

**SCOTTISH BORDERS  
COMMUNITY PLANNING  
STRATEGIC BOARD**

**MEETING**

**Date:** 10 June 2021 from 2.00 to 3:50 p.m.

**Location:** Via MS Teams

**Attendees:** Councillor Mark Rowley (SBC) [Chair], Councillor Stuart Bell (SBC), Ms Elaine Acaster (Borders College), Mr Stephen Gourlay (Scottish Fire & Rescue), Professor Russel Griggs (SOSE), Ms Karen Hamilton (NHS Borders), Mrs Marjorie Hume (Third Sector), Mr Ralph Roberts (NHS Borders), Councillor Robin Tatler (SBC), Councillor George Turnbull (SBC).

**Also in attendance:** Netta Meadows, Jenni Craig, John Curry, Rob Dickson, Stuart Easingwood, Jenny Wilkinson (all SBC); Keith Allan (NHS Borders/SBC - Public Health); Ms Angela Cox (Borders College); Nile Istephan (Eildon Housing); Rob McCulloch-Graham (H&SC IJB); Julia Mulloy (SBHA).

**MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS**

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Superintendent D. Forrester (Police Scotland), Councillor C. Hamilton, and Mr Robin Hill (SBHA).

**2. MINUTE**

2.1 The Minute of Meeting of 4 March 2021 had been circulated.

**DECISION**

**AGREED the Minute.**

2.2 Mrs Hume advised that a number of presentations which had been made at the previous meeting had yet to be passed on to members, and officers confirmed this would be done. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute regarding an update on the TSI, Mrs Hume further advised that the new set up was now in place and if any partners wanted anything included in the regular Newsletter then they could make contact.

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

**3. COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP - KEY PRIORITIES/ACTION PLAN 2020/21**

With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 4 March 2021, copies of an updated CPP Key Priorities and Action Plan 2020/21 had been circulated. Ms Shona Smith, SBC Communities & Partnership Manager, presented the details which gave updates and timescales on projects/actions with an amber RAG status and showed those at green status. No projects had a red status. Ms Hamilton commented that it was really helpful to see the detail and her only observation was that it would be good if it could be more

measurable in terms of what was trying to be achieved. Netta Meadows advised that some of the actions needed to be more specifically measurable and further work would be carried out to allow better monitoring.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED that further work would be carried out on the Action Plan to ensure it would be more specifically measurable in terms of outcomes which would allow better monitoring.**

#### **4. EDUCATION & SKILLS**

Angela Cox, Principal of Borders College, gave a presentation with an update on Borders Learning, Skills and Employability Partnership (BLSEP); the South of Scotland Digital Skills Hub; the Advanced Manufacturing project; and sustainable futures. Details were given of the governance structure which centred on the Borders Learning, Skills and Employability Partnership Strategic Board. The BLSEP was in place to facilitate local collective leadership and a shared commitment across the region responding to national, South of Scotland and the Edinburgh & South East City Regional Deal skills priorities. Details were given on partnership working over the last year. The Digital Skills Hub, led by Borders College and Dumfries & Galloway College aimed to make the region more competitive by facilitating the delivery of higher level digital skills, supporting digital upskilling and retraining for the key sectors of the south of Scotland's economy. Priorities for action had been identified along with 4 key themes: educational pathways; improving access to digital skills; career long professional learning and mentoring; and upskilling and reskilling for business. Further details were given of the current focus of the Hub. With regard to the Aims Project, Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders Councils, along with D&G and Borders Colleges, SOSE and key stakeholders had received a funding allocation of £3.3m to deliver the Advanced Innovative Manufacturing in the South of Scotland project. This project – for manufacturing SMEs – would provide access to advanced manufacturing technologies, delivered through a regional Hub and Spoke approach, aligned with the Skills and Learning Network. Services would include: training and upskilling the workforce; R& D investment, innovation, concept development; product realisation; and enabling a manufacturing ecosystem. Future ambition was for a partnership response to sustainability through education, knowledge exchange and adoption of technologies. A sustainability summit was planned, Borders College was leading on 3 fringe events at COP26, and work continued with SOSE Energy Transitions Group, College Sector Energy Skills Partnership and the SDS Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan, and Change Works on upskilling local tradespeople. Future priorities included a carbon literacy education programme in schools, college and community; and Sustainability Champions and an Innovation Catalyst Programme. Ms Cox added that while priorities would change, it was about collective leadership and collective willingness to do things together which is what had to be held on to despite the complex ecosystem in which education operated.

#### **DECISION**

**NOTED.**

#### **5. DRAFT SOUTH OF SCOTLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

Copies of a report by SBC Executive Director – Corporate Improvement & Economy had been circulated which set out the progress being made in the development of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy. The draft Strategy had been developed by the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP). The REP aimed to ensure that there was a strong strategic direction for the economic development of the South of Scotland that aligned partner activities with those of the South of Scotland Enterprise. The REP comprised members drawn from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors across the South of Scotland, including from the Scottish Borders. The first main task of the REP had been leading and overseeing the development of a South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy and a draft of this was shown in Appendix 1 to the report. This draft Strategy provided a vision and a set of priority themes for the next 10 years

along with a set of high level actions. These would provide the ambition and intent for the development of a three year action plan that would be updated on an annual basis. This action plan would be developed over the following two months in tandem with a proposed public consultation on the draft Strategy. Mr Dickson gave a presentation on the Strategy, highlighting the context, challenges, strategic framework, and the timeline to the proposed final Strategy. Professor Griggs thanked everyone for all the work which had gone in to the draft Strategy, commenting on the very positive meeting of the REP which had approved it. Members of the Board gave their support to the draft Strategy and consultation.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to welcome the draft South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, and to support the planned consultation on the Strategy by encouraging and promoting participation through partner networks.**

#### **6. EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND CITY REGIONAL DEAL**

Copies of a briefing note by SBC Executive Director, Corporate Improvement and Economy, on the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal “Regional Prosperity Framework Consultation Plan” had been circulated. A six-week consultation was proposed on the Regional Prosperity Framework (RPF) key themes. The overarching aim of the RPF consultation was to create a plan for achieving a fairer, more inclusive and sustainable economy with equity, health and wellbeing of citizens at its core, incorporating the aspirations fed back during the consultation. The main areas for focus were:

- Flourishing – a fairer economy, environment & ecology, households & places
- Resilient – workforce, climate responses, infrastructure & buildings
- Innovative – private sector, third sector & public sector

The RPF would inform future approaches, strategies and policies across sustainability, transport, planning, housing and economic development to enable the region to generate and spread sustainable inclusive growth and to transition to a low carbon economy. This would ensure that the success of the region could continue to be realised and be a key driver of the Scottish economy. Details of the key dates for the consultation were given with the consultation due to end on 26 July 2021. Mr Dickson confirmed that the RPF sought to address some fundamental challenges and stressed the importance of the Framework due to the influence Edinburgh had on the Borders economy. This balanced nicely with the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy which together brought a number of opportunities. The RPF would be circulated after the meeting.

#### **DECISION NOTED.**

#### **7. CHILD POVERTY 2020/21 AND 2021/22**

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 19 November 2020, copies of a report by SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, along with a number of appendices, on Local Child Poverty had been circulated. These included the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Annual Progress Report for 2020/21 and the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report and Action Plan for 2021/22 which required endorsement by the Strategic Board prior to submission to Scottish Government. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 required Local Authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare a Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report and an Annual Progress Report. The Annual Progress Report for 2020/21 was the third Annual Report for the Scottish Borders and provided the Community Planning Partnership and Scottish Government with an update on progress made within the Action Plan. Details were given of the background and main categories that drove poverty, along with the national context and measures to assess child poverty in Scotland. A summary was given of the local context and further details going down to Ward level were provided in Appendix 2 to the report. All indicators were showing an increase in poverty and that was without the impact of Covid which was still to come. A further insight from Borders College highlighted student poverty. Although this was a very

challenging environment, a lot of work was already underway to tackle child poverty. New actions had been identified and these were included in the Report and Action Plan for 2021/22. The focus would now move to that Action Plan and also thinking ahead to 2022/23. The Community Planning Partnership needed to consider what more it could do as a partnership given the impending impact of Covid, the effects of which were still to be felt. Reference was made to the links with the Council's work on its Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Chairman invited the partners to contribute to actions for 2022/23 and look beyond simply treating symptoms and try to treat causes to give people the tools to lift them out of poverty longer term.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to endorse:**

- (a) the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Annual Progress Report for 2020/21 for submission to Scottish Government; and**
- (b) the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report and Action Plan for 2021/22 for submission to Scottish Government.**

#### **8. FINANCIAL INCLUSION LANDSCAPE**

Copies of a report by the SBC Service Director Customer & Communities setting out the current Financial Inclusion Landscape across the Borders had been circulated. The report summarised all the resources across the partnership being put into financial inclusion work to prevent poverty. The advice and support to individuals on how to access the right support at the right time was of critical importance, especially at this time given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report provided an understanding of what the Community Planning Partnership organisations offered in respect of financial inclusion advice and support, and to identify any gaps so that resources and activity could be targeted appropriately as well as maximising any funding opportunities. Each organisation and resources were fairly well joined up and best practice was being shared. The report also sought to make appropriate links to the CPP Child Poverty Report and Action Plan and Scottish Borders Council's Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that financial inclusion resources and activity brought benefits to those who most needed support. In Early Years, the Service Director undertook to provide a response to a question around the time period for referrals and gains, which had totalled 430 and £1.3m respectively. Officers were feeding back through Cosla, professional groups, and the Housing Federation on the timing of the ending of the furlough scheme and the ending of the £20 Universal Credit top up. Partners were encouraged to lobby through their respective professional groups on retaining both these. Councillor Tatler proposed that a seminar/networking event for practitioners be held to identify any gaps, consider the impact of Covid19 and identify how to ensure people knew where to access help.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to:**

- (a) note the financial support and advice that was currently offered by the Community Planning Partnership;**
- (b) note the good links between all of the organisations undertaking financial inclusion work across the partnership and that in most cases referral processes were in place if required;**
- (c) note the concerns in relation to:**
  - (i) The Covid19 benefits support ending, and the demand on support services across the Partnership;**
  - (ii) Food poverty and fuel poverty – providing long term solutions; and**

- (iii) **Digital inclusion – this was an area of focus for the Partnership with many partners providing support through the Connecting Scotland Programme;**
- (d) **note the Council had recently developed a draft Anti-Poverty Strategy, which would be finalised in Autumn 2021. Actions in relation to financial inclusion would be taken forward as part of the Action Plan; and**
- (e) **arrange to hold a seminar/networking event for financial inclusion practitioners to identify any gaps, consider the impact of Covid19 and identify how to ensure people knew where to access help.**

9. **INTEGRATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2019/21**

Copies of the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan Progress Report 2019/21 by the SCB Service Director, Young People, Engagement and Inclusion had been circulated. SBC Chief Officer Education joined the meeting and presented the report, advising that Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 required each Local Authority, Local Health Board and Partners to prepare a Children's Services Plan and subsequently to prepare and publish a report on how they had delivered on the Plan. This requirement was the responsibility of the Community Planning Partnership which had delegated the task to the Children and Young People's Leadership Group. This Group had prepared the Progress Report to cover the two year period of 2019/20 and 2020/21. The Report set out the actions taken to deliver the Plan and achieve good outcomes for children and young people, and included some alternative actions taken as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. The Chairman thanked officers for the really helpful way that all acronyms had been expressed and made a plea to include a glossary of terms at the back of the Report for reference the next time it came back to the Board for consideration.

**DECISION**

**AGREED to endorse the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan Progress Report for 2019 – 2021 for publication.**

10. **INTEGRATED CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2021/23**

Copies of a report by the SBC Service Director Young People, Engagement and Inclusion, on the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan for 2021/23, had been circulated. The Plan set out the strategic direction for the planning and delivery of services for Children & Young People in the Scottish Borders, working in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families. It ensured that all services looked to support children, young people and families at the earliest point possible to prevent adverse childhood and family experiences through an early intervention and prevention approach. The Plan was flexible in the delivery of services and could support additional services and resources where required. The Plan contained 4 priorities and 8 themes. In response to questions, the SBC Chief Officer Education advised that Priority 2 was about supporting emotional and mental wellbeing, recognising a whole systems approach which included that provided by the Third Sector; the diagram on the back page of the Plan was an attempt to make things as simple as possible and was something that could be displayed in public places to show the intent of the Plan.

**DECISION**

**AGREED to endorse the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan for 2021-23 for submission to Scottish Government.**

11. **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS REPORT**

The Board noted the Children's Rights Report.

12. **UNCRC REPORT**

The Board noted the UNCRC Report.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Stephen Gourlay advised that a consultation on a 10 year Vision for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was due to begin from Monday 14 June and close on Sunday 18 July. The link to the consultation was - [SFRS Homepage - Working together for a safer Scotland \(firescotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

**DECISION**

**NOTED.**

*The meeting concluded at 3.50 pm*