

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD

Date:	8 June 2023, 2.00 pm.
Location:	Via Microsoft Teams
Attendees:	Cllr C. Cochrane (Chair), Councillors J. Greenwell, S. Hamilton, E. Jardine and E. Thornton-Nicol, Ms K. Hamilton (NHS Borders), Mr K. Langley (Scottish Fire & Rescue), Mr C. McGrath (SBCCN), C. Fancy (Eildon Housing Association), J. Dowland Gilliland (BCA)
Apologies:	Chief Executive, Director Social Work & Practice, Superintendent A. Carson (Police Scotland), Prof. R. Griggs (SOSE), K. Jackson (SOSE), Hilary Sangster (Scottish Fire & Rescue), C. Myers (NHS) and P. Smith (Borders College).
Also in attendance:	Director Resilient Communities, Participation Officer, C. Brown, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden), (all SBC); Ms J. Amaral (BCA); Ms M. Meldrum (Berwickshire Housing), K. Kiln (NHS Borders), Claire McElroy (NHS Borders), Rob Davidson (SOSE), S. Mitchell (SDS).

MINUTE AND ACTION POINTS

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received and noted accordingly.

2. MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER

- 2.1 Copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 9 March 2023 had been circulated. Colin McGrath (SBCCN) raised an omission of his suggestion for an additional theme. This was subsequently located in paragraph 12.2 of the Minute of 9 March 2023.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chair.

- 2.2 Copies of an updated Action Tracker had also been circulated. Completed actions were to be removed from the tracker.

3. ENJOYING GOOD HEALTH & WELLBEING

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Kirsty Kiln, NHS Borders, the purpose of which was to update members on the progress of Theme 3: Enjoying Good Health and Wellbeing. With reference to the outcomes of 'Increased life expectancy' and 'More people enjoying good mental health and wellbeing', it was confirmed that survey templates for baselining status for anchor organisations and FSD/ health in all Policies had been developed and circulated to members of the Joint Programme Board. There had

been an extension to the deadline until 30 June 2023 and all partners were requested to send this information to the Public Health mailbox. The completed plan was to be presented to the Board at a later date. With reference to actions related to 'Developing guidance for promoting good health and wellbeing', the Public Health team were reviewing data on uptake of health services and outcomes to identify health inequalities across the Borders, to be shared at a later date.

- 3.2 With reference to actions around 'Current volunteering landscape to be considered and opportunities to be promoted and maximised' Juliana Amaral reported that Borders Community Action (BCA) had supported 70 community groups/charities to recruit volunteers. There were 520 open opportunities for volunteers in the Borders, 97 volunteers had been signposted to community groups and 104 new volunteers were identified. From November to March, four drop-in sessions had been held at Galashiels Jobcentre and one in Hawick to increase awareness of volunteering roles in the community. A provider event was hosted for a number of organisations to provide an overview on the benefits of volunteering and opportunities available. The BCA continued to work with stakeholders to encourage referrals and there had been an increase in young people under 16 who wanted to begin volunteering. Restrictions which included insurance, PVGs and general risk aversion resulted in few organisations being able to meet the demand for places and plans were being developed with BCA to try to mitigate these factors. BCA were in discussion with schools and local youth groups to address opportunities for the under 16 cohort and 11 young people had been allocated formal consistent volunteer placements. A number of Saltire awards had been presented and a further 7 placements had been found with imminent start dates. Jenni Craig suggested the potential for the CPP to be more visible in encouraging volunteering and agreed to undertake further discussion with BCA. There was a strong demand for formal and informal volunteering opportunities across age groups and from the corporate sector. A draft consultation of the Strategy Plan was scheduled in June 2023. The challenge of mapping the volunteering opportunities undertaken by the public was highlighted, given the variety of volunteering activities both formal and informal. The suggestion of an audit of volunteering across the Borders was noted. It was possible to provide a snapshot of active committees and their member numbers during the BCA's internal review currently being undertaken. It was also suggested that the publication of live case studies may help to recruit new members to local committees and improve their sustainability going forward.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

4. MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT & SUICIDE PREVENTION PLAN

There had been circulated copies of report 'Creating Hope in the Scottish Borders' from Clare McElroy (NHS Borders), the purpose of which was to inform members of the action plan to increase the number of people in good mental health at every age and stage of life and to reduce the number of suicide deaths in the region, while working with partners and communities to tackle the contributory inequalities. The report detailed the two overarching principles, four key programmes and ten outcomes contained in the action plan which was specifically focussed on the adult population of the Scottish Borders. The three year action plan was underpinned by research, evidence and data including Lived Experience insight, training and capacity building, communications and advocacy of a Public Mental Health approach and monitoring and evaluation. The next steps were to put in place detailed programmes of work and structures for each of the ten areas of action. Accountability was provided via the Mental Health Partnership Board and operational responsibility lay with the Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention Steering Group and programme delivery groups, alongside Third Sector, Housing Associations, Borders College, NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council. There followed a brief discussion on social prescription, where concerns were expressed about the unintended consequences of peer based recovery strategies for the individuals who volunteer with mental health support groups. The initiative was not intended to replace

clinical interventions and Ms McElroy undertook to discuss with the steering group the protective risk factors further and how best to support community groups.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5. **THE PROMISE**

There had been circulated for noting copies of a briefing paper by Mr S. Easingwood, Director Social Work and Practice, the purpose of which was to update members on progress to date regarding both the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership and planning and implementation of The Promise.

DECISION

NOTED

6. **YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING SURVEY**

With reference to paragraph 1 of the Minute of 9 March 2023, there had been circulated copies of a number of reports by Christine Brown, Education and Lifelong Learning that pertained to the Young People's Wellbeing Survey. Ms Brown presented the background to the Health and Wellbeing Census carried out in March 2022, a requirement of the Scottish Government. All Borders Schools participated with pupils from P5 to S6 involvement, with responses as follows: Primary – 82%; Secondary – 60%. 36% of pupils in S4 responded to the Substance Use questions. Following consultation, the sexual health and relationship questions were removed. The key findings of the census were that young people were negatively affected by the pandemic, as across all local authorities. Four areas had been identified for inclusion in the Education Improvement Plan: Bullying; Body Image; Young Carers; and Stress, Worry and Loneliness. The Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying policy had been approved at the meeting of the Education Sub-Committee on 24 May 2023 and was to be rolled out across all educational settings. The policy contained a clear definition of bullying and the processes, roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils, parents and carers. Work was to continue to strengthen the Personal and Social Education curriculum with action on Body Image. Action on Young Carers continued with partner organisations to ensure that a clear definition of a young carer was understood by all stakeholders and that they were fully aware of support available to them. Two online self-help services had been commissioned by Scottish Borders Council, Couth (P7-S6) and Together All (S5 and 6), to offer support around stress, worry and loneliness. Work with Quarriers was also ongoing along with the Building Resilience programme in primary schools and Young Minds Matter programme in secondary schools. In terms of next steps, it was reported that the next census was scheduled to take place in November 2023 rather than March 2024, following feedback from schools. Processes and procedures were to be strengthened to improve engagement and completion of the census questions. There followed a brief discussion where concern was expressed at the lack of data on sexual health for the Scottish Borders against a national increase in cases of STDs in 16-18 year olds. Consideration was to be given by the Education Sub-Committee to the inclusion of the sexual health questions for the next census and the ongoing work of Health Improvement Scotland, Public Health Scotland and the school nurse service was highlighted in providing support and information to children and young people. There was agreement that the communications to parents and careers required improvement for next time. There were also plans to improve the administration of the Drug Use survey to the S4 cohort to maximise engagement. Ms Brown agreed to circulate the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying policy to Members.

DECISION

NOTED

7. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN 2023 - 26 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 23**

There had been circulated copies of two reports by Janice Robertson. The Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-26 was to be brought to Council in June 2023. Ms Robertson provided an overview of the report and its appendices. The Plan recognised the need to continue to deliver against key priorities within the previous plans whilst making a fundamental shift to placing 'The Promise' at the heart of future planning. The report detailed key plans, strategies and legislations alongside budgets and specific funding for Children and Young People's Services in 2023/24.

Appendix 1 presented the plan for 2023-26. Appendix 2 detailed the Integrated Children & Young People's Plan Annual Progress Report 2022-23. The report reflected the progress and significant achievements made in the delivery of the four shared partnership priorities set out in the 2021-23 plan: Keeping children and young people safe; Improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities; Targeting support to maximise life experiences and opportunities and ensuring inclusion; and Increasing participation and engagement. Appendix 2A provided a progress report on the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding. Appendix 2B reviewed the 'Inspiring Young Minds', Kelso High School's Study Leave Programme April – June 2022. A number of successes were highlighted which included good levels of participation and positive partnerships developed between SDS and CLDS. A number of recommendations were to be considered, which included extra planning time, broader partnership involvement and further sessions with parents and school staff.

DECISION

AGREED the recommendation to endorse the Children & Young People's Services Plan 2023-26 and the Integrated Children & Young People's Plan Annual Progress Report 2022-23 before submission to Scottish Government.

8. CPP RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING CONSULTATION

There had been circulated copies of a report for noting by Director Resilient Communities, which detailed the Community Planning Partnership's response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Community Wealth Building. This was a joint response compiled with partner organisations. The consultation focussed on legislative changes which were to introduce a new statutory duty bearing on public sector bodies to embed CWB in their practice. It gave a number of options that outlined how this was to be done and asked respondents to indicate their preference with suggested potential legislative changes. Appendix 1 detailed the Council's response which advocated against a new statutory duty for three main reasons: that CWB should be place-based and provide flexibility to anchor organisations in its implementation; that a number of new duties had recently been created by Scottish Government; and the range of duties combined with a limited funding envelope placed significant demand on public sector organisations. Furthermore, a consolidation or simplification of the policy landscape was essential to deliver value for money. The CPP also called for the adoption of non-statutory guidance and a simplification of the funding landscape for communities.

DECISION

NOTED the report

9. LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

There had been circulated copies of a report by Donna Bogdanovic, Lead Officer Housing Strategy and Development, the purpose of which was to update members on the consultative draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023-28 and provide information on further planned consultation. A statutory requirement under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the LHS detailed the joint and strategic approach of the local authority and its partners to deliver high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures to meet identified need in its area. The draft strategy, developed jointly with stakeholders, addressed some of the most significant and important challenges currently faced by the Council, its partners and communities and aimed to: provide a background to and a strategic framework for the future development of the local housing system; set out the five strategic outcomes for housing for the next five years; explain how national and local

developments impacted on the LHS; and propose new objectives through an outcomes based approach. The five draft strategic outcomes were as follows:

- 1: More homes in well designed, sustainable communities that increase opportunity for all;
- 2: People have access to homes which promote independence, health and wellbeing;
- 3: Improved energy efficiency of homes and a reduction in fuel poverty while supporting a Just Transition to Net Zero through decarbonising domestic heating and energy;
- 4: Communities are regenerated through improving the quality and condition of housing and the built heritage; and
- 5: Homelessness is prevented wherever possible and a range of housing options are provided so people can secure a suitable and sustainable housing outcome as quickly as possible.

These strategic outcomes had been agreed in order to address a number of key issues and challenges which were summarised at the end of each outcome section in the draft LHS. The current pressures on housing supply were highlighted and mitigations were being considered including better online advertisement of the available housing options and encouragement to residents to consider their longer term housing solutions earlier in life. Members were requested to promote the consultation as widely as possible.

DECISION

NOTED the report

10. CHILD POVERTY REPORT 2023 - 24, INCLUDING ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2022/23

- 10.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by Director Resilient Communities which presented the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report for 2022/23 and Action Plan for 2023/24 (Appendix 1) for endorsement before submission to Scottish Government. The report provided the Community Planning Partnership and Scottish Government with an update on progress made in the Scottish Borders against activities within the Action Plan for 2022/23 and set out planned actions for 2023/24. The report categorised the direct drivers of poverty: income from employment; costs of living; and income from social security and benefits in kind. Significant highlights were outlined: children in low income families (before housing costs) had risen from 14.6% in 2020/21 to 19.7% in 2021/22, similar to the trend for Scotland; percentages of children in low income families (before housing costs) in Scottish Borders Wards ranges from 11.6% in Tweeddale West to 30.6% in Hawick and Denholm; the median gross weekly pay for full time workers working in the Scottish Borders was £571.30, £69.20 less than elsewhere in Scotland; and 21.7% of employees aged 18+ earned less than the real living wage in 2021-22 and was higher than the Scottish average of 14.4%. There had been a sharp rise in workless family households since Covid-19. Scottish Borders had a lower proportion of households in receipt of Universal Credit (12.9%) compared to Scotland (16.1%). There were 3015 households (5.4%) claiming the Child Entitlement compared to Scotland (6.5%). Appendix 1 provided details of the activities and actions being carried out across the Scottish Borders to alleviate child poverty by Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and key partners. Appendix 1B detailed work undertaken to address child poverty in 2022/23 by Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and other partners. The report reflected the scale of work undertaken and Ms Craig urged proper scrutiny of the Action Plan 2023/24 and for all those involved in the partnership to continue to bring resources together effectively and to develop further innovations at subsequent meetings.
- 10.2 In response to a question on the impact of the Scottish Child Payment since November 2022, it was confirmed that the relevant data was not yet available. The matter of the CPP promoting the eligibility of this payment, in addition to others, to parents and carers was discussed. Targeted communications were possible for some benefits and a communication strategy was to be considered; the Education service was suggested as a key partner in this. There was a brief discussion on the ambition to move away from the

use of foodbanks in line with the Scottish Government press release on a 'Cash First' approach to supporting families. The matter was to be discussed at the next meeting of the Cost-of-Living Strategic Group.

DECISION

AGREED to endorse the Scottish Borders Local Child Poverty Report for 2022/23 and Action Plan 2023/24 before submission to the Scottish Government.

11. CPP TASK GROUP IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 11.1 Jenni Craig gave a brief presentation on the work of the Task Group to date. Under Action 1 – Prioritise, there had been identified 16 potential priorities under 5 themes: Enough money to live on; Economy, skills and learning; Enjoying good health and wellbeing; A good place to live, grow up and enjoy a full life; and Community empowerment. A consultation was scheduled to run from 24 May to 16 July 2023 and was to include online and paper consultation and attendance at Area Partnerships and other community meetings. The draft plan was to be brought to the Strategic Board in September 2023. Under Action 2 – Governance, a mapping of governance arrangements in other areas was ongoing and proposals for future structure and governance processes was to be brought to the Strategic Board in September 2023. Under Action 3 – Performance, a framework for performance management was to be developed in parallel and to accompany the refreshed Community Plan/LOIP and brought to the programme Board for discussion in September 2023.
- 11.2 Ms Craig updated members on the Scottish Government requirement to provide a 2018 Community Plan Progress report. The report was to detail improvements to priority outcomes, the extent to which the CPP had participated with community bodies in carrying out its functions and the extent to which participation had been effective in enabling community bodies to contribute to community planning. Partners were asked to provide information for their themed areas as required and the draft was to be brought to the Strategic Board in September 2023, with data from 2022/23 where possible.
- 11.3 There was a brief discussion on the engagement with and empowerment of the community. Community empowerment was a key focus of SBC and there was a contribution to be made by Community Councils and its Network. Community engagement was done in a number of different ways, and should this be absent from any report, Ms Craig requested that any omissions were made known to the service for reflection on how to better include those measures.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

12. WORK PLAN PROGRESS REPORTS

There had been circulated for noting copies of reports on the three remaining themes: Theme 1: Enough money to live on; Theme 2: Access to work, learning and training; and Theme 4: A good place to grow up, live in and enjoy a full life. The Lothian and Scottish Borders Local Policing Plan 2023-26 had also been circulated.

DECISION

NOTED the reports.

13. THEME FOR NEXT MEETING

The theme for the next meeting on 7 September 2023 was noted as 'Enough money to live on' in advance of Anti-Poverty Week and the release of pending Poverty reports.

14. FORWARD PLANNER FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the copies of the Forward Plan of meetings and items for the Community Planning Programme Board and Strategic Board which had been circulated.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There had been a suggestion for the next meeting on 7 September 2023 be held in person either There had been a suggestion for the next meeting on 7 September 2023 be held in person either at Council Headquarters or a partner base.
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16. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

A number of dates had been identified. The next meeting of the Strategic Board was confirmed as 7 September 2023 at 2:00pm.

The meeting concluded at 4.15 pm