
REPORT BY SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE ON AREA PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY FUND

Report by Service Director Customer & Communities

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25 JUNE 2020

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the review which was commissioned by Scottish Borders Council of the Area Partnerships and the Community Fund.**
- 1.2 At its meeting on 26 June 2019, the Council decided the scope, approach and timeline for the Area Partnership review consultation, including the future allocation and governance of the Community Fund. The consultation was to be undertaken by an external organisation in order to ensure impartiality.
- 1.3 The consultation, which was undertaken by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), employed a range of methods in order to ensure that as many people as possible, who wished to do so, were able to participate.
- 1.4 A total of 199¹ individuals responded to the consultation. Of these, 121 responded to the survey, 59 took part in a focus group, nine participated in one-to-one stakeholder interviews and ten Elected Members attended a seminar. Due to the low number of respondents the results should be read as indicative rather than statistically significant.
- 1.5 Responses to the consultation were mixed but the overriding message is that people want to be involved in shaping the Area Partnerships to ensure that they are fully inclusive, meet the needs of all stakeholders and achieve meaningful involvement and community engagement.
- 1.6 This report proposes that the findings of the review are shared with stakeholders and that a further report is brought to Council in August 2020 outlining the next steps in evolving the Area Partnerships and Community Fund.
- 1.7 The recommendations made by SCDC appear throughout their report (appendix one).

¹ This number reflects participations rather than individual participants i.e. an individual that took part in both the survey and a focus group will have been counted twice.

- 1.8 Since this report was received, the Council has been responding to the current Covid-19 pandemic, and there has been a great deal of further learning and experience of working with our communities through our Community Assistance Hubs. This learning should also be considered in evolving the Area Partnerships, the Community Fund and the wider Community Planning Partnership arrangements.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that Council :-

- (a) Notes the results, findings and subsequent recommendations of the report produced by the Scottish Community Development Centre (appendix one);**
- (b) Agrees that the report is shared with stakeholders; and**
- (c) Agrees that a further report be brought to Council in August 2020 outlining the next steps in evolving the Area Partnerships and Community Fund arrangements.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 26 June 2019 the Council decided the scope, approach and timeline of the Area Partnership review consultation, including the future allocation and governance of the Community Fund.
- 3.2 In order to ensure that the review was completely impartial, clear and transparent an external organisation, the Scottish Community Development Company (SCDC), was commissioned to undertake the consultation work on behalf of Scottish Borders Council. The consultation ran from 23 August – 28 October 2019 utilising a range of methods to enable as many people as possible to participate.

4 THE REVIEW OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY FUND

- 4.1 The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) is recognised as the national lead agency for community development in Scotland with a 25-year history of activity spanning multiple geographies and several policy areas. More information about SCDC is available at www.scdc.org.uk.
- 4.2 The review undertaken by SCDC gathered views regarding local decision making, including what the arrangements could look like in each locality (governance arrangements may vary in each area in order to best suit local circumstances), and the new Community Fund. The review looked at:
 - a. Membership of Area Partnerships and decision making/voting rights/agenda setting within the partnerships;
 - b. Role of communities within the Community Planning Partnership (CPP);
 - c. Role of communities and other partners to deliver actions and meet priorities identified in each area's Locality Plan;
 - d. Training required to develop skills/competencies required to support changes and enable effective community level governance;
 - e. Support required to enable the shift to community level governance;
 - f. General decision making process;
 - g. Impact of the combining of funding streams to form the Community Fund; and
 - h. Decision making arrangements and allocation of the Community Fund.
- 4.3 The consultation took place from 23 August – 28 October 2019 utilising a number of methods to ensure that as many people and groups as possible were able to take part:
 - An online survey available on the Council's [Consultation Hub](#)
 - Paper copies of the survey were available through libraries and Council Contact Centres.
 - Six focus groups took place across the Borders. One focus group took place in each locality and one, centrally located, targeted groups working across the Borders and those with an interest in equality issues.
 - Nine interviews with key stakeholders (individuals) took place with representatives from:
 - Community Planning Partners

- Scottish Borders Council senior officers
- Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network
- Registered Social landlords
- Seminar with Elected Members

5 CONSULTATION FINDINGS – OVERVIEW

5.1 SCDC has produced a report setting out the responses to the consultation gathered from all methods. Quantitative information from the online and paper surveys is supported by the qualitative information gathered at the focus groups and key stakeholder interviews.

5.2 118 people responded to the online survey of these,

- 54% responded as an individual
- 31% responded on behalf of their organisation/community group
- 15% responded on behalf of their community council

5.3 Online responses by locality were as follows:

Area Partnership area	Total	% of responses by AP area	% of Borders population by AP area
Berwickshire	31	26%	18%
Cheviot	12	10%	17%
Eildon	28	23%	31%
Teviot & Liddesdale	15	12%	16%
Tweeddale	29	24%	19%
Cross Borders	6	5%	

5.4 Most responses came from the Berwickshire, Tweeddale and Eildon areas. Berwickshire and Tweeddale returned a greater percentage of responses when compared to the population make up. Due to the low number of respondents the results should be read as indicative rather than statistically significant.

5.5 The review has reflected the strong view, which had previously been communicated to Members and officers, that local people did not feel they had been appropriately included in the design of the new partnership structures or current community funding arrangements.

5.6 The full findings and recommendations are available in the SCDC consultation report (appendix one).

6 FURTHER LEARNING FROM COVID-19 RESPONSE

6.1 In response to the Covid-19 emergency, five Community Assistance Hubs (CAH'S) were set up to provide support at a local level, to work with and help co-ordinate other service areas, 57 Resilient Community Teams and other voluntary groups, and to provide individual support to approx. 4,500 individuals who are shielding.

6.2 The response to Covid-19 within communities has been amazing and local groups, in the main voluntary, have been providing a huge amount of

support within their communities. There is an opportunity to build on this along with the significant learning and benefits of setting up the five CAH's.

- 6.3 All stakeholders should be asked to consider the findings of the SCDC report as well as the experience and learning over the last few months responding to Covid-19. A further report will then be brought to Council in August outlining the next steps to evolve the Area Partnerships, the Community Fund and the wider Community Planning Partnership arrangements.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

The Community Fund has a base budget of £471k in 2020/21 which will be directed to support work with communities.

7.2 Equalities

It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion or belief arising from the proposals in this report.

7.3 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

7.4 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on the Council's carbon emissions arising from this report.

7.5 Rural Proofing

(a) This report does not relate to a new or amended policy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

(b) Not acting upon the findings in the name of SCDC's report would have a negative impact on the Area Partnerships and the Council's reputation as an organisation that listens to the community.

7.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

JENNI CRAIG
Service Director Customer & Communities

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Shona Smith	Communities & Partnerships Manager, Customer & Communities
Clare Malster	Strategic Community Engagement Officer

Background Papers: Scottish Borders Council, 26 June 2019

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Clare Malster can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at: Clare Malster, Scottish Borders Council, Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA
Tel: 01835 826626
Email: cmalster@scotborders.gov.uk