

Eildon Area Partnership – 30th June 2022

Place Making – Options for Next Steps in Eildon

1. Purpose

To set out options for the Eildon Area Partnership to progress place making in communities across the locality.

2. Background

2.1 Area Partnership Discussions/Workshops

Over the past year, conversations have been continuing with Area Partnerships around:

- How we develop a place making approach in each locality and across the Borders
- Where we might make a practical start
- What the role of Area Partnerships should be in overseeing the implementation and delivery of place making in their communities

The conversation began in spring last year around introducing the proposals presented to the February 2021 Council meeting and continued in summer with a series of brief workshops facilitated by Scottish Futures Trust to gauge views on what place making means to communities and what the priority issues and ambitions were for the approach. The output from the workshops was used to draft more detailed place making proposals which were endorsed by the August 2021 Council with a view to further engagement and development with Area Partnerships over Autumn and winter.

In spring, this year, a series of facilitated workshops were held to explore place making in greater detail and to enable those involved in Area Partnerships and their communities to shape place making in their locality, including the role of the Area Partnership in overseeing place making.

The focus now needs to turn to how practical support is given to communities in developing their place plans.

2.2 Emerging Approaches

Across the 5 localities, different approaches are emerging reflecting the diversity of the area.

Two area partnerships have chosen to establish short-life Place Making Working Groups, comprising representatives from across local communities and organisations and are proposing an inclusive “opt-in” approach, initially seeking expressions of interest from Communities across their localities. It is anticipated that the inclusive approach – i.e. all communities that wish to become involved in place planning should be helped to do so – can be done through a network of champions or leaders with support being provided by SBC and others according to their needs.

Both working groups are chaired by community representatives and are supported by Council officials and both groups will feedback progress to the next round of Area Partnerships and ultimately make recommendations for progressing Place Making in their respective localities later this year. Both groups provide a model that could be adopted, in whole or in part(s), by other Area Partnerships. Both groups have publically available documentation – questionnaires,

refined principles, place making definition – that can be adapted and, as their proposals are developed, there is scope for further sharing of information.

Options for the other localities are being developed based on the output from their respective Place making Workshops in March and April.

2.3 Borderlands

In 4 localities, there are also commitments to begin place making in the 4 target towns identified in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal - Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick and Jedburgh – this year. Nationally agreed guidance from the Borderlands Place Programme and experience from the development of associated place plans (both locally, and across the Borderlands local authorities – Carlisle, Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway and Northumberland) can also provide models to guide place making elsewhere.

For Eildon, this means that there is already a commitment under the Borderlands Place Programme to undertake place making – and the development of a Town/Place Plan and associated Investment Plan in Galashiels. As this falls under separate agreed governance arrangements under the Borders Inclusive Growth Deal – this would fall outwith the scope of the options set out in section 4 below.

3. Eildon Workshop – (23rd March)

3.1 Emerging Themes

A summary of points raised at the workshop is included at Appendix 1. Some of the themes emerging are highlighted below:

- A broad understanding of place making – that it should be inclusive, community-led, grass-roots movement, extend beyond spatial planning and cover all aspects of life in a community.
- Recognition of the diversity of communities in the locality and that there should be no one-size-fits-all.
- Energy and enthusiasm for the potential of the place and its people – including the opportunities to make communities better for both older and younger people.
- The importance of supporting rural communities – not just towns.
- Including all people in communities and in particular engaging young people in the process.
- Understanding that community-led plans should form a foundation for wider plans – a bottom-up approach to service planning.

3.2 Communities Where Initial Place Making Could Start

While the aim is to include *all* communities that wish to develop local place plans, the workshop on the 23rd March identified a small number of communities around which *initial* place making activity could be focused. These were:

- **Galashiels** (which will be included under Borderlands see above)
- **Langlee** (also part of Borderlands as it is within Galashiels)
- **Newtown St. Boswells** which is currently undergoing significant change.
- **Stow & Fountainhall** representatives expressed an interest in becoming involved as a smaller rural community.
- **Bannerfield** – opportunities around the investment in the Community Centre

Since the workshop, a meeting with representatives from Explore Selkirk and Selkirk Means Business raised the potential for a wider Selkirk place making approach – supporting and including Bannerfield. **It is therefore proposed that wider place plan is developed for Selkirk.**

Eildon Area Partnership is asked to consider whether it wishes to endorse these suggested communities as an initial focus for place making activity and the development of associated local place plans for each. The Area Partnership may also wish to seek expressions of interest from other communities who wish to develop/further develop community-led place plans.

3.3 Oversight Role of the Area Partnership

No clear steer emerged from the workshop over the future role of the Eildon Area Partnership in its role in overseeing and directing place making in the locality.

4. Options

2 possible options for progressing place making in Eildon are set out below:

- a. **Working Group Approach.** The Area Partnership establishes – and seeks initial nominations for – a working group along the lines of the models adopted in two Area Partnerships. The working group would likely comprise 8 – 14 people including community council/organisation representatives and 3 members (1 per ward) although the exact number is for both the Area Partnership and the working group, itself, to determine. A draft potential terms of reference for an Eildon Place making Working Group is set out in Appendix 2 to this report. The terms of reference would need to be considered and agreed by the Area Partnership.

In the meantime, while the Working Group is being established, SBC's Community Engagement Team - on behalf of the Working Group – could:

- i. seek expressions of interest from others who wish to becoming involved in the working group and either:
- ii. work with representatives of those communities identified by the Area Partnership (see 3.2 above) to develop a series of proposals for engagement and the development of community-led place plans in each community reflecting the differing needs, capacity and circumstances of each

Expressions of interest from other Communities that would like to become involved in place making (individually or combined with other communities) could also be sought if the Area Partnership wishes.

SBC would provide support to the Working Group in line with practice in Berwickshire and Tweeddale and share good practice across all groups. The working group would provide updates and make recommendations to the Area Partnership.

- b. **Area Partnership Approach.** As per option a above, but working directly to – and on behalf of – the Eildon Area Partnership, SBC's Community Engagement Team work with representatives of those communities identified by the Area Partnership (see 3.2 above) to develop a series of proposals for engagement and the development of community-led

place plans in each community reflecting the differing needs, capacity and circumstances of each.

Again, expressions of interest from local communities who wish to becoming involved in place making could also be sought if the Area Partnership wishes.

Proposals would be brought forward to the Area Partnership for consideration

5. Recommendation

- a. That the area partnership considers whether it wishes to endorse the communities identified at 3.2 above as an initial focus for place making activity in Eildon and the development of associated local place plans for each.**
- b. That the Area Partnership consider the options set out in section 4 and provide direction on how they would like to progress.**
- c. That the Area Partnership, if they choose option a, consider and agree the attached draft Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix 2.**