

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT
AREA PARTNERSHIP held remotely by
Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 22
September 2021 at 6.30 pm.

Present:- Councillors S. Hamilton (Chairman), J. Brown, S. Mountford, E. Robson, T. Weatherston, together with 11 Representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils and Members of the Public.

Apologies: Councillor S. Scott.

In attendance: - Locality Development Co-ordinator, James Lamb - Portfolio Manager, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson).

1.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 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.

2.0 FEEDBACK FROM MEETING ON 30 JUNE 2021

2.1 The minute of the meeting of the Cheviot Area Partnership held on 30 June 2021 had been circulated and was noted.

SECTION 1: SERVICE & PARTNER UPDATES

3.0 PLACE UPDATE

3.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 30 June 2021, SBC Service Director Customer & Communities, Mrs Jenni Craig, and SBC Portfolio Manager, Mr James Lamb, were in attendance to present an update on Place Making. Mr Lamb summarised the progress of the previous Place Making workshop held with Diarmaid Lawlor of Scottish Futures Trust where key issues and success factors had been identified. The output from all workshops held with Area Partnerships were included in a report considered by Scottish Borders Council in August 2021. The main purpose of Place Making was to develop joint working by Scottish Borders Council, partner organisations, and communities, to build on existing work and to learn from experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Place Making would be a multi-year project that would see communities developing local plans suited to each community. As part of the presentation, feedback was requested on the project's principles, framework, resources and plan. The meeting was asked for agreement on the project principles, criteria for identifying communities to be prioritised, affirming Place making governance, and to agree next steps. It was noted that Scottish Borders Council had agreed on the draft principles to develop place-making and that seven had been suggested by stakeholders, with a further six added that Scottish Borders Council felt was important to include. It was hoped that the Area Partnership would form a Locality Programme Board to have oversight of the Locality Plan and prioritise communities' activities in Place making. Mrs Craig emphasised that an inclusive and collective approach should be pursued to ensure equality between rural and urban communities; locality plans were owned by the Area Partnerships which were to be built on community plans, and that the project should be taken forward with mutual trust. The aspiration was that every community would be supported to develop its own plan but this would take time and could not all be done at once. The project had a short-term plan to take forward to early 2022 so

that actions could be agreed and communities could observe changes and feed back to the Area Partnership.

- 3.2 Mr Burton enquired about investment in electric vehicles and the need for millions to be invested and Mrs Craig confirmed that funding streams were being considered, although funding was a challenge for everyone. In response to a question about the involvement of Community Councils, Mrs Craig confirmed that Community Councils were key players and communities needed to get involved, everyone had a valid opinion. Charles Strang enquired about the Community Plan and Mrs Craig confirmed that the Community Planning partnership was for the whole of the Scottish Borders and would influence the Community Plan. Councillor Weatherston enquired what other Local Authorities were doing in response to this as it was vital to make it work, although it was not clear how it would work.

DECISION

NOTED that feedback on the Place making proposals should be sent to Mr Lamb, SBC Portfolio Manager, by 31 October 2021.

4.0 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

- 4.1 Mr MacNeil of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service delivered a verbal update of activities being undertaken by the Service. With regard to operational responses:

- Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) had adapted and amended operations to reflect COVID-19 measures;
- FRS facilities were not accepting non-essential visitors;
- There had been a moratorium on safety visits and community engagement, but that was now starting to relax;
- There had been a priority on outdoor safety reflective on recent incidents in Scotland regarding water safety. Mr MacNeil informed the committee that water safety information had been posted on social media and popular swimming sites and water safety awareness had been delivered on location in Kelso;
- Home fire safety had been affected by the pandemic and was to be restarted once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.
- Fire stations across the Scottish Borders were being used as asymptomatic COVID-19 testing centres which had previously been carried out by the military, with PCR testing being carried out by the NHS.
- New smoke detection standards for domestic housing would come into effect from February 2022. Domestic properties would require one smoke alarm in the room most frequently used during the day, a smoke alarm in a place with most air circulation, one smoke alarm in each level, a smoke alarm and heat alarm in the kitchen and for alarms to have interlinked connectivity. Mr MacNeil advised that if a homeowner was considered high risk, the Service would fit smoke alarms with wi-fi connectivity free of charge.
- Confirmed that COP26 preparations were affecting the FRS across Scotland.

- 4.2 Councillor Robson thanked Mr MacNeil for the water safety work undertaken at the Cobby, Kelso and commended the Fire Service for the work undertaken in respect of unwanted fire alarm signals. In response to questions about the consequences of not adhering to the new smoke detection standards and whether insurance companies would cover this, Mr MacNeil advised that it would be up to the individual insurance company. In response to questions about the cost, information was that it could cost in the region of £200, Mr MacNeil advised

that unregulated companies had targeted vulnerable people with leaflets causing concerns regarding costs and scams.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5.0 POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Clare Wildsmith was present to talk about positive communication in general, when on line, wearing face coverings etc. Face coverings and protective screens muffle speech and obstruct facial cues and therefore effectively everyone had hearing and vision loss at present. The following tips were discussed:-

- Face the person when speaking
- Speak clearly and more slowly – give each other time to absorb and process the information
- Consider the back lighting when online so that you can be seen clearly
- Gestures can help
- Re-phrase if someone is not understanding
- Lower your face covering, if safe to do so (consider having a clear visor to hand)
- Write things down clearly
- Try a speech –to-text app on your mobile to transcribe

More information can be obtained from : positivepebbles@gmail.com

6.0 AREA PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Chair advised that the consultation closed on 1 August and officers were in the process of forming a paper to go to Scottish Borders Council later in the year with recommendations for the development of the Area Partnerships based on the outcomes of the consultation.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7.0 SECTION 2: LOCAL PRIORTIES

Cheviot Assistance Hub Update

Clare Malster, Locality Development Co-ordinator reported that there had been an increase in the number of new referrals to Cheviot Community Assistance Hub since the last meeting. These were largely for people that had been contacted by Test & Protect and were having to self-isolate and included requests for support accessing food and financial support. All Hubs remained operational and could be contacted through 0301 100 1800 or Covid-19Community@scotborders.gov.uk by anyone requiring support for themselves or someone they know. Cheviot Community Partners (Community organisations, Third Sector, SBC and NHS Borders) continued to meet on a weekly basis to share service updates and recently received a presentation from Michael Curran (Service Manager, SBC) about Service Commissioning with the Third Sector. Input had also been given by Derek Bell, SBC's Redundancy Support Co-ordinator about support available through PACE (Partnership Action for Continuous Employment). Partners were meeting clients face to face again but, depending on the organisation, this was still restricted by numbers and need. The What Matters Hub was due to reopen in Kelso later in the Month and would initially be available to clients on the waiting list and thereafter to the wider public. Jedburgh was expected to reopen in January 2022. The Hub Meeting continued to be attended by a range of

organisations with the shared experience and knowledge being a very valuable resource to identify solutions to problems and issues that were brought to the meeting.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY FUND

8.0 Kalewater Community Company

With reference to paragraph 5.3 of the Minute of 25 November 2020, Mr Eric McNulty updated the Area Partnership on the progress of the Morebattle Recreation Ground project. Through a series of pictures, Mr McNulty highlighted the 3.4 acre field situated behind the Morebattle Institute and next to the Templehall Hotel which had been purchased in 2019 with funding secured from the Community Grant Fund. An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Clyde Archaeology on behalf of the Kalewater Community Company in relation to the development of a recreation ground that would include a community garden, children's play area with trim track, picnic area, a community orchard, and a larger area for recreation/informal ball games. The evaluation formed part of a wider programme of archaeological work put in place to discharge condition 2 of planning permission (ref: 18/00558/FUL). It took place between 24th and 28th May 2021 and was designed to provide opportunities for local volunteer participation and broader activities for the local primary school. A total of five trenches, totalling of 172 sq. m, were excavated across the site which targeted linear anomalies ~~and~~ during an earlier phase of geophysics. A series of very shallow linear ditches and a rough stone lined drain, both of unknown date, were uncovered in the northern part of the development area, none of which appeared to correspond to the geophysics anomalies. The dig was completed on 28th May 2021 with no significant finds and an outcome report would be produced and submitted to the SBC Archaeology Officer to await a decision about continuing to develop the recreation ground.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

9.0 COMMUNITY FUND ASSESSMENT PANEL – UPDATE

With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 30 June 2021, the Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Malster advised that following a recruitment process the following appointments had been made to the Cheviot Community Assessment Panel :-.

Town Community Councils: Graeme Hayward / Depute – John Taylor (Jedburgh CC)
Dean Weatherston/ Depute – Gavin Horsburgh (Kelso CC)

Rural Community Councils: Mr Peter Jeary (Crailing, Eckford and Nisbet CC)
Brian Burton (Sprouston CC)
Depute – Andrew Carter (Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn and Smailholm)

Community Reps: Eleanor Lockey
Nicola McIlwraith

Elected Members: Councillor S Scott
Councillor T Weatherston

Ms Malster further advised that as the recruitment was yet to be completed, the Committee should consider temporarily reducing the Quorum from 5 to 4. Sarah Mackie expressed an interest in joining the Assessment Panel and would discuss with Ms Malster.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the appointments to date;

- (b) AGREED that the quorum be temporarily reduced from 5 to 4 until the recruitment process was complete.**

10.0 CHEVIOT COMMUNITY FUNDING 2020/21

There had been circulated copies of the Cheviot Funding for 2021/2022 which detailed the funding available together with information on the allocation of the Community Grant Fund in 2020/21. The opening balance at 1 April 2021 was £46,551.00 plus 50% of available Local Festival Grant Budget totalling £8,337.50, which resulted in an overall budget of £54,888.50. The Fund was currently closed.

- 10.1 Other sources of Grant Funding for Cheviot totalled £79,926.00, less Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund applications awarded totalling £585.00 and the applications assessed and awaiting a decision which totalled £25,184.20 resulting in a balance of £54,156.80. There remained £16,072.00 in applications which were awaiting assessment, potentially taking the balance to £38,084.80.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11. SBC BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND

With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of 30 June 2021, there had been circulated copies of applications in respect of:-

11.1 Roxburghshire & Berwickshire Citizens Advice Bureau

The CAB wished to build in to their service multiple routes for community members to access advice and support. These routes included email and telephone support, web chats and virtual drop in using the Near Me system and would be additional to the traditional method of face to face engagement. The service development had grown from the flexibility CAB had been able to provide during the past year and the ability to provide the Cheviot area with 5 days of support rather than 1.5 days pre Covid. In order to create the new offer, CAB required to increase their number of volunteer advisors. Many volunteers were ready to have a break having provided constant support during the past year and coupled with the requirement to provide IT training to existing volunteers who were not IT literate, there was a need for a volunteer recruitment drive. The CAB wanted to employ a CAB Champion to be responsible for promoting the opportunity to volunteer with CAB and increase the number of CAB volunteers. The Champion would be responsible for highlighting the opportunity through promotional materials, attending events and engagements, assisting new recruits to complete the application process and completing the initial stages of an induction and Adviser Training Programme. The Champion would cover the full geographical reach of CAB therefore they were requesting a share of the costs from the Berwickshire, Cheviot and Teviot & Liddesdale BBBB funds. The amount requested was in the sum of £2,197.80. The application had been assessed as high, as it met a number of criteria.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £12,210.00, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance; and**
- (ii) the rate of pay given to the Volunteer Co-ordinator must meet the National Living Wage,**

11.2 CHEVIOT YOUTH

Cheviot Youth were seeking a grant in the sum of £13,433.40 to establish an Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Support Service (EWMHSS) at its new base in the Old School at St John's Church in Jedburgh. The building, owned by the Episcopal Church required decorating and furnishing in order to make it suitable for the delivery of services. The grant would cover the costs of setting up the new base in Jedburgh, including IT equipment, decorating, furniture and specialist kit to deliver the service. Cheviot Youth were able to secure funding in the sum of 19,993 from the Cheviot Community Fund towards the costs of enhancing the Stepping Stones mental health and well-being service being delivered from their Kelso base. Although that work was ongoing, and evaluation still to be undertaken, the learning to date had helped to shape the project that would be delivered from the new Jedburgh base. As a result of Covid an increased number of young people were presenting problems from depression to anxiety and self-harm to suicidal thoughts. Although these problems existed prior to March 2020 they have been exacerbated by Covid with the mental health epidemic becoming a huge challenge. Over the past year 70 people had benefitted from the service delivered from the Kelso base and it was estimated that approximately 40 from the Jedburgh area would access the service in any given year. The service provided by qualified Practitioners uses counselling skills and draws on cognitive behavioural therapy and methodology to provide those accessing the service with psychoeducation tools and strategies. There were links in place with the NHS Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to ensure a holistic approach. The new premises in Jedburgh would also be the base for the Training, Employability & Advice Service and would be addressing the need for people in Jedburgh to provide a bespoke service from the initial challenging work on confidence, self-esteem and belief, then onwards to working through a range of modules from our employability programme, further training, to volunteering, to employment taster sessions and then onwards when ready to supported employment, college and full employment. The base would be open five days a week for Cheviot Youth and seven days a week for community use. Discussions were ongoing with Citizens advice Bureau, Skills Development Scotland and the Jedburgh Medical Practice about using the Space. The application was scored as high as it strongly demonstrated how the project would assist recovery from the pandemic.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £14,926.00, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance when delivering the service; and**
- (ii) Moveable equipment e.g, Lego therapy kit and IT equipment to be passed to another community group-organisation should this project cease to operate.**

11.3 MOREBATTLE COMMUNITY SHOP

Morebattle Community Shop were seeking a grant in the sum of £2,964.00 to recruit a part-time volunteer co-ordinator for a fixed term of six months. The co-ordinator would be responsible for increasing volunteer numbers from 21 to approximately 35, training (including writing a new volunteers manual), rotas and social activities. In particular they would be tasked with increasing the number of young people within the community who volunteer and thus gain work experience in the shop. The role would also give volunteers representation and a listening ear for their expectations and aspirations when supporting the shop, the co-ordinator would be able to champion their views at management and board

level. The Community Shop provided a lifeline to purchase groceries within the village, and during the pandemic there had been a sustained increase in customers which was now only slightly lower than at the height of lockdown. The number of volunteers also increased from 14 to 21 as a result of those furloughed and others wishing to help out. The shop has proved a vital social hub for residents to meet up and keep abreast of local activities and initiatives and by having a volunteer co-ordinator in post communication with local residents would be easier. The volunteers managing the shop would benefit as the co-ordinator would be able to manage day to day enquiries and activities. Discussions with younger people in the village have highlighted that they are finding it difficult to gain part-time employment or work experience. An opportunity to gain experience in their village will stand them in better stead when applying for jobs in the area. New members of the community had found it difficult to integrate while the pandemic closed down the usual social clubs in the village, and the shop had given them the opportunity to meet other residents. The application was assessed as medium/high as it provided acceptable examples as to how the work of the volunteer co-ordinator would assist with improving health and wellbeing social and reduce social isolation.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £2,964.00, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance; and**
- (ii) the rate of pay given to the Volunteer Co-ordinator must meet the National Living Wage.**

11.4 QME CARE, KELSO

The past 18 months had seen more people living in the community become socially isolated from their communities and/or loved ones due to shielding and/or living rural locations. QME care propose to develop a new Community Connection and Companionship Project to support people living with Dementia and Older Age who have experience increased social isolation over the period of the pandemic. With Community networks being fragmented due to the pandemic, the new project would aim to reduce the trauma, isolation for our older adults to ensure that they are not a forgotten generation and can still flourish in a fair and compassionate environment regardless of their age or condition. A grant in the sum of £7,650 would enable QME Care to employ a Volunteer Co-ordinator to will recruit and match 15 volunteers aged 16+ with people aged over 55, living with dementia in the Cheviot community, based on their interests, hobbies and connections to aid a better bond and successful pairing match with our older people in the community. They would support them weekly to re-engage with their community and build back networks lost or diminished during the pandemic, with the support from the Co-ordinator and Holistic therapists to support the trauma recover process. After the first six months' pilot period legacy funding and specific fund raising would be used to continue the project. The application was assessed as high as it met a number of fund criteria.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £7,650.00, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance; and**
- (ii) the rate of pay given to the Volunteer Co-ordinator must meet the National Living Wage.**

12. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future Meetings of the Cheviot Area Partnership would be held on the following dates:

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

Wednesday, 23 March 2022

Wednesday, 29 June 2022

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 24 November 2021 at 6.30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

13. MEETING EVALUATION

Ms Malster reminded those present about the meeting evaluation form which could be accessed via the link <https://forms.office.com/r/HHH1dEcmz3> and was available until 11.45 a.m. on 26 September 2021. She added that feedback about the Area Partnership meetings was really helpful and always appreciated.

CHAIRMAN

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.