

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP**

MINUTES of Meeting of the TWEEDDALE
AREA PARTNERSHIP held via Microsoft
Teams on Tuesday, 1 November 2022 at 7.00
pm

Present:- Councillors M. Douglas (Chairman), D. Begg, J. Pirone, E. Small, R. Tatler, and V. Thomson.

Also present:- Peter Maudsley (Peebles Community Council), Chris Lewin (Upper Tweed Community Council), Esther Daborn (Tweeddale Assessment Panel), Lorna McCullough (The Bridge), Crick Carleton (Chair of the Tweeddale Area Partnership Place Making Working Group), Fiona Colton (Live Borders), Gill Westwood (Tweeddale Citizens Advice Bureau), Lisa Denholm, Lynne Marshall, Les Turnbull, Chris Whitmore, Alexander Burns, (SBHA), Angela Holliday.

In Attendance:- Community Co-ordinator (K. Harrow), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall), Trainee Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

1. WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Tweeddale 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. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 23 AUGUST 2022

There had been circulated copies of the Menti feedback and the Minute of the Meeting held on 23 August 2022. Feedback was mostly positive. Attendees were encouraged to provide agenda items for future meetings.

DECISION

AGREED the minute and feedback of 23 August 2022.

3. COST OF LIVING UPDATE

- 3.1 Gill Westwood of Tweeddale Citizens Advice Bureau (TCAB) provided an update of activities taking place across Tweeddale to support the cost of living. She expressed her thanks to the Area Partnership for previous funding awarded during the pandemic which had enabled them to install a new telephone system and fund extra hours for their specialist debt advisor. It was noted that the TCAB was a small part-time team that consisted of 6 employees with specialist advisory roles, 9 volunteers and encouragingly, 5 new trainees. The serious hardship experienced by the community during and post pandemic had continued and was exacerbated by the current cost of living crisis. There had been an increase in advice sought on matters around debt, employment and redundancy, relationship breakdown and domestic violence, all mainly rooted in hardship. In the previous financial year (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022) TCAB worked with 1,084 clients and gave 3,387 pieces of advice. Collectively, as a result of speaking to TCAB, clients were nearly £500,000 better off. The advice provided was increasingly complex; issues were more protracted and often involved DWP, power companies and creditors, which has had an overall adverse impact on the TCAB team.
- 3.2 The previous month saw 120 clients and 240 pieces of advice given; this resulted in clients being £48,508 better off. Referrals to the foodbank were fewer at 79 but this was attributed

to people self-referring. The resources that TCAB were offering (fuel vouchers, foodbank referrals, help with rent and fuel debt, SIM cards) were 'sticking plasters' and they continued to work with partners to find more long term solutions. In response to a question about the impact of Ukrainian refugees approaching the TCAB for assistance, it was reported that the provision of SBC staff in the hotels had provided that help, meaning that the TCAB was not adversely affected. It was noted the effectiveness of their having had information leaflets translated into Ukrainian and that other groups could consider following TCAB's example. Members were apprised of the Money Talk Team website as a useful money and debt advice resource. In response to question regarding the fuel foundation, Ms Westwood explained that fuel vouchers were available.

DECISION

NOTED the update and thanked the TCAB for their continued excellent work.

4. CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST (CIT)

- 4.1 Fiona Colton of LiveBorders provided an update and an overview of future plans. On 15 November from 3:30-5:30pm and 6:30-8:30pm, there was to be a Community consultation event, presentation and a 45 minute behind scenes tour of the Chambers Institution building with an opportunity to feedback on plans for the development proposals. Page/Park, project architects were due to then give a 30 minute presentation on the floorplan and options for building development. There was to follow a Q&A session and an opportunity for the public to give feedback and comment on the proposals. Places were to be reserved via Eventbrite or by contacting the Peebles Library/Museum. The event was to be advertised in the library also.
- 4.2 On 27 November from 2-5pm there was to be an open day at the Burgh Hall to launch the mobile exhibition of the CIT development project proposals and floor plans. Public feedback and community involvement was considered essential to determine how to improve access, current service provision and to contribute to the community and the life of the building.
- 4.3 It was reported that work was ongoing with the CIT and the Beneficiaries Group to put together a brief to present to an independent facilitator, with the Beneficiaries Group taking the lead on what the project will look like. Members were encouraged to publicise membership of the Beneficiaries Group as open to anyone in the locality and it was highlighted that the building was a Tweeddale facility. All enquiries were to be directed to Kenny Harrow who advised that a meeting of the Beneficiaries Group was scheduled for 16 November to discuss the plan to remove the suspended ceiling.

DECISION

NOTED the update and thanked Fiona and the team for the work so far particularly in arranging the production of display resources at short notice

5. PLACE MAKING UPDATE

- 5.1 Crick Carleton, Chair of Place Making Working Group provided an update of progress to date. It was reported that there had been a lot of progress since the last meeting; ten communities were now interested in participating and developing their own place plans and some were in the early stages of forming a place making group. Eddleston and Walkerburn were in the early stages of community engagement while Peebles had completed much of the consultation. Members were reminded that communities should refer to their Local Development Plan and were also to consider longer term development of the settlement area during this place plan process. Communities were not to rush their place plans; several years of funding would be available. The processes for the disbursement of funds were in hand.

- 5.2 SBC had applied to various funding streams to resource the project and was awaiting approval in the next few weeks. The following four needs had been identified:
- (i) to get the community groups up and running with their place plans
 - (ii) help communities identify what they need, in order to brief consultants etc.
 - (iii) help in contracting consultants
 - (iv) engaging investment planning consultants where appropriate
- 5.3 SBC had launched a tender process (closing date 14 November) to identify and recruit consultants on a 2 year + framework contract with a view to the communities drawing on these for assistance. It was suggested that Area Partnerships and Working Groups may want to have oversight in order to be satisfied that a place plan is imagined and written by the community to meet their needs and not outsourced to the consultant.
- 5.4 The Place Making Standard Tool that scaffolds groups through the community consultation process was to be further developed by the Scottish Government to address matters around the transition to Net Zero and climate change. A 'Climate Lense' add-on was to be appended to the Tool to provide a climate change context when considering projects. Members were directed to ourplace.scot for useful resources and information.
- 5.5 In response to a question about transport between places, it was confirmed that transport was within the scope of the place plans. Settlements may decide to partner one another to address shared transport issues. A single issue that applied across the whole area could be addressed in a document separate to the place plan.

DECISION

NOTED the update and thanked Crick and his team for the tremendous work undertaken thus far

6. FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW

There had been circulated copies of the Tweeddale Funding Table which showed available funds in the Tweeddale area. The Neighbourhood Support Fund had £93,357 available at the start of the year less £32,485.68 awarded thus far. If all applications totalling £24,631.29 were successful, funds of £36,240.03 would remain. Members were reminded that the Welfare Trust had a remaining balance of £2958.79 available to those disadvantaged through poverty, ill health, age etc. Mr Harrow encouraged interested parties to contact him.

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND

Ms Esther Daborn of the Tweeddale Assessment panel provided an overview of each of the applications. Ms Daborn clarified that the Assessment Panel had carefully considered each application and that any conflicts of interest were declared during the Panel's deliberations. Following a report in the Peeblesshire News on 28 October 2022, Ms Daborn clarified that the Assessment Panel, made up of volunteers, existed only to provide recommendations to Elected Members on funding applications; final decisions on awards were taken by the Committee members and these decisions were not made in advance of the meeting. Mr Harrow pointed out that where an application was rejected, contact with the group was maintained to further support them with subsequent applications to either the NSF or a more appropriate fund.

7.1 Peebles Civic Society

The project aimed to curate a digital archive based on recollections and ephemera of those who had worked in the Tweeddale woollen industry. It involved hosting blethering events to collect this material. The digital archive will be locally available on static machines and more widely available online in the long term. An initial pilot had been conducted to test the level of local interest. They had also established partnerships with other local history groups. This was a worthwhile and engaging project for the community. The costs were to cover video

lighting equipment, microphones, reconditioned laptops from the Renew crew, Filemaker pro software, venue hire and exhibition materials. In the long term, the equipment would be available to other Tweeddale groups. The panel recommended that reference was made to the Borders wide nature of the woollen industry, with residual ongoing activities. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Pirone, proposed that the application for funding was approved. Members unanimously agreed to provide £4,326.29.

7.2 **Tweed Wheels**

The Bridge Council for Voluntary Service requested £7,000 to make up the balance of the sum they had put aside previously for a new 17-seat minibus (£39,000) The minibus was needed now, otherwise they would have gone for an EV one that was able to take the wheelchair lift and was within the size range of their volunteer driver limit. Members discussed the application, and highlighted the need for fairness and continuity in decision making. Mr Harrow highlighted that the funding applied for would solely benefit users in Tweeddale, and that funds had been raised for a one off specific cost. Councillor Small, seconded by Councillor Pirone, proposed that the application for funding was approved. Members unanimously agreed to provide £7,000.

7.3 **Stable Life**

Stable Life had requested £2,500 towards staffing costs for a structured programme that included Equine Assisted Therapy/Learning, riding lessons and psychosocial based interventions to vulnerable young people referred to them. They also offered transitional work placements for young people who would normally struggle in traditional work situations. They offered volunteering opportunities to the young people they have supported as well as to the wider community. The cost per child was £850. The amount requested was for 3% of 100 people who are referred to them. However, Stable Life is Borders-wide, and there was no guarantee that the 3% will be from Tweeddale. The application was generic, for staff costs and there is no evidence of value for Tweeddale. Following considerable discussions, a vote was held to decide whether not to provide funding:

VOTE

Councillor Pirone, seconded by Councillor Douglas moved that the application for funding was deferred.

Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Small moved as an amendment that the application for funding was rejected.

As the meeting was conducted by Microsoft Teams members were unable to vote by the normal show of hands and gave a verbal response as to how they wished to vote the result of which was as follows:-

Motion – 2 votes

Amendment – 3 votes

Absent – 1 vote

The Amendment was accordingly carried, and the application for funding was rejected.

7.4 **Tweed Valley Cheyne Gang**

The Cheyne Gang had requested £2925. Run by nurses as a singing group for people with long term respiratory conditions like Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), the charity has already had significant experience of running similar sessions in other parts of Scotland. Based in Innerleithen, they were involved in the local community (gave concerts, had a link with a Ukulele group etc.) The money requested would cover costs for the specialist group leader, an administrator, venue hire, advertising, microphone, music stand,

and travel (taxi, petrol, parking). There were 35 members pre pandemic and 27 now. 17 were attending regularly which was the reason for transport money request. The target number is 40. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Pirone proposed that the application for funding was approved. Members unanimously agreed to provide £2925.

7.5 Innerleithen Swap and Share Shed

The Swap and Share Shed had established itself in Innerleithen as a respected resource that can be used anonymously. The group requested £5,000 - £350 per month for a year to buy tins and toiletries plus 40 x £20 food vouchers. However, this kind of support was a broad need across the Borders. The panel was not sure that this was the right fund so does not recommend award. For a more sustainable outcome, the Swap and Share Shed was advised to dovetail into the funded framework for food support that the SBC was working on across the 5 localities (Cook Clubs to develop skills, the Low and Slow projects, Fareshare etc). There was a fairly extensive Food Conversation group that helped to channel resources to the most appropriate places, hence the proposals going forward to the Strategic group. The plan is to have a collective strategy around access to food and that will involve bringing partners together and building collective proposals that help with access to food. Members unanimously agreed not to award funding.

7.6 Clovenfords & District Community Council

Clovenfords Community Council requested £1944 towards the £2160 required for design consultants to specify and design a wooden bridge to link the Playing Field to Caddonfoot Road. The present one was so weak it could only take 3 people at a time. Only one quote had been received, though they had tried to get more. SBC were to help with some Place Based capital costs but was unable to cover any consultancy/feasibility fees, hence the application to NSF to start this process. SBC would continue to be consulted throughout the process. Once the design had been agreed, Clovenfords were to look for funding from other sources. Mr Harrow explained that the need to obtain 3 separate quotes was in operation for the previous community fund, and confirmed that the requirement had been removed for the current fund. Councillor Pirone, seconded by Councillor Tatler, proposed that the application for funding was approved. Members unanimously agreed to provide £1944.

7.7 Broughton Social Make and Play Club

Broughton Social Make and Play Club runs twice a month on Friday evenings 5-9pm, in Broughton village hall. They had requested £936, which is 2/3 of annual Hall fees plus £40 for materials. It is a drop-in event, open to everyone - noughties to nineties. It invites people to come along to chat, craft and or play games/music/musical instruments. It attracted an average of 30 people per evening which was a good number for a small rural community. It had been running now successfully for 7 months. Hall hire had so far been funded by Community Council micro-grants. They hoped that going forward costs could be met via donations and fund-raising, including accessing other funding if necessary. The group was presently unconstituted, but Restorative Routes was the umbrella organisation that acted as banker. The panel took the view that this was a very worthwhile activity that has grown organically and recommended it should be supported to develop a constitution. The award recommended is for 6 months funding to give them time to constitute, set up a bank account and get some rules in place for the running of the club. The group should then come back with a further application to the fund before the end of the current financial year. Members in attendance expressed that they considered that 6 months would not be long enough to put those measures in place. Lorna McCullough (The Bridge) had offered to assist the group with their Constitution. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Pirone proposed that the application for funding be granted in full. Members unanimously agreed to provide the full amount of £936.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to award Peebles Civic Society the sum of £4,326.29;
- (b) to award Tweed Wheels the sum of £7,000;
- (c) that the application from Stable Life was not approved;
- (d) to award the Tweed Valley Cheyne Gang the sum of £2,925;
- (e) that the application from Innerleithen Swap and Share Shed was not approved;
- (f) to award Clovenfords and District Community Council the sum of £1,944;
- (g) to award Broughton Social Make and Play the sum of £936;

8. **PEEBLES PARKING WORKING GROUP**

8.1 The departure of Shona Haslam from SBC had created a vacancy on the Peebles Parking Working Group. Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Thomson, nominated Councillor Pirone. Councillor Pirone accepted the position.

8.2 It was agreed that the timing of the working group meetings be reviewed to allow all members of the working group to attend. Councillor Tatler undertook to contact relevant group members.

DECISION

AGREED to appoint Councillor Pirone to the Peebles Parking Working Group.

9. **OPEN FORUM**

9.1 In response to a question regarding the proposed lighting of Eshiels Tunnel, it was confirmed that progress had continued. Mr Harrow undertook to investigate and provide an update.

9.2 In response to a question regarding a review of the timing of bus routes 101/102 it was confirmed that a review of the entire service and a new tender process was underway. SBC provided guidance on routes and timetabling, however the final decision lay with the bus company. Councillor Thomson agreed to pass on comments and to check if it is indeed SBC who runs the current 101/102 service, as they did with route 91.

9.3 In response to a request a return to face to face meetings, it was agreed that the next meeting be held via Teams due to the time of year.

10. **MEETING EVALUATION**

Mr Harrow encouraged attendees to complete meeting evaluation forms via the link in the chat.

11. **NEXT MEETING OF THE TWEEDDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP**

The next meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership was scheduled for 7 February 2022, via Teams.

The meeting concluded at 8.55pm.