

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 9 March 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors N Richards (Chairman), W McAteer, C Ramage, G Turnbull and R Tatler

30 representatives of partner organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public

Apologies Councillor S Marshall and D Paterson

In attendance:- Service Director Customer & Communities (Part), Communities and Partnerships Manager, Locality Development Co-ordinator (G Jardine), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership held remotely via Microsoft Teams, which included Elected Members, guests attending and those watching the live stream.

2. **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.

3. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 12 JANUARY 2021**

The Minute of the meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Partnership held on 12 January 2021 had been circulated and was noted.

4. **TRANSPORT UPDATE**

Dan Cathcart, SBC Localities Transport Officer gave an overview of the current local area transport services for Teviot and Liddesdale. Mr Cathcart explained that currently local bus services were operating at 80% of their pre-Covid timetables. Bus services had managed to continue to operate with payments from Transport Scotland's Covid Support Grant, and this payment would continue until June 2021. Mr Cathcart further advised that last summer the NHS and Care Sector had received a 50% ticket discount for bus transport across the Scottish Borders. SBC had also negotiated with services which depart from the Borders General Hospital (BGH) and they would offer a free ticket for anybody boarding at the BGH to their home destination. Mr Cathcart went on to advise that Passenger Transport were currently conducting a review of all public sector contracts including Hawick Town Centre and Bonchester Bridge, and, also commercial services passing through the area to ensure they linked with ancillary services. Passenger Transport were also considering trialling Demand Response Transport (DRT) which was a software package for buses. This was a service similar to Uber and would enable passengers to dial a bus. Mr Cathcart concluded by advising that the school bus service had now reduced social distancing from 2m to 1m for High School services which would make a difference transporting children to schools. The Chairman thanked Mr Cathcart for his attendance and informative update.

5. **FIT FOR 2024 – PROPOSED PLACE MAKING APPROACH**

There had been circulated copies of a report by on the Fit for 2024 Proposed Place Making Approach which had been presented to Council on 28 February. The report proposed a phased introduction and development of a Place Making approach to community engagement and participation across Borders' communities. James Lamb, Portfolio Manager for SBC was in attendance to give more detail to the proposal and advise of timescales. Mr Lamb began by referring to the Cosla definition of the Place making principle which was: "A more joined up, collaborative, and participative approach to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enables better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives". Mr Lamb advised that the Scottish Government was establishing a Place Based Investment Programme with funding, over five years, to support Place Making-related projects and activity. Details were still being developed, including the eligibility criteria for funding. Mr Lamb went on to explain that the Place Making process was a cyclical, bottom up approach which would feed into partner organisations. There were four distinct phases to the process and between each phase there would be a review. The first phase was preparation and planning, raising awareness of the approach, alignment of activity and governance. Mr Lamb explained that resources might be required to support subsequent phases. Phase 2 was the High Level Place Briefs – initially at Locality level where priorities and needs would be identified. In future years, Place Briefs would be developed for individual communities, recognising that there was no one-size-fits-all and some communities already had community-led action plans. Phase 3 would translate the learnings from the previous phases to develop Locality Place Plans. In effect, these would refresh the locality plans which sit under the community planning process. Phase 4 would be the delivery of quick wins and the establishment of projects as well as identifying what activity needed to be included in the Council's – and partner organisations' service planning and capital planning processes. Area Partnerships would play a central role in monitoring and evaluating progress. Mr Lamb went on to advise that timescales were necessarily ambitious, particularly for the first phase – with Phase 1 to be completed by July and delivery from November onwards. However, timescales were, at this stage, indicative and would be revised at the end of Phase 1. In response to questions Mr Lamb advised the work communities had already undertaken would feed into activity and hopefully taken forward to Locality Place Plans in Phase 3. The Council would support and collaborate with communities in relation to funding for capital projects. However, the criteria for accessing funding was still awaited. Timescales were indicative and could be accelerated to deliver and create programmes. The Area Partnership considered the process should be simplified and accelerated. Engagement should also be with local communities not just through Area Partnerships. The Chair thanked Mr Lamb for his attendance and informative presentation.

6. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer and Communities gave an SBC update on the Covid-19 current position. Mrs Craig explained that currently there were nine cases per 100k of Covid-19 in the Borders with 22 cases over the last seven days testing positive. Mrs Craig highlighted that although it was an improving picture, because of the highly contagious variant, cases could rapidly increase and the 'Stay at Home' message remained in place. With regard to education, all primary school children were back in schools with senior pupils returning on a phased basis. A full-time return for secondary pupils would take place after the Easter holiday. SBC were planning for the return to schools and information would be released over the next few days. Mrs Craig advised that plans were being finalised to expand the local programme of community testing for asymptomatic cases. This was important as many people might not have symptoms and would be spreading the virus without realising. Anyone who had Covid-19 symptoms should book a test and self-isolate immediately (www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 0800 028 2816). Ms Craig went on to advise that business support funds were still available and administered by the Council. In addition, there were funds available from other organisations the Strategic Framework Business Fund, Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund and the Mobile and Home Based Close Contact Services Fund. Information on all business support available was on the Scottish Government website.

With regard to the Community Assistance Hubs (CAHs) Mrs Craig explained that they remained operational to coordinate support required within localities. The CAHs continued to work closely with a range of partners and could be scaled up if necessary. Mrs Craig concluded her presentation by advising of the positive progress of the vaccination programme with almost half of the population receiving their first vaccine. Wave 3 was expected to be completed by mid-April and the rest of the adult population completed by end of July. In response to questions Mrs Craig acknowledged that it would be important to stick by the rules to ensure restrictions were lifted. Local Area Commander Fisher added that policing was based on the four Es - engage, explain, encourage and lastly enforcement. The Chairman thanked Mrs Craig for the informative presentation.

(Note: Following the meeting the presentation slides and the link to testing information was forwarded to the Area Partnership circulation list).

7. FLOODING

- 7.1 The Chair explained that that this item had been requested following the recent extreme weather conditions and the devastating impact on local communities. Community Councils shared their experiences:-
- 7.2 Southdean Community Council – issues with runoff, cundies, timber transport, increase in house building, verges have been badly damaged and drains required clearing. Greater participation required from SBC with regard to road clearing. Engagement required with Forestry Commission as vertical planting creates flooding downstream. SBC responded quickly to properties affected by flooding. Should be building standards in place for planting – more control by SBC required. Flood protection measures to be commenced before 2022 to give community hope.
- 7.3 Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council – SBC responsible for producing a working flood risk management plan so should lead on flood prevention – nothing in place for the Liddle Water catchment area. Lack of joined up thinking by SBC - actions they take were causing issues further downstream. For example, SBC replaced pipes but did not enlarge the pipe under the road to prevent flooding to a cottage. SBC have advised that the pipe will be replaced this summer. Forestry Commission – furrows for planting should be across hills. Forestry clearance was resulting in water runoff and causing water pollution and water rising in Newcastleton.
- 7.4 Newcastleton & District Community Council – debris including increased water flow causing a serious of pinch points and a challenge getting water away from community. Aware that dredging was not a long term flood planning solution but something needed to be done to release pinch points. The Holmbridge effects flood levels and also the drainage to homes being flooded. SEPA rules regarding dredging need to be revisited. Trees being felled are causing the Slitrig to flood in Hawick. Forestry Commission responsible for much of the flooding. Difference of opinion in timeline with Council's emergency planning team. Not allowed to call out fire service which was a disgrace. Planting at south of Hawick is going to risk the Slitrig flooding again.
- 7.5 Hawick Community Council – Houses at Crowbyres need to be protected. Hawick Flood protection scheme works will be accelerated over the coming months.
- 7.6 Duncan Morrison, Flood and Coastal Management Team Leader was in attendance and advised that any issues in relation to emergency response should be raised with Jim Fraser at the emergency planning debrief. He explained that the Solway Flood Management Plan covered Newcastleton and was available on the Council's website. In terms of flood risk management, flooding cannot always be prevented, protection was key. Following the discussion it was agreed that Mrs Elbron set up a Flooding Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee would consider the wider process of flood management plans, forestry and SEPA.

Action: Mrs Elborn would set up a framework for the Flooding Sub-Committee and circulate an agenda. Mr Morrison, on request, could arrange for representatives from SEPA and the Forestry Commission to attend.

8. **CURRENT SBC CONSULTATIONS**

The Chair advised that the updated Supplementary Planning Guidance – Planning Brief – Former Borders College Galashiels consultation closed on 31 March 2021.

https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/regulatory-services/updated_spg_former_borders_college_gala/

9. **TWENTY'S PLENTY**

9.1 The Chair gave an update on the Twenty's Plenty scheme explaining that a second survey was due to be circulated to Community Councils shortly and ask for consideration on:

- Has the 20mph trial had any influence on walking and cycling in your community?
- Are there any streets you would like to revert back to 30mph?
- Are there any streets that need some more work to remain at 20mph?

9.2 A wider public consultation was scheduled for the last week in April and the first three weeks in May. The public consultation would ask for feedback on experiences of the 20mph trial, any influences on walking and cycling and if there were any streets they wanted kept at 20mph and any to revert back to 30mph. Many communities would also begin to see the roll out of electronic signs from now until the end of April. SBC was working with the trunk road authority to see if it was possible to trial the electronic signs on trunk roads.

10. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW**

Cameron Knox, Hawick Community Council and Philip Kerr, Southdean Community Council provided an update on the Community Council Scheme Review Group meeting. Points raised included: Code of Conduct and that this should be the same as for Councillors. No community council boundaries had changed, however, membership to be considered. Constitutions should be harmonised across all community councils. Online banking meant a different mechanism required for signatories. Mr Knox added that four years between elections was considered too long and the term should be three years. Attracting a diverse and younger membership had also been discussed.

11. **FIT FOR 2024: REVIEW OF AREA PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY**

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 12 January 2021, Gillian Jardine advised that each Area Partnership had given suggestions on how Area Partnerships and Community Funding could be developed. Reports on both the Community Fund and Area Partnerships would be presented to Council on 25 March. Following the Council meeting the Working Sub-Groups would be advised of the next steps for each locality.

12. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB**

12.1 Gillian Jardine gave an update on the work of the Community Assistance Hubs (CAHs) advising that feedback received from services involved with the hubs and people receiving support had been positive. Building on the success, the intention was to build a locality model with a single point of contact for a range of services e.g. third sector housing, health and social care partnership and resilience groups. Currently the CAHs operation remained the same and contact was through the Council's 0300 number. In the future the CAHs would have a physical location based on the What Matters Hubs, so that people could come along and discuss any assistance they required with a range of partners and services. Ms Jardine went on to advise that they were also considering the use of video technology for virtual consultations with the Borders General Hospital. A trial of a virtual

Whats Matter Hub would commence at the end of April. Information would be circulated to promote the service to communities.

- 12.2 The health and social care partnership were meeting daily to review and agree packages of support to local communities and individuals. There was weekly community partnership meetings attended by a range of organisations to provide support. Ms Jardine would feedback emerging priorities from and to the Area Partnership and this could inform the locality plans. In response to a question regarding coordinating with Place proposals, Ms Jardine explained that because a range of services attend the Community Partner meetings, they would be able to advise of the communities needs and suggest solutions. It was noted that the Hubs should be promoted to make the public aware of this service.

13. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE LOCALITY PLAN AND ACTION PLANS**

The Chair advised that the Teviot and Liddesdale Locality Plan and related Action Plans were available on the Council's website. These plans outlined the priorities for the Teviot and Liddesdale area and were live documents and would change as local need and priorities changed and this Area Partnership evolved. Ms Jardine explained that the Locality Plans and Actions Plan had not been progressed during this past year because of Covid but that the plans would evolve as the Area Partnership develops and the CAH provides updates on local need.

14. **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015**

The Chair further advised that currently, there were no formal Participation Requests or formal Asset Transfer requests being considered within Teviot & Liddesdale. Further information can be found in the useful links in Section 4 of the agenda.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ramage declared an interest in the Railway Film Project in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

15. **TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE COMMUNITY FUND 2021/21**

- 15.1 Gillian Jardine, Locality Development Officer, advised there were four applications to be considered this evening amounting to £43,955.00, which meant the Teviot and Liddesdale Community Fund was oversubscribed by £1,413.00. Ms Jardine summarised each application, detailed information on each application had been provided in the supplementary agenda pack circulated prior to the meeting.

15.2 **Hawick Recreation Association – Heating System**

The application for consideration from Hawick Recreation Association was for £6,637.00 to replace the existing heating system at the Auld Baths. The hall was used by a variety of groups who had commented that the hall was cold and there was a concern that bookings might stop which could impact on HRA's income. £7,374.00 had been ring fenced from Hawick Common Good so if they were successful this evening they would be able to complete the project.

15.3 **Future Hawick – Salaries for Welcome Hosts**

This application from Future Hawick was for the Hawick Welcome Initiative requesting £14,950.00 to pay wages of four Welcome Hosts and an administrator this summer. Two of the hosts would be young people interested in a career in tourism. Feedback from visitors for the Welcome Hosts was positive and local businesses were also supportive with many providing financial donations. Due to the pandemic, funding activities have been limited this year and reserves were not sufficient to cover full project costs.

15.4 **Newcastleton & District Community Council – Railway Film Project.**

This application was from all eight community councils seeking £4,878.00 to commission Alchemy Arts to produce a film on the communities' thoughts on extending the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Carlisle and would focus on the social gains of extending the railway. The film would be accessible and allow communities to express what the railway

would mean to them. Participation would be open to everyone and would include archive footage of the railway from the past. The film would be shared through social media platforms and the digital discussion taking place in the spring.

15.5 **Newcastleton & District Community Council - CCTV**

The final application for consideration was from Newcastleton and District Community Council for £17,490.00 to assist with costs of installing a CCTV system. The CCTV would provide a series of linked cameras for all entrances to the village and locations prone to antisocial behaviour. Two cameras would also be placed at the River Liddle and could be monitored by the emergency planning team and resilience team and would give a 20 minute warning of flooding to the village. This could be used to inform a future flood scheme. Ms Jardine explained that the application still required planning permission and therefore did not currently meet the criteria of the Fund. However, the Area Partnership could award on the proviso that planning permission was granted, but the earliest a decision would be reached by planning would be early April.

15.6 All four applications were discussed and fully supported by the Area Partnership. The Chair suggested that because of the shortfall, and that planning permission was still required, the CCTV application should have the slight shortfall with the proviso that this would be paid from the 2021/22 Fund. Ms Smith advised that as the application did not meet the Community Fund criteria, there would need to be a caveat in the award letter in the event that planning permission was not granted. In response to a question Mrs Elborn clarified that the £17,400 already secured by Newcastleton & District Community Council would be used to commence the first element of the project ahead of planning permissions being secured. Ms Smith explained further that the community funding would not be awarded until planning permission was granted and this condition would be included with the other terms and conditions in the award letter for Newcastleton and District Community Council.

15.7 Following consideration of all four applications, the Area Partnership unanimously approved community funding as follows:-

- £6,637.00 to Hawick Recreation Association;
- £14,950.00 to Future Hawick – Welcome Host Initiative;
- £4,878.00 to Newcastleton and District Community Council – Railway Film Project; and
- £16,077.00 to Newcastleton and District Community Council – CCTV. (The remaining £1,413.00 to be paid from the 2021/22 Community Grant Fund). The grant for the CCTV not to be issued until planning permission was granted and this would be included with the other terms and conditions of the award letter).

16. **DATE OF NEXT TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP – 8 JUNE 2021**

16.1 The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, 8 June 2021. Suggestions for agenda items could be sent to the Locality Development co-ordinator at gjardine@scotborders.gov.uk

16.2 It was suggested that following consideration by Council of the Fit For 2024 proposals an additional meeting be arranged, this could be an informal meeting.

17. **YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Chair welcomed Ram Rigby, SBC Youth Engagement Worker and Emily Gibson Youth Ambassador for Sustainability. They shared a short film clip on climate change which highlighted some of the problems that required addressing in the Borders and their hopes for the future. The film suggested the Scottish Borders could accelerate change by increasing car charging points, rewilding green spaces, encouraging organisations to divert from fossils to green value, increasing public transport and creating more green

jobs for the local community. The Youth Ambassadors were launching #OurPromiseToThePlanet campaign on 19 March.

Action: further information would be circulated to communities.

18. **MEETING EVALUATION**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and asked that attendees complete the meeting evaluation which was open until 23:45 on Friday.

The meeting concluded at 8:40 pm.