
BORDERS RAILWAY BLUEPRINT – DELIVERY OF ACTION PLAN

Report by Corporate Transformation and Services Director

Scottish Borders Council

2 April 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides an update on the work to date to deliver the Borders Railway Blueprint Action Plan.**
- 1.2 'Borders Railway Maximising the Impact: A Blueprint for the Future' was launched in November 2014 by the First Minister (Annex 1). It aims to maximise the economic benefits of the new Borders Railway connection by helping to stimulate the growth of businesses, generate employment and boost visitor numbers.
- 1.3 The development of the Blueprint has been led by the Scottish Government in partnership with Scottish Enterprise, Transport Scotland, VisitScotland, and City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils.
- 1.4 Since the launch, work has focused on developing the Action Plan to deliver the key investments and commitments made by partners in the Blueprint. The Action Plan (Annex 2) outlines project activity across three strategic themes: *Great Places for Working and Investing*, *Great Communities for Living and Learning*, and *Great Destinations to Visit*.
- 1.4 The report outlines the Blueprint governance structure, action plan projects and the Council's current contribution to the financial deal.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Council:-**
 - (a) **Notes the significant progress made in developing the Borders Railway Blueprint Action Plan.**
 - (b) **Approves the funding identified in Annex 2 to deliver the Action Plan.**
 - (c) **Agrees that further reports on implementation of the Borders Railway Blueprint Action Plan will form part of the Executive Committee's regular quarterly monitoring of the Council's Corporate Transformation Plan.**

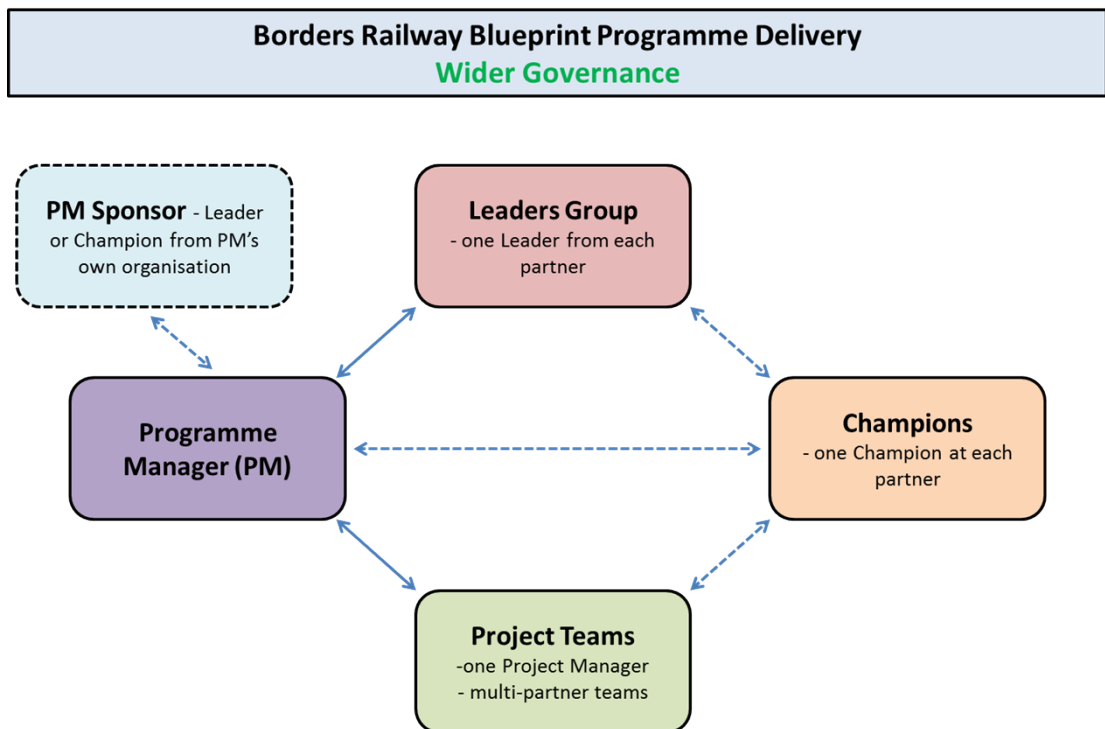
3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Borders Railway opens in September 2015. The £294 million investment will deliver the longest new UK domestic railway for more than 100 years. It will provide a modern, sustainable transport connection between Edinburgh, Midlothian and the Scottish Borders, offering a unique economic development opportunity for Scotland.
- 3.2 'Borders Railway Maximising the Impact: A Blueprint for the Future' was launched in November 2014 by the First Minister. It aims to maximise the economic benefits of the new Borders Railway connection, capitalising on the transformational impact of the new line in creating new places to 'live, work, visit, learn, play and grow'.
- 3.3 The development of the Blueprint was led by the Scottish Government, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise, Transport Scotland, VisitScotland, and City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils. Since the launch, work has focused on developing an Action Plan to deliver the key investments and commitments made by partners in the Blueprint. The Blueprint outlines key investments across three strategic themes: Great Places for Working and Investing, Great Communities for Living and Learning, and Great Destinations to Visit.
- 3.4 In developing the Blueprint, a number of 'tests' were used by the partners to determine which projects and ideas would be included, reflecting the overall aim to maximise the national economic impact of the Railway. These were:
- Ambition –the proposed investments were ambitious;
 - International significance – particularly for 'Great Destinations to Visit' theme, the proposed investments are capable of attracting international interest;
 - National significance – the proposed investments could deliver net additional economic impact at the Scottish level;
 - Balance– the proposals in the Blueprint reflected the Borders Railway route from Edinburgh to Tweedbank across three Council areas;
 - Consensus – the investments contained in the Blueprint were agreed by the participating partners.
- 3.5 The investment proposals published in the Blueprint together form a 'national plan' for collaborating on delivery. They secure a commitment from partners to jointly plan, prioritise and agree resources to deliver these priorities. Some of the proposals reflect work already done by the Council and other partners, and challenge the partners to 'raise the bar' in maximising the impact of the Railway. While not all Railway related activity is cited in the Blueprint Action Plan, this should not underestimate their wider contribution to maximising the impact of the Railway. An example would be the Galashiels Transport Interchange, a key project that will deliver Blueprint impacts, but on its own not a 'Blueprint Investment'.
- 3.6 The Borders Railway Blueprint is attached in Annex 1.

4 GOVERNANCE

4.1 The delivery of Borders Railway Blueprint is led by a 'Leadership Group' of senior officers (Chief Executive and Director level) representing the seven partner organisations, chaired by Scottish Enterprise. The Leadership Group takes strategic and investment decisions, directing the overall delivery of the programme. The Leadership Group is supported by a Programme Manager (PM), a full-time resource to coordinate the programme. Projects are delivered by multi-partner 'Project Teams' with named project leads, and are supported by 'Champions' within each partner organisation to provide connections and help to influence and enable project delivery. This governance structure is outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Borders Railway Blueprint Governance Structure



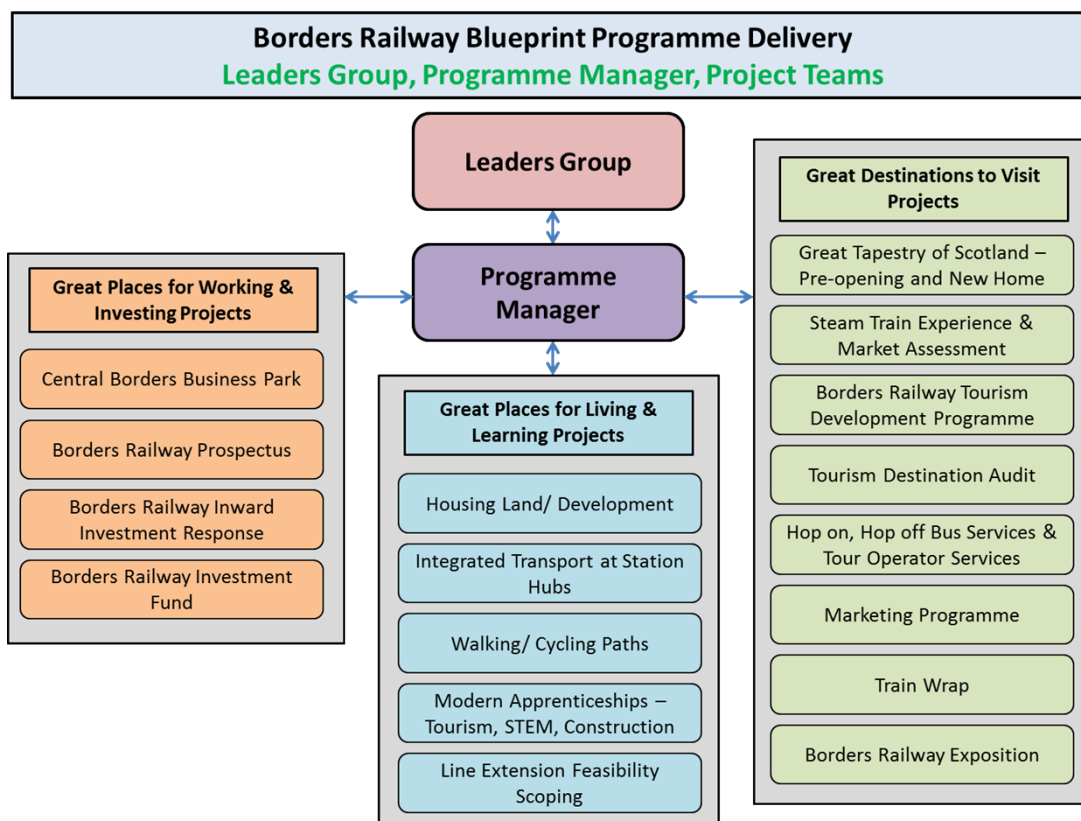
Source: Scottish Enterprise

5 THE ACTION PLAN

5.1 The Blueprint sets out a number of investments across the three themes of Great Places for Working and Investing, Great Communities for Living and Learning, and Great Destinations to Visit. Within each theme the key projects are detailed in the Action Plan (Annex 2), which are summarised in Figure 2 and in Annex 3.

5.2 The Action Plan highlights the key stakeholders (defined as 'project leads', 'beneficiaries' and 'customers'), the enablers (other 'third parties' that have a key enabling role in making the project happen – eg Planning or funding funders), outputs/ outcomes, and the indicative cost and timing. The Action Plan was 'tested' and developed further through specific workshops in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders in November 2014 and January 2015.

Figure 2. Programme Delivery – Themes and Projects



6 THE FINANCIAL DEAL

- 6.1 A commitment has been made by the partners to jointly deliver this programme of projects and develop a corresponding 'Financial Deal' that sets out the funding commitments to each project. Already a number of funding gaps are emerging that will provide a case for the financial commitment offered by the Scottish Government to support delivery of projects.
- 6.2 The principle of the Blueprint is that the Action Plan investments are funded across the partners using other funding sources where appropriate (e.g. Skills Development Scotland, Abellio as Train Operator and/or other private sector sources). The amount of £10m has been committed in principle from the Scottish Government to fund the financial gap in the delivery of the Action Plan projects. The Leadership Group will work closely with Scottish Government to managing the phasing of projects and to allocate the funds appropriately.
- 6.3 The current costs of Blueprint projects are outlined in Annex 2, totalling £16,800,500. The Council has already committed £7,657,500 towards these project costs. A further £257,500 is required to deliver key investments including: Integrated Transport at Station Hubs, Walking & Cycling Paths, Scoping out Feasibility for the Line Extension, Hop on/ Hop off bus pilots and the Marketing Programme. In the near future, an estimated £170,000 is needed towards the costs of the Inward Investment Response, Housing Land Development and the Borders Railway Exposition.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

- (a) Additional costs associated with these proposals will be partly met from existing capital and revenue budgets reflected in the 2015/16 – 2019/20 Financial Plan. The remaining resources have been identified from partly utilising an earmarked balance approved at the 24th February 2015 Executive meeting which ring-fenced resources to 'support Economic Development activity and infrastructure, the Borders Railway blueprint and associated action plan and the development of locality planning during 2015/16'.

7.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) The Borders Railway Blueprint was launched in November 2014, and contained a promise by the partners to jointly plan, prioritise and agree resources across our organisations to deliver the ambition to maximise the economic benefits of the Borders Railway. This paper outlines Scottish Borders Council's initial commitment to the delivery of the Blueprint programme. Without this commitment, there is a risk that the Blueprint ambition and the associated economic and community benefits will not be realised.

7.3 Equalities

- (a) An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and it is anticipated that the Blueprint will assist the Council to meet the Equality Duty. The Blueprint investments are expected to deliver a number of positive impacts for equalities groups, particularly as a result of enhanced connectivity to and from stations, and from new employment, skills training and business opportunities. We will continue the impact assessment process as we progress this work.

7.4 Acting Sustainably

- (a) A core principle of the Railway Blueprint is to stimulate sustainable economic development. The action plan will deliver benefits for the environment in supporting a 'modal shift' from car to train, and in connecting communities to new work, learning and leisure opportunities.

7.5 Carbon Management

- (a) All Blueprint infrastructure projects, including new buildings, will be designed to deliver cutting-edge low carbon outcomes. Construction methods will use current low carbon principles, and the brief for new developments will include the potential for on-site renewable energy generation. In addition, any major construction projects will require to be screened for Environmental Impact Assessment, which will highlight any environmental sensitivities associated with the proposals.

7.6 Rural Proofing

- (a) Rural proofing is not required as this report does not relate to new or amended Council policy or strategy. However, it is expected that the Blueprint investments will have a regional economic and social impact that reaches far beyond the immediate corridor of the new line, benefiting surrounding rural areas.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Rob Dickson
Corporate Transformation and Services Director

Signature

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Background Papers: N/A

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

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

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Annex 3 –

Blueprint Themes and Projects

Great Places for Working & Investing	Great Communities for Living & Learning	Great Destinations to Visit
1. Central Borders Business Park	1. Housing Land/ Development	1. Great Tapestry of Scotland
2. Borders Railway Prospectus	2. Integrated transport at Station Hubs	2. Steam Train Experience
3. Borders Railway Inward Investment Response	3. Develop walk/ cycle ways into wider network	3. Borders Railway Tourism Development Programme
4. Borders Railway Investment Fund	4. Modern Apprenticeships	4. Hop on/ off bus and tour operator services
	5. Scope out feasibility for line extension	5. Tourism Marketing Programme
		6. Train Wrap
		7. Borders Railway Exposition