

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the
BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP
held in via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 9
June 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:- Councillors J. Anderson (Chairman), J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, A. Orr and M. Rowley

Other organisations attendees: Ms J. Amaral (BAVS), Mr J. Brown (Swinton and Ladykirk CC), Mr K. Dickinson (Gavinton, Fogo & Polwarth CC), Ms P. Hood (Cockburnspath and Cove CC), Mr L. Inglis (Reston CC), Mrs A. McNeill (Heart of Duns), Ms R. Parker, Mr S. Sanderson (The National Lottery), Ms J. Sutton (Cockburnspath and Cove CC), Mr L. Wood (A Heart for Duns).

Apologies:- Councillor D. Moffat

In Attendance:- Communities and Partnership Manager, Community Co-ordinator (G. Jardine), Community Engagement Officer (J. Purves), Portfolio Manager (J. Lamb), Community Place Planning and Regeneration Officer (J. Houghton), Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and the Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted and how those both in the meeting and watching via the Live Stream could take part. Ward councillors were invited to introduce themselves to those present.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 3 MARCH 2022**

Copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 3 March 2022 had been circulated.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

3. **PLACE MAKING**

Copies of the report from Mr Dickinson were circulated that described the formation of the Berwickshire Area Partnership Place Making Working Group, summarised initial discussion related to communication and terminology, discussed prioritising of community support, proposed a model for supporting communities in Berwickshire and indicated next steps. Mr Dickinson advised that it was important there was an understanding of what Place Making was and that terms should be simplified and that he was seeking endorsement on the principles outlined in appendix 3 of the report. The working group proposed that a group of champions be identified to assist the development of place plans. The working group circulated a questionnaire to all community councils in Berwickshire and community groups to identify interest in Place Making and received eleven responses. The Working Group would be meeting later to look at community groups that may be able to work together in clusters. Mr Dickinson noted that two or three Area Partnership ward councillors were requested to join the working group and that the Area Partnership was requested to endorse an 'opt-in' model where interested parties in Place Making were not turned away and were supported by Place Making champions. The Working Group requested that written feedback was submitted from attendees before

Friday 17 June. Councillors Greenwell, Anderson, Hamilton and Orr indicated they would be willing to participate in the Place Making Working Group. The Area Partnership agreed to endorse the opt-in approach of the Place Making Working Group.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED the progress of the working group;**
- (b) NOTED that feedback was requested to the working group on the draft Place Making definition and Principles set out in Appendices 2 and 3 of the report by Friday 17 June;**
- (c) NOTED the next steps of the working group; and,**
- (d) AGREED to endorse the 'opt-in' approach of the working group**

4. FINANCIAL INCLUSION FUND - FOOD CONVERSATION

The Community Co-ordinator delivered a presentation on Borders Wide Food Conversation and explained that conversations had been taking place regarding food security and this would likely form a regular item on agendas for the Area Partnership so that attendees were aware of developments and could contribute to discussions. Ms Jardine explained that rurality presented an additional challenge to food security in the Borders. Community partners and volunteers had met 3 times so far looking at areas of good practice to address food security to assess what solutions could be developed. The Low and Slow Project was highlighted as one example alongside financial inclusion support through foodbanks and Fareshare. Ms Amaral explained that Berwickshire Alliance secured funding from Covid Recovery to support third sector recovery and highlighted examples of support including for mental health, education, food larders and community fridges. There was now a focus on securing sustainable approaches to support. Premises were being sought for Duns foodbank to establish a share shop for surplus food as it was highlighted that some food being donated to foodbanks was not always appropriate and sometimes were going to waste. Community fridges was highlighted a good example to help people obtain food.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY FUNDING

The Community Co-ordinator delivered a presentation on Community Funding that provided an overview for the Area Partnership on an overview of the Communities and Partnerships Team. The Communities and Partnerships Team supports communities to take forward activities they would like to see in their area and to bring about change. Support took the form of planning, supporting through funding and develop connections with different services and agencies to support partnership working. The team was also the first point of contact with people in relation to the Community Empowerment Act. An overview of the priorities of the Communities and Partnership Team was provided. The Community Engagement Officer explained that his role was to meet as many community groups as possible to support them to apply for funds. The Neighbourhood Support Fund was the largest fund that had £100,000 available at April 2022 for community projects to apply for awards up to £5,000. It was explained that awards were assessed by an assessment panel of volunteers that make recommendations for the Area Partnership. The next round of applications was to close on 24 July and would be heard at the 1 September Berwickshire Area Partnership meeting. Mr Purves explained that the Welfare Trust was a bespoke fund for relief of poverty and for those with ill-health or disability which could award £1,000 to individuals and £2,500 to constituted groups. The Community Enhancement Fund and the Small Schemes Fund was also highlighted.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

6. BERWICKSHIRE FUNDING TABLE 2022-23

There had been circulated copies of the Berwickshire Funding Table, which showed the available funding for funds available in the Berwickshire area. There were two funding applications to the Neighbourhood Support Fund to be determined and if these were successful then there would be £93,223.19 funds remaining. Further applications had been received after the closing date which would be heard at the 1 September meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership. Ms Jardine explained that £810 was remaining from the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund which had since closed which would be added to the Neighbourhood Support Fund.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND

7.1 There had been circulated copies of a report from the Berwickshire Neighbourhood Support Fund Assessment Panel that summarised the Panel's meeting held on 7 June 2022 and included proposals to the function of the assessment panel, the frequency of funding rounds, and a review of applications submitted to the Fund. Mr Dickinson explained that changes had been made to the application form which was hoped to have been available as an online form, but was available as a downloadable form for the meeting's round of applications. The Panel had difficulty with one application as a member of the Panel declared an interest which led to the Panel not reaching quorum. The Panel had eight spaces for Area Partnership members and three places for ward councillors, and at the last meeting, there were four members in attendance. The Panel wished to increase its membership however formal applications had not started yet. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the Meeting held on 4 March 2021, Mr Dickinson explained that the Berwickshire Area Partnership agreed to the creation of a sub-committee with delegated powers to undertake the assessment of applications and make awards, however feedback was given that progress had been too fast compared to other area partnerships in the Borders. Mr Dickinson explained that the paper proposed that the Berwickshire Area Partnership seek delegated powers again based on the work of the Panel over the previous year.

7.2 Mr Dickinson summarised the two applications presented for grant award from the Neighbourhood Support Fund. The applications to the Neighbourhood Support Fund were considered:

- Burnmouth Community Council
- ReTweed

The Assessment Panel's recommendations, which were detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, were as follows:

(a) Burnmouth Community Council

It was agreed to recommend that the Berwickshire Area Partnership award a grant of £1,064 to Burnmouth Community Council.

(b) ReTweed

It was noted that the Panel did not reach quorum for this discussion, however the application was discussed. It was agreed to recommend that the Berwickshire Area Partnership award a grant of £4,900 to ReTweed.

DECISION

AGREED to:

- (a) approve the award of a grant of £1,064 to Burnmouth Community Council;
- (b) approve the award a grant of £4,900 to ReTweed;
- (c) seek the granting of delegated powers for the Berwickshire Neighbourhood Support Fund Assessment Panel to undertake the assessment of applications and subsequently make awards from Scottish Borders Council in consultation with officers; and,
- (d) approve the recommendation for three, equally spaced funding rounds per year.

8. THE NATIONAL LOTTERY - COMMUNITY FUNDING

- 8.1 The Chair introduced Stewart Sanderson, Funding Officer for South of Scotland Team, National Lottery to the meeting who delivered a presentation on funding opportunities with The National Lottery Community Fund. There were four live funding programmes, with two closing soon which Mr Sanderson presented. Awards for All offered groups awards up to £10,000 which has been used for projects such as the repair of village halls, community growing projects and to cover costs such as staff time and for activities. Community groups did not need to liaise with the funding team beforehand although it was encouraged to establish a relationship with the funding team and offer support. Young Start offered awards of up to £100,000 and was not raised through lottery ticket sales but through money in dormant bank accounts. The fund was aimed at younger people to encourage them to make change in their lives. This fund required applicants to be in touch with the funding team in the first instance so that a conversation could take place about what applicants wanted to achieve with their project. Community Led and Improving Lives funds were closing on 30 September 2022. Community Led offered awards of up to £150,000 over three years for activities that communities led on such as improving wellbeing and connecting communities. Groups had to have an elected board that anyone could join and awards could cover salary costs and limited building costs. Improving Lives offered awards up to £200,000 over three years directed at supporting communities to overcome challenging circumstances and led by the people concerned to ensure their voices were heard as far as possible. New projects would be launched by The National Lottery which were still in development and consultation with the Scottish Government, communities and the third sector to ensure the new programmes are as relevant as possible. A funding surgery was to be held on 23 June 2022 in Duns.
- 8.2 Responding to questions from attendees, Mr Sanderson noted that funding in the Borders fluctuated year-to-year but there wasn't numbers to hand for the rate of successful applications from the Borders. Ms Amaral raised the concerns of member organisations of BAVS that funders prefer to fund new projects rather than for core funding. Mr Sanderson advised that core funding was possible for 2023 and that a conference was being held in Glasgow where the National Lottery portfolio team would be receiving views on the question of core funding. Ms Amaral advised that she was raising the issue with the Scottish Government.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

9. PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

The Community Co-ordinator provided an update on participatory budgeting which all local authorities were required to have 1% of its budget reserved for. Participatory budgeting at Scottish Borders Council was to be called community choices. Community choices aimed to involve community members in shaping services being delivered and having a say in how public money was spent. An e-learning module had been created for staff so that all departments understood Community Choices and the decision-making process to support involving the community in the decision-making process. Ms Jardine advised that anyone who wished to know more about Community Choices could be in

touch with her or Mr Purves. Ms Jardine explained the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted SBC reaching its 1% target however there were examples of participatory budget in action such as pupils at Peebles High School using funding from the Tweeddale Community Fund to run a Community Choices event aimed at improving the school environment. Ms Jardine introduced the Community Engagement Officer to highlight how grant funding of £60,000 had been used to allow the Gavinton community improve their playpark. Cllr Rowley highlighted the funding for Gavinton playpark was secured through the playpark budget and that there was a need on the Council to present a pot of money to communities to determine what they want public money spent on. Councillor Rowley further highlighted that the money reserved for participatory budgeting was 1% of the council's discretionary spend outside of its statutory obligations and that the Berwickshire Area Partnership was instrumental for councillors recognising what communities' priorities were.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The Chairman advised that additional information was included in the agenda pack which contained information on current consultations and links to useful information highlighting the School Meal Survey, Improving Mental Health in the Scottish Borders, the NHS Borders Money Worries application.

11. NEXT MEETING OF THE BERWICKSHIRE AREA PARTNERSHIP

It was noted that the next meeting of the Berwickshire Area Partnership was on 1 September 2022 and the agenda would be issued on 18 August 2022.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 A Heart for Duns

The Community Co-ordinator advised that A Heart for Duns had accrued an underspend on their Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund grant award to support community events in Duns to recover from the period of self-isolation. Due to further Covid-19 restrictions, some events were cancelled so the full allocation was not spent and the full underspend was £1,916. Administration costs related to the cancelled events were incurred which totalled £1,289 if the Area Partnership approved that spend, leaving £628 which A Heart for Duns have suggested could be put to delivering community event with the consent of the Berwickshire Area Partnership.

DECISION

AGREED to:

(a) Approve the spend of £1,289 of underspend on administration costs; and,

(b) Approve use of the £628 of remaining underspend on community events to be delivered by A Heart for Duns.

12.2 Eat Sleep Ride

The Chairman advised that Eat Sleep Ride were having a wellbeing-themed open day on 11 June 2022.

12.3 SBC Greener Gateway

The Chairman advised that the Greener Gateway awards was to launch which would replace the floral awards.

12.4 Citizen's Advice Bureau Roxburghshire and Berwickshire

The Chairman advised that Citizen's Advice Roxburghshire and Berwickshire were looking for more board members.

12.5 **Community Councils**

Councillor Orr encouraged attendees to consider becoming members of their local community councils.

13. **MEETING EVALUATION VIA MENTI**

Attendees concluded the meeting with submission of meeting evaluations using the software Menti.

The meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.