

Date: 17 November 2022, 2.00 pm.

Location: Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Cllr E. Thornton-Nicol (Chair), Mr. J. Ayling (NHS Borders), Superintendent A. Carson, (Police Scotland), Ms B. Francis (TSI), Cllr J. Greenwell, Prof. R. Griggs (SOSE), Cllr S. Hamilton, Cllr E. Jardine, Mr R. McCowan (Borders College), Mr C. McGrath (SBCCN), Ms J. Mulloy (RSLs), LSO H. Sangster (Scottish Fire & Rescue).

Also in attendance: Acting Chief Executive, Director Resilient Communities, Participation Officer, Communities and Partnership Manager, Clerk to the Council (all SBC); Dr C. Allan (NHS), Ms S. Mitchell (SDS), Mr K. Langley (Scottish Fire & Rescue Service), Inspector R. Noble (Police Scotland).

MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS

CHAIR

In the absence of Councillor Cochrane, Councillor Thornton-Nicol chaired the meeting.

1. 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. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor Thornton-Nicol, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr Cochrane (SBC), Chief Inspector Fisher (Police Scotland), Mrs K. Hamilton (NHS Borders).

3. MINUTE

- 3.1 Copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 8 September 2022 had been circulated. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute, Mr McGrath asked for details of the membership of the Community Planning Programme Board and the CPP Task Group. With reference to paragraph 5 on The Promise Governance Structure, Mr McGrath also commented that Cllr Anderson would be a good addition to the Foster Group.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair; and,

- (b) **that details of the organisations represented on the CP Programme Board and the CPP Task Group be sent to Mr McGrath.**

3.2 Copies of an updated Action Tracker had also been circulated.

DECISION

NOTED the update and the new actions which had been added.

4. **CPP TASK GROUP IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, copies of a paper giving updates of the work underway on the 4 CPP Themes (Enough money to live on; Access to work, learning & training; Enjoying good health & wellbeing; and A good place to grow up, live in and enjoy a full life) had been circulated. SBC Director Resilient Communities, Mrs Jenni Craig, gave a presentation with an update on the Improvement Plan and the work of the Task Group, advising that the Community Plan refresh would need to take account of the significant changes in the operating landscape as a result of the pandemic. A short term 12 month work plan had been agreed. There were four priority themes with clear outcomes and a lead organisation for each of these. Planning was now underway to develop the new longer term Community Plan with an updated evidence base, robust community input and a more visible and proactive partnership. With regard to the governance and performance framework, this included the mapping of strategies; documented current delivery landscape of all partnership groups, including their role, remit and membership; documenting the models that existed across Scotland and building in feedback from partners; and some early emerging findings. The Task Group would continue to work on this and bring options forward for consideration. Mrs Craig confirmed that in terms of the review, Part 2 (Community Planning) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 was being used for guidance and the Improvement Service was also involved. Prof. Griggs commented that in sharing strategies, the focus should be on the ones which would provide the most benefit, some of which were also relevant to the Regional Economic Strategy. Mrs Craig responded that there were a lot of strategies and partnerships to consider, so we needed the Strategic Board to set the direction to ensure we were not missing anything and link up with other appropriate groups.

DECISION

AGREED that the SBC Director Resilient Communities would bring an update on the work of the Community Planning Partnership Task Group Improvement Plan to the Regional Economic Partnership.

5. **CPP WORK PLAN THEME – ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ON**

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, SBC Resilient Communities Director, Mrs Craig, advised that the group membership was still to be finalised for this work. There were already a Strategic and an Operational Group focussed on the cost of living crisis and a wide range of partners were on these Groups. Consideration needed to be given to the wider outcomes listed under this theme and work out whether a separate group was needed or whether reports could be brought to the Strategic Board from the two Groups already established which could avoid duplication of effort. The Council had recently released £1.2m of funding from reserves to support the cost of living crisis and there were active discussions underway as to how that could be put to best use. A statement from the Scottish Government was expected shortly as a result of the Autumn Statement by the Chancellor, and that would be picked up in these two groups. With regard to Challenge Poverty Week, a significant amount of work had been undertaken to try to align all the information about where people could get support into simple messages, in one place, in easy to read language [Financial support and advice | Cost of Living Crisis support | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#) Work has also been carried out by the Borders Housing Network on an employment advice and mentoring project which had resulted in 23 people

finding work. We needed to work as a collective to make the most of community wealth building by bringing the right people together to take this forward.

DECISION

AGREED to provide a briefing to the next meeting of the Strategic Board on the cost of living crisis and the circular economy.

6. THE PROMISE: HUMAN AND ECONOMIC COST MODELLING

6.1 With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, copies of a presentation on “Using Money Differently” had been circulated. Claire Stuart and Louise Whitelock of The Promise gave the presentation, highlighting the key points:

- How to use money differently was not a new issue as it had been included in the Community Planning statement of ambition (2012), Single Outcome Agreement guidance (2012), Scottish Borders Community Planning Audit Report (2013).
- The Promise 21-24 had 5 priority areas, covering a good childhood; whole family support; planning; supporting the workforce; and building capacity. These were being taken forward through a number of actions, underpinned by the fundamentals of what matters to children and families, listening, poverty, children’s rights, and language.
- “Follow the Money” report showed the human and financial costs of the ‘system’ failures.
- The overall approach to using the money differently – by establishing how resources were currently spent on children and families in and around the care system; by thinking about how we could use the money differently in future, to deliver better outcomes and better value for money; and to understand the strategic investment required to get from where we were to where we needed to be.
- Pilot areas – there had been extensive engagement in all 3 pilot areas with Councils and partnerships and initial work carried out to estimate how much was currently being spent on children and families in and around the care system. This latter work used the headings in the Follow The Money report of “operation costs of the current care system” and “costs associated with the current care system”. Some caution was required in the figures, but for Scottish Borders Council operational costs were £15.9m with associated costs of £4m (education); for North Lanarkshire operational costs of £42.8m with associated costs of £13.8m (education); and for Clackmannanshire operational costs of £16.1m with associated cost of £7.5m (education and housing).
- Gathering the data had been difficult which mirrored some of the challenges faced in the Independent Care Review and while some assumptions could be made about some of the spend on care experienced children and young people in universal services, particularly education, it got more difficult once the net was cast wider.
- The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund – this worked towards the ambition in the Programme for Government that 5% of all community based health and social care spend would be spent on preventative whole family support measures by 2030. Scottish Borders shared of element one of this Fund was £668k. However, there were a number of concerns about this type of funding, with repurposing investment difficult and the need for longer term commitment. Key would be effective partnership working and good governance in using money differently.
- A new approach to governance would need to achieve accountability for, and assurance on, the proper and effective use of public money, providing clarity of roles and responsibilities and openness and transparency on how the money was used. This would involve building on shared ownership across multiple stakeholder groups, managing risks effectively, facilitating learning and improvement, and making things simple to avoid more ‘governance clutter’.

- 6.2 In response to a question regarding governance, Ms Whitelock advised that The Promise Oversight Board was a national body which existed to check up on whether Scotland was keeping “The Promise” by holding it to account and checking on performance. The operational team within the Borders for implementation of The Promise was led by the Director Social Work and Practice. Ms Whitelock was working closely with this team which was looking at all aspects of the care system such as education, social work (which included foster carers) and health, with a series of workshops being delivered to foster carers around The Promise. Councillors were not directly involved in operational work as they had a specific strategic role to play. The Director Resilient Communities advised that the proposed landscape map of groups, referred to earlier in the meeting, would include where The Promise sat. The Chief Executive SBHA confirmed that Registered Social Landlords were playing a significant role, working together with others on transitions for care experienced people, and looking at how this model could be expanded. The Chair thanked Ms Stuart and Ms Whitelock for their presentation which gave the Strategic Board an insight into developments around The Promise.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7. **CPP WORK PLAN THEME – ENJOYING GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING**
With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, Dr Chris Allan, Consultant in Public Health, gave an update on the work to date, with group membership still to be finalised. Once this had been done, the next step was to identify who within each of the partner groups would take forward completion of the template for baselining their status as anchor institutions for addressing health and socio-economic inequalities. It was hoped that measurable change would then be seen in the years to come. With regard to the outcome on increasing volunteering numbers throughout the Borders, the Chair asked that the skills of those who currently undertook volunteer recruitment be used to maximum capacity.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

8. **CPP WORK PLAN THEME – ACCESS TO WORK, LEARNING AND TRAINING**
With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, SBC Community & Partnerships Manager gave an update on behalf of Ms Shona Mitchell, SDS. Positive sustained destinations in the Borders were already quite high but the Theme Group wanted to have a deep dive into some of those and focus on those from equality groups, such as those with disabilities, care experienced, poverty and refugees, etc. The Group had looked at the data and shared that information and would now prepare different ways of working for next year, working with the local Employability team. Several pieces of work by the Group could also be shared with the Regional Economic Partnership to inform their work.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

9. **CPP WORK PLAN THEME – A GOOD PLACE TO GROW UP, LIVE IN AND ENJOY A FULL LIFE**
With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 September 2022, Inspector R. Noble gave a brief update on the work to date. Inspector Noble had attended a number of place making events recently and so far these were proving very useful in helping make police part of communities.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

10. **FOOD GROWING STRATEGY**

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 18 November 2021, copies of a presentation with an update on the Food Growing Strategy and copies of the Community Food Growing Report 2021/22 had been circulated. Ms C Cooke, SBC Greenspace Manager, and Ms A Alcorn, Greenspace Programme Officer, had joined the meeting and started with a recap of the requirements under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which included the development of a Food Growing Strategy. The aim of that Strategy was to support and facilitate anyone who wanted to get growing, through existing growing opportunities and new approaches to growing. Over the previous 12 months, achievements had included the creation of 7 new allotment plots in Hawick, hosting 4 Scottish Borders Community Food Growers Network meetings, helping 16 community groups with funding applications, creating and issuing 11 Community Food Growers newsletters, acquiring (and delivering free of charge) 45m³ of compost and given 2 presentations to Area Partnerships. In addition, meetings had been held with NHS representatives to discuss Quality Greenspace ideas and social prescribing; built and populated an interactive map showing food growing projects and contact details; and prepared the Annual Allotment Report. The Community Food Growing Strategy supported the CPP theme of “a good place to grow up, live in and enjoy a full life”. Examples were given of different growing projects across the region. The next steps were to invited the CPP partners to develop community food growing areas on their greenspaces by nominating a dedicated person to work with Scottish Borders Council to identify land and projects; continue to develop the Scottish Borders Community Food Growers Network; work with the Council’s Planning Department to integrate food growing land/opportunities into new development where appropriate; work with Scottish Government to set up a Forum for Local Authority officers to share best practice and knowledge to further the delivery of food growing opportunities; and to encourage community growing projects run by CPP organisations to enter the Greener Gateway, Cultivating Communities Award 2023. In response to questions, Ms Alcorn confirmed that all community food growing gardens gave away produce to volunteers and also many ran sessions for families in need, although specific records of those who had benefited were not kept. Community Councils could also be added to the mailing list for the Community Food Growers newsletter. Mr Ayling commented on the development at Huntlyburn and the peaceful, reflective nature of the site for both staff and patients.

DECISION

AGREED that each of the Community Planning Partnership partners would nominate an officer to work with Scottish Borders Council to identify land and projects for community food growing.

11. **FORWARD PLANNER FOR MEETINGS**

Copies of a Forward Planner for meetings and items for agendas had been circulated. The Chair asked everyone to check this and if they had any other items for the Spring meeting to notify these by 21 January 2023, and for the Summer meeting, to notify by 28 April 2023. The Director Resilient Communities added that items were welcomed from partners and they should give further consideration to any additional areas on which the Partnership should focus in future and let her know.

DECISION

NOTED.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

12.1 Mr McGrath, of the SBCCN, asked the Board to consider whether they should encourage each Community Council in the Borders to set up their own individual Citizens Panel. Mr McGrath did not feel there was currently enough empathy with communities. The SBC Acting Chief Executive responded that he was happy to receive further details of such a proposal but the Council’s capacity to take on the support for potentially 69 Panels was

extremely limited so caution was needed in raising expectations. The Chair suggested that the SBCCN engaged with all Community Councils to gauge their thoughts prior to sending in its proposal. It was noted that Community Councils were all invited to attend and participate in Area Partnerships.

DECISION

AGREED that Mr McGrath would develop and submit a proposal on Community Councils each setting up a Citizen's Panel to the SBC Acting Chief Executive, once the SBCCN had contacted all Community Councils to gauge their enthusiasm for such a move, and that their individual support be included in the proposal.

- 12.2 Ms B. Francis of the Third Sector Interface raised the issue of community engagement, with the new Interface looking to communities and third sector organisations, including Community Councils, to develop a better infrastructure. This should be added to a future agenda of the Strategic Board, to include the need to contact "hard to reach" groups and not just engage with the usual groups, to ensure all voices in the community were being heard. This was challenging for rural and remote settings but needed to be done. Mr McGrath objected to the use of the word "engagement" as this should be about community empowerment, but the Chair reminded him that community engagement was the first step towards empowerment.

13. **NEXT MEETINGS**

The next meetings of the Strategic Board were confirmed as 9 March and 8 June 2023, taking place online via Microsoft Teams starting at 2:00pm.

Meeting concluded at 3:50 pm