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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held in Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on Tuesday, 17 September 2019 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors N Richards (Chair), D Paterson, C Ramage and G Turnbull, 15 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community Councils and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors S Marshall & W McAteer
In Attendance:- Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Locality Development Co-ordinators (J Pringle, G Jardine), Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer

1. **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

Councillor Richards welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership. On behalf of the Area Partnership he expressed his sadness at the passing of Mr Jim Little.

2. **LOCALITY BID FUND 1**

The Chairman introduced Annette Reeves, from Artbeat Studios, who was in attendance to give an update on their successful bid to the Locality Bid Fund. Ms Reeves began by explaining that Artbeat Studios was a registered charity which had been in existence since 2002. The studio offered support and facilities for health and wellbeing and opened 16 hours a week. Currently there were 90 weekly attendees who were referred by the NHS, Scottish Borders Council, Job Centre and Occupational Health. Following on from the success of the studio, and after consultation with users and the local community, Artbeat Studios applied for Locality Bid funding for a Community Art Hub. The project had been successful in the voting process and was awarded £3,000. The Hub provided evening art sessions for the community such as pottery, felting, fine art and jewellery making. In response to questions, Ms Reeve explained that they did charge for classes to cover the cost of premises, heating lighting and equipment. Regarding the consultation, she explained that this had been a 'soft' approach, they had discussed with attendees and attended local events and schools. They also had a Facebook page for suggestions. Ms Reeves concluded her presentation by highlighting some of the artwork produced at the studio, advising that the Locality Bid Fund had achieved a continuing legacy for the local community.

3. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 11 JUNE 2019**

The Minute of the Meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership held on 11 June 2019 had been circulated. A summary of the discussion and a review of priorities identified in the draft Teviot and Liddesdale Locality Plan was attached as an Appendix to the Minute. One of the priorities was to improve the provision of transport in the area and how this could be improved to meet the needs of the local community. A range of comments were made including: passenger groups using digital platforms for journey planning, online booking system, flexibility in the school bus service, NHS scheduling based on locality, e-cars in villages and liaison with private bus companies to improve timetabling. These comments led on to the main theme for the evening which was transport networks and connections within Teviot and Liddesdale, as outlined below.

4. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE LOCALITY PLAN**

4.1 Scottish Borders Council Passenger Transport Manager, Timothy Stephenson and Transport Service Team Leader Gordon Grant were in attendance to give a presentation on Transport Planning in the Scottish Borders. Copies of the presentation on Transport Planning had been circulated with the agenda and were available at the meeting. Mr Stephenson explained that the Council currently subsidised local bus services at £1.5m per annum. However, local bus services were not a statutory requirement and like all local authority budgets were always being reviewed. In 2018, £200k saving has been made by alternatives being put in place and innovative thinking. In 2019, £85k had already been secured without further cuts but a further £165k savings was required for 2020. Some tough decisions had to be made and a workable plan found to make the required savings. A number of under-performing bus routes had been identified where passenger numbers were declining and subsidy per passenger was very high. However, rather than just making service cuts the Council wanted to meet communities to talk about transport. Bus User Scotland were also holding a public consultation to work with communities to form a transport plan. Mr Stephenson went on to discuss the local bus services being reviewed in the Teviot and Liddesdale area and subsidies per passenger ranging from 95p (Town Services 46/47/49) to £8.12 (Newcastleton – Hawick 4621) compared to the average cost per passenger of £3.65 across the Borders bus network. Mr Stephenson was keen to hear from communities who wanted to try new things and encourage community led transport projects: something alternative to ‘the traditional bus’, something flexible, that could be controlled locally and that communities could commit to. Mr Stephenson then gave examples of innovations in other areas such as NEED Ltd, an Alnwick Community Transport Scheme and Bo’ness Community Bus. He also referred to non-bus related options such as E-car, E-bike, Tripshare and Community Transport/Social Car Schemes. In response to questions, Mr Stephenson advised that 50% of bus passengers were non-paying. With regard to concessionary fares, the West Linton scheme had honoured concessions, and any similar scheme could have a similar set up. Regarding the school transport budget this was £3.5m, with £2.5m for special needs education. Certain school buses were registered to carry public passengers but this was dependent on capacity.

4.2 Following the presentation, the Chairman invited those present to take part in a round table discussion about transport planning in terms of potential options, solutions and actions within communities. There was templates on the tables to aid the discussion on which points should be recorded. A summary of the output of the discussion is attached as an appendix to this Minute.

5. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE INTERIM COMMUNITY FUND**

5.1 The Locality Development Co-Ordinator, Gillian Jardine, referred to documents which had been circulated and which were available at the meeting, which gave an overview of the Interim Community Fund and internal and external funding maps for Teviot and Liddesdale area. She explained that there was a total 2019/20 budget allocation of £174,308 for the Teviot and Liddesdale Community Fund. Within this fund, after committed allocations of £7,000 for Community Councils; £12,550 to Local Festivals; £4,729 to Village Halls; there was an available balance of £150,029 remaining in the Fund. Regarding the committed allocations, Ms Jardine explained that these would remain for the 2019/20 financial year. However, would be reviewed as part of the Area Partnership/Community Fund consultation.

5.2 Ms Jardine then explained the Interim Community Fund application process, advising that there was £10,000 available for constituted groups, £5,000 for non-constituted groups and up to £1,500 available for fast track applications. Applications would be brought to the Area Partnership for decision. Ms Jardine asked those in attendance to encourage community groups, who might be interested in applying to the Fund, to contact the Communities Partnership Team for guidance. Regarding any underspend at the end of the financial year, this had previously been carried forward to the next year financial year, but confirmation was

still awaited from Council – The Area Partnership requested that any underspend remained in the Teviot and Liddesdale locality.

- 5.3 The voting process was then discussed, Ms Jardine explained that applications would be brought to the Area Partnership meetings for consideration. If the consensus was to agree the application then the funding would be granted. If there was no consensus then elected members would be required to vote on the application. There was concern at the lack of transparency in relation to the grant process and that if a community council was unable to attend an Area Partnership how would they be able to support or raise any concerns? Ms Jardine explained that the application assessment would be circulated with the agenda, and any views could be feedback to officers for reporting at the meeting.

6. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chairman asked the meeting for any suggestions/proposals for future agenda items or any items to be submitted to Ms Jardine for the next meeting.

7. **OPEN FORUM**

- 7.1 There was concerns about the format of the Area Partnership meetings, and that elements from previous Area Forums should be incorporated, such as the Community Council Spotlight, reports from Police Scotland and from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. It was also noted that now the Locality Plans were in place, the Partnership should be discussing actions and projects arising from the Plan. Ms Jardine asked that everyone respond to the Area Partnership/Community Fund consultation raising their concerns and giving suggestions for improvement.
- 7.2 Regarding the Area Partnership/Community Fund consultation. Ms Malster explained that the community fund was an integral part of the Area Partnership meetings and that was why they were both included in the same consultation. However, she would review the format to improve accessibility and re-circulate if required.
- 7.3 Public Conveniences – no decision had been made on the future of the Council's public convenience.
- 7.4 Denholm Community Shed Asset Transfer - Ms Jardine would refer to the Council's Neighbourhood Services Team.
- ## 8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 8.1 The Chairman referred to the Home Energy Scotland information booklets on the tables and the Healthy Hawick newsletter which listed a range of activities around Scottish Borders Diversity Week.
- 8.2 Councillor Ramage invited everyone to attend the Burnfoot Benches Celebration on 10 October at Burnfoot Community Hub from 2 pm to 3.30 pm for an afternoon tea party.
- ## 9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- The next meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership was scheduled for Tuesday, 19 November at Hawick High School Councillor Richards thanked all those who had attended the meeting for their participation.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

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Teviot and Liddesdale Locality Plan – Community Transport: Solutions and Actions

Suggestions made:

- Electric solar information panels at key locations
- Border Integrated Transport App
- Expand volunteer driver schemes + social car share schemes
- E-bikes scheme (Energy Trust)
- SBC e-car scheme
- Extended Rail Connections/Accessibility
- Maximise the use of Borders College /SBC /NHS/Post Office/Third Sector minibuses
- Remove need for travel – extended outreach, use of skype for appointments, telecare
- Demand Responsive Transport i.e. community taxi, uber type scheme

Locality suggested transport solutions	Would this work in your community?	Who would take this forward – we need key champions/organisations	What support would be needed (financial, time, resources etc), and what would this look like?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real time information – More awareness of what services are operating (“Borders bus app” extension) • Promotion of Travel line Scotland. • Bus services are not a viable solution – flexible working, change of demographic and “car dependency” • Awareness raising of Young Scot benefits to encourage usage • E-Car – Flexibility of locations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be taken forward by Transport Scotland • This would be taken forward by the Scottish Borders Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For this project to be a success we would need to look into getting better Wi-Fi in the borders. • The discount only applies to single fare journeys • For this to be successful it would require a flexibility in overnight locations for the E-Cars

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing service provision – engage with bus operators • Joint working across the Borders (Councils/Companies) • Trip share to be researched • Community bus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify under used services and identify times when they would be better used and then change the times. • Identify one day a week when all people can arrange appointments (e.g. BGH) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would only work in the Teviot and Liddesdale area if there was an improved service • This would only work if again there was an improved service • Subject to users • Subject to enough volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be taken forward by user groups and Local community groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denholm are in conversation with Cllr Ramage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Stevenson to be part of public meeting in Hawick to identify need and discuss options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-instate the train internet connection – need better coverage so community transport is contactable • Fast charge electricity units in Newcastleton need up rated sub station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidy for Government compared for Scottish Borders to Highland and Islands
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Increase parking charges – charge behaviour force			
Education – Behaviour change (Developed reliance culture)			
UBER type scheme	Taxi style approached, unlicensed but approved. Access via smart phone technology/apps. Drivers Screened – criminal checks Safety Features built-in, tracking customer reviews, driver profiles Vehicle safety inspections		
Bo’ness and Area Community Bus Association – reintroduction of bus links between Bo’ness and Edinburgh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruited 2 Full Time drivers and 1 Part time driver and 1 Volunteer driver • Recruited an Operations Consultant • Recruited an Administration Assistant • Delivered 10235 passenger journeys since February 2018 • Make 58 journeys a week to and from Edinburgh • Covered over 120,000 miles 		
Killin & District Volunteer Car Scheme	<p>Volunteer based scheme that aim to assist people in our district who have real problems in accessing transport or coping with the long journeys. The service is provided by volunteer drivers who use their cars to provide transport to people who struggle to access other forms of transport, due to a variety of reasons and where there is a need to access services that are essential and/or in the interest of their general wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journeys are subsidised – 45p per mile for drivers and 20p per mile for a passenger • The driver's expenses cover fuel, maintenance and depreciation of their vehicle so that they are not out-of-pocket. 		
Badenoch & Strathspey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Transport model operating a set bus route, although providing door to door service • Operates 5 days per week, 9.30-4.30pm • Must be booked in advance • 		
NEED Ltd (Alnwick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely self-financing model • Range of services – car scheme / dial-a-ride / family vehicle / group transport • Contracts for Council and NHS • Entrepreneurial 		
Chariotts (Wrexham)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branded fleet of accessible vehicles • Paid co-ordinator but all volunteer drivers <p>In 2015 provided 12,645 trips, of which 6,642 were for wheelchair users</p>		
Transport Access People (Cornwall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer car scheme for non-emergency healthcare appointments • Journeys to and from the Hospitals in Truro and Plymouth • Door to door transport for people who find difficulty accessing transport 		

Facilitator Initials:

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