

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held Via Microsoft
Teams on Tuesday, 2 November 2021 at
7.00 pm

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), H. Anderson, S. Bell, S. Haslam, E. Small
together with 15 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community
Councils and members of the public.

Absent:- Councillor K. Chapman

In Attendance:- Director Resilient Communities, Communities & Partnership Manager,
Locality Development Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Community Engagement
Officer (H. Lacon), Portfolio Manager (J. Lamb), Democratic Services Team
Leader, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership being held via Microsoft Teams and 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 PREVIOUS MEETINGS.**

The Minute of the meetings of the Tweeddale Area Partnership held on 24 August 2021 was noted.

3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

The Chairman explained that the additional information document included reference to a wide range of information that would be referred to during the meeting.

4. **PLACE MAKING UPDATE**

4.1 Portfolio Manager, James Lamb, gave a presentation providing an update of the Place Making Approach. Mr Lamb explained that the report discussed at the previous meeting was a draft which had now been approved by full Council. Recruitment of the 9 newly created posts had progressed, with 5 Community Engagement Officers successfully recruited, 4 of which had started work. The Green Space Programme Officer was also in place. 2 Place Planning and Regeneration Officers would be in post before the end of this month. The recruitment of the Climate Change Officer remained a challenge, with ways to improve the attractiveness of the post being considered. Further work had gone into creating smaller settlements profiles, which incorporated statistics taken from national level on population change, access to amenities and deprivation levels. This would be published on the Council's website along with the smaller town index.

4.2 Following the previous meeting, Mr Lamb had asked the Area Partnership attendees to provide feedback on the proposed Joint Principles, the Framework, Prioritisation and the terms of reference. 21 responses had been received across the 5 area partnership areas, with 8 from the Tweeddale Area. This represented a 4% participation rate, and Mr Lamb acknowledged that the results were more informative than representative. In response to a question, Mr Lamb agreed that a Council report was not the best way of communicating with Area Partnerships. Regarding the Joint Principles, Mr Lamb agreed that 13 principles were too many, and that the more principles there were the less effective they became. Mr Lamb undertook to re-examine the principles, reduce their number and synthesise them in

a more succinct manner. The feedback on the Joint Framework was largely positive, with the focus primarily on the need to simplify the language used and whether the approach was sustainable in the long term.

- 4.3 After considerable discussions by those present it was agreed that the proposed method of identifying initial communities for action be disregarded and a new approach sought. The Chairman proposed that the Portfolio Manager organise a workshop with all interested parties to examine the approach to identifying initial communities again, following which a group would be formed that would make a prioritisation list and report back to the Area Partnership. Members endorsed this approach as a more effective way to make nuanced decisions on what levels of support should be provided to communities based on their differing levels of capacity to undertake projects and gain access to funding. The Chairman hoped that the workshop would be completed prior to the next meeting of the Area Partnership and thanked Mr Lamb for his presentation and the work that he had undertaken.

5. **ROADS UPDATE**

Donald Scott, Team Leader, Road Assets Team gave an update on the Roads asset programme. He explained the strategic approach that his team used to manage and carry out works on the road network across the region. There were 3000km of roads under the responsibility of SBC, 43.5% of which required treatment or work carried out to it. £12million had been identified as the sum required to maintain the network in its current state. £6million was being spent on planned and routine maintenance this financial year. Two new trainees had begun work recently, it was hoped that their recruitment would improve the capacity for works to be carried out in the long term. Mr Scott explained that the Road Assets Team used a blended approach, with third party contractors brought in to carry out work where necessary. Mr Scott went on explain that in wintery conditions the primary road network would be prioritised for treatment, after which secondary roads and then tertiary roads would be salted where conditions and resources allowed. Changes made to the planned works programme were outlined and Mr Scott concluded with an update on projects that had been completed. In response to a question, Mr Scott explained that his team were constantly looking to new technologies to help them in their work. Mr Scott went on to explain that a third party had been contracted to clear out and empty the gullies in the region, work was expected to start imminently in Tweeddale. Regarding pot-holes, Mr Scott explained the way in which repairs were categorised meant that timing issues often only allowed for temporary repairs to be carried out. The Chairman thanked Mr Scott for his excellent and informative presentation and it was agreed that Mr Scott's contact details and a copy of the slide presentation would be issued.

6. **FUNDING OVERVIEW**

A copy of the Tweeddale Area Partnership Funding Table had been circulated. The Chairman asked Kenny Harrow to provide an update on funding levels. Regarding the Community Fund 2021/22, Mr Harrow referred to the table and explained that £40,846.90 remained if all assessed applications were successful. He advised that there were two further meetings of the Area Partnership to be held before the new financial year and invited applications for funding. Mr Harrow turned to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund, and advised that if the pending applications were approved there would be a balance of £15,456 remaining. In response to a question on an application by Clovenfords Community Council, Mr Harrow explained that the application had been to the community fund, was not eligible to be fast tracked and that the group had been directed to work with Ms Lacon to apply to the Welfare Trust for financial support.

7 **COMMUNITY FUND**

The recommendation of the Tweeddale Area Partnership Assessment Panel on an application by Sustainable West Linton to the Tweeddale Community Fund had been circulated. Esther Daborn gave an outline of the application before providing comments and an explanation of the reasons for the recommendation. Concerns had been raised

regarding appropriate record keeping. She confirmed that the decision by the Panel had been unanimous. The application was for a grant of £1367 to establish a community apiary on land in Carlops. The request for funding was unanimously approved with appropriate terms and conditions attached along with effective monitoring.

8. **BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND APPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Chairman asked Mr Harrow to give an outline of each of the applications to the Build Back a Better Borders (BBBB) fund.

8.2 **Tweeddale Rideability Group**

The Tweeddale Rideability Group had applied for £6300 to purchase a horse to return to their pre Covid levels of capacity. The application for funding did not meet the criteria of the BBBB fund because they had not demonstrated a new element of operations to their application. Members discussed the application, lauded the excellent work carried out by the group but unanimously decided not to grant funding. Members recommended that the group apply to the community fund. Mr Harrow and Ms Lacon agreed to follow up with the group to assist in an application.

8.3 **St Ronan's Silver Band**

The St Ronan's Silver Band had applied for £6000 to allow the purchase of 35pbuzz instruments and to pay for tuition time to provide 30 children with access to free face to face musical tuition with the instruments. The funds applied for would also be used to pay for the installation of new windows at their hall. Mr Harrow advised that part of the application for funding was for the purchase and installation of a new shed, which had been withdrawn. The requested sum had therefore been reduced to £5094. Councillor Bell, seconded by the Chairman moved approval of £5094 and this was unanimously approved.

8.4 **Walkerburn Bowling and Petanque Club**

The club had applied for £4365 to improve accessibility to their newly expanded petanque playing area. The funding applied for would allow to the club to build a level walkway from the clubhouse to the street and provide a better pathway for wheelchair users. The funding would also be used to create a children's practice area and enable the replacement of a retaining wall. Members discussed the application and praised the Club for its ongoing success. The Chairman, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of £4365 and this was unanimously approved.

9. **GROUP EVALUATION**

Clare Wildsmith of the Tweeddale Access Panel gave an update on work that she had undertaken in the area to help those with hearing difficulties adapt to life post Covid. She explained that widespread mask wearing had created more daily challenges for those affected. Ms Wildsmith had spent grant money sending out letters to local businesses and creating packs containing a dry wipe board and tips on more effective communication, which had received a good reception. Ms Wildsmith had subsequently held discussions with local shops regarding some measures that they could take to help those with hearing difficulties, such as clear pricing, labels, the use of clear face masks and ways in which workers could improve communication. Ms Wildsmith commented that local shops had responded in an exemplary manner. The Chairman thanked Ms Wildsmith and encouraged her to keep up her good work.

10. **PEEBLES PARKING SUB GROUP UPDATE**

The Chairman gave an update on the work of the Group. A meeting had been held on the 15 September, the notes of which would be distributed presently. The next meeting would be held on 22 November, at which it was hoped that an update on the installation of electric charging points in car parks would be given. The Chairman advised that the group required more diverse representation, in particular from local traders.

11. **VILLAGE SPEED LIMITS**

Esther Daborn of Skirling Community Council thanked Councillors Anderson and Small for their assistance in connecting her with Philippa Gilhooly to discuss the placement of lights and signage in Skirling. Discussions on the placement of the aforementioned equipment were ongoing, and concerns that had been raised were being addressed.

12. **DATE OF NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING**

The next full meeting of the Area Partnership was scheduled for 18 January 2022 and the Chairman asked for agenda item suggestions to be submitted.

13. **MEETING EVALUATION**

Ms Lacon gave a demonstration of Menti, a tool designed to allow better participation in online meetings. The tool worked by asking users to scan a QR code with a mobile phone or tablet computer. It then allowed them to provide feedback or ask questions that could be shared on screen. It was also possible to use a standard web-based link. The Chairman proposed that at future meetings the tool could be used prior to any break.

14. **ANY OTHER FORMAL BUSINESS**

Councillor Haslam raised the matter of discussions she had held with a Modern Studies teacher at Peebles High School. The pupils there were hosting mock elections and were looking to get involved with place making activity. Mr Harrow advised that he had also spoken with the teacher involved and explained the various opportunities for engagement that existed.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 pm