

MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA PARTNERSHIP held remotely by Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 11 November 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G. Edgar (Chairman), S. Aitchison, C. Cochrane E. Jardine (from para 9), J. Linehan, H. Scott and E Thornton-Nicol together with 22 representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillor D. Parker

Absent:- Councillor T. Miers

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

1. **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held remotely via Microsoft teams, which included elected Members, guests attending within the meeting and those watching via the Live Stream. The Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted.

2. **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

3. **FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW**

A copy of the Eildon Area Partnership Funding Table had been circulated. Regarding the Community Fund 2021/22, Mr Harrow referred to the table and explained that £77,750 had been awarded. He advised that if the pending applications were approved there would be a balance of £19,524 to last until the new financial year. Mr Harrow invited applications to the Fund.

4. **COMMUNITY FUND UPDATE / APPLICATIONS**

4.1 A report outlining the recommendations of the Eildon Area Partnership Assessment Panel on five applications to the Eildon Community Fund had been circulated. Jenny Mushlin proceeded to go through each of the applications. She confirmed that all decisions by the Panel had been unanimous.

4.2 **Selkirk Silver Band**

The application from the Selkirk Silver Band was for a grant of £2,198.44 to help digitalise and preserve the original manuscripts of a series of songs. New copies of the music would also be generated, and laminated for the use of the current players in the band. The request for £2,198.44 was granted in full.

4.3 **Newstead Village Community Trust**

Newstead Village Community Trust was applying for a grant of £13,758 to fund the development of a community action and business plan. The panel was of the opinion that

that the application was better suited to apply to the BBBB Fund. Following discussions the application was denied and the funding was not granted.

4.4 Melrose and District Community Council

The application for £1,500 from Melrose and District Community Council to upgrade their existing festive light system had been considered under the fast track provisions. The panel granted the funding in full on the basis that the upgrade was environmentally friendly and demonstrated community need.

4.5 Lilliesleaf Community Development Limited

The application from Lilliesleaf Community Development Limited had been dealt with as a fast track application. The panel had granted £1,500 to cover the ongoing expense of an accountant, insurance and grass cutting to support the group following the purchase of the green area in the village.

4.6 Trustees of Bowden Common

The Trustees of Bowden Common had applied for a grant of £896.48 to fund the replacement of shed doors and football nets. The nets used on the goalposts on the football pitch at the edge of the common were ageing and in need of replacement. The doors on the shed were falling into a state of disrepair and also required replacement. The application had been considered as a fast track application and granted in full by the panel.

4.7 Oxton & Channelkirk Community Council

Oxton & Channelkirk Community Council had applied for a grant of £1,400 to fund the repair of a community tractor. Jenny Mushlin advised the meeting that during the panel's considerations a member of the assessment panel had declared an interest in the application and took no part in the discussion. The panel had considered the application under as a fast track application. Funds had been granted in full on the basis that the tractor plays an important role in helping community resilience.

5. BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND UPDATE / APPLICATIONS

5.1 The Chairman asked Mr Harrow to provide an overview of the applications to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund. Mr Harrow explained that The Build Back a Better Borders fund had to date awarded £34,259. He advised that if the pending applications were approved there would be a balance of £44,583.39. Mr Harrow proceeded to give an outline of each application.

5.2 The Abbotsford Trust

The Abbotsford Trust were applying for £15,000 to help develop a pilot project to help people living in the local community whose mental health and well-being had been affected by the pandemic. The project aimed to engage with 20 individuals, delivered over four blocks, with each block lasting six weeks, involving 5 participants at a time. The participants in the project would have the opportunity to undertake a variety of practical duties across the gardens and estate of Abbotsford House. The funding applied for would cover key staff costs. Following considerable discussions the application for £15,000 was unanimously granted.

5.3 Eildon West Youth Hub (TD1 Youth Hub)

The application from TD1 Youth Hub was for £12,384 to allow them to offer a new outreach service over the winter months that would allow young people to access the TD1 youth hub in Galashiels town. It would allow the Hub to offer new outreach opportunities to those living in the Langlee area, within the community and from the Queens Centre. The Hub would also provide regular group activities offering the chance for young people to take part in youth work opportunities with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour by allowing young people the opportunity to engage twice a week in organised activity. The funding would cover the cost of providing those free activities, vehicle hire, staff costs and resources for activities. The Members in attendance praised the merits of the application,

highlighted the exemplary work being undertaken by the Hub and undertook to send a letter to the developer of Melrose Gait, signed by all Eildon Area Councillors, asking whether they would like to financially contribute to the provision of outreach services to the development given the dearth of opportunities present in the locale. Members unanimously granted the funding of £12,384.

5.4 **Selkirk Rotary**

The Rotary Club of Selkirk were applying for £4,500 to help deliver a Community and Economic Project on 27 November 2021. The event would include stage entertainment from local theatrical and musical groups, a fashion show, a live radio broadcast and children's entertainment. The funding applied for would cover the costs to allow the event to be free of charge, helping bring the whole of the local community together. Members praised the application and granted the funding of £4,500 in full. It was agreed that the marketing materials for the event would be circulated via the Area Partnership by Mr Harrow.

5.5 **Gala Rugby**

Gala Rugby had applied for £4,025 to fund the appointment of an assistant development officer for a 6 month period. The new staff member would allow Gala Rugby to engage with young people and schools that they have lacked the capacity to work with previously. They club would provide rugby activities within Langlee and Balmoral primary schools and focus on encouraging girls in early secondary school to participate in rugby. The application for £4,025 was granted in full.

5.6 **Melrose Bowling club**

The application from Melrose Bowling Club was seeking £9,828 to fund the purchase of a new lawn mower suitable for the needs of a modern-day bowling green. The current mower was increasingly no longer fit for purpose due to its age and the grass on the bowling green requiring regular cutting. Members praised the efforts of the club to be accessible to all and granted the application for £9,828 in full.

5.7 **Ettrick Forest Archers**

Ettrick Forest Archers were applying for £6,700 to enable them to purchase equipment to hold "Come and Try" sessions and open days. The funding would also allow the group to offer four free two-hour training sessions to the first five new junior members and first five new senior members who wish to join the club. The application for £6,700 was granted in full.

5.8 **Melrose Tennis**

The application from Melrose Waverly Tennis Club was for £8,163 to allow them to extend and expand their coaching sessions for children, and also reach out to new children. The Club would like to install a practice fence to extend the active time for all of the children taking part in coaching sessions. Additionally, the club would introduce a new 6-week block of free coaching aimed at 5 year olds who have not taken part in the sport previously. Members praised the application and granted the application for £8,163 in full.

5.9 **Newstead Village Community trust**

The application from Newstead Village Community Trust was for £12,382 to help appoint a professional consultant to work with the community to develop a Community Action Plan and Business Plan. The trust wished to build on the community spirit and togetherness that had arisen as a result of the impact of COVID-19. Members praised the application, granted the application for £12,382 in full and recognised that the work to be undertaken by the Trust could act as a template for other similar communities in the Borders.

6. **GROUP EVALUATIONS**

6.1 **Maroon'd**

Ian Dalgleish of Gala Rugby joined the meeting to provide feedback on a rugby 7s event held by Club on 21 August 2021. Despite poor weather attendance figures had been

good, with approximately 3500-4000 people attending. Different new features had been introduced to the event this year, including live music, running events and football. As part of the evaluation the Club had used SurveyMonkey to get feedback from attendees of the event. 90% of those who completed the survey indicated that the event was well run, 93% indicated that they would attend similar future events, 76% rated the quality of food as high, and 40% stated that they had visited local businesses in Galashiels prior to attending. The Members in attendance, some having attended, praised the event for being very successful and fun to attend. Mr Dalgleish agreed to provide photographs of the event to Mr Harrow in order to publicise the impact that BBBB funding was having in the local community.

MEMBER

Councillor Cochrane left during the discussion of the above item.

6.2 Friends and Family of Newtown Primary School

There had been circulated copies of a written evaluation from the Friends and Family of Newtown Primary School on a grant that had allowed the completion of a sporting area. The sports facility allowed games such as football/netball/basketball to be played in Newtown free of charge for all. Councillor Thornton-Nicol provided some additional feedback on the impact of the project on the local community, explaining that the apparatus had made an extremely positive impact.

7 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The Chairman explained that the additional information document included a wide range of useful information and links.

8 FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 23 September 2021 had been circulated and was noted.

9. PLACE MAKING UPDATE

9.1. 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,

9.2 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 2 from the Eildon Area. Overall, this represented less than 4% participation rate, and Mr Lamb acknowledged that the results were more informative than representative. Mr Lamb acknowledged that a Council report was not an effective way of communicating with Area Partnerships. Those in attendance suggested using bullet points and simpler language as a more effective way of engaging with people. 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.

9.3 Regarding the prioritisation of initial communities, Councillor Aitchison drew attention to Newtown St Boswells as a potential area to prioritise, highlighting the impact that workers being largely absent from Council Headquarters had on the number of people visiting the village on a day-to-day basis. The Chairman suggested that the Portfolio Manager

organise a workshop with all interested parties in line with what other Area Partnerships were doing to examine the approach to identifying initial communities. Mr Harrow indicated that the workshop would likely take place late January or early February. The Chairman indicated a preference that the workshop take place at the end of January and thanked Mr Lamb for his presentation and the work that he had undertaken.

MEMBER

Councillor Scott left during the discussion of the above item. Councillor Jardine joined during the discussion of the above item.

10 SBC ROADS UPDATE ON PLANNED WORKS PROGRAMME

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 clarified that when he referred to the deferral of work to alleviate drainage problems on the Lauder road, the work would be carried out in the new calendar year. The Chairman thanked Mr Scott for his excellent and informative presentation and it was agreed that a copy of the slide presentation would be issued.

11 COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB UPDATE

Mr Harrow explained that an information update on the Community Assistance Hub was included as part of the additional information document. Oonagh McGarry thanked the volunteers who continue to support the hub.

12 NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 10 February 2022. Suggestions for agenda items could be sent to the Locality Development Co-ordinator at kenny.harrow@scotborders.gov.uk.

13 MEETING EVALUATION

Mr Coltman 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. Those in attendance provided answers to questions that were collated and shared on screen.

CHAIRMAN

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

The meeting concluded at 8.20 p.m.