

Proposal for creation of a BAP Working Group on Place Making in Berwickshire

Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to propose the formation of a BAP Place Making Working Group, charged with making recommendations on the way forward concerning the development and implementation of Place Planning in Berwickshire, to the BAP meeting on 3rd February 2022. It is envisaged that this Working Group will operate on a short-term basis, albeit it may subsequently prove appropriate to form a Sub-committee of the BAP to take responsibility for the oversight of place-making in Berwickshire over the coming years.

Background

This proposal fully recognises SBC's commitment to Place Planning, but concerns were raised during the discussion of the "Place Making -Next Steps" paper at the BAP meeting on 2nd September. A number of contributors commented on the absence of prior consultation with those communities whose contributions will be vital to the future success of place planning. Others spoke of what they believed to be flaws in the proposed methodology. Yet other community development organisations and community councils expressed difficulty interpreting the proposal due to the approach and language used. Overall, there was a feeling that there was insufficient time to discuss the paper in any meaningful way and therefore it was unclear how we could reach a well-considered view on the way forward.

Over the past year, the BAP has made significant strides in improving our effective operating arrangements. In many ways BAP is developing into a true partnership. These proposals aim to ensure that BAP continues to progress in this way. It is clear that, in relation to the vitally important area of Place Making in Berwickshire, that we avoid the danger of reverting to the former "top down" approach, adopted in the past.

Membership and operation of the Working Group

Recent working groups of the BAP have comprised 6-8 members with an additional 2/3 SBC councillors. To my knowledge there has always been a place for those who express a wish to be involved. They have been chaired by a non-SBC member of the BAP. The working groups have benefitted from the expertise and support of SBC officers during their deliberations.

There is clear evidence that working-groups can work successfully with all members from across the BAP having the time to debate issues in detail and deliver recommendations quickly and effectively. Past working group experience shows that within a timescale of 6 weeks, and following 2 or 3 well-structured 2-hour on-line meetings, it is possible to deliver recommendations that have subsequently been fully endorsed by BAP. It is suggested, therefore, that we implement this proven model of success.

Agenda for Working Group

Much of the agenda for a place-making working group will come from the Place Making – Next Steps paper presented at the last meeting. Amongst other topics it is likely that the following will be considered:

- Proposed Joint Principles
- The Proposed Target Place Making Framework
- The methodology for determining which communities to prioritise
- How to best allocate resources available for place planning in Berwickshire
- James Lamb's "Area Partnership – Draft Place Making Role Agreement"

Recommendations

Agree to

- the setting up of a place planning working group
- a method of recruitment to the working group
- the initial Agenda outlined above
- provide officer support for the activity
- the proposed timescale for recommendations to the BAP meeting in February 2022

Keith Dickinson