "Schools for the Future" programme). The initial funding commitment is in the range of £220-275m from the £1bn to be provided by the Government in future years.

Officers are continuing to progress the design development of new schemes in Eyemouth, Earlston, Galashiels and Hawick using currently allocated resources and it is anticipated that public consultation event will take place across these towns in due course with member briefings in advance. No decision has been taken as yet with regard to any preferred site in Hawick.

As the capital programme in 2019/20 assumed that the previous funding model would continue, the implications of the new strategy are currently being assessed by the Capital, Education and Finance teams and will be brought to Council as part a Learning Estate update and the budget process for 2020/21

Question from Councillor McAteer

To the Executive Member for Community Safety

With the recently reported April to June 2019 Scottish Borders crime statistics revealing an overall increase of 12%, and with acquisitive crime and thefts by housebreaking contributing with over 30% increases over the same period, can the Executive Member provide any reassurance to the Borders Public concerning the safety and security of their property. Additionally, with a reported 17% solvency rate for theft by housebreaking, can he explain what action he has taken on our behalf to ensure that adequate policing resources are addressing a startling 12% drop in performance.

Reply from Councillor Turnbull

The question raised relates to the Police Scotland Q1 Scrutiny Report held on 30th August 2019. As you rightly point out reports of this type of crime during Q1 have increased while detections have fallen. In that report the police allude to a group of organised criminals whom they are tackling with other neighbouring divisions. It can be the case that the detection of one of these types of crime can lead to multiple detections.

As you will be aware the police have operational independence and Q1 is not a particularly good indication of performance overall. Some of these investigations take time to conclude and the results not reflected in the figures for a period of time. Disruption, detection and prevention activity are all essential parts which I am confident the police are working hard to achieve.

The police reported solvency from Q1 to week 20 for crimes of dishonesty increasing from 34.1% to 40.1%.

I am further advised that the detection rate for housebreaking has risen from 17.7% in quarter 1 to 33.6%, a rise of 15.9% so far in Quarter 2. This is a 10.7% increase when compared to the same period last year.

Looking at previous years reported crime and detections move within each quarter. At this stage in the reporting year I would expect to see an improving trend going into the remaining 3 quarters.

The police cannot do this alone, they need the public to support the police in reporting any suspicious activity either through 101 the non-emergency number or 999 in an emergency.

Supplementary

Councillor McAteer asked, given that these statistics were a measure of Police performance, what steps Councillor Turnbull would be taking to publicising these improving figures to the public. Councillor Turnbull advised that it was not his place to become involved in police operational matters but the Police, Fire & Rescue and Community Safety Board would continue to put pressure on the police to increase solvency rates.

Questions from Councillor Ramage

To the Executive Member for Children & Young People

1. Are all classroom staff being given an iPad?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

All class teachers will be issued an I-pad as per the publicised plan and previous briefings to elected members.

Supplementary

Councillor Ramage advised that she had been approached by a classroom assistant who had not received an iPad. Councillor Hamilton advised that the pupil they were supporting would have one.

2. What are the monetary savings made from removing librarians from Galashiels, Peebles and Kelso High Schools? What is the cost of buying and fitting the self-service equipment for the staff-less libraries?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

As reported in June, the saving from the three schools is £78,203

Although the capital spend on library equipment and software in 2018/19 was £42,843, this is a one-off cost and allows the learning resource spaces in all three schools to be open and accessible for extended hours beyond the school day.

It is also noteworthy that the pre-installed Live Borders library app is on the I-pad's, allows young people to request materials from public libraries 24 hours per day.

Supplementary

Councillor Ramage considered that the saving was small compared to the important role of librarians in schools and commented on the Scottish Government funding being used to support library projects in other areas. She asked when a full report would be provided on this matter. Councillor Hamilton advised that the libraries were not staff-less. There was currently work ongoing with Live Borders and the Chief Officer had recently met with library support staff.

Question from Councillor Robson

To the Executive Member for Children & Young People

Further to the announcement by the Scottish Government on 6th September whether the Council's share of the £15 million investment in "frontline staff" for additional support for learning has as yet been identified, if so what that amount is and whether it is recurring, and, what plans there are to deploy these additional resources if and when they become available?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

The Council is yet to receive clarification from Scottish Government regarding the additional investment announced for "frontline staff" for additional support for learning provision.

Supplementary

Councillor Robson asked when this money was received that it be focused on early intervention work. Councillor Hamilton advised that she would ensure officers kept her informed of progress.