

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE held remotely by Microsoft
Teams on Tuesday, 15 September 2020 at
10.00 am

- Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice-Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine, S. Mountford, M. Rowley, R. Tatler and T. Weatherston.
- Apologies:- Councillor G. Turnbull
- In Attendance:- Executive Director Corporate Improvement & Economy, Executive Director Finance & Regulatory, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Service Director Customer & Communities, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS

Present:- Mr G. Clark (Federation of Small Businesses)

1. COVID-19 FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO BUSINESS

1.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy, providing information on the financial support distributed to businesses by Scottish Borders Council as part of Scottish Government's Coronavirus Support Schemes. The support funds that were administered by Scottish Borders Council on behalf of Scottish Government were the:

- Small Business Grant Fund (three phases);
- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund;
- Newly Self Employed Hardship Fund; and
- Bed & Breakfast Hardship Fund (B&BHF).

The administration, management and delivery of the business support grant process was primarily undertaken by the Council's Business Gateway, Economic Development and Customer Services Sections, with a large number of staff from a range of other Council Departments involved in assisting in the process of awarding the grants. At the height of the grant delivery process there was a team of approximately 60 officers involved in the administration and payment of the grant funding. The report provided details of the number of applications within each category with the number of grants awarded, grants declined and total value of funding. In total approximately 3900 applications had been received and approximately 3300 grant awards were made. The total value of funding distributed through the four funding streams was approximately £33,800,000. All four support funds were now closed and an appeals panel which was set up to reconsider a number of declined applications met for the last time on Tuesday 1 September.

1.2 The Scottish Government also introduced two new Business Rates Reliefs from 1 April 2020. All non-domestic properties had been awarded a 1.6% rates relief for the billing year 2020/21. In addition to this, those businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure industry would receive 100% rates relief for the billing year 2020/21. To date 2440 properties had been awarded this relief. In addition to the grant support funds administered by Scottish Borders Council, discretionary funding providing additional support for businesses in the South of Scotland was administered by South of Scotland

Enterprise (SOSE) through two grant funding streams. These two funding schemes were the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprise Hardship Fund and the Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund. The funds proved useful in filling gaps and supporting the additional funding requirements of businesses throughout the South of Scotland. SOSE worked with Scottish Borders Council to help determine which businesses had already received funding from the other support schemes offered by Scottish Government. SOSE issued grant offers from these Funds to 137 companies in the Scottish Borders totalling just over £6m.

- 1.3 Members recognised the massive amount of work carried out by the Council in distributing the grant support funding to businesses and thanked all the officers involved in this huge effort. They welcomed the relatively high proportion of grants awarded in comparison with other areas. Mr Garry Clark also expressed his gratitude to the Council on behalf of small businesses in the Borders and referred in particular to assistance from the Business Gateway teams. In response to a question about underspend of the Council's allocation of grant funding, the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory advised that discussions were ongoing between COSLA and Scottish Government about a range of support measures and he was not aware of any plan to access the underspend.

DECISION

AGREED to recognise the Council's efforts in distributing the Scottish Government's COVID-19 Grant Support Funding to businesses throughout the Scottish Borders.

2. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

- 2.1 With reference to paragraph 9 of the Scottish Borders Council Minute of 31 October 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy providing the background and context to the phased establishment of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP). The report gave an overview of the work of the COVID-19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group, the forerunner of the REP, then went on to discuss the work of the REP which had now held two meetings. At its meeting on 31 October 2019, Scottish Borders Council agreed to support the establishment of South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP). Following this meeting, work commenced to transition from the South of Scotland Alliance (SOSA) to the REP, the remit and composition of which was set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The Executive Director gave the background of the REP, which aimed to support the establishment of South of Scotland Enterprise by developing and driving forward a South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy. It comprised members of Scottish Borders Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, South of Scotland Enterprise, together with appointed members from business, communities, social enterprise, registered social landlords, and representatives from colleges, universities and public bodies including the Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, and VisitScotland. Nationally, the REP linked into the South of Scotland Convention, which was chaired by the Deputy First Minister. In early March 2020, it was agreed to pause efforts to establish the REP as the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic became clear. The Councils, together with SOSE, acted quickly to establish the COVID-19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group with the focus to provide strategic direction and oversight to the initial economic response to COVID-19 in the South of Scotland. Key activities for the group included: understanding the impact of COVID-19; supporting business; supporting communities; advocating for the South of Scotland; communication (agreeing a joint approach); tackling labour market challenges; aligning response, restart and recovery activity; and setting the groundwork for the REP. The report went on to provide more details on the membership and organisational arrangements of the REP. A key task would be to set the development of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy and Action Plan. Diagrams within the report set out the timeline the REP was working on and the relationship between the elements of the regional landscape.

- 2.2 Members recognised the significant work carried out by the Team South of Scotland during the response to the pandemic, noting that the officers working with the team would be the same as those supporting the REP. In further discussion, the priority of getting the Regional Economic Strategy in place was emphasised. In response to a question from Councillor Tatler, Chair of the Scottish Borders Living Wage Group, the Executive Director gave assurance that core principles of a living wage would be addressed and be central to the strategy. In response to further questions about the position of the REP in relation to the various other groups and bodies meeting within the South of Scotland region, the Executive Director gave a further explanation of the table shown within the report which set out the relationship between the various key elements of activity. He agreed to put this summary in a briefing note for Members.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **recognise the work carried out by the COVID-19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group; and**
- (b) **welcome the progress being made in establishing the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership and its work programme.**

OTHER BUSINESS

3. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of 11 February 2020.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

4. **MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21**

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing the budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 30 June 2020 along with explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn expenditure and income and the current approved budget. As reported to the Council meeting on 27 August 2020, after the first quarter of 2020/21 a detailed budget review exercise had been undertaken to realign budgets in light of the financial implications of the COVID-19 response. This analysis of the revenue budget had highlighted estimated revenue budget pressures of £20.449m and available resources of £19.056m from a combination of in-year savings and additional grant support leaving a residual budget pressure, based on current forecasts, of £1.393m. As previously reported, there was likely to be a significant impact on the delivery of planned Financial Plan savings during 2020/21 as a result of the emergency situation. Financial plan savings of £12.091m required to be delivered in 2020/21. An analysis of deliverability had been updated as shown in Appendix 4 to the report. Following the June month end £5.279m (44%) savings had been delivered permanently, £3.205m (26%) were profiled to be delivered by 31 March 2021 and £3.607m (30%) had been delivered on a temporary basis through alternative savings. Full details of pressures, risks and challenges and the significant majority of areas of the Council's operation where budget plans remained on track were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. The Executive Director explained that the level of support provided by the Scottish Government in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic had not been sufficient to fund the full financial impact of COVID-19 including the significant impact on the level of income which funded local services. Additional Scottish Government funding in the form of grant had addressed 33% of the total pressure identified with the welcome easing of restrictions in the use of specific grants taking this up to 50%. The remainder of funding was required to be found from existing Council budgets and reserve balances. The current shortfall of £1.393m plus any further impacts, beyond the estimated shortfall, would require further funding to be identified in order for the Council to successfully

manage the financial impacts of COVID-19 by 31 March 2021. The report went on to detail key assumptions made in arriving at the figures; management actions for the remainder of the financial year with the aim of closing the current £1.393m gap; and a summary of the impact of COVID-19 related pressures on individual services. The Executive Director confirmed that any budget shortfall at 31 March 2021 would require to be funded from reserves.

- 4.2 Members discussed the report and received answers to their questions from the Executive Director. They recognised the turbulent time that the Council was going through and the challenge presented in terms of savings required. They congratulated officers for their work to achieve the level of savings which had already been delivered on a permanent basis. In response to a question about the assumption that Live Borders would not require additional financial support from the Council, the Executive Director confirmed that COSLA were currently discussing an income scheme with Scottish Government which it was understood would include ALEOs like Live Borders. Members expressed regret that the Council would probably have to dip into reserves at the end of the financial year and the Executive Director confirmed that the Reserve Policy would need to be reflected in the budget planning process for 2021/22 with a view to replacing the sum used.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) note the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 30 June 2020, the pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of this position and the identified areas of financial risk as reflected in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) approve the virements attached as Appendix 2, following the revisions to the revenue budgets for 2020/21 approved by Council on 27 August 2020;**
- (c) approve the virements in Appendix 3 to earmark budget into 2021/22;**
- (d) note the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 4; and**
- (e) request the Corporate Management Team to continue to take all possible management action to balance the budget in the current year.**

5. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing an update on the progress of the 2020/21 Capital Financial Plan and seeking approval for virements and the reallocation of funds. The monitoring tables in Appendix 1 to the report detailed actual expenditure to 30 June 2020. Key issues identified in the tables were summarised within the main report. The review of the capital budget, in light of financial implications of COVID-19 as presented to Council on 27 August 2020, focussed on assessing the impact of the national “lockdown” of the construction industry and the associated inevitable delays in current and planned programmes of work. The overall impact on the capital plan was that net £26.855m of budget within the Capital Plan had moved as a timing movement to future years with a movement from base budget of £96.953m to a revised plan of £70.098m. This revised plan was based on a review of deliverability of the Plan with revised budgets now representing what project managers were forecasting would be spent and delivered during the remainder of 2020/21. Appendix 2 contained a list of the block allocations approved for this year and the various approved and proposed projects to be allocated from them within the 2020/21 Capital Plan. A list of estimated whole project capital costs for single projects which would not be completed in the current financial year was contained in Appendix 3 to the report. The Executive Director answered Members’ questions about the specific issues detailed within the report. Members recognised in

particular the benefits being realised through the investment in the Inspire Learning project.

DECISION

- (a) AGREED the projected outturns in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget, following the approval of these revisions to the Capital Plan by Council on the 27 August 2020, and approved the virements required;**
- (b) NOTED:-**
 - (i) the budget virements previously approved by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory and the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure detailed in Appendix 2 under delegated authority;**
 - (ii) the list of block allocations detailed in Appendix 2; and**
 - (iii) the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3.**

6. PROJECTED BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2021

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2020 and details of the projected balances at 31 March 2021. The report explained that the unaudited Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £6.315m at 31 March 2020. The projected General Fund useable reserve was projected, at this early stage in the financial year, to remain at £6.315m at 31 March 2021 in line with the Council's Financial Strategy. Any year end overspend as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic would, however, require to be funded from reserves. The total of all useable balances, excluding developer contributions, at 31 March 2021 was projected to be £23.490m, compared to £29.866m at 31 March 2020. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £7.965m would be affected by any further capital receipts, developer contributions, interest credited and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year. A question was asked as to whether the 52% of risks identified, covered by the projected useable General Fund balance, was a high enough level of cover going forward, due to the different types of risks now presented by COVID-19. The Executive Director confirmed that the recommended reserve would be reviewed as part of the revenue budget process for 2020/21.

DECISION

NOTED:-

- (a) the unaudited 2019/20 revenue balances at 31 March 2020;**
- (b) the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2021 as contained in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report; and**
- (c) the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.**

7. CORPORATE DEBTS - WRITE OFFS IN 2019/20

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory, detailing the aggregate amounts of debt written off during 2019/20 under delegated authority. The report covered the areas of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Sundry Debtors, Housing Benefit Overpayments and aged debt from the balance sheet. The total value of write-offs increased from £0.702m in 2018/19 to £1.872m in 2019/20. The Executive Director referred Members to the table within the report which showed the amounts written off by category and a comparison with previous years. The highest value of write-offs for continued to be within the category where the liable party had become

insolvent. This was in part a reflection of the economic situation. There were ongoing risks associated with the management of the Council's debts and these may lead to an increase in the level of debts that may require to be written off as irrecoverable in future years. These risks were identified within the report. The Council maintained an appropriate bad debt provision to help manage these risks. In terms of the Council's approach to outstanding debt and in response to a Member's question, the Executive Director confirmed that the Council would be fair and would facilitate repayment arrangements with debtors. It was suggested that a communications message from the Council to proactively encourage anyone who was anticipating problems with payments to contact the Council at an early stage may be helpful. The Executive Director agreed that this could be looked into and also agreed to the Leader's request to provide 6 monthly updates on debtor balances to the Executive Committee.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED the debtor balances written off during 2019/20 under delegated authority.**
- (b) AGREED to provide 6 monthly updates on debtor balances to the Executive Committee.**

8. OUR PLAN AND YOUR PART IN IT: SBC'S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2019/20

- 8.1 With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of 11 February 2020, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy, presenting a high level summary of Scottish Borders Council's 2019/20 performance information with more detail contained within Appendices 1a, 1b, 2a and 3 attached to the report. The Executive Director explained that this report would ordinarily have been produced for the June 2020 Executive Committee but had been delayed until September 2020 due to COVID-19 impacts. He handed over to the Senior Business Services Officer, Alasdair Collison, to highlight the main points of the report which included reporting on the progress of change and improvement projects across Scottish Borders Council (SBC) under the Fit for 2024 programme. During 2019/20, SBC had continued to press ahead with a range of important initiatives and innovation, including:
- (a) The progression of a number of key capital projects including the completion of Jedburgh Grammar Campus. Works progressed on other key projects including the Great Tapestry of Scotland and preparation work for the Hawick Flood Protection scheme;
 - (b) Progressing the implementation of the Inspire Learning programme, with every secondary school teacher and student receiving an iPad, enabling SBC to have a dedicated platform to allow for consistent managed remote learning opportunities for all secondary teachers and students;
 - (c) Continued engagement around the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and to take forward the Borders Innovation Park project as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. SBC had taken a lead role in the establishment of the Covid-19 Team South of Scotland Leadership Group. The aim of the Group was to secure and stabilise the economy of the South of Scotland in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences, in order to provide a foundation for the future work of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership;
- 8.2 The information contained within the report and the appendices were also available on the SBC website and could be accessed at www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance. The appendices reflected a quarterly reporting format structured around the four corporate themes. Mr Collison referred to the summary of successes and challenges which were

listed in the report. In terms of successes, he drew attention in particular to the Waste and Recycling figures for 2019 which showed an improved performance following the introduction of the residual waste approach which commenced in July 2019. Household recycling improved in 2019 to 47.61% from 38.80% in 2018. Recycling at Community Recycling Centres increased to 63.56% in 2019 from 57.95% in 2018. Household waste landfilled reduced to 28.67% in 2019 from 60.84% in 2018. In terms of challenges, Mr Collison referred to the percentage of Freedom of Information requests completed on time, which had improved in 2019/20 to 88% from 85.8% the previous year but this remained below the target. The report went on to give a summary of activity and impact of the Community Action Team (CAT) which was provided in Appendix 3 to the report.

- 8.3 Members welcomed the comprehensive report and the ease of interpretation of performance against indicators within the infographics. They commented on the overall improving picture across the services and noted that the information would be available for public viewing on the Council's website. In particular they were pleased to note the improved recycling rates and asked for the signs at recycling centres to be updated as soon as possible to convey to the public the improving level. In response to a question about landfill tax, officers agreed to check and report back to Members about how much tax was saved by household waste not going to landfill.

**DECISION
NOTED:-**

- (a) **the progress update relating to Change and Improvement Projects, referenced in Section 5 and detailed further in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) **the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 6 of the report; and**
- (c) **the performance summarised in Sections 7 and 8 of the report and detailed within Appendices 1, 2a and 3 and the action that was being taken within services to improve or maintain performance.**

9. **LIVE BORDERS PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 - 2019/20 (BI-ANNUAL SUMMARY AND DATA FOR QUARTERS 3 & 4 2019/20)**

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 11 February 2020, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Corporate Improvement & Economy presenting a high level summary of Live Borders' performance during Quarters 3 and 4 2019/20, with details contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. In an introduction to the report which referred to the last two quarters of 2019/20 the Executive Director commented that 2020/21 would clearly be a very difficult and challenging year for Live Borders. This would be focussed on in the months ahead. He then handed over to Linda Ross, Live Borders Director of Business Services, to present the report. During 2018, Live Borders developed and agreed a new Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2023. The strategy contained a new vision and 6 strategic goals. A table in the report showed how these goals would assist Live Borders in working towards the 6 outcomes in the contract with Scottish Borders Council. In terms of the two quarters subject to the report, Ms Ross drew attention to key successes and key challenges, as detailed in the appendices. A notable success included library membership numbers growing in the last quarter with a positive increase in online membership in March. Key challenges included staff absences which failed to meet the ambitious target of 2.5% and participation levels in other sports. The effect on income due to the coronavirus pandemic was estimated at £200k mainly on uncollected membership income for the period. However, there was still an increase in income excluding Management fee, of £135k compared to the previous year. This had been an exceptional year, with the fire at Peebles High School significantly affecting services in that area over December and January. Costs, although within budget, were £372k higher than 2019/20 mainly as a result of additional staffing costs in sports facilities. This needed to be the focus going forward. Members thanked officers for the report.

DECISION

NOTED Live Borders' performance and the action being taken to maintain or improve performance.

MEMBER

Councillor Haslam declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Chamber during the discussion. The chair was taken by Councillor Mountford while she was absent from the meeting.

10. DRAFT FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

- 10.1 There had been circulated a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory introducing Scottish Borders Council's first ever Food Growing Strategy – 'Cultivating Communities' and seeking approval for consultation on the Draft Strategy. The report also set out the process and next steps in delivering the Strategy Action Plan, as well as associated changes to Allotment management, including new Allotment Regulations, as required by the legislation. The Food Growing Strategy supported the Locality Plans for the region and was itself supported with the proposed creation of new policy EP17 in the Local Development Plan. Chief Officer Roads, Jason Hedley, presented the report and provided further information by way of a slide presentation. He explained that Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 updated and simplified allotments legislation, bringing it together in a single instrument, introducing new duties on local authorities to increase transparency on the actions taken to provide allotments in their area and limit waiting times. Allotments were defined in Part 9 as land that was owned or leased by a local authority and used wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers and not for profit. A key requirement of the Legislation was for every local authority to develop a Food Growing Strategy under section 119 of the Act. Each authority must set out in its food-growing strategy how it would provide land to meet demand for food growing as allotments or other forms of cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers for community or individual growing. Stakeholders such as Community Planning Partners, local 3rd sector organisations, Allotment Associations/Societies and Community growing project managers had been consulted with through a series of meetings, gaining insight into current growing activities and needs for future capacity building. A 12 week public consultation ran from 24 July to 16 October 2019 and was promoted to all Community Councils, In Bloom groups, 3rd sector organisations, publicly via a press release (30 July) and via website and social media. It had a good response, with 300 respondents. A summary of the consultation was included as an appendix to the Strategy. The Allotment Regulations were subject to a statutory 1 month consultation, upon approval by the Executive.
- 10.2 The report referred to COVID-19 which had transformed the way we lived our lives. It was felt that the Food Growing Strategy could contribute positively to the lives of our communities during the COVID-19 era. The Strategy had been amended to include advice around working safely in communities to prevent any spread of infection. Following the consultation, the Strategy had been developed based on the information gathered. The aim of this Strategy was to support and facilitate anyone who wanted to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches. As well as supporting and facilitating self-deployment of individuals and community groups to get growing, the Strategy set out the Council's commitments through the Action Plan, which was detailed in the report. The Draft Food Growing Strategy, Proposed Allotment Regulations and the consultation feedback summary were included as appendices to the report and proposals for resourcing the project were set out in the body of the report. Members expressed their enthusiastic support for the food growing strategy and congratulated officers for the extensive work carried out in its preparation. They noted the significant number of responses to the first consultation and recognised that there was a considerable demand in the Scottish Borders for shared accessible spaces and support for residents to grow their own vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers.

DECISION

AGREED to approve:-

- (a) the Draft Food Growing Strategy for consultation;**
- (b) the proposals for resourcing as set out in section 9.1 of the report; and**
- (c) the proposed statutory consultation on the new Allotment Regulations.**

11. JEDBURGH - ASSET TRANSFER PROPOSAL

- 11.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director, Customer & Communities to make Elected Members aware of the outline proposal to Scottish Borders Council by the Jedburgh Legacy Group for an asset transfer, which would allow the group to take over and operate Jedburgh Town Hall, Library building, public toilets and other services. The outline proposal was set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The outline proposal from the Jedburgh Legacy Group was an ambitious one that involved taking over the running of an enlarged Town Hall, Library building and public toilets. It also included the maintenance of play parks, grassed areas, flower beds and hedges. The outline proposal saw the running, and potentially ownership, of these facilities passing over to a new body, Jedburgh Town Services. The bodies to be involved in operating Jedburgh Town Services were Jedburgh Community Council, Jedburgh Community Trust, Jedburgh Leisure Facilities Trust, Jedburgh Alliance, Jedburgh and District News Group (incorporating the Jedburgh Marketing and Tourism Group) and Jedburgh Horticultural Society. It was considered that the outline proposal should initially be progressed using Scottish Borders Council's established process for dealing with applications by Community Groups under Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 legislation – i.e. an "expression of interest" prior to a formal Asset Transfer Request. A brief overview and analysis of the outline proposal was given within the report. The proposal was aligned with Scottish Borders Council's draft 5-year Strategic Property Framework, with the preferred solution for the Town Hall and Library building being an asset transfer to the community. This strategic fit was welcomed and supported where it complemented other local services and assets. The report proposed that a Multi-disciplinary Officer Group should be established to support the Jedburgh Legacy Group on developing the outline proposal into a formal Asset Transfer Request. The principles, processes, timescales and financial implications for carrying out this work were set out within the report.
- 11.2 Members welcomed the outline proposal from Jedburgh Legacy Group, commenting that, although at a very early stage, this represented an exciting and ambitious project. It was an example of potential key partnerships which the Council could develop with a range of organisations and could be a pilot for other areas. The proposal was a huge undertaking and the central question was whether there would be long-term sustainability. A strong business case for the proposal would be essential.

DECISION

AGREED that:-

- (a) the outline proposal from the Jedburgh Legacy Group should be progressed using Scottish Borders Council's established process under the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 legislation; and**
- (b) an Inter-agency Officer Group be established to assess, and offer to work with the Jedburgh Legacy Group on the outline proposal.**

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 4 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 Minute of meeting held on 11 February 2020 was approved.

The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm