

MINUTES of Meeting of the EILDON AREA
PARTNERSHIP held via Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 17 November 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:- Councillors E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), L. Douglas, J. Linehan, N. Mackinnon, J. PatonDay, F. Sinclair (from para 5) and H. Steel, together with 15 representatives of Partner Organisations, Community Councils, and members of the public.

Apologies:- Councillors C. Cochrane, E. Jardine and D. Parker

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

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.

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.

2. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF 8TH SEPTEMBER 2022

The Minute of the meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership held on 8 September 2022 had been circulated and was noted. The Community Co-ordinator, Mr Kenny Harrow, explained that the feedback on the previous meeting, which had been focused on climate change, had been positive. Mr Harrow hoped to invite Scottish Borders Council's Greenspace Programme Officer, Ms Amy Alcorn, to attend a future meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership to provide an update on food growing in the Eildon locality. Home Energy Scotland had attended community meetings, and the information could be circulated to interested parties. An update on the Coast to Coast cycle route would be discussed later on the agenda. The Communities and Partnerships team were exploring points which had arisen from the discussions at the last meeting, including climate training or workshops for community members, and assessing the process for developing action plans to deliver solar fields and water energy projects. The Chair highlighted that the breakout room element of the previous meeting had been well received and worked well.

3. PLACE MAKING - PROGRESS REPORT

The Community Engagement Officer, Mr Erin Coltman provided a progress update on Place Making across the Eildon locality. Galashiels was one of the four Borderlands towns, which was part of a £450m investment initiative between five local authorities spread over the Scotland/England border. As part of the initiative Galashiels was obligated to create its own Place Plan. A Borderlands workshop had been held at the Volunteer Hall in Galashiels, which had allowed community members, Scottish Borders Council and its partners to explain what they felt were the priorities for Galashiels, and to discuss what the ambitions were for the town. Diarmaid Lawlor of Scottish Futures Trust had facilitated the session, and the information from the evening would be shared. There were plans to create a "Town Team" in Galashiels to lead discussions. Progress had been made in Selkirk, where Selkirk Regeneration and Selkirk Means Business had taken the lead to offer community workshops similar to the Borderlands workshops in Galashiels. A further meeting would be held in the January at the Philiphaugh Community

Centre. Mr Coltman stressed that the feedback from the workshops would shape the Place Plan for Selkirk. Stow Community Trust launched a community questionnaire earlier in the year, and had collated the responses and were in the process of delivering follow up events. Support was available for representatives of Stow and Fountainhall to assist the progression of the Community Action Plan. Earlston's existing action plan dated from 2016, and it was expected that a review of that plan, to assess what had been delivered, what had not been achieved, and what the people of Earlston would like to see in an updated plan would be undertaken. Oxton and Channelkirk had completed their Community Action Plan for 2022/23, and the Communities and Partnerships team would work with the community to help develop and deliver their plan. Newstead was in a similar position to Oxton and Channelkirk. The villages of Lilliesleaf and Ashkirk had expressed an interest in getting involved in Place Making, and whilst the discussions were at a premature stage, it was hoped that Community Action Plans could be developed successfully. The Chair thanked Mr Coltman for his succinct and informative update, and advised that the Place Making meeting for Selkirk would take place at 10 am on the 19 January 2023 at Philiphaugh Community Centre.

4. TWEEDBANK CARE VILLAGE - GATHERING VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

4.1 The Chair welcomed Ms Lynn Medley and Ms Carol Hayden to the meeting to provide some insight into the proposed Care Village at Tweedbank. Ms Hayden explained that she worked for an organisation called the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI), an independent organisation which had engaged with a number of different people, groups and organisations including local doctors. They were keen to hear feedback on the plans from attendees, and were seeking ideas for how the community could work with the care village. There were a number of different ways which could be used to assist the community in interacting with the care village, including social enterprises or the social hub method. Ms Medley presented the plans, and explained that when the new facility in Tweedbank was opened, the existing facilities at Garden View and Waverley Care Home would close. The care village represented a whole new vision of care, and would be a much more integrated way of delivering care. The plans as they were presented were almost finalised, with minor tweaks still expected to occur. Within the plans there would be provision for Aberlour and another learning development company. Three residential blocks would be present in the village. Each block covered two floors, and each floor was divided into two homes of five. A social hub and residents' hub would be present in the village. Each home would have five bedrooms, each with their own en-suite bathroom. The facility was unique in that if the circumstances were appropriate, such as siblings, then a joint room could be configured to provide a double space. A family retreat room would be provided in each room of five, which would allow family members to stay overnight. All visitors would have to pass through the entrance building, which had provisions in place for changing facilities for staff. The residents' hub was expected to have a craft room, a music room, and a hairdresser. There would be a room for visiting services, such as dentists or GPs, and a gym/physio therapy space. The social hub would have a café/bar, which would allow residents and visitors to sit together for meals. A village shop, which could potentially be run as a community interest company, would also be present. It was expected that facilities such as the village hall would be used by the wider community as well as residents of the care village. There was no intention to replace the existing community centre in Tweedbank.

4.2 The Chair explained that she had previously visited a care village in the Netherlands, the philosophy of which the Tweedbank Care Village had been based upon. The key aim of the care village was to change the approach to care, and ensure that residents were engaged with their local communities. Ms Morag Walker expressed her hopes that a community interest company or social enterprise would be an ideal fit for the facility and offered to assist the integration programme. In response to a question regarding capacity, Ms Medley explained that 60 residents was the total capacity, and that discussions had been ongoing with regard to the composition of the village. There would be 25 intermediate care beds; five beds for respite and step-up care provision; 15 enhanced dementia beds; and 15 long stay beds. The whole village was planned to be dementia-

friendly, and flexibility had been of utmost importance when the plans were drawn up. The composition could be changed based on demand and needs. Regarding the surrounding area, and whether food and vegetables would be grown there for residents, Ms Medley explained that the focus so far had been on the overall footprint of the building. Attention would shift to the internal elements of the building, and then the external groundwork. Discussions were ongoing with SBC's Greenspace Programme Officer to develop a support group who could assist with food growing in the village. A specific group would be set up to assess the landscape and architecture in the future. Ms Hayden explained that feedback on the development of the garden areas had been common at the drop-in sessions, and third sector organisations were interested. Regarding the age groups of the residents, Ms Medley explained that registration was for those aged 65 and over. Whilst the care village residents would be limited to the aforementioned age group, the other facilities, such as for Aberlour, would ensure that the overall park would be multi-generational. The importance of communication and integration was highlighted. The importance of intergenerational work was raised as being very important. Further questions were invited from attendees, which would be dealt with via email. Mr Harrow expressed his hope that Ms Medley and Ms Hayden would be able to attend a future meeting of the Eildon Area Partnership.

5. COST OF LIVING - UPDATE AND DISCUSSION INCLUDING PROGRESS FROM LOW AND SLOW PROJECT IN GALASHIELS

5.1 The Chair welcomed Ms Liz Williams of the Galashiels Foodbank to provide an update on the Low and Slow project in Galashiels, and how the Foodbank was supporting challenges related to the cost of living crisis. Ms Williams highlighted that the Foodbank had introduced an evening distribution from 5:30pm to 6:30pm at the Focus Centre, Galashiels on a Thursday evening. The distribution was expected to help people who were in employment but required assistance from the Foodbank. People would be referred by the same process, and three people were expected to collect provisions.

5.2 The Low and Slow project was started by the NHS and other partners. Agencies or individuals could request a place on the scheme. The project operated with a professional cook, with the appropriate training and qualifications would attend and guide the session. Attendees were assisted in the cooking by two NHS Borders staff, who also purchased the food which would be used to cook. Menus were devised and provided by the NHS, and the meals were planned to be as nutritiously beneficial as possible. The funding had been provided by the Council to the foodbanks, which was ring-fenced to purchase a slow-cooker for each attendee. There were four slow cooker sizes available, which ranged from small to very large. The slow cookers had been delivered to attendees' homes by car. The attendees would prepare the food, and start the cooking process. The food would then be put into sealable food storage boxes and taken home to be finished. Two dishes were prepared each night. Volunteers from the Foodbank also attended the events to work alongside attendees and help provide support. The course took place over six weeks, with attendees either going in the morning or the afternoon. Families had been the focus of this cycle of the course. One or two courses were planned for the New Year, and a key focus was on ensuring that attendees continued with the course for its duration, in order to realise the most benefit. The slow cooker remained the property of the attendees, and Ms Williams expressed her thanks to Argos, who had provided slow cookers at a heavily discounted rate. It was important to tailor the project to the attendees. The Chair thanked Ms Williams for her insightful presentation and excellent work. Regarding whether the groups could continue with a social club element following the completion of the course, Ms Williams explained that it was not possible for the Foodbank to structure it, but people could continue informally. Mr Harrow and Mr Coltman expressed their gratitude to Ms Williams for her work, and encouraged any party interested in running their own project to contact the Communities and Partnerships Team as funding had been ring-fenced.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Harrow explained that Ms Catherine Francis of the South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) was present at the meeting to provide an update on the Coast to Coast cycle path. The Chair welcomed Ms Francis, who explained that she works in the Enterprising Communities Team at SOSE, which focused on supporting community-led initiatives and social enterprises in the region. Ms Francis explained that the Coast to Coast cycle route was a 250-mile, on-road, route under development. The route covered the breadth of the South of Scotland, and was due to launch in the summer of 2023. The route was aimed at more experienced, or adventurous cyclists who were comfortable cycling on the roads. Coast to Coast was a working title, and Ms Francis welcomed suggestions for another name. The route itself would run from Stranraer to Eyemouth, which would be one of the longest long-distance cycle routes in the UK. It was expected that the route would be similar in nature to the Caledonia Way, a route in the North of Scotland which runs from Campbeltown to Inverness and covers 234 miles. It was hoped and expected that the route would bring considerable economic, environmental, and community benefit to the region. Projections indicated that up to 175,000 extra visitors could be attracted to the region, with a total spend of approximately £13m per year. The launch was planned to coincide with the UCI Cycling World Championships in 2023 across Scotland. The team developing the plan was led by SOSE, but SBC, Dumfries and Galloway Council, the South of Scotland Destination Alliance, Visit Scotland, Cycling Scotland, and Sustrans Scotland were working in partnership to provide information and expertise. Ms Francis shared a map of the route, and explained that several factors were used to design the route, including a desire to visit as many towns as possible, using the existing roads to carry the route and avoiding the busy trunk roads where possible. A safety audit had been carried out along the route, and the issues raised had been addressed. Plans were being developed to engage with communities along the route, with a desire to brief communities on the project, and to help develop activities or projects which could be implemented to realise the most benefit from the plans. Content about the route would be on the Visit Scotland website. Ms Francis hoped that the Area Partnership would be a channel to engage with local communities. In response to a question regarding timelines, Ms Francis hoped that the engagement session would take place in the first quarter of 2023, and then signage and promotion needed to be carried out prior to the World Championships in August 2023.

7. **EILDON FUNDING TABLE 2022/23**

Copies of the Eildon Funding Table 2022/23 had been circulated with the agenda. Mr Coltman advised that the opening balance of the Neighbourhood Support Fund (NSF) had been £147k, and that approximately £54k had been awarded since April 2022. Applications totalling £87,427 had been assessed and were awaiting decision. Mr Coltman highlighted that not all of the applications being considered at the meeting had been recommended for funding.

8. **NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT FUND**

8.1 There had been circulated copies of the Eildon Assessment Panel's recommendations with the agenda. The Chair welcomed Ms Jenny Mushlin of the Eildon Assessment Panel to provide an overview of each of the recommendations. Ms Mushlin explained that the total value of all of the applications received had surpassed the available funding, and stressed that the Panel had held thorough discussions and made difficult decisions.

8.2 **Stable Life**

The application from Stable life was for £15k to deliver a structured programme for at least 100 referred young people, which would include Equine Assisted Therapy, riding lessons and psychosocial based interventions. Stable Life would also offer transitional work placements for young people who would normally struggle in typical work situations. The funding applied for would be used to pay project workers' salaries. The Panel was supportive of the work that the organisation carried out, and was aware that they had faced considerable financial challenges. The Panel had expressed hope that the group would move to a more sustainable funding model, and had recommended to part-fund the project to a value of £12.5k, and encouraged the group to access other sources of funding

in future years. Ms Mags Powell of Stable Life was present, and explained that the funding gap which had become apparent had been partially addressed by crowd funding and other community funds provided by SBC. Members unanimously agreed to grant £12.5k.

8.3 **Selkirk High School Parent Partnership**

The application from the Selkirk High School Parent Partnership was for £13,903.92 to establish a well-resourced school bike club to remove barriers to entry and provide access to mountain biking for the young people of Selkirk and the surrounding areas. The club would focus on guided off-road biking, skills coaching, bike maintenance and trail building. The funding would be used to purchase bikes and trail building tools. The Panel highlighted that the group was open to all and encouraged considerate use of cycle routes by users. A member of the group was in attendance and in response to a request that the group consider approaching Just Cycle Ltd to use second hand bikes, it was explained that the eight bikes purchased would be used very extensively, that getting a strong number of bikes in operation would allow the group to get properly established, and stressed that there was a desire to be as sustainable as possible. Members highlighted that the project would get young people outdoors and active and unanimously agreed to fund the application in full.

8.4 **Selkirk Regeneration**

Selkirk Regeneration had applied for £1,777 to print a book which detailed the battle to recover the fishing rights for Selkirk which had allegedly been stolen by the predecessors of the Crown Estate in 1912. The book would be sold and any funds would be credited to Selkirk Regeneration. The group wanted to print 100 copies. The Panel were interested in the history told in the book, but were unsure of wider community interest. The Panel felt that the need and demand for the book had not been evidenced, and had recommended not to fund. Members unanimously agreed not to fund the application.

8.5 **Earlston Bumps, Babies and Toddlers Group**

The application from Earlston Bumps, Babies and Toddlers Group had applied for £8.1k which would be used to provide support and friendship to all parents and wider family which attended their group. The Group provided weekly talks and input from local professionals. There were 12 active members of the group, with a desire to raise that number to 20. The Panel were supportive of the project, however the financial expenditure did not reflect the desired outcomes. The Panel was not supportive of the expenditure in the application which related to trips, and had recommended not to fund. Mr Coltman explained that since their last meeting the group, which was very new, had reassessed their request and planned to apply to the next round of funding. Members unanimously agreed not to fund the application.

8.6 **Perfect Harmony**

Mr Coltman explained that an error had been made in processing the application from Perfect Harmony. There was widespread support for the application. Members unanimously agreed to defer the application to allow the mistake to be addressed.

8.7 **Abbotsford Trust**

Abbotsford Trust had applied for £14,964.89 to help deliver a project which would inform, empower and support adults with mental health needs referred by SBC's LAC Mental Health Team using Abbotsford's natural and built heritage as focus for meaningful wellbeing and employability focused activity as a route into volunteering and/or work within the heritage sector. Participants would develop life skills and experience through working in areas such as the estate, front of house, digital marketing, and visitor interpretation. The Panel were supportive of the project and the work at the Trust had done as part of their successful Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund grant. The Panel were aware of their responsibility to manage the Neighbourhood Support Fund, and felt that part-funding the application at a total of £10k was appropriate. Members highlighted that the Trust were doing excellent work to support people with mental health

needs. The Chair recommended that the Trust consider an application to the Community Wealth Fund and seek other sources of funding. Ms Sandra Mackenzie, the Heritage Engagement Manager with the Trust, explained that this was the second iteration of the project, and that Trust remained in a tricky funding position. The Chair suggested that the Trust contact the Bridge to seek assistance. Members unanimously agreed to part fund the project, and grant £10k.

8.8 **Heritage and Archaeological Research Practice (HARP)**

The application from HARP was for £7,787.27 to help deliver a project which would focus on sports heritage and provide health walks in Galashiels. The project provide opportunities for volunteers and members of the local public to engage with their local heritage, and would identify and highlight the history of sport in Galashiels. The Panel highlighted that Cultural heritage played an important role in Galashiels, and had recommended to part fund the project at a total value of £5k. In response to a question regarding whether a trail would be developed, Mr Ian Hill explained that the project hoped to get people out walking, and to teach people to assess and view buildings with a different focus. Members unanimously agreed to part fund the project, and grant £5k.

8.9 **Café Recharge**

Café Recharge had applied for £15k as they wished to employ someone in their kitchen who would take the lead in preparing and serving the food in the café during the week, and run the kitchen at the weekend. The individual concerned would manage a small team of staff and volunteers. The extra capacity would allow Café Recharge to run community supper evenings and family brunches, and to extend their services. The Panel had expressed that Café Recharge had undertaken good work in the area, and were supportive of the surplus food operation that they had. Café Recharge had previously applied to the BBBB Recovery Fund and Community Fund in previous years. The Panel had recommended to fund the application in full on the grounds that the funding would allow the group to become financially sustainable. Café Recharge was encouraged to access funding from other sources in future years. The application for funding was unanimously approved.

8.10 **Waverly Consort**

The application from Waverly Consort was for £4,645 to help the group deliver a classical music event in Melrose on Easter weekend in 2023. The vision was for an inclusive community event, with no ticket charge. The Panel had expressed that the event was expected to be memorable, was free of charge, and supported local amateur musicians. The Chair expressed concerns regarding the level of funding which had been applied, and the extent to which the wider community would benefit. The application for funding was unanimously approved.

8.11 **Selkirk Cricket Club**

Selkirk Cricket Club had applied for £11,028 to help purchase a replacement grass cutter. The Club operated three old grass cutting machines which were no longer fit for purpose. The new mower would save time and money, and would assist the Club with their 150th Anniversary Ground Improvement Project. The Panel had highlighted that the area was well used for cricket and for wider community benefit. Mr John Smail of the Club was present, and explained that Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) planned to send a team to Selkirk to commemorate the 150th anniversary, and it was important that the pitch and wicket were in good condition. The application for funding was unanimously approved.

8.12 Ms Mushlin highlighted that the Eildon Assessment Panel was made up of members of the public, and was entirely voluntary. They were assisted by Mr Harrow and Mr Coltman, but made fully independent decisions.

9. **NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP: THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2023 AT 6PM**

The Chair explained that the meeting on that date would be carried out via Microsoft Teams, but plans were being made to hold a face-to-face meeting in the spring.

10. **MEETING EVALUATION VIA MENTI**

The Chair requested that suggestions for agenda items, in particular the next theme, be sent to the Communities and Partnerships team.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm