
PLACE MAKING UPDATE

Report by Director - Resilient Communities

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

18 April 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The report updates members on progress made with Place Making since the August 2021 Council agreed to take a collaborative approach with Area Partnerships to roll-out Place Making across Borders Communities.**
- 1.2 In August 2021, Council agreed a proposed approach, working with Area Partnerships, to develop and enable place making activity across Borders communities. The approach was intended to complement the related Place Programme under the [Borderlands](#) Inclusive Growth Deal which focusses on the four target towns of Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick and Jedburgh.
- 1.3 In practice, all place making activity, whether it's Borderlands or the wider Area Partnership-led approach, shares the same core characteristic – it is about communities leading on the development and delivery of an action plan for their place which identifies local needs and ambitions, and which then prioritises actions and projects to address them.
- 1.4 By taking an inclusive approach open to all communities, the five Area Partnerships have, between them, identified over 40 communities that are interested in developing community-led action plans. These communities are set out in Table 1 below. The report highlights the progress in supporting the development in the overall approach and the practical progress that is being made in communities including the four Borderlands target towns of Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick, and Jedburgh.
- 1.5 The report outlines the support for place making from SBC and CPP partner staff and further support which is being put in place in terms of additional capacity and funds that can support communities in the development and delivery of their plans.
- 1.6 Place making represents a significant opportunity for communities across the Borders and is increasingly the key to unlocking external funding opportunities by evidencing the need and will of the community through demonstratable inclusive engagement. This also facilitates a community led approach to shaping and informing the planning and delivery of critical public services. This approach is increasingly built into legislation (e.g. the

Planning (Scotland), Joint Working (Scotland) and Community Empowerment Acts) and will impact on – and needs to transform – the way both the Council and its Community Planning Partners work together with communities to understand, support and respond to local needs and ambitions.

- 1.7 Over the coming year, the main focus of place making activity will be around three main areas of work:
- a) Continuing to support all participating communities to progress their plans and ambitions;
 - b) Ensuring that funds, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund, and the Place Based Investment Fund are used to best effect in supporting communities deliver credible investment proposals, built on a body of community led evidence; and
 - c) Ensuring that place making is seen as “the way things get done” – informing service and community planning, the way that projects are identified and developed and the key to accessing external funding – all built on community needs, aspirations and priorities.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:

- (a) Notes the progress that has been made in relation to place making activity across the Borders.**
- (b) Agrees that regular progress reports are brought back to the Executive Committee.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In August 2021, Council agreed to work with Area Partnerships to develop and implement a Borders-wide approach to place making. The approach was intended to complement the related Place Programme under the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal which focusses on the four target towns of Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick and Jedburgh.
- 3.2 In practice, all place making activity, whether it's Borderlands or the wider Area Partnership-led approach, shares the same core characteristic – it is about communities leading on the development and delivery of an local place plan for their place which identifies local needs and ambitions, and which then prioritises actions and projects to address them.
- 3.3 Over the last 18 months, Area Partnerships have taken an inclusive approach to identifying and working with communities that wish to develop community-led action plans either individually or collectively. To date, over 40 communities – including the four Borderlands towns – have expressed an interest in developing community-led local place plans. These communities are set out in Table 1 below and have been identified through work done by Area Partnerships – sometimes through related working groups – to reach out and seek expressions of interest from their communities and through facilitated workshops for each locality. More detail on both the place making approach and progress in communities is available online [here](#) and by following the links in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Communities that have expressed an interest in Place Making

Locality	Community	Locality	Community
Berwickshire	Abbey St. Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston	Eildon	Galashiels
	Coldstream		Selkirk
	Duns		Newtown St. Boswells
	Eyemouth		Stow & Fountainhall
	Gavinton, Fogo & Polwarth		Earlston
	Grantshouse		Lilliesleaf
	Cockburnspath		Ettrick & Yarrow
	Burnmouth		Newstead
	Ayton		
	Gordon		Teviot & Liddesdale
	Greenlaw & Hume	Southdean & Hobkirk	
	Reston	Newcastleton	
	Leitholm, Eccles & Birgham	Denholm	
	Foulden, Mordington & Lamberton	Tweeddale	Eddleston
Hutton & Paxton	Walkerburn		
St.Abbs	Innerleithen		
	Peebles		
	Carlops		
	Skirling		
	West Linton		
	Newlands		
	Clovenfords		
Cheviot	Jedburgh		
	Crailing, Eckford & Nisbet		
	Smailholm		
	Kelso		
	Sprouston		

***The towns highlighted in blue are the target towns identified in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal**

- 3.4 Out-with the Borderlands towns, community led place making activity has led to the early stages of forming a Town Team in several communities, including:
- Coldstream;
 - Duns;
 - Kelso;
 - Smailholm;
 - Newtown St Boswells;
 - Walkerburn; and
 - Peebles.
- 3.5 Over the same period, our collective understanding of place making has grown and we now have a wider network linking us with communities and organisations beyond the Borders with experience, [case studies](#) and examples of community-led planning – particularly from Borderland communities in Cumbria and Dumfries and Galloway

4 SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

- 4.1 Supporting upwards of 40 communities represents a challenge for the Council and its partners. This support takes a number of forms which are outlined below.

Area Partnerships

- 4.2 Area Partnerships have played a central role in enlisting the support of capable and motivated members of their communities who have shaped and supported the development of place making in their localities. Without their commitment and leadership, progress would be limited. Each Area Partnership has taken a slightly different approach. Some have created working groups, others have taken a more direct approach. Each has contributed – and continues to contribute – to the development of best practice across the Borders.
- 4.3 Area Partnerships have a vital and continuing role in co-ordinating and supporting the development of community-led plans in their area. They have a role, too, in seeking to ensure that there is a single locality plan for their area which reflects and addresses the needs, ambitions and priorities of their communities. In turn, the Area Partnership has a role in ensuring that Community Planning Partners reflect those needs, ambitions and priorities in the wider Community Plan and associated plans for the delivery of services.

Borders Third Sector Interface (TSI)

- 4.4 Borders TSI (formerly The Bridge and Berwickshire Association of Voluntary Services) has a track record of supporting communities in a range of place-based development and activity. The communities they work with value them as an objective source of support and an “honest broker” between public services and funders and the communities they work with. Over the last 18 months they have played a key role in working with the Area Partnerships to support and shape the inclusive place making approach.

- 4.5 Recognising the challenge of supporting the number of interested communities, Borders TSI have been awarded funding from the Council (see para 4.8 below) for a project to provide a dedicated officer to support communities in the Eastern Borders. The project responds to a demand from local communities – particularly in Berwickshire and Cheviot – for this type of support. The post, which will have an initial focus on Duns and District and Coldstream and District – will initially be funded for one year with the intention of extending and expanding the project to all parts of the Borders where there is demand to do so. The post will also co-ordinate a Peer Support Group, and manage a small budget to enable place making activity including facilitation, training, materials, printing and venue hire. The post holder will also seek to lever-in additional funding to support communities and work collaboratively with the place making team within Scottish Borders Council and wider Community Planning Partners.

Scottish Borders Council (SBC) and South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE)

- 4.6 SBC currently provides [support](#) to Area Partnerships and communities through two Place Planning and Regeneration Officers and five Community Engagement Officers (one for each locality). Additional support is provided from two members of the Council’s transformation team, the Climate Change Officer, Green Spaces Programme Manager and the Economic Development Team. Staff from South of Scotland Enterprise also provide support to local communities.

Scottish Futures Trust

- 4.7 Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) has provided support throughout the development of our place making approach and helped to shape the language used to communicate the opportunity to community members, partners and colleagues through workshops and targeted sessions. The support extends to Area Partnerships and to individual communities having facilitated workshops in the four Borderlands Towns (see 1.2) and more recently facilitated the Selkirk and district community-led workshops which attracted large numbers of community members of diverse ages and interests to begin to map out local needs, ambitions and priorities. A similar event is being planned in Coldstream – again led by the community and facilitated by SFT – on the 26th of April.

Funding for Place Making

- 4.8 Initial funding of £410k has been identified to support communities to develop local place plans. This comes from two main sources:
- Within the Council’s Community Engagement budget £110k has been committed over 2022/23 and 2023/24 to enable early place making activity. This includes an allocation of £83.6k to Borders TSI (see 4.5 above).
 - The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) includes at £300K to support communities to develop local place plans. This forms part of the £2.026m allocation under the Communities and Place heading of the SPF. As agreed at March Council, allocations for Communities and Place and Local Business investments will be considered by a new Place

Partnership advisory panel. This will be chaired by the Director of Resilient Communities and potentially include key strategic partners such as South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), Live Borders, Borders College, Third Sector Interface (TSI), Chamber of Commerce and Regional Social Landlords.

- Additional revenue funding to support the development and feasibility of community led projects identified in the place making process may be sought through SPF, and further rounds of Community Led Local Development (CLLD) funding

4.9 There is a range of other funding which communities will be able to access depending upon location and eligibility criteria. Some communities such as Stow & Fountainhall, Cockburnspath and Grantshouse have been able to access alternative sources of funding and have used this to support the development of locally-led plans.

Procurement Framework

4.10 Linked to this funding, a [procurement framework](#) has been established in collaboration with Borders TSI, community representatives and SOSE to identify a pool of organisations with the necessary expertise, experience and capability to support communities to develop their plans and associated business cases. This framework – which is unique in Scotland – provides a simple route for communities to procure support, whether it is for a small one-off piece of facilitation or a larger piece of work to support the community to develop a plan end to end. The procurement heavy lifting has been done at the outset, allowing communities the autonomy to choose a consultant that suits their needs and chosen way of working. There are two parts to the framework: The first offers support for communities in developing their plans; and the second offers support for those communities that need technical support to develop complex business cases or investment plans.

5. PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR

5.1 Over the coming year, the main focus of place making activity will be around three main areas of work:

- a) Continuing to support all participating communities to progress their plans and ambitions;
- b) Ensuring that funds such as the Shared Prosperity Funds are used to best effect in supporting communities and Levelling Up and council led investment proposals are built on a body of community led evidence; and
- c) Ensuring that place making is seen as “the way things get done” – informing service and community planning, the way that projects are identified and developed and the key to accessing external funding – all built on community needs, aspirations and priorities.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

- (a) Initial funding of £410k has been identified to support communities to develop local place plans.
- (b) Additional revenue funding to support the development and feasibility of community led projects identified in the place making process may be sought through SPF, and further rounds of CLLD funding.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) Expectations – while the approach seeks to encourage the identification of local needs, ambitions and priorities, these need to be grounded in the reality of the changing and challenging financial landscape.
- (b) Collaborative Approach – Without collaboration with and between communities, council services and community planning partners during engagement and the development of plans and projects, there is a risk that public service providers do not respond effectively to local needs and priorities and do not reflect these in their plans and strategies.

6.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

An integrated impact assessment has been completed. It is anticipated that there will be no negative impacts under either the Equality Duty or the Fairer Scotland Duty

6.4 Sustainable Development Goals

Place making contributes to Goal 3 – “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages” by encouraging community involvement in planning, with partners, to identify actions that meet local needs and priorities.

6.5 Climate Change

A Borders-wide and sustained engagement with communities, will contribute to net zero transition through the identification and delivery of a range of related projects including:

- Providing and enhancing local amenities and services;
- Reuse and conservation of buildings and local assets;
- Making use of existing or underused heritage assets; and
- Providing opportunities for food growing, recreation, education, skills development as well as health and wellbeing.

6.6 Rural Proofing

The encouragement of local people to help identify and contribute to the development of settlements within the Scottish Borders is at the heart of the place making process.

6.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There will be no changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation resulting from the proposals set out in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Interim Chief Officer Corporate Governance (and Monitoring Officer), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

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Background Papers: [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

Previous Minute Reference: [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. James Lamb can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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