

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHEVIOT
AREA PARTNERSHIP held remotely by
Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 24
November 2021 at 6.30 pm.

Present:- Councillors S. Hamilton (Chairman), S. Mountford, T. Weatherston,
together with 18 Representatives of Partner Organisations, Community
Councils and Members of the Public.

Apologies: Councillors J. Brown, E. Robson and S. Scott.

In attendance: - Director – Resilient Communities, Communities & Partnership Manager,
Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Community Engagement Officer
– David Peebles, 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 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

2.1 The minute of the meeting of the Cheviot Area Partnership held on 22 September 2021 had been circulated and was noted.

3.0 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Clare Malster reported that there were 11 parts to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Area Partnership would be looking at parts 3, 5 and 9 in turn.

3.1 Part 3 – Participation Request - Community groups will be given the power to ask to be involved with local public sector bodies, like Scottish Borders Council, Police and NHS, to improve services.

3.2 Part 5 – Asset Transfer - is aimed at community groups that wish to buy, lease or use land or buildings that are owned by public sector organisations such as SBC. To help community groups identify which land/building would be suitable an [asset \(property\) register](#) had been published for each of the five areas in the Borders. There was a Community Asset Transfer policy which set out what community groups had to do if they would like to buy, lease or use SBC property.

KELSO HERITAGE SOCIETY was the first group to have an asset transfer request. The group, who hadn't yet been formally constituted as Kelso Heritage Society, approached the council about leasing a piece of land to plant a community orchard. Over the period of several months the group worked with council officers to develop the paperwork which would become their asset transfer application. During this time they were supported by staff at The Bridge, to become Kelso Heritage Society, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and by doing so became community transfer body as defined in the Act. However, with a 30 year lease secured the project had a few more hurdles before tree planting could start. The prospective orchard was within the boundary of Kelso Abbey and so required permission from Historic Environment Scotland, before work could commence.

An archaeological survey, using geophysical and site excavations, was carried out where the 16 planned fruit trees would be planted. The four local primary schools got involved and helped to wash the finds of 18th & 19th century pottery and clay pipes. The site was known to be part of the Abbey's orchard during the 12th century but while this disappeared hundreds of years ago evidence was found to suggest it had at one time been used as an allotment.

With no significant medieval finds identified Historic Environment Scotland gave permission for the tree planting to progress. Just before lockdown students from Borders Agricultural College, assisted by children from the primary schools, planted 16 fruit trees in February 2020, provided with a grant from Borders Tree Planting Fund. The trees, a mix of apple and pear were all heritage varieties with a tradition of being grown in the Borders. Unfortunately two trees were stolen shortly after planting although these had since been replaced. Although the project was paused due to the pandemic educational packs, including some of the finds and their history, were prepared by the archaeologists ready for when the schools reopened.

- 3.3 Part 9 – Allotments – A register of property which was held as part of the common good had been established and was maintained.

COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

Amy Alcorn, Greenspace Programme Officer was present at the meeting to update on Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. It was explained that under the legislation local authorities were required to undertake new duties in relation to allotment management (i.e. new allotment regulations, preparation of annual Allotment Report), increase transparency on the actions taken to provide allotments and develop a Food Growing Strategy. The aim of the Food Growing Strategy was to support and facilitate anyone who wanted to get growing through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. The Objectives of the Food Growing Strategy were to provide a central resource for community growing information, to raise awareness around Community growing in the Scottish Borders, show communities how to get growing; where, how and who can help community groups, to help get community growing projects off the ground and to help identify potential allotment sites and growing spaces. In terms of the Cheviot area, it was explained that funding had been granted to Generation Working Together and with a partnership approach between the school community, Community Learning Development teams, GWT and funding from the Cheviot Community Fund an intergenerational project had been developed at Jedburgh Grammar Campus. The project aimed to bring children and young people from the school together with older members of the community volunteering their time, to learn together and help develop the garden project with a focus around the learning and community support it could bring – plant to plate, enhancing the local environment, sustainability and climate action – through fostering strong positive relationships which increased skills, confidence, social cohesion and break down issues around social isolation and ageism. Amy went on to explain that Eildon Housing Association had turned their greenspace at the back of one of their developments into a fantastic set of allotments for their tenants and other local people. This had given much needed outdoor space to people during lockdown, and improved peoples fitness and access to home grown food. The next stage of the development was to work with local partners to turn the area on the left into a community garden for local people to come and take part in gardening activities (for more info contact Lita McHale (07810123201)). Amy concluded her presentation by detailing the contact details as follows:-

Amy Alcorn, Greenspace Programme Officer – Amy.Alcorn@scotborders.gov.uk

Lisa Brydon, Volunteer Coordinator - Lisa.Brydon@scotborders.gov.uk

**DECISION
NOTED.**

SECTION 1: SERVICE & PARTNER UPDATES

4.0 PLACE MAKING UPDATE

4.1 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 advised that the approach to Place Making presented at the previous meeting had been approved by Scottish Borders Council. With regards to staff recruitment, five community engagement officer posts had been filled along with two planning and regeneration officers, and a green space officer. Recruitment for the Climate Change Officer remained ongoing and ways to improve the attractiveness of the post were being investigated. Further work had been undertaken on creating smaller settlement 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 Mr Lamb presented a summary of feedback received from the five Area Partnerships on the proposed joint principles, framework, prioritisation, and terms of reference. Across the five Area Partnerships, 21 responses were received, including four received from the Cheviot Area Partnership. Mr Lamb noted that approximately 570 email addresses received the Place Making consultation questionnaire, and the response rate represented was just under 4% return. That rate would not be representative and was not therefore conclusive, but the feedback was informative for the process. It was further noted that the Council report may not have been an effective means to consult and that feedback may be supplemented by other means including a special meeting or workshop. Attendees noted that the timeframe for the consultation was short and didn't lend itself to Community Council meeting schedules to provide more effective feedback. It was acknowledged that 13 joint principles were too many, and 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 Following 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 thanked Mr Lamb for his presentation and the work that he had undertaken.

**DECISION
NOTED the Update.**

4.4 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.

5.0 WARM AND WELL – CHANGeworks

Ruth Dickinson, Changeworks was present to inform the Area Partnership about Affordable Warmth Services in the Scottish Borders. Changes works collaborate with Scottish Government agencies, local authorities, housing associations, business, schools, Community Groups and individuals to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty, prevent waste and inspire and scale up low carbon behaviours. Criteria for identifying fuel poverty where; low income, in receipt of benefits, use of electricity as a primary heating fuel and larger /older properties. Successful outcomes included 42% helped with debt and billing resolution – amounts resolved ranging from £100 to over £2,000 of savings for one client. Clients supported with Warm Home Discount applications and external grant funding including emergency top ups. 55% of clients had received advice on switching and explored options and to date in excess of 560 households had been supported to collectively save £760k.

6.0 SECTION 2: LOCAL PRIORTIES

6.1 Cheviot Assistance Hub Update

Clare Malster, Locality Development Co-ordinator reported that the number of new referrals to Cheviot Community Assistance Hub since the last meeting had remained steady. As previously reported these were largely for people that had been contacted by Test & Protect and were having to self-isolate. Requests included support accessing food, financial support and prescription pick up/delivery. 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.

6.2 Cheviot Community Partners (Community organisations, Third Sector, SBC and NHS Borders) had changed to a fortnightly meetings to share service updates and identify ways in which people living in the Cheviot area could be supported. Since the last report the group has received presentations from:

- Jenny Lees (Joint Health Improvement Team) on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.
- Steven Isbrand and Sharon Stoddart on the Parental Employability and Intensive Family Support Services

6.3 The meeting had started a discussion around poverty with a view to identifying gaps in the Cheviot area and what could be done to address them. The availability of information about the various support services had been raised as a problem and Cheviot would be linking with the other localities to explore the promotion of such services.

6.4 The Kelso What Matters Hub had reopened and was initially based in Kelso Men's Shed, this had now moved to the Cross Keys Hotel and was open 2- 4pm every Thursday. Further

information was available at What Matters Hubs - Kelso What Matters Hub | Scottish Borders Council (scotborders.gov.uk). Future discussion topics include Eat Well Age Well and the Warm & Well projects both of which link to the wider poverty discussion.

The meetings take place fortnightly via MS Teams on Thursdays at 9:30am. If anyone would like to attend please contact Clare Malster at cmalster@scotborders.gov.uk. The next meeting is 25 November 2021.

7.0 **SECTION 3: COMMUNITY FUND**

7.1 **Morebattle Community Shop**

With reference to paragraph 11.3 of the Minute of 22 September 2021, Mr Ray Fielding was present to update the Area Partnership on the progress of the Morebattle Community Shop. A short video was shown which highlighted the benefits to the wider Morebattle Community of having the shop within the Village, particularly during the pandemic when there were travel restrictions in place. Mr Fielding detailed the timeline of setting up the shop, highlighting lessons learned. A Tenant for the flat above the shop had been found and was now in residence. The Manager appointed for the shop was increasing the ranges available and sourcing local produce where possible. Funding had been received from Covid protection measures within the shop and Covid support funding in the sum of £15,000 had been set aside for further improvements. The shop was now turning a profit and funding from the BBB had funded a part-time Volunteer Co-ordinator for a fixed term of six months.

DECISION NOTED.

7.2 **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 less Community Fund & Community Fund Fast Track applications that were assessed and awaiting a decision of £8,258.00, resulting in a total of £46,630.50.

Other sources of Grant Funding for Cheviot totalled £79,926.00, less Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund applications awarded totalling £26,814.20 and the applications assessed and awaiting a decision which totalled £17,216.00 resulting in a balance of £35,895.80. There remained £15,000.00 in applications which were awaiting assessment, potentially taking the balance to £20,895.80.

DECISION NOTED.

7.4 **APPLICATIONS**

There had been circulated copies of a report which detailed the recommendations of the Cheviot Community Fund Assessment Panel. The report provided a brief description of each application received and a recommendation on the sum to be awarded to each project.

An application had been received from St Boswells Parish Community Council for planters around the bus terminus in the village. The Panel were supportive of the project and the key points influencing the Panel's decision were that the project was Community driven, was Community empowerment and ownership e.g., volunteering, and fundraising activities to support ongoing projects and investments and had a positive impact on tourism and wider

village initiatives e.g., Spring Clean, Community Woodland. The Panel recommended awarding £1,928.00.

An application had been received from the Kelso Orchard Tennis Club towards the renovation works to the clubhouse. The Panel were supportive of the project and the key points influencing the Panel's decision were that the Club was a well-established charity, the funding would enhance facilities and improve conditions, allowing year round sessions, and provide flexibility of space for several uses i.e. lessons, events and fundraisers. The Panel recommended awarding £2,500.

An application had been received from QME Care for a digital inclusion and activities project for care home residents and the wider community. The Panel were supportive of the project and the key points influencing the Panel's decision were the focus on wellbeing; quality of life enhancement; creation of employment opportunities and improving the digital skills for residents and the wider community which could reduce social isolation. The Panel recommended awarding the sum of £1,800.

An application had been received from Kalewater Community Company for legal fees for land acquisition linked to the development of a recreation park. The Panel were supportive of the project and the key points influencing the Panel's decision were the Community benefits and investment and that the wider project had previously received awards through the Community Fund. The Panel recommended awarding £2,030.

DECISION

AGREED that the following grants be awarded:-

- (a) St Boswells Parish Community Council in the sum of £1,928**
- (b) Kelso Orchard Tennis Club in the sum of £2,500**
- (c) QME Care in the sum of £1,800**
- (d) Kalewater Community Company in the sum of £2,030**

8.0 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:-

8.1 Borders Group Riding for the Disabled

Borders Group of Riding for the Disabled (Borders RDA) was one of four Riding for the Disabled Groups in the Borders (others are Berwickshire Group, Ettrickbridge & Dryden and Tweeddale Rideability). All operated independently under the Riding for the Disabled Association – Edinburgh & Borders Region to provide activities for people with disabilities. Prior to the pandemic approximately 50 children, young people and adults with a variety of disabilities attended each week. Based near Jedburgh the facility had two large fields and two paddocks along with a purpose built indoor arena which included a tack room and viewing area. The majority of service users were from the Cheviot area. In preparing to reopen the centre Borders RDA identified two new projects aimed at rebuilding self-confidence around others and animals. By running two projects at the same time they had the added benefit of encouraging intergenerational activity and communication. Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) involved learning ground work exercises, to build a relationship with the horse and improve the confidence and self-esteem of participants and offer a cycle of instruction, response and feedback which enabled the participant to communicate with the horse in a way that the horse understands, through body language, energy and movement.

Tea with a Pony was a relatively new programme supported by the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) and was a meaningful activity to help those living with dementia and other long term conditions. Both the EFL and Tea with a Pony programmes would be available free of charge with the opportunity for clients, who can afford to do so, to make a donation. A grant from the Build Back a better Borders Fund would cover the costs of an Equine Assisted Learning Facilitator and Volunteer training as well as the wages and expenses of a RDA coach, to deliver both programmes for six months.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £11,500 subject to the following conditions:

- (i) The applicant must follow Scottish Government COvid-19 guidance; and**
- (ii) The rate of pay given to the Coach must meet the National Living Wage.**

8.2

KELSO ORCHARD TENNIS

Group sport had been severely impacted during the pandemic affecting not only opportunities for people to engage in sporting activities but also to benefit from the social interaction that it provided. Planned renovation work would enable the Club to provide new activities that could be carried out indoors to ensure that they are were not weather dependent. Prior to the pandemic junior club nights were very popular but numbers had yet to return to pre-pandemic numbers as were Membership numbers, with subscriptions to social doubles having fallen by 1,000 during 2020 and 2021. The Club would like to introduce new activities and rekindle interest in the sport by holding free taster sessions for key groups including disability sessions, tots, beginners, senior citizens and cardio tennis. Following on from the free taster sessions, a 6 week block of sessions would run for free for the key groups, working with community groups and sports groups in the area to reach a wider audience.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £15,429, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) The rate of pay given to the coaches and assistants must meet the National Living Wage;**
- (ii) Moveable equipment should be passed to another community group/organisation should this project cease to operate; and**
- (iii) Equipment must be available for wider community use.**

8.3

JED HEARTS HERE

Since its inception Jedburgh Hearts Here (JHH) had been able to provide 13 defibrillators around Jedburgh. Four defibrillators were funded by Jedburgh Common Good Fund in October 2021, three by a local businessman, two by the Ex Callants & Heralds Association, one by Jedburgh Community Council, one by the Lodge of St John and two by outside organisations. As restrictions had been lifted and more people are out and about in the town the organisation would like to provide training on how to use the equipment for members of the local community. The training would be provided by paramedics who volunteer with JHH. Not all of the defibrillators previously installed were accessible 24/7 and Funding was sought for three cabinets to be moved to external locations at the Golf Club, Lodge of St John and McColl's and therefore publically accessible at all times. JHH had also provided a defibrillator and cabinet for Jedburgh Grammar campus and discussions were taking place

as to where it would be situated. The British Heart Foundation stated that for every minute someone was in cardiac arrest without CPR and access to a defibrillator their chances of survival dropped by up to 10%. Having a public access defibrillator (PAD) available in an emergency can be lifesaving, especially in rural areas where ambulance response times may be longer.

DECISION

AGREED to award the sum of £2,907, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance;**
- (ii) Moveable equipment to be passed to another community group/organisation should Jedburgh Hearts Here cease to operate**
- (iii) Necessary insurance cover must be in place.**
- (iv) A plan must be put in place for the maintenance of the defibrillator cabinets.**

9.0 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

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

Wednesday, 23 March 2022

Wednesday, 29 June 2022

The next meeting would be held on **Wednesday, 26 January 2021 at 6.30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.**

10.0 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 p.m. on 29 November 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 8.30 p.m.