

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM

MINUTE of Meeting of the TEVIOT AND
LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM held in Lesser
Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on Tuesday, 15th
December, 2015 at 6.30 pm

- Present:- Councillors G Turnbull (Chairman), A Cranston, W McAteer, S Marshall,
D Paterson, R Smith, Community Councillors: Mr M Grieve (Burnfoot), Mr J
Hepburn (Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water), Mr W Roberts (Denholm),
Mrs M Short (Hawick).
- Apologies:- Community Councillors: Mr C Knox, (Hawick); Inspector Carol Wood (Police
Scotland).
- In Attendance:- Station Manager Mr R Bell (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service), Sergeant R
Noble (Police Scotland), Neighbourhood Area Managers (Mr A Finnie, Mr F
Dunlop), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

Members of the Public:- 1 in attendance

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that there would be presentations on: Hawick Flood Protection Scheme; Scottish Borders Council Financial Plan and the Management of Trees. The Chairman referred to the flooding incident in Hawick on 5 December. He thanked Scottish Borders Council, Hawick Volunteer Flood Group, the emergency services and Hawick community for their outstanding efforts and organisational skills in dealing with the impact of this major flooding incident. The Chairman also advised that this would be the last Forum Mr Finnie would be attending as he would now be dealing with the Cheviot area. He introduced Mr Fraser Dunlop, who from 2016, would be the Neighbourhood Area Manager, representing Teviot and Liddesdale.

2. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 17 November 2015.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

3. HAWICK FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME

- 3.1 The Chairman welcomed from Scottish Borders Council (SBC): Mr Rob Dickson (Corporate Transformation & Service Director), Miss Shirley Mushet (Hawick Flood Protection Scheme Project Manager), Mr Steven Renwick (Projects Manager), Mr K Paterson (Communication and Marketing Officer) and Mr Steven Vint (Project Officer, Halcrow). The Project Team were present at the meeting to give a presentation on Hawick Flood Protection Scheme. Mr Dickson began by referring to the significant flooding incident in Hawick on 5 December. The flood had been harrowing for the town and costly to householders and businesses alike. However, multi-agency response efforts and the willingness of individuals to assist had helped manage the incident. This recent unfortunate event, together with historical Hawick flooding events, would assist the scheme's design, ensuring that it met the requirements of the town. Mr Dickson introduced Miss Shirley Mushet the Team Project Manager to explain the process being undertaking. Miss Mushet began by showing images of the recent flooding event and

historical flooding events in Hawick. She discussed officers' approach to flood protection which was short term measures:- the installation of localised protection e.g. kerbs and flap valves. In the medium term it was the 1 - 75 year scheme with future proofing to increase standard to 1 in 200 year. Longer term was for natural flood management and storage measures to further enhance the scheme. Miss Mushet highlighted the flood risk areas and the level of protection. She explained the progress of the scheme so far: ground investigation works had been undertaken, together with environmental, topographical and geophysical surveys. Hawick was now on the national prioritisation list. There were 42 areas also requiring funding to develop schemes, it was therefore important the Council's application was robust. As part of the preparation process, the Council was required to notify anyone affected by the scheme, this included householders, businesses, utility providers and community groups. Miss Mushet stressed that it was important that any organisation or individuals concerned about the scheme came forward to discuss with the project team, this would assist at this outline design stage to avoid any delays to the scheme. Miss Mushet went on to discuss the consenting requirements required, Acts of Parliament that needed to be complied with, regulations and processes to be adhered to.

- 3.2 Mr Vint from Halcrow, explained that the outline design had commenced. The design of the scheme was a complex and challenging one. Hawick was built around the river and many of the buildings, located directly on the watercourse, were listed buildings. Moreover, ground conditions were porous which meant that the ground water levels rose at the same time as the river. There was also existing infrastructure which had to be taken into consideration, for example the old mill lades providing pathways into the town which could potentially allow water behind future defences. The scheme would be constructed near to existing utilities meaning that these would need to be relocated prior to construction. Mr Vint went on to detail the design programme: in 2016 the outline design would be finalised; enabling works would commence in 2017 – 2019; and the main construction would take place between 2019 – 2022.
- 3.3 In answer to questions, officers advised that SBC and SEPA were looking at upstream natural flood management. Lessons had been learnt from the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme with regard to service diversification, occupation of land and design to assist with speed of construction; this would have a positive impact on the Hawick Scheme. Regarding gravel extraction from the riverbed, the Project Team were currently assessing risk and would be consulting SEPA. With regard to the unfortunate release of sewage into the river, this had been caused by a breach in the syphon, Scottish Water had implemented a temporary solution with new pumps, and the risk downstream had been diminished owing to dilution of the effluent. Members advised that local residents had asked if the scheme could be extended and the Project Team noted this for consideration. Officers concluded the presentation by highlighting that the Project Team were looking for champions to promote the scheme, especially from sports, businesses, householders and emergency services, anyone interested should contact Miss Mushet. In the New Year there would be drop in sessions in Hawick to encourage engagement with the community. There would also be a video to promote awareness. The first workshop would be held on 18 January 2016 and the official public exhibition was scheduled for August 2016. The Chairman thanked officers for attending and for the informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

4. FINANCIAL PLAN CONSULTATION

The Chairman welcomed Ms Suzy Douglas, Financial Services Manager, Scottish Borders Council (SBC) who was present at the meeting to provide an update on the financial challenges facing the Council. Ms Douglas began by advising that the Council was under pressure to ensure efficient and cost effective services were maintained under challenging financial constraints. In terms of the Council's approach, in 2013/14 a five year Financial Plan had been implemented; 2016/17 represented the fourth year of this

five year plan. This long term approach to financial planning had allowed significant pressures to be managed and delivered solutions to bridge gaps in ways which were least damaging to services. To help meet funding gaps, a Corporate Transformation Programme was underway which looked at how the Council worked to become more efficient and effective. Seventeen areas of work had been identified as part of the Transformation Programme, including workforce transformation and integration of health and social care. Ms Douglas went on to explain that the Council would spend £1.3 billion in revenue budgets between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The budget was about priorities, spending taxpayer's money in the most efficient and effective way possible. In 2014/15 the Council had achieved £1.8m efficiency savings of which 80% had been achieved on a permanent basis. The Council's Financial Plan and Corporate Transformation programme would assist in achieving the Council's vision to: "... seek the best quality of life for all the people in the Scottish Borders, prosperity for our businesses and good health and resilience for all our communities". Ms Douglas concluded the presentation by advising that in November, the Council had launched a new dialogue tool to encourage residents to submit ideas on a wide range of real challenges the Council faced. The dialogue tool was available on the SBC's website homepage or at <https://scotborders.dialogue-app.com/> The Chairman thanked Ms Douglas for the informative presentation.

DECISION

Noted the presentation.

5. TREE MANAGEMENT

The Chairman introduced Mr Jason Hedley, Neighbourhood Area Manager, Scottish Borders Council (SBC). Mr Hedley was in attendance to give the final presentation of the evening on tree management. Mr Hedley began by advising that there were two aspects to tree management: statutory planning which covered Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), conservation areas, planning applications and also administered legislation regarding high hedges. Neighbourhood Services dealt with care and maintenance of trees, tree planting, health and safety and neighbour nuisance. Mr Hedley continued that the last tree survey of the Council's 1,195 sites had been undertaken in 2011/12. In Spring 2016 the survey would recommence, starting in the Teviot and Liddesdale area. Mr Hedley went on to explain that the budget provision for tree management, for the whole of the Scottish Borders was £50k, this meant that there was a need to balance reasonable expectations with the ability to delivery. The highest priority was given to dead, diseased or dying trees. Medium priority was overhanging branches, fallen leaves or fruit, blocked light, loss of view and loss of satellite/TV signal. The lowest priority was anything not covered by the high and medium priorities. In answer to questions, Mr Hedley advised that if a landowner was not carrying out necessary maintenance works to trees on his land, this should be highlighted to the appropriate Neighbourhood Area Manager who would contact the landowner to request that works be carried out. If the landowner refused, this could then be referred to the Council's Enforcement Officer. Mr Hedley advised that the Council's approach to tree management was similar to Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) in that five year surveys were carried out; they also liaised with area managers at SBHA. The Chairman thanked Mr Hedley for his attendance and for the informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

6. DRAFT INTEGRATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

Ms Alison McCollam, Joint Head of Health Improvement, was in attendance to answer questions relation to the Draft Integrated Children and Young People's Plan which was currently out for consultation. The draft Plan was available on SBC's website and a shorter summary document had been circulated with the Agenda. Ms McConnell explained that the draft plan had identified five priorities: Raising attainment and achievement; improving health and reducing health inequalities; keeping children and young people safe; improving wellbeing and life chances; increasing participation and

engagement. Over the next three years the Council would be taking forward actions to achieve these priorities. The Chairman thanked Ms O'Connell for her attendance and for the briefing on the draft Plan.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

7. NEIGHBOURHOOD SMALL SCHEMES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

With reference to the paragraph 7 of the Minute of 17 November 2015, there had been circulated copies of a report by Service Director Neighbourhood Services updating the Forum on previously approved Neighbourhood Small Schemes. The report sought approval for the provision of a bench at Ettleton Cemetery at a cost of £200.00 from Small Schemes. Permission was also sought for a sign on the A68 at Carter Bar, national boundary, at a cost of £900.00. Mr Finnie, Neighbourhood Area Manager, advised that the Waverley Walk footpath upgrading works had been completed. It was intended to install the goal posts at Green Terrace at the end of next week. The delay in installation had been caused by the weather. In answer to a question regarding a request for a 'Welcome to Burnfoot' sign. Mr Finnie advised that there were no other communities within towns which had such signs; it would set a precedence if this was agreed. Mr Finnie was advised that Tweedbank community was signposted separately. Mr Finnie indicated that he would feed the comments back to the Traffic Section for their consideration. Councillor Marshall requested a meeting be arranged to discuss further.

DECISION

(a) **AGREED the following new Neighbourhood Small Scheme for implementation:-**

(i) **Provision of bench at Ettleton Cemetery, Newcastleton £200.00**

(b) **AGREED the following new Quality of Life Scheme for implementation:-**

(i) **Provision of sign at national boundary, A68 Carter Bar £900.00**

(c) **NOTED**

(i) **The updates on previously approved Neighbourhood Small Schemes as detailed in Appendix A to the report; and**

(ii) **The updates on previously approved Quality of Life Schemes as detailed in Appendix B to the report.**

8. ENGAGEMENT BY NHS BORDERS

The Chairman welcomed Ms Susan Manion, Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Integration, Scottish Borders Council (SBC). Ms Manion was in attendance to give an update on NHS Borders initiatives. Ms Manion advised that NHS Borders were reviewing their clinical services. This review had the title 'Health in Your Hands' and had commenced with inpatient services. The review would also consider the provision of acute services within a community setting. This was about providing more support at home in order to prevent admissions. Ms Manion continued that from 1 April 2016, there was a new standard from two weeks to 72 hours for patient discharge. This was a significant challenge and NHS Borders were investigating different options to ensure patients returned home timely. However, it was important that patients were well enough to be cared for at home and that they had the required amount of support in place. Ms Manion went on to discuss the key role NHS Borders had in supporting independent dental practices. In November, a national survey had shown that the Scottish Borders had the lowest level of tooth decay in children less than seven years of age in Scotland. This was an encouraging indicator of children's health. In answer to questions Ms Manion advised that the 'Health in your Hands' consultation would consider the best use of community hospital facilities around health and social care. NHS Borders were presently considering different models for a virtual ward. This would enable patients to stay at home but receive treatment. This would improve care for patients and their

families and would reduce hospital admissions. The Chairman thanked Ms Manion for her informative report.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

9. **POLICE SCOTLAND**

There had been circulated copies of a report by Inspector Carol Wood, Police Scotland. Sergeant Noble was in attendance and highlighted that with regard to Drug Dealing and Misuse a number of stop and searches had been carried out in November. Eight individuals had been reported for possession of drugs. Three house searches had been carried out under misuse of drugs warrants. Three persons had been charged with drug offences. The Road Safety priority showed that 21 road checks has been carried out, three conditional offers had been issued for mobile phone offences and one for failing to wear a seatbelt. A male had been charged with various road traffic offences under the influence of drugs and had been found to be carrying a child in the vehicle at the time. Sergeant Noble went on to discuss the violent crime priority, advising that there had been two robberies in Hawick in November. Those responsible had been detained in custody for their court appearance. With regard to Anti Social Behaviour there had been five fixed penalty tickets issued. Sergeant Noble advised that the Road Safety Campaign would be targeting drink driving offenders in the coming weeks, with increased road checks both in the evening and early morning to deter anyone thinking of drink driving. Sergeant Noble concluded his report by praising the multi-agency work between different services and thanked volunteers who had assisted with the recent flooding event. Mrs Short thanked Police Scotland for allowing her to accompany PC Gibson when he had carried out car parking monitoring in Hawick High Street. The Chairman thanked Sergeant Noble for his report.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

10. **SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

There had been circulated, copies of a report from Mr Russell Bell, Station Manager, Hawick Fire Station, updating the Forum on Scottish Fire and Rescue activity for the month of November 2015. Mr Bell advised that there had been two house fire occurrences – one kitchen and one electrical junction box. There had been one open fire, three special services and three unwanted fire alarm signals. Mr Russell advised that during Bonfire night there had been no incidents. The Fire Service had been active during the recent flood and he thanked the community for their support. The Chairman thanked Mr Bell for his report.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

11. **COMMUNITY COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT**

- 11.1 Mrs Short from Hawick Community Council advised that Hawick Flood Group, Resilience Group and the Community Council had worked well together during the recent flooding incident. The Christmas Parade had gone ahead and had been welcomed.
- 11.2 Mr John Hepburn from Teviot and Borthwick Water Community Council reported that the floods had impacted on the community upstream and many fields had been affected. The South of Scotland National Park would be hosting a public meeting in January 2016
- 11.3 Mr Roberts from Denholm Community Council stated that the community were also interested in the national park proposals and had held a meeting with Ms Jane Bower. Ongoing concern for the community was the Boundary Commission's proposal on boundary changes.

- 11.4 Mr Grieve from Burnfoot Community Council advised that they were organising Santa's visit to Burnfoot on Chirstmas Eve. Planning for next year's carnival had also begun.

DECISION

NOTED the reports.

12. **DATE OF NEXT TEVIOT AND LIDDESDALE AREA FORUM MEETING**

The next meeting of the Teviot and Liddesdale Area Forum would be held on Tuesday, 19 January 2016 at 6.30 pm in the Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick.

The Chairman ended the meeting by extending Seasons greetings from the Forum to all those present.

The meeting concluded at 8.35 pm.