SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP held Via MS Teams on Thursday, 1 July 2021 at 6.30 pm

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Present:-   SBC Councillors: J. A. Fullarton (Chairman), C. Hamilton, D. Moffat and M. Rowley.
Other organisations' attendees: Ms J. Amaral (BAVS), Mr J. Brown (Swinton & Ladykirk CC), Mr L. Brown (A Heart for Duns), Mr K. Dickinson (Gavinton, Fogo & Polworth CC), Mr B. Forrest (Reston & Auchencrow CC), Mr R. Hamilton, Ms A. McNeill (A Heart for Duns), Mr D. McNeill (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service), Mr A. Mitchell (Duns CC), Ms P. Rigby (SBC Youth Engagement Worker), Ms J. Sutton (Cockburnspath Community).

Apologies:-   Councillors J. Greenwell and H. Laing.

In Attendance:-   Mr D. Lawlor (Scottish Futures Trust), Locality Development Co-ordinator (G. Jardine), Clerk to the Council.

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1.   **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**
     The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and the Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted and how those both in the meeting and watching via the Live Stream could take part.

2.   **FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS**
     The Minutes of the meetings of the Berwickshire Area Partnership held on 20 May and 10 June 2021 had been circulated. With reference to the last sentence in paragraph 2.2 of the Minute of 10 June 2021, regarding consensus, it was agreed that the reference to "1 or 2 people" in dissent would be amended to the "mood of the room" to better reflect the discussion at the meeting.

     DECISION
     AGREED the Minutes of meetings held on 20 May and 10 June 2021, subject to an amendment to the last sentence in paragraph 2.2 of the Minute of 10 June 2021, so that it would now read "In response to a question about consensus, Ms Wilkinson further confirmed that this not mean 100% agreement. It was agreed that this would reflect the general mood of the room instead."

3.   **PLACE MAKING - CO-PRODUCING THE FUTURE OF OUR PLACES**
3.1   With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of 4 March 2021, the Chairman introduced Mr Diarmaid Lawlor, of Scottish Futures Trust, to facilitate a brief workshop around Place Making. Mr Lawlor explained that the context for the discussion would cover the What, Why and How of learning from Covid & lockdowns:
     - What – working better together around local needs
     - Why – build on Covid experiences and support community ambitions
     - How – shared principles/way of working on local priorities, alignment and simplification.

     The format for the workshop was based on three questions around: ambition and key issues in the community; success criteria; and principles – how we could better work together. Mr Lawlor led the discussion and made real-time notes to summarise the

comments and points made. A number of points were raised: resilient communities working well together; rural farming community; natural networks to be fostered; voluntary sector undervalued; recognising micro-priority areas; use of a bottom up approach; the importance of connectivity in terms of broadband and also road, rail and bus; the opportunities around re-opening Reston Station; success would mean more young people staying in the Borders, families moving to work here, decentralisation; size of population an issue; affordable housing; making best use of digital opportunities at home, at work, and in an entrepreneurial way.

3.2   The Chairman explained that a summary of the workshop discussions across all the Area Partnerships would inform a report to Council at the end of August to set out the detail of the place making approach. Subject to Council approval, the first place-making events would begin in Autumn 2021. The Chairman thanked Mr Lawlor for attending and facilitating the workshop and for all those who had taken part in the discussion. A summary of the context and key points of the workshop are appended as Appendices 1 and 2 to this Minute.

4.   **CONSULTATIONS**
Ms Gillian Jardine, Locality Development Co-ordinator, advised that the consultation on the future and potential changes to the five Area Partnerships was open until 1 August, so there was still an opportunity to have a say in how the model should evolve and how meetings should be run.

5.   **BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB**
An update on the operation of the Berwickshire Community Assistance Hub had been given on the agenda for the meeting. Since that had been published, Ms Jardine, Locality Development Co-ordinator, advised that there had been an increase in the numbers of positive Covid cases or households having to self-isolate. This had meant an increase in welfare calls and referrals for assistance e.g. financial, access to food, picking up prescriptions, etc. This was the case across the Borders and not limited to Berwickshire.

6.   **EYEMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL**
Mr Steve Renwick, Project Manager, and Mr John Butcher, Education lead for the project, joined the meeting and gave an update on the proposals for Eyemouth Primary School. Mr Renwick explained that, following a Citizen Space consultation, strong community support had been shown for 2 of the 3 options with a distinct favourite in adopting a campus-style solution. A report had been considered by Council which had agreed to go ahead with the formal education consultation which would start at the beginning of the new academic year in August and run for 30 days. This consultation would focus on the educational benefits. Mr Butcher explained that this was a statutory consultation, with a formal document produced and distributed. It would outline the proposed rebuild of the Primary School in a new campus arrangement which would be located within the boundaries of the High School within the town. This would focus early years, primary and secondary provision, and also develop the young workforce, all in the one location. The formal consultation would require public meetings to be held to outline the education case and then people could formally respond. A report would be produced for Council to make a decision and then this would be sent to Scottish Government for their consideration. The decision of Council would either be agreed or it could be called in for further examination, after which it could be agreed, amendments requested or refused, although the latter was unlikely. Mr Butcher had been heartened by the discussion on place making earlier in the meeting to capitalise on the Borders. In education terms, the aim was for young people to have an excellent education and play a full part in their community. The Inspire Learning programme gave young people opportunities to learn through a digital platform, which was unique in Scotland. It was all about collaboration and working together, building on community. Eyemouth was a distinct community with its surrounding towns and villages, and by building a new Primary School wing and early years facility, this would offer young people the opportunity through the years to build relationships with staff and each other; to get specialist support when needed; and access

high quality, first class learning. Staff could work together and share best practice to develop children's skills from the age of two. Parents would know that their children were in a safe environment. Both the Head teachers in the Primary School and High School were supportive and collaborating on the project. The Area Partnership welcomed the update, which was a really progressive opportunity for the Eyemouth community.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes to allow for a comfort break.

7. **BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY UPDATE**
7.1 Ms Juliana Amaral advised of BAVS sessions on the Community Recovery Fund with the next meeting due on 5 July at 3pm, the aim being to create partnerships and this space was useful to share ideas. BAVS was also recruiting for a Board member (Trustee) and was particularly interested in hearing from younger people and those from different backgrounds.

7.2 Ms Jennie Sutton gave an update on the Cockburnspath Community Shop which had received £10k of funding and had opened one month previously. The shop was run by 2 managers, 16 volunteers and a young person was currently being recruited through the Kickstart programme. The shop had received huge compliments from the local community; predominantly sold local food and artisan products; was used by both locals and walkers; and overall was a great success. A second online poll had now been launched the previous weekend for Cockburnspath and Cove, on transport, services and facilities, and already 500 responses had been received.

8. **BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY FUND ASSESSMENT PANEL**
With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of 10 June 2021, the Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine advised that there had been six applications to join the Assessment Panel. All were strong candidates who went beyond the criteria and Ms Jardine was pleased to say that all six had been appointed. The Area Partnership noted that James Anderson, Keith Dickinson, Andrew Mitchell, Anne McNeill, David Scott, and Rachael Wood had been appointed by the Service Director Customer & Communities. As the Panel had space for eight people, applications could still be received from anyone wishing to be considered for appointment. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that should the number of voting members of the Assessment Panel remain at six, then the quorum for meetings could be reduced to four until a full complement of members was achieved. SBC Elected Members were not counted as part of the quorum as they were non-voting members of the Panel.

9. **BERWICKSHIRE COMMUNITY FUND**
The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, advised that no applications had yet been received for the Berwickshire Community Fund and reminded everyone that applications needed to be received by the end of July for consideration at the Area Partnership meeting on 2 September 2021. In response to a question, Ms Jardine confirmed that the Fund was being promoted on social media and there had been some local press coverage on the recruitment of members to the Community Fund Assessment Panel. A further push would be made and the link to the application was issued at the meeting ([Community Fund 2021-22 | Scottish Borders Council (scotborders.gov.uk)](scotborders.gov.uk)). In previous years in Berwickshire, it tended to be mid to the end of the year before applications came in to the Fund.

10. **BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND**
The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, gave details of the Build Back a Better Borders Fund, which was new funding available for projects for recovery from Covid linked to culture, sport, the environment, recognising volunteers, etc. A link to the Fund was provided at the meeting ([Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund | Scottish Borders Council (scotborders.gov.uk)](scotborders.gov.uk)) The Chairman confirmed that this was a one-off Fund

to help communities recover from Covid, which was open now and he encouraged applications from community groups.

11. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR NOTING**
The Area Partnership noted the current community information and useful links which had been circulated with the agenda and also the information contained in the Area Partnerships' information pack.

12. **NEXT MEETING**
The next meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership was scheduled for 2 September 2021 at 6:30pm and would be held via MS Teams. Everyone was encouraged to submit items for the agenda.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/OPEN FORUM**
Mr Donald McNeill advised that the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service had a live public consultation underway until 18 July 2021, which was on the draft long-term vision for the Fire & Rescue Service and what the service would look like in the coming years. The document itself set out the high level strategic intent and priorities for the service over the following 10 years, recognising the changing risks/demands. Dwelling fires continued to decrease year on year, but there had been an increase in wild fires and flooding, along with changes to demography. Information would be emailed out to the Area Partnership. In response to questions, Mr McNeill advised that unfortunately there were still road traffic accidents, including fatalities, not just on A class/trunk roads but also on minor country roads.

14. **FUTURE BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING DATES**
The dates for the future meetings of the Area Partnership, as detailed on the agenda up until June 2022, were noted. The Chairman referred to comments on the agenda for meetings to be over long and over-wordy so asked for any thoughts or ideas on how this could be improved in future. The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting that evening.

The meeting concluded at 8.25 pm

What

Working better together around local needs

Why

Build on Covid experiences and support community ambitions

How

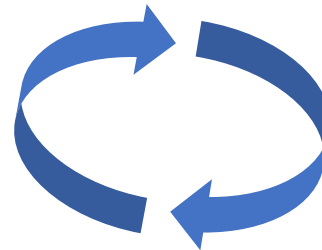- Shared principles; way of working
- Alignment
- Simplification

Localism

- *social partnerships - impact*
- *gaps before statutory responses*
- *distributed services*
- *real world learning*

Vulnerabilities

- *social inequalities*
- *hidden harm*
- *shielding*
- *stop people getting ill*

Capabilities

- *trusted people*
- *rediscovered interests*
- *national tensions*
- *new ways of working*

Common Purpose

- *the order of doing*
- *what matters - a common purpose*
- *quick decisions - oversight by trust*
- *affects every aspect of life*
- *leadership at all levels*
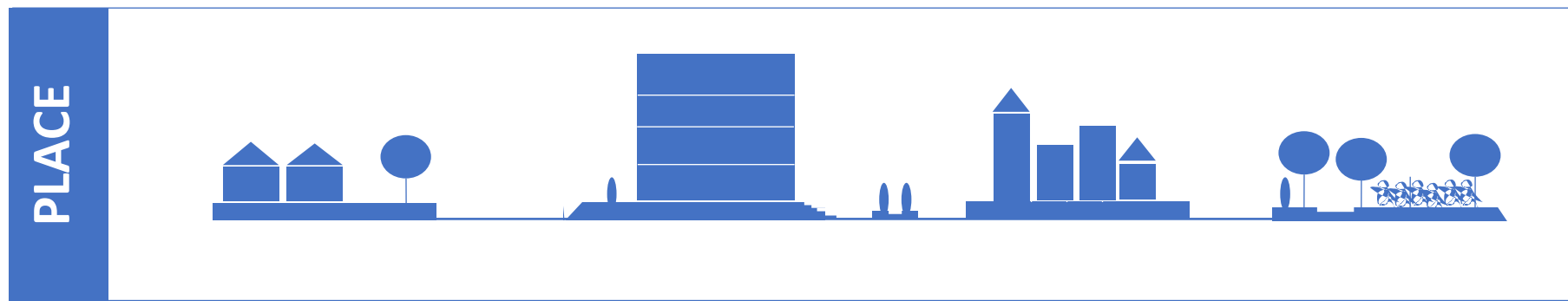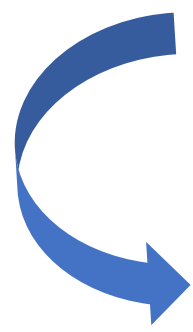
Infrastructures

- *ownership of space*
- *resourcing*
- *digital equity*
- *new settings*

Place as a Mechanism for Change

Individuals → Communities ▸ Organisations → Policy Themes ▸ Statistics → Outcomes

PLACE
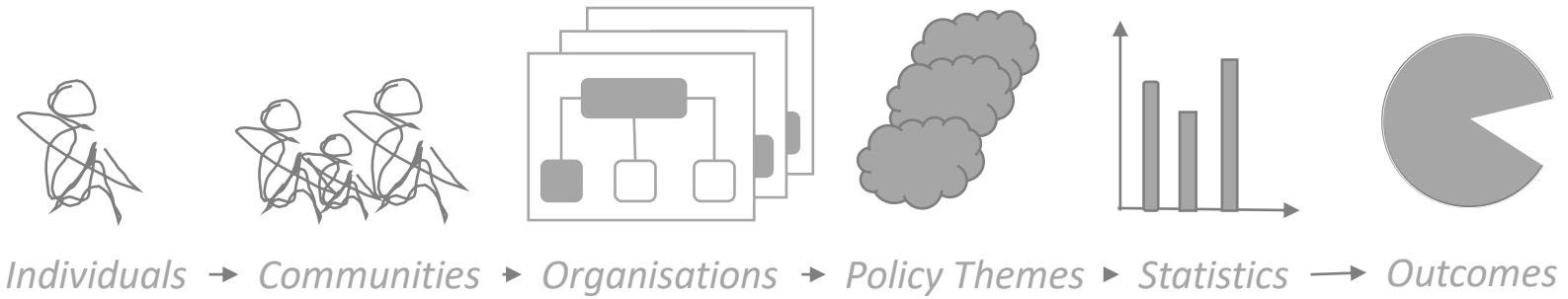
Agenda

What

Working better together around local needs

Why

Build on Covid experiences and support community ambitions

How

- Shared principles; way of working
- Alignment
- Simplification

- Key issues

- Success =

- Working together priorities

Key Issues

- Covid
- Resilient communities for flooding and winter maintenance
- Resilient communities worked very well
- Linked in with the idea of how you define what a place is in geographic terms and community terms
- Have been looking at ways to plan
- **Planning for areas beyond where we live**
- There will be communities who feel like a community, a place
- The whole of Edinburgh will be completely different
- Resilient community, 300 properties, knocked on doors, got buy in
- A small area
- **When we are thinking about priorities, priorities will be different for the sub sets of Berwickshire**

- Big towns, villages, rural farming community
- **Neighbourliness**
- Ambition, and what success looks like
- What resilient comunuties can be if support is provided at the right time
- **Red tape removed**
- Communities responded, and responded well
- Communities well equipped
- **Needs met before social work**
- Community assistance hub
- At times phone lines were not being used because support locally
- **Natural networks to be fostered**
- **Risk that the voluntary sector is forgotten, undervalued, only used in when as required**
- Informal networks

Key Issues

- Recognising that there are micro priorities
- Areas that have their own priorities
- Overarching proprieties
- Feel sometimes that the top level priorities are set at top level
- Can the top level priorities be set from bottom up rather than national policy
- Age
- The younger generation
- Think about everybody
- Especially those without vehicles
- Finished school, family in farming
- Connectivity, digitally and transport important for young people
- They have a better grasp of digital things
- Ensuring everybody has good broadband
- Sometimes clunky

- Access to transport
- The challenges of learning to drive
- Being able to drive
- Station at Reston, £20m
- Four trains in each direction each day
- Need more
- LNER
- Earning Edinburgh wages and bring back to the Borders
- Working here
- Mobile digital connectivity
- Unique opportunity post Covid, rewriting contracts so staff only to attend office 40% of time….more opportunity to work locally
- 2 day commute
- Makes the Borders much more attractive

Key Issues

- In the next couple of days, a draft economic strategy to be launched
- Cross sector, third and voluntary, RSL's, all kinds of people involved
- Talks about a better connected place, a greener place, a thriving place
- Somewhere where innovation and development happens
- This is the land of David Hume
- Inventing the modern plough
- Not a backwater
- Fantastic connections to England and beyond
- HS2 To Carlisle
- Great opportunities here
- Covid has thrown up phenomenal examples of collaboration

- Neighbours talking
- Folk seeing eye to eye
- Incredible feeling of collaboration across the Borders and South of Scotland
- Its why we are here

Success

Collaboration

Priorities

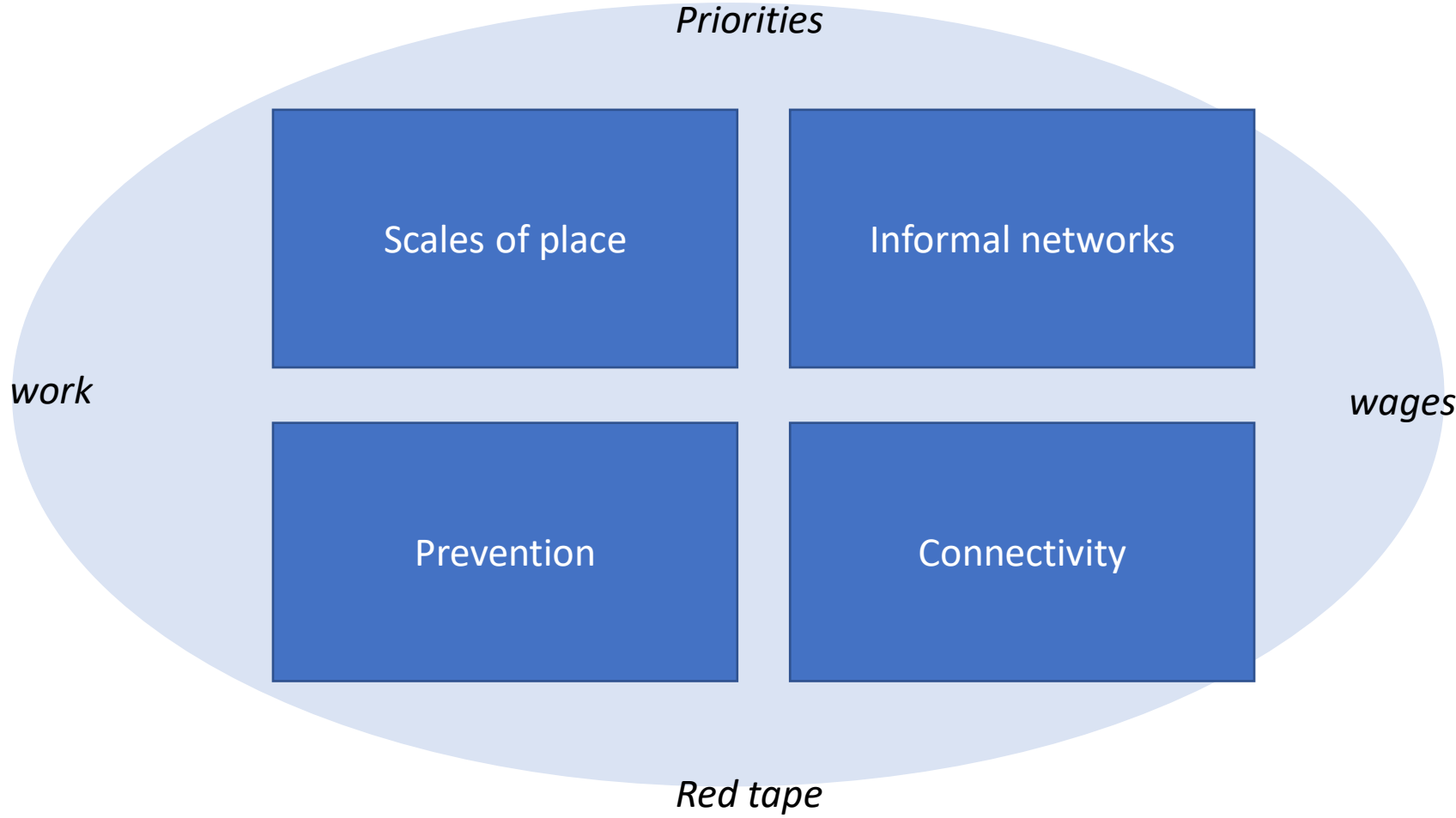*work*

wages

Scales of place	Informal networks
Prevention	Connectivity

Red tape

Innovation

Success

- Digital and the new digital age
- Impact on localism
- If consumers wish to buy in their house
- Using amazon as a mechanism
- Blended experiences
- More young eople staying in the Borders for work or study
- Study beyond school is limited
- Looking at options for this,
- Amazon…..not a success buying
- If we did these things right, people would know they can set up a business here, cheaper than Edinburgh with fantastic landscapes, and footfall
- Fantastic opportunities
- Need further education opportunities
- Young people feeling represented, having a say over local policy and things that matter to them
- Education policy experience in school
- More pupils have greater say of what comes into their school

- More voice on more of x or y for young people in their schools
- Lots of lads who worked on the farm had to travel a few miles to get to work, then after a while afford motorbike or car
- Bikes
- Relying on hitchhiking or bike
- Young people new and in the past have many of the same problems
- Amazon
- Customers got into online shopping
- Mail order bit
- Older customers were not comfortable going out
- Double whammy…..online shopping and people staying at home
- Shopping was a social thing
- Combinartion of things happening

Success

- Bikes
- E-bikes are the future
- Reston link, ebike commute
- Big issue is population
- Every single organisation struggles for members, consultancies, voluntary group
- People are volunteers on many groups
- Need more homes
- Tiny villages and sizeable villages need a proportion of more homes to support local services
- Different reasons for more homes in different places
- Digital as an opportunity
- If we choose to use Amazon [moral and economic choice]
- Digital works in 2 ways: Eyemouith pies across the UK
- Duns brownies open in Princes St and across UK

- Get digital infrastructure right
- Position as a great place t live
- A lot of good companies based here with blended working can work here
- Decentalisation
- More local places working better with local services
- Bringing population into the area
- Need critical mass of individuals and families with suffivient income to support new emerging bsuinesses
- Growing and diverse population
- The area is fairly mono cultural and ageing
- Supporting digital
- Mental wellbeing
- Fair work

Issues

Collaboration

Priorities

work

wages

Scales of place	Informal networks
Prevention	Connectivity

Red tape

Innovation

Success
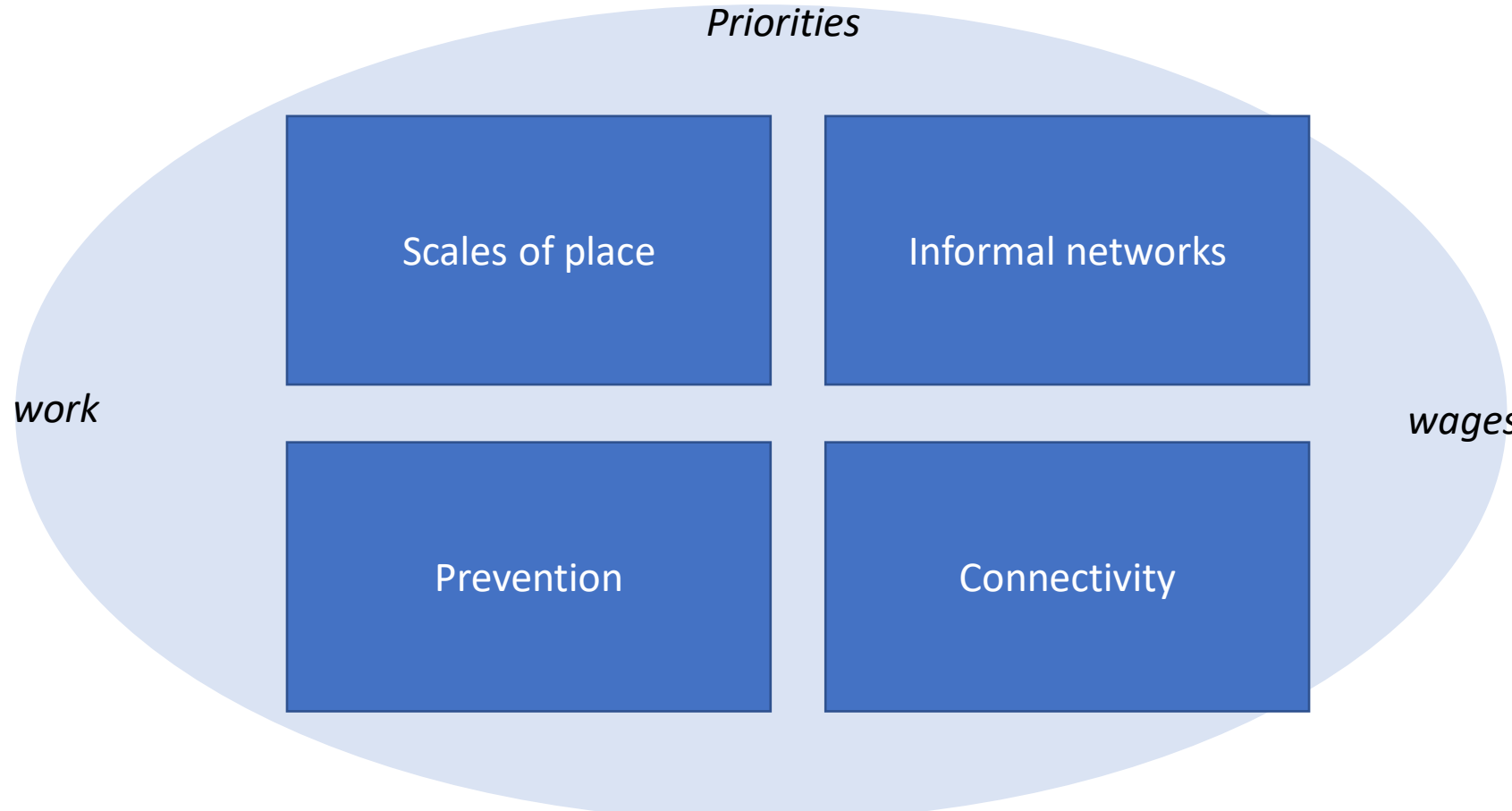
Grow and diversify population

Great place

Wider learning	Voice & participation

decentralisation

Fair work and wellbeing

Enable economic choices

Blended	Entrepreneur

More homes, more choices

Critical mass
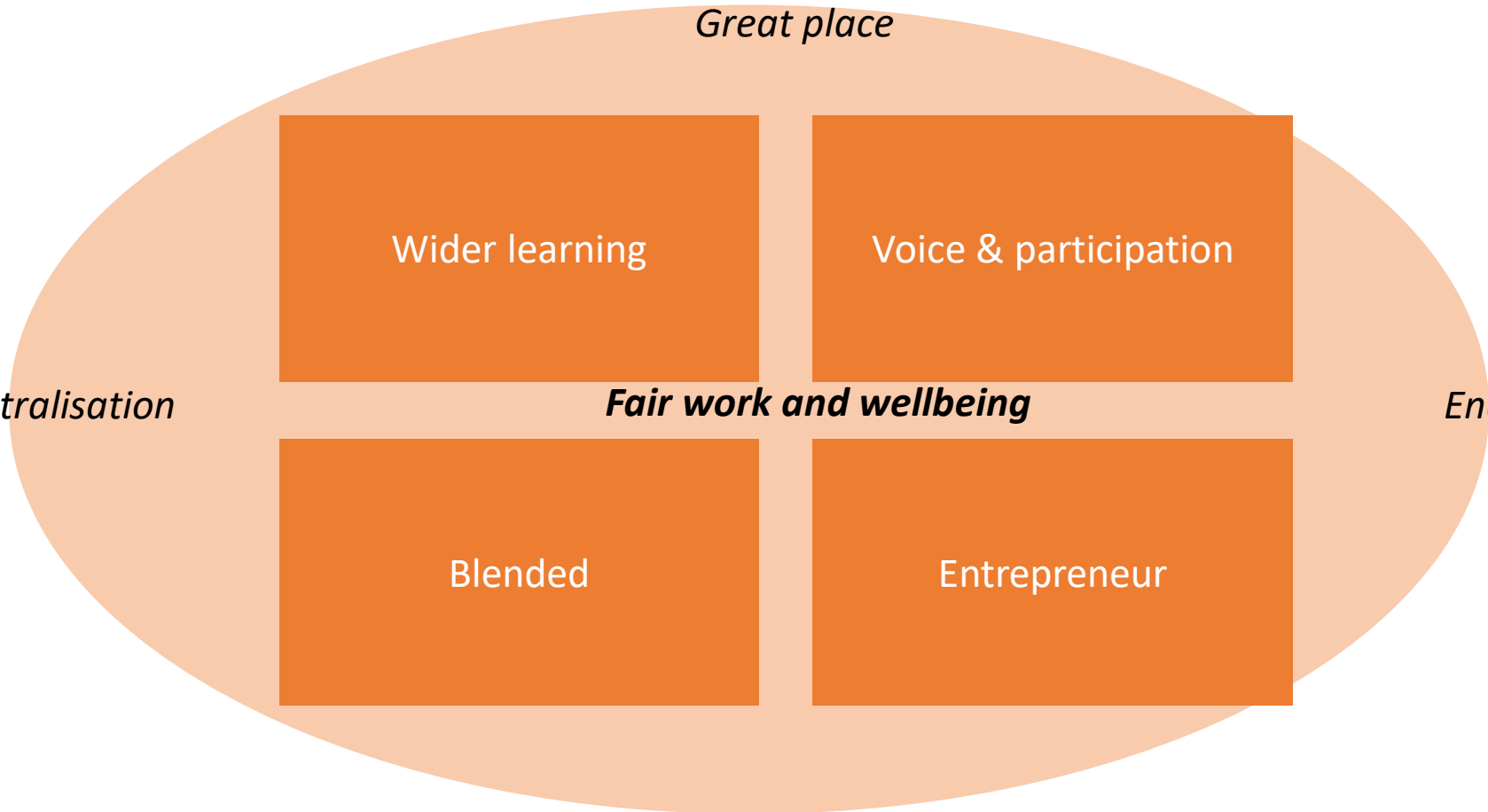
Issues

"set overarching priorities from the bottom up rather than national policy"

How you define what a place is in geographic terms and community terms matters. It affects how we plan where we live, and plan for areas beyond where we live. There will be some communities who feel like a community, like a place. But that experience will be completely different in different places.

Priorities will be different for sub sets of Berwickshire, big towns, villages, rural farming community. And there are overarching priorities across all areas. But, these priorities seem to be set only at the top level of decision making.

"natural networks need to be fostered"

The Resilient communities model for flooding and winter maintenance has worked well for the Covid response. Neighbourliness and informal networks matter. Covid has shown what resilient communities can be if support is provided at the right time. Red tape was removed. Communities responded and responded well. People had needs met before formal social work referrals were needed. At times, the phone lines in community assistance hubs were not being used because people were being supported locally.

But natural networks need to be fostered. The risk now is that the voluntary sector gets forgotten, and is only used 'as and when required'.

"the risk now is that the voluntary sector gets forgotten"

We need to think about everybody in our communities, including the younger generation, especially those without vehicles who can't get around. Connectivity is important for young people. And, they often have a better grasp of digital things, with confidence. So, it is important to ensure that everybody has good broadband. Sometimes, now, it is clunky.

Access to transport is also important. New rail investment and new stations are welcome in the Borders. But we need more stops, more frequency. And more connections to the stations for more people.

"opening up the Borders offers people new choices"

There is a unique opportunity post covid for people to re-write contracts so staff only need to attend offices some of the time, providing more opportunities to work locally. We can use this to bring Edinburgh wages and more work back to the Borders. Support more people working here. So, capitalise on the beauty of the landscape, the quality of the place. Attract and retain more people.

Strengthen the Borders as somewhere that innovation and development happens, This is the land of David Hume, not a backwater. It has fantastic connections to England and beyond, with great opportunities around the HS2 and future connections to Carlisle.

Covid has thrown up phenomenal examples of collaboration. More neighbours are talking, more folk seeing eye to eye. Build on the collaboration across the South of Scotland. It is why we are living here.

"build on the collaboration across the South of Scotland"

Success

"blended experiences, linking digital and localism, offer new opportunities"

We are concerned about the rise of Amazon, the impact of digital on high streets. And in Covid, some older customers are no longer comfortable going out.

But we need to see digital as an opportunity. Build on the experience of local businesses making local and serving UK Markets with excellent food, and produce and pies. Connect markets. Get the digital infrastructure right. Position the Borders as a great place to live. A lot of good companies offering blended working can locate and work here. There are fantastic opportunities.

Buying more from Amazon is not a success. This kind of purchasing is a moral and economic decision. So, build on the value of what we have locally. Show that this is a place where people can set up a business cheaper than Edinburgh, with footfall and markets, in a fantastic landscape, with digital connections.

"more young people staying in the Borders for work of study"

At the moment, study beyond school is limited. We need more options around this. Use digital to extend experiences for higher and further education, so more people can access more of these experiences more locally.

Success is more young people feeling represented, having a say over local policy and things that matter to them. Build more opportunities across communities. for school pupils and young people to have a voice, to have a say on decisions. Build skills. Support mental health. And fair work.

"connectivity choices"

Young people now and in the past have had the same problems with connectivity. Many people still rely on hitchhiking or taking a bike to travel miles. E-bikes are an exciting future. They enable more connections to new rail stations and travel points, facilitating choices for commuting and working locally.

A big issue is population. Every single organisation struggles for members, consultancies, voluntary group. Often, people are volunteers on many groups. And the area is fairly mono cultural and ageing. So, bring population into the area. We need critical mass of individuals and families with sufficient income to support new emerging businesses.

So, we need more homes. Tiny villages and sizeable villages need a proportion of more homes to support local services. There will be different reasons for more homes in different places. And we need more decentralisation, with more local places working better with more local services.

"grow a more diverse population"