

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT
AREA PARTNERSHIP held remotely by
Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 27
January 2021 at 6.30 pm.

Present:- Councillors S. Hamilton (Chairman), J. Brown, S. Mountford, E. Robson, S. Scott, T. Weatherston, together with 19 Representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils and Members of the Public.

In attendance: - Service Director Neighbourhood Services, Communities and Partnerships Manager, Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

1.0 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Cheviot Area Partnership held remotely via Microsoft teams, which included elected Members, guests attending within the meeting and those watching via the Live Stream. He outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

2.0 **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 25 NOVEMBER 2020**

2.1 The minute of the meeting of the Cheviot Area Partnership held on 25 November 2020 had been circulated and was noted.

3.0 **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer and Communities gave an SBC update on the current Covid-19 situation. Mrs Craig explained that Covid-19 had recently accelerated significantly with an increase in positive cases, partly due to the highly transmittable variant of the virus which was present in the Borders. Mrs Craig emphasised that it was essential that everyone followed the current guidelines to stay at home and minimise face to face contact with those outwith your household. Referring to Covid-19 testing, Mrs Craig advised that due to the high case numbers, particularly in the Hawick area, a Mobile Testing Unit had been deployed to the Teviotdale Leisure Centre as part of its rotational schedule. This was in addition to the walk-in testing facility which had opened in Langlee Complex, Galashiels which was for symptomatic testing. The Council were also involved in discussions with partners about the potential for asymptomatic community testing facilities in the Scottish Borders. In terms of SBC services, there was currently no direct impact over those already in place from the Level 4 period. However, the need to continue to deliver essential frontline services and give support to communities might result in staff being deployed to support other areas, for example the care service, which would result in other services having to scale back operations. Mrs Craig then discussed the Community Assistance Hubs (CAHs) explaining that they remained operational to co-ordinate support within localities and continued to work closely with Customer Advice & Support and Social Work colleagues and a range of partners locally. Mrs Craig went on to advise that in terms of Education online and remote learning was being provided for all pupils, with in-school arrangements for invited young people and the children of key workers. Remote learning arrangements - Pupils in P1

to P3 will be provided with home learning packs, which would be accessible online and in hard copy by arrangement with individual schools. Remote learning arrangements for Pupils in P4-S6 would see the Inspire Learning programme fully utilised to support remote learning for all P4 to S6 pupils. Any planned Senior Phase Assessments would be postponed and carried out when possible with appropriate preparation time provided. With regard to Live Borders, their facilities were closed to the public and their focus during the lockdown was on providing support to NHS Borders and SBC's COVID response efforts through use of available staff and resources. Live Borders membership had been kept updated and digital services ranging from online fitness classes to online library access continued to be offered and could support home learning. In terms of support for Business, there was a range of support available for firms experiencing difficulty and included access to funding support administered by the Council on behalf of the Scottish Government, Information on this support was available online at www.scotborders.gov.uk/covid19business and all eligible businesses were encouraged to apply. Where entitlement changes due to changes to the Levels of restrictions in place then this is automatically reviewed, without the need for repeated applications. Businesses were encouraged to use the national Find Business Support website (www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot) to check all available funding support, including that being administered by other partners. The Council continued to work closely with South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE) to ensure support was made available to businesses. Mrs Craig concluded her presentation by advising that anyone within the community requiring assistance should contact 0300 100 1800 to access support through the CAHs. In response to questions, Mrs Craig advised that she would investigate why Jedburgh residents were being sent to Edinburgh for COVID testing and Kelso Residents appeared to be going to Galashiels. Dean Weatherston, Chairman of Kelso Community Council reported that as at 20 January 2021 Kelso Health Centre had vaccinated 100% of Residents in Care Homes and were working on the 80+ and Housebound and were on target. Mrs Craig agreed to circulate her presentation following the meeting. The Chairman thanked Mrs Craig for the informative presentation.

4.0 SCOTTISH BORDERS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Charles Johnston, Principal Officer: Plans and Research was present and explained that there was a statutory requirement for all local planning authorities to produce and maintain a Local Development Plan for their region. The current Local Plan for the Scottish Borders was the Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016, and this was due to be updated. In anticipation of this, the new Scottish Borders Proposed Local Development Plan had been published. The proposed plan set out land use proposals and planning policies which were intended to guide development and inform planning decisions within the Scottish Borders over the next 10 years. In so doing, it aimed to strike an appropriate but careful balance for the need to conserve all that makes the Scottish Borders, its towns, village and countryside, a great place to live, work and visit with the need to facilitate the delivery of the developments that the region, its economy and residents need, going forward into the 2020s. The objective was therefore to deliver the right development in the right place; sympathetically designed and suitably accommodated and to help ensure this, there was consultation on the Main Issue Report in 2019. At that time, the public, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders, were asked to comment on key issues and different development options that were being considered for inclusion in the Proposed Plan. The written responses received were then considered by Planning Officers, and have informed the production of the Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan was the settled view of the Council and the Council intended to adopt the Proposed Plan as the new Scottish Borders Local Development Plan, taking into account of matters raised during the consultation period which closed on 25 January 2021. Mr Johnstone answered questions.

5.0 SEX ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

Mr Ron Kirk, Managing Solicitor explained that sexual entertainment venues in Scotland were currently unregulated. The Scottish Government had introduced a change in the law which came into effect on 26 April 2019. It had decided not to introduce a statutory licensing requirement for SEVs but instead introduced a discretionary licensing system allowing Scottish Local Authorities to decide whether or not to regulate SEV activity in its own area. When a Local Authority agreed to licence a non-discretionary activity, this was known as a Resolution. The main considerations of Civic Government Licensing were public safety and preventing crime and disorder. A specific licensing regime for sexual entertainment venues would allow local authorities to consider local circumstances in setting the number of venues able to operate within their areas (which could be nil) and to exercise appropriate control and regulation of the nature of the activity with particular regard to the objectives of preserving public safety, prevention of public nuisance, crime and disorder; protection of children and young people from harm and reducing violence against women. The consultation, which was stage one of a two stage consultation was open until 12 February 2021.

**DECISION
NOTED**

6.0 SBC BUDGET CHALLENGE

The annual Scottish Borders Council budget consultation was open for the chance to play #yourpart and shape the Council's financial plan for next year as well as its future priorities. The consultation, which opened in November 2020 and had been open for 12 weeks was due to close on 31 January 2021, focused on some high-level issues facing the Council and the wider area. Borderers were being asked to allocate a limited number of points across these to provide insight on local priorities. The feedback received would be used as the Council developed its 2021/22 financial plan and also future priorities as part of a review and update of the Council's Corporate Plan.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7. FIT FOR 2024: REVIEW OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY FUND AND ACTIONS FOR CHEVIOT AREA PARTNERSHIP

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 25 November 2020, there had been circulated copies of a presentation which detailed recommendations for the future evolution of the Cheviot Area Partnership and Cheviot Community Fund drawn together by the Working Group. The Partnership were generally in agreement with the proposal and in terms of the Cheviot Locality Plan and Action Plan, it was agreed that the Partnership should not just be about the Community Fund and the Locality Plan should be considered at future Meetings and re-visited as a result of COVID 19.

- 7.1 In terms of the Community Fund, the general consensus was that it should be a separate Panel which discussed the applications and made recommendations to the Cheviot Area Partnership. It was suggested that something be put in place for the new financial year and should involve SBC/Community Councils and the general public. Following discussion about how to involve the 3rd sector and how the funding panel would operate it was agreed that the Working Group re-convene and continue to draw together proposals. There was a request that the small schemes funding continue to be available to Community Councils to spend locally on small projects.

DECISION

AGREED that a further meeting of the Working Group be held to draw together proposals on the establishment of the Funding Panel.

8. CHEVIOT COMMUNITY FUND 2020/21

Assessments of two applications to the Cheviot Community Fund had been circulated, plus a summary of grant funding within Cheviot in 2020/21 and the source of that funding. The summary showed grant applications awarded, those under assessment and those to be considered by the Area Partnership. Also included were funding commitments to Community Councils, Village Halls and Local Festivals. Before consideration of the two pending applications, Ms Clare Malster outlined the process of assessment of applications to the Community Fund and the criteria used for that assessment. She advised that all applications to the Community Fund would be put forward to the Area Partnership for consideration, with officer assessment advising if the criteria had been met. She went on to confirm that each of the following applications met the Community Fund criteria. Additional funding had been secured in the sum of £39,154 for the Cheviot Community Fund and Lothian Hall Committee, who had previously received funding in the sum of £12,150 had repaid £2,000 due to funding received from the Federation of Village Halls which gave a total for allocation of £39,615.43.

81 Cheviot Youth

Cheviot Youth were requesting financial support in the sum of £25,151 for the enhanced delivery of Stepping Stones mental health and well-being service in Cheviot, which aimed to improve the mental health and well-being of children and young people. Youth Borders coordinates a team of seven Project Workers to deliver Stepping Stones across the Borders. Cheviot Youth planned to increase the capacity of the Stepping Stones service in Cheviot to meet local need and had requested funding to pay 50% of the salary cost of the Lead Practitioner (£18,673) and 33% of the salary cost of a Practitioner who would be recruited early 2021. The Lead Practitioner's working hours would increase from 28 hours to 35 hours and the Practitioner would be employed for 16 hours per week (£5,086,). The Lead Practitioner would be responsible for the day to day running of the Stepping Stones service and help plan service development. The Practitioner would hold their own case load and contribute to developmental work and provide supervision to a small number of Volunteer Practitioners. In addition, Cheviot Youth requested £1,392 for the cost of providing monthly in-house counselling sessions for Practitioners led by a qualified practitioner. Ms Malster explained that since publication of the Agenda the application had been reduced to £19,993 as funding had been secured from elsewhere.

8.2 Generations Working Together

Generations Working Together (GWT) were looking to appoint a Development Officer who would plan and deliver a gardening project based at the Jedburgh Community Campus. The proposed project would be added to an existing post giving the part time officer additional hours. The group were also looking for £5,000 to erect and install a Polytunnel in the school grounds which would be warmer and dryer allowing the group to continue to work on this project throughout the year and costs that would support the running of this project, including volunteer expenses and outdoor clothing for participants. Covid-19 had had a negative impact on people's access to learning and had aided in people feeling isolated and disconnected. The need for an intergenerational outdoor space was also backed by the Scottish Government who encouraged people to meet outdoors where physical distancing measures can be safely applied. Young people participating in the RSPB wild challenge

identified the need for an Intergenerational Garden to allow them to continue their learning and to create opportunities to learn and share skills and experiences with older people. A sub group of the community council previously had use of a greenhouse at the old Grammar school in Jedburgh and now no longer had access to this area and required a new base so that they are able to carry on their work. Ms Malster explained that funding of the polytunnel (£5,000) had been secured from another sources reducing the application to £18,093.

DECISION

(a) AGREED that Grants be awarded as follows:-

(i) Cheviot Youth in the sum of £19,993; and

(ii) Generations Working Together in the sum of £18,093

(b) NOTED the balance of the Community Grant Fund in the sum of £1,529.43.

8.4 KALEWATER COMMUNITY COMPANY

There had been circulated copies of the Evaluation of Funding received from the Community Grant Fund. The Evaluation explained that Clyde Archaeology engaged Magnitude Surveys Ltd to carry out an Archaeological Investigation by means of a Geophysical Survey as part of SBC Planning condition on the field which was purchased by Morebattle Community through a Grant from Scottish Land Fund to transform into a recreation ground. The Community engagement aspect of the survey to engage Morebattle Primary School and the wider community was a success, with usable GPR data being collected by the community groups. Staff members proficiently assisted the attendants into developing new skills and confidence in archaeology, heritage, the use of modern technologies and enjoying outdoor activities. Some linear features in the northern end of the field were found. The results of the Geophysical Survey was then sent to SBC Archaeologist for comments. There was a difference between the Grant and quote as there was only VAT charged on the Geophysical Survey and produce report. Should the Planning Department require and Archaeological Dig that would be the next stage of the project.

8.5 MOREBATTLE COMMUNITY SHOP

Morebattle Community Shop Ltd managed by a board elected by the shareholders produced a business plan that showed that if the Flat above the shop could be renovated using money obtained by the grant, that the business could become more sustainable in the longer term. Other improvements to the shop such as decoration and flooring and some external repairs were also applied for. The interior redecoration, flooring and external repairs were still waiting to be completed as priority was given to the flat renovation which was completed prior to COVID 19 lockdown. Due to COVID 19 restrictions the tenant had been unable to move in until July but was now happily in place and rent of £350 per month was being received adding a very useful £4200 of annual income. Local tradesmen were used to complete the flat renovation. Although the shop turnover had increased considerably since the COVID 19 restrictions and was extremely well supported by the community a business plan showed that it was not financially viable to have an assistant and a manager in place and subsequently the assistants' position was made redundant. The position of shop

manager was advertised and following interviews a couple who made a joint application were appointed. This has made a significant difference to the performance of the shop, there was now a proper management in place and a team of 16 volunteers and strong financial results. An alcohol licence had recently been obtained. Plans are ongoing for shop improvements interior decorations and flooring will be completed as and when we finish internal alterations such as moving the counter increasing storage space for stock and purchasing more efficient Freezers and Chill cabinets.

9.0 OTHER INFORMATION AND NEWS FOR NOTING

The following information and news, as detailed on the agenda, was noted:

- (a) The Cheviot Community Fund for 2020/21 was now open - guidance and application form was on the Council's website:
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/261/community_fund
- (b) Cheviot Locality Plan & Action Plans - these plans are now published and outline the priorities of the Cheviot area and could be the focus of a future Area Partnership meeting:
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/1310/locality_plans
- (c) Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – Currently, there are no formal Participation Requests or formal Asset Transfer requests being considered within Cheviot. Further information can be found here:
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/357/community_empowerment_scotland_act_2015
- (d) Information Pack on Community Empowerment for Area Partnerships (attached)
- (e) Fit for 2024 – Outline proposals for community engagement over future service delivery:
<https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s48419/Item%20No.%2012-%20-%20FF2024%20report.pdf>
- (f) NHS Borders Wellbeing Service:
<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services/general-services/wellbeing-service/>
- (g) NHS Borders Wellbeing Point:
www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint
- (h) Caring Connected Communities Winter Newsletter:
<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/media/769980/caringconnectedcommunitieswinterwellbeing.pdf>

10.0 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on **Wednesday, 24 March 2021 via Microsoft Teams.**

The meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.