

MINUTES of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held via MS Teams on
Wednesday, 30 March 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G. Edgar (Chairman), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, E Jardine, D. Parker, H. Scott and E. Thornton-Nicol, together with 17 representatives from Partner Organisations, Community Councils and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillor J. Linehan

Absent:- Councillors C. Cochrane, and T. Miers

In Attendance:- Communities and Partnerships Manager, Locality Development Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Community Engagement Officer (E. Coltman), Community Place Planning and Engagement Officer (S. Renwick), Youth Engagement Officer (P. Rigby), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Eildon 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. **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. **BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND APPLICATION**

Mr Coltman, Community Engagement Officer, provided an overview of an application for funding to the Build Back a Better Borders Fund from Earlston Tennis Club. The club had applied for £3023.02 to help deliver free tennis taster sessions to people from a range of ages and abilities over a five week period, including adults and children. The Members in attendance spoke in favour of the application and unanimously agreed to approve the application in full.

4. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT & MENTI EVALUATION**

The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Mr Harrow, highlighted the additional information document that had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting and encouraged those in attendance to consult the document with regards to ongoing Scottish Borders Council consultations.

5. **CHALLENGING AGEISM GUIDE**

Mr Harrow drew attention to the Challenging Ageism guide that had been circulated with the agenda. The guide was designed as a practical tool to support people communicating about ageing and older age.

6. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 10TH FEBRUARY 2022**

Mr Harrow explained that the feedback from the previous meeting had been positive, in particular the Place Making update. The Minutes of the meetings of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 10 February 2022 were noted.

MEMBER

Councillor Parker left the meeting during the discussion of the item below.

7. PLACE MAKING UPDATE

Sharon Renwick, Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer gave an update on Place Making workshops that had taken place since the previous meeting of the Area Partnership. Ms Renwick explained that participants at the Eildon workshop had initially been reluctant to identify the initial communities for projects. Langlee in Galashiels, Bannerfield in Selkirk, Stow, and Fountainhall had subsequently been identified as initial communities following discussions on which areas needed the most work to promote regeneration, areas where higher levels of deprivation existed, and the need to ensure rural communities were more resilient. Councillor Aitchison referred to his previous suggestion that one of the initial communities should have been Newtown St Boswells due to its changing character, the effect of Covid, and social deprivation. Mr Harrow explained that the project was community led, highlighted the bottom-up nature of place making, and that he hoped that Newtown would be considered.

8. FOOD GROWING STRATEGY

Amy Alcorn, introduced herself as the Greenspace Programme Officer working for Scottish Borders Council. Ms Alcorn had been in her role for 6 months. Ms Alcorn explained that her role involved promoting food growing across the Scottish Borders, and gave a presentation of the food growing strategy within the Eildon area. Food growing across the area was a diverse and varied field, ranging from gardens and allotments to guerrilla gardening. Work had taken place with five of Scottish Borders Council's Community Engagement Officers, who had assisted Ms Alcorn in helping projects access various sources of community funding. A new website had gone live that included an interactive map, allowing interested parties to find growing places and access the contact details of the relevant organiser. Ms Alcorn gave an overview of four projects within the Eildon area and provided an email address that people could use to sign up to receive a newsletter on related projects in the area. Those in attendance thanked Ms Alcorn for her presentation and the excellent work that she had undertaken since she had been in post.

9. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND - ALLAN KINLEY

Allan Kinley of Skills Development Scotland (SDS) was present at the meeting to give a presentation on the nature of the work that his organisation carries out. Mr Kinley explained that SDS were active across Scotland, had careers advisors at all of the secondary schools across the Scottish Borders, and that they provided a universal service that anyone could access. The organisation provided support to help people think about career management skills, such as planning job interviews, and assist in accessing training and education opportunities. Mr Kinley explained that various projects were ongoing, such as the "My World of Work" initiative, which provided careers advice, online learning pointers, distance learning information, funding assistance to help people acquire a CSCS card to work in the construction industry and a CV builder. In response to a question regarding training opportunities in the green economy, Mr Kinley explained that opportunities were slowly increasing, initiatives were ongoing to try and retain young talent in the area and that, if the partnership was interested, he could return at a future meeting to examine the issue in more detail. The Chairman thanked Mr Kinley for his interesting presentation and expressed his hope that Mr Kinley would return to future meetings of the Area Partnership.

10. MONEY WORRIES APP - FINANCIAL INCLUSION CONVERSATION - NICHOLA SEWELL, JOINT HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

Nichola Sewell was in attendance to give insight into, and raise awareness of, a Money Awareness mobile phone application that had been developed by NHS Borders in

partnership with a range of organisations. The application provided help across a wide variety of areas; including money, health, and housing and work. The information provided in the application was quality assured and up-to-date, and was being used by a wide variety of partners and other parties across the Borders to signpost and direct people to key resources. Those in attendance thanked Ms Sewell for her presentation and for the work that had gone into creating a useful, relevant, application to help the public.

11. **ASSESSMENT PANEL SUMMARY**

Jenny Mushlin of the Eildon Area Partnership Assessment Panel provided a summary of the work that had taken place over the term of the Area Partnership. The six members of the panel had volunteered their time to help the community decide for itself how funding should be given out. The group had not always agreed on everything, but with help from Mr Harrow and Mr Coltman, had carefully considered applications and reached decisions beneficial to the area. Mrs Mushlin advised that all of the members of the group were willing to continue in their role. The group suggested changes to the process to introduce a closing date for applications, with a fast track deadline every month, in order to ensure that applications could be dealt with in a timelier manner. The Chairman thanked the group for its exemplary work, and requested that the requests be put before the next meeting of the Area Partnership for approval.

12. **2021/22 COMMUNITY FUND - CLOSING POSITION**

Mr Coltman provided an overview of the Funding table that had been circulated with the agenda and the closing position of the various funds. £99.4k had been set aside for community projects, which represented all of the funding that was available after ring fenced funding had been subtracted. All of the Community Councils within Eildon had received the grant that they were entitled to. Two Community Councils were not entitled to a grant due to the financial reserves that they held, and one Community Council was in abeyance. The Build Back a Better Borders fund had been spent in its entirety. £105.6k had been awarded to 25 projects at an average just under £6.5k. All had received their funding, and two evaluations had been received. It was expected that at the next meeting of the Area Partnership there would be further projects to report on. The Members in attendance thanked Mr Coltman and Mr Harrow for their diligent and impressive work. Mr Harrow extended his thanks to the Assessment Panel for volunteering their time to take on a difficult and important task.

13. **2020/21 COMMUNITY FUND PROJECT EVALUATION - CAFÉ RECHARGE - AMY WRIGHT**

Amy Wright was in attendance to provide an evaluation of Café Recharge's 2020/21 Community Fund project. The café had two main aims – to reduce edible food sent to landfill and to reduce food poverty. The group collect surplus food from supermarkets that had been deemed unsellable, made meals from it and then sold it on a “pay what you can” basis. The group had also provided a meeting space at their premises for a range of community groups. Ms Wright thanked the Community Fund for their support, and explained that in the 12 months from January 2021 to December 2021, the café had served a total of 4085 meals and rescued 4697kg of food that would otherwise have been sent to landfill. The café had served on average 345 customers per month. The Chairman thanked Ms Wright for her presentation and urged anyone with a project to get in touch with Mr Harrow and Mr Coltman to find out about what support could be available to them.

14. **MEETING EVALUATION**

The next full meeting of the Area Partnership was scheduled for 30 June 2022 and the Chairman asked for agenda item suggestions to be submitted. A link to the Menti evaluation of the meeting was posted, and the Chairman invited those in attendance to provide their feedback.

15. **NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP: THURSDAY, 30 JUNE 2022, AGENDA ISSUED: THURSDAY, 16 JUNE 2022**

The Chairman thanked all of those in attendance for their work over his term. Councillor Aitchison thanked the Chairman for his excellent work as Chairman of the Eildon Area Partnership.

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm