

## **Scotland Loves Local Gift Card**

### **Report by Director of Resilient Communities**

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## **Executive Committee**

**7 December 2021**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This paper seeks approval to join the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card scheme which is a national initiative designed to help encourage all Scottish Local Authorities to develop their local supply chains and to help support local retailers and high streets**
- 1.2 The Gift Card was launched in July 2021 by Scotland's Towns Partnership with a view to providing opportunities for people to help support local businesses by purchasing local produce and keeping more spend within the Local Authority area.
- 1.3 The idea is that people can choose the amount of money to load onto a loyalty or gift card and spend it within businesses that have signed up to the proposal.
- 1.4 Anecdotal information would suggest that there is a view from local businesses in the Scottish Borders that this initiative would be welcomed and worth trying, especially considering the difficulties businesses have experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.5 A financial commitment will be required by Scottish Borders Council on an annual basis to help promote the gift card system.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:**

- (a) Approve the development of the gift card proposal within the Scottish Borders and allows officers the opportunity to engage with Scotland's Towns Partnership with a view to launching the scheme; and**
- (b) Receive a further report in 12 months on the operation of the scheme.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Scotland Loves Local Gift Card is a national initiative promoted by Scotland's Towns Partnership and supported by Scottish Government to try and encourage people in Scotland to support their local high streets. Further details can be found via this link [Gift Card – Scotland's Town Centre Recovery Campaign – Home of the Scotland Loves Local campaign. \(lovelocal.scot\)](https://www.lovelocal.scot/)
- 3.2 The idea behind the gift card is to try and encourage people to spend money in the local community, thereby helping to support local businesses and the local supply chain. Like any other gift card, you can choose the amount of money to load onto the card. However, the key difference in this case is that the money can only be spent within the boundaries of the Scottish Borders and with businesses that have signed up to the scheme.
- 3.3 The gift cards will feature a 16 digit MasterCard Number, CVV and Expiry date allowing them to be used online at independent and national retailers alike, as long as the retailer has a physical presence in the local authority area and is making a contribution to the local economy.
- 3.4 Once a business has signed up to the scheme, they will appear in an online directory and will be supported with promotional materials within an introductory period from Scotland Loves Local. There will also be technical support for cardholders and retailers provided by consultants Micronex who are based in Perth.
- 3.5 Anecdotal information from the Scottish Borders Chamber of Commerce and from local Elected Members suggests that there is an appetite for this type of initiative from local businesses and would be welcomed.
- 3.6 Our understanding is that neighbouring Local Authorities such Dumfries and Galloway and Midlothian Councils have already signed up to the scheme and East Lothian Council already had a gift card scheme in place which they believe to be worthwhile.

### **4 PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Following exploratory meetings with Scotland Loves Local earlier in the year, it is proposed that Scottish Borders Council signs up to the Gift Card proposal and trials the scheme over the short to medium term.
- 4.2 The scheme will require promotion and marketing in order to succeed and will be dependent on local retailers signing up to the project. Officers understand that Scotland Loves Local will provide some support to the Council in the initial stages of the project, but going forward Scottish Borders Council will be responsible for the marketing and promotion of the initiative and it has been estimated that there will be annual cost of approximately £10k to undertake this work along with the appropriate officer time.

- 4.3 A review of the scheme will be undertaken after a full year of operation to help gauge the success of the project and the results of this review will be presented to Elected Members.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

The financial implications relate specifically to the ongoing promotion and advertising of the scheme, which have been estimated at approximately £10k per annum. The ongoing costs will need to be met by the Council from existing budgets.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The primary risk associated with the proposal centres on the take-up of the loyalty card scheme by local businesses and the officer time associated with the promotion and advertising of the scheme. To mitigate the risk, consideration should be given to how resources across the organisation could be utilised to promote the scheme.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no direct implications associated with an Integrated Impact Assessment.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

The promotion of local businesses and the local supply chain will hopefully help sustainability in the Scottish Borders.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

There are climate change implications associated with the promotion of local businesses and the development of the local supply chain.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

The report promotes the development of the local supply chain and local businesses throughout the Scottish Borders.

### **5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to the scheme of administration or the scheme of delegation proposed in this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Jenni Craig**  
**Director of Resilient Communities**

**Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

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**Background Papers:**

**Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Graeme Johnstone can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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