

MINUTE of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held remotely by Microsoft
Teams on Thursday, 30 June 2022 at 6.00
pm

Present:- Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), C. Cochrane, L. Douglas, F. Sinclair, N. Mackinnon, and J. Paton-Day, together with 10 representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors D. Parker, E. Jardine and J. Linehan

Absent: Councillor H. Steel

In Attendance:- Community Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Portfolio Manager (J. Lamb), Community Engagement Officer (E. Coltman), Youth Engagement Officer (P. Rigby), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS**

The Chair 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 Chair outlined how the meeting would be conducted. The Chair introduced each of the Elected Members in turn.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair 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.

2. **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 30 MARCH 2022**

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 30 March 2022 had been circulated and was noted. The Chair advised that with regards to the Menti Evaluation circulated with the Agenda, items listed would be assessed and considered at the meeting of the Area Partnership in September.

3. **PLACE MAKING - PROGRESS REPORT**

3.1 Portfolio Manager, James Lamb, gave a slide presentation providing an update on the Place Making Approach. Mr Lamb explained that he had been working on Place Making for over one year, and that two options were being considered for how to proceed with developing Place Making Plans. It was essential that Place Making plans were community-led, that efforts were made to be as inclusive as possible, and that every community was considered individually to reflect their needs and aspirations.

3.2 Regarding the necessity of plans, Mr Lamb explained that accessing funding was a key part of Place Making, and that ensuring a joined-up approach to thinking allowed communities to access the wide array of funding that was becoming available. Significantly, Place Making plans could help unlock funding streams by demonstrating the level of community support projects have, the business case of a project and demonstrate its deliverability. Fundamentally, Mr Lamb advised that Place Making was about ensuring that communities could come together and align their interests to ensure that through the effective use of resources and the capacity within that community, places were made better for people to live in.

3.3 Mr Lamb provided an overview of the approaches that different localities had considered. Within the five localities within the Scottish Borders, 26 communities had expressed an interest in Place Making. Berwickshire and Tweeddale had chosen to set up Working Groups to take forward Place Making. The aforementioned Area Partnerships had agreed to form a working group, develop the arrangements and co-ordinate Place Making within their locality. Within the Eildon locality, the initial communities of Galashiels, Langlee, Newtown St Boswells; Stow and Fountainhall, and Bannerfield had been identified. Subsequently, interest had been registered from Selkirk, with considerations being made to involve Selkirk and Bannerfield together. Mr Lamb proceeded to outline the Working Group proposals for proceeding with Place Making as circulated within the agenda pack. The Area Partnership unanimously agreed to proceed with the initial communities that had been developed. The Area Partnership unanimously agreed to proceed with the Working Group approach as defined within the document circulated with the agenda. Further discussions clarified that additional communities were welcome to get involved with Place Making, and that officer support would be available to seek expressions of interest from those who wished to get involved in the working group.

4. **PROJECT EVALUATION - SELKIRK BAPTIST CHURCH**

The Chair invited Heather Neilson to provide a presentation on work that had gone on following the award of funding from the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund to the Selkirk Baptist Church. The Church had applied for, and received funding of approximately £7k, to redevelop a garden area at the rear of the church. The garden had been in a neglected state prior to the work, but had been transformed into a significant asset, with three tiers present within the garden with a range of features including a pergola, rock garden and water feature. The garden was used as a community asset, with a range of groups and individuals using the space to meet and host events. Those in attendance expressed their delight in seeing the transformation, remarked that the project was inspiring and encouraged Ms Neilson to publicise and circulate her group's success using social media.

5. **THE NATIONAL LOTTERY - COMMUNITY FUNDING**

Neal Bennison of the National Lottery joined the meeting to provide insight into his group and an overview of how they could help with community funding. Mr Bennison explained that he worked as a National Lottery Community Fund Manager, focused on helping communities access funding. The National Lottery had, in the last financial year, provided approximately £1.3 million to projects across the Scottish Borders via small grants of between £10k and £200k. Mr Bennison highlighted that his organisation shared a lot in common with the approach of Place-Making, namely that the group would look to try and co-ordinate a connected approach, pull a range of groups together to optimise their strengths and build on existing assets. Mr Bennison shared his contact details and advised any interested party to contact him as early as possible when considering making an application for funding.

6. **FINANCIAL INCLUSION FUND / FOOD CONVERSATION**

Mr Harrow, Community Co-ordinator, provided an overview of work that had gone on within Eildon looking to improve financial inclusion and provide food support. Mr Harrow explained that the Financial Inclusion Fund had been made available by the Scottish Government, and that the funding was used to tackle food insecurity, provide welfare payments directly to households and fuel cards to those who experiencing fuel poverty. Regarding food support, Mr Harrow explained that a trial "Low and Slow" project had taken place in Hawick, but that a new project would start in approximately 2 weeks. The project brought together NHS Borders, Gala Foodbank, Changeworks and the Focus Centre. 8 individuals were taking part initially, with a view to developing childcare facilities to allow a roll-out to a wider group of people in the future. With regards to Food Conversations, Mr Harrow explained that a group would be formed that would be action focused, with each session having key actions or targets to make a real difference. In response to questions Mr Harrow explained that his team were seeing more and more

people struggling with the cost of living, and that work was ongoing to try and improve communication to encourage people to come forward for help. With regards to providing food vouchers, Mr Harrow explained that people in crisis could get in contact through an SBC contact centre or directly get in touch with Mr Harrow, or his colleague Mr Coltman, who could arrange supermarket gift card vouchers to be provided. The Chair highlighted an SBC leaflet that outlined support available specifically within the Eildon locality, encouraging any organisation that sent out food parcels or support to get in touch. Mr Coltman encouraged any interested party to contact him, and that he could provide them with copies of the leaflet. Pam Rigby, Youth Engagement Worker with SBC, encouraged Young People to sign up to the membership benefits that come in conjunction with a Young Scot Card.

MEMBER

Councillor MacKinnon left during the discussion of the item above.

7. OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY FUNDING

Mr Coltman, Community Engagement Officer, introduced himself to the meeting and provided insight into his work as part of the Communities and Partnerships Team. Mr Coltman explained that he was always interested in speaking to groups, organisations or individuals in the voluntary sector or beyond to help co-ordinate and assist work that can help local communities. Previous projects and highlights were shown to the meeting, and Mr Coltman encouraged people to get in touch if they were seeking help on any community projects.

8. EILDON FUNDING TABLES

The main source of funding available this financial year, as a replacement for the Community Fund, was the Neighbourhood Support Fund. The Fund had opened with a balance of £147K, with £145.5k remaining following the approval of smaller, fast-track applications. Mr Coltman explained that the fund would run until it was depleted or until the end of the financial year.

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND

9.1 Jenny Mushlin, Chair of the Eildon Assessment Panel, gave an outline of each application before providing comments and an explanation of the reason for each recommendation. One application was deferred whilst the Panel sought further information.

9.2 Works+

The application from Works+ was for £3.5k to help deliver two, 20-week courses for up to 20 women in the Eildon locality. The funding would help support staff costs, pay for rent, travel, refreshments and materials for workshops. The Panel recommended that the application was approved, which was unanimously agreed.

9.3 Go Wild Scotland

The application from Go Wild Scotland was for £14,790.60 for salary costs for one full-time staff member to deliver a new project that would help community groups throughout the Eildon locality to create a "digital trail", combining physical and digital elements. Trail users could use phones or other smart devices to access digital resources by scanning tags to gain access to a range of resources. In response to a question regarding leases for the use of land being used, assurances were provided that safeguards would be put in place to ensure the continuity of the trails following their development. The recommendation of the funding Panel was unanimously approved.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Sinclair declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Meeting during the discussion.

9.4 Gala Rugby (Maroon'd)

The application from Gala Rugby was for £12.5k to deliver the second Maroon'd event at Netherdale on 20 August 2022. The event was planned as a sporting and social event featuring rugby from primary school and high school ages up to senior sevens level. Clan rugby was also included. The event would also include a further range of sporting events, including athletics, football, and a range of live entertainment and food. The event was planned to be free entry, with a shuttle bus running to the town centre. The funding applied for would cover the provision of security staff, portable toilets and showers, marquees for changing and music costs. Ms Mushlin explained that the Panel had recommended to fund the project this year, but was reluctant to continually fund future iterations of the event. Members in attendance unanimously agreed in principle with the recommendation for the funding, but lacking a Member from each of the Wards within the Eildon locality, were not quorate. The decision was therefore subject to future ratification.

10. **NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 8 September 2022. Suggestions for agenda items could be sent to the Community and Partnerships team.

The meeting concluded at 7.40 pm