

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BERWICKSHIRE AREA FORUM

MINUTES of Meeting of the
BERWICKSHIRE AREA FORUM held in
Council Offices, Newtown Street, Duns on
Thursday, 3rd December, 2015 at 6.30 pm

Present:-	Councillors M. J. Cook (Chairman), D. Moffat (from paragraph 8), J. Campbell and J. Greenwell. Pauline Hood; Coldstream and District – Martin Brims; Duns – Anne Affleck (from paragraph 8); Edrom, Allanton & Whitsome – Trixie Collin; Eyemouth – James Anderson; Foulden, Mordington and Lamberton – Howard Doherty; Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth – Keith Dickinson; Reston and Auchencrow – Barrie Forrest; Swinton and Ladykirk – Jim Brown. Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service – Kathy Cremin.
Apologies:-	Councillors J. A. Fullarton and F. Renton M Acton, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Community Councils:- Burnmouth; Coldingham; Lammermuir; Hutton and Paxton.
In Attendance:-	J Alexander – Head of Ambulance Services, Scottish Ambulance Service; Inspector J Scott, Police Scotland; D Silcock, SB Local Area Manager; Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

Members of the Public:- 5

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman 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.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

3. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 3 September 2015.

**DECISION
APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman.**

4. BEFRIENDING IN BERWICKSHIRE

The Chairman introduced Terri Bearhope, Early Intervention Co-ordinator with Seton Care, who was in attendance to give a presentation on the Befriending Service provided by Seton Care. Ms Bearhope explained that this project was based in Duns and was delivered by Seton Care, a sub-group of Berwickshire Housing Association. Ms Bearhope was the only full time member of staff on the project. The post was currently funded by Comic Relief and a bid had been submitted to the Big Lottery for funding for the project for a further five years. The project was established to provide a little extra support to older people within the community who were perhaps isolated and lonely and was dependent on volunteers who could offer a few hours of their time each week to visit people in their own homes. The type of service befrienders might provide could range from a coffee and chat to visits out to places of interest to the service user. Full training was provided and each befriender was "matched" with the service user. Ms Bearhope indicated that during

the three years that the project had been in existence, around 30 service users had been supported by between 15 and 20 volunteers. Requests to access the Befrienders service could either be by self-referral or by a third party via email: terri.bearhope@setoncare.org.uk; by telephone: 07801 672167 (mobile) or 01361 884000; by post: Terri Bearhope, Seton Care, 55 Newtown Street, Duns TD11 3AU. The Chairman thanked Ms Bearhope for her presentation, adding that this was an extremely worthwhile project and wished it well for the future.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

5. COMMUNICATIONS PLANS - SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL BUDGET

The Chairman informed those present that he had just received notification that Mr David Robertson, Chief Financial Officer at Scottish Borders Council was currently caught in adverse weather conditions at Sutra and was unable to get through the snow to attend the meeting. Information on the SBC budget was available to the public via the Council's website.

DECISION

NOTED.

6. DENTISTRY IN BERWICKSHIRE AND THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

6.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr Alasdair Pattinson, General Manager NHS Borders and Ms Morag McQuade, Clinical Director Dental Services to the meeting to give a presentation on Public Dental Services across the Scottish Borders. The description of public dental services included the provision of dental care to priority groups, vulnerable people in the community and hospital in-patients; out of hours emergency care; ongoing work to develop and deliver oral health improvement strategies; and working with other agencies and dental providers to ensure the smooth delivery of dental services across whole communities. Within the public dental service, there were 19 surgeries (excluding an oral surgery and an orthodontic surgery within the Borders General Hospital) located within six fixed sites with a further 2 mobile dental units. 16 dentists and 5 hygienists were employed across the service. Ms McQuade went on to give details of numbers of children and adults registered with NHS dentists and noted that the Borders currently had the highest adult (84%) and child (92%) attendance rate. In April 2015, a patient feedback survey was carried out and the responses were generally very positive. The demand and capacity for dental services had increased over the years and in June 2015, the dentist:patient ratio was 1:1521, the target average number being 1:1500. A number of benchmarks were in place and it was noted that in the Borders, almost 84% of Primary 7 children had no evidence of dental decay. A project to encourage tooth brushing in primary schools was now well-established and it was further noted that the percentage of 2 or more fluoride varnish applications for 3 and 4 year olds was currently higher than in other Scottish Health regions.

6.2 Discussion followed and a number of questions were raised. With regard to dental care provision, services were provided either by NHS or private practitioners with the latter being sub-contracted by NHS where this was required. It was also noted that patients who resided within the NHS Borders area but who were registered outwith were not included in the NHS Borders figures. Ms McQuade confirmed that the Scottish Government stipulated which services could be provided by the NHS and also that there was no limit to the number of patients a private dentist could have registered with their practice. Members thought it would be useful to know whether the take-up of dental services was directly affected by the geographical location of the service users and Ms McQuade noted this for future surveys. The Chairman thanked Mr Pattinson and Ms McQuade for their informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

7. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

7.1

The Chairman welcomed Ms Elaine Torrance, Chief Social Worker to the meeting to give a presentation on the progress of the Health and Social Care agenda. Ms Torrance explained that the second draft of the Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care Integration was currently out for consultation and that the consultation period concluded on 11 December 2015. Ms Torrance explained that the aims of the Strategic Plan were to create a more personalised health and social care service and to improve the outcomes for service users, carers and families with "Best Health, Best Care, Best Value" for all communities. It was further noted that this was the biggest change in the provision of health and social care provision since the formation of the National Health Service in 1948 and was necessary to meet the challenge of increased demand on limited resources. Integrating services would provide improved care and Ms Torrance went on to detail the 9 local objectives in the Plan, namely:- making services more accessible; improving prevention and early intervention; reduction of avoidable hospital admissions; provision of care as close to home as possible; delivery of services within an integrated care model; enabling people to have more choice and control over their care; optimising efficiency and effectiveness; reduction of health inequalities; and improving support for unpaid carers to allow them to continue in their caring roles. Ms Torrance advised members that a fund of £6.39m had been made available over a three year period to integrate services and there were a number of key priorities to progress in 2016/17. These included the development of integrated accessible transport in conjunction with colleagues from private and voluntary organisations and the development of extra care housing for older people in Berwickshire. Development of integrated services Local Plans would be based on a locality approach. Within the Borders, the percentage of residents living in "remote rural" areas would be challenging in terms of how Health and Social Integration would be delivered. Ms Torrance explained that following consultation, the Plan would be finalised in February 2016 and would go live in April 2016 and that a Joint Integration Board would agree and monitor any actions thereafter. Further information and access to the consultation document could be found at www.scotborders.gov.uk/integration and could be completed online or by hand and returned by mail to FREEPOST RRBU-KBCB-JBJG Integration, Strategic Policy Unit, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.

7.2

Discussion followed and it was acknowledged that although the draft Strategic Plan did provide assurances to the public, there did not appear to be any link to SMART objectives. Ms Torrance confirmed that a detailed assessment document had been developed that this had assisted in the formulation of the draft Plan.

7.3

With regard to cross-Border care home provision, the Chairman advised of a situation that he had been made aware of recently and which demonstrated some of the issues which caused concern for residents in local communities. In particular, if a resident living north of the Border was placed in a care home south of the Border, it appeared that the option for that individual to receive hospital treatment excluded the Borders General Hospital (BGH). In the case in question, this could result in severe strain on the small family unit and would be in conflict with the individual's wishes. Ultimately, this would restrict the choice of care homes for people north of the Border. The family who raised this matter felt that this was contradictory to the principles behind health and social care integration and had the potential to affect a number of families who were not aware of this when choosing a care home. Discussion followed and Mr Pattinson, NHS Borders advised that patients registered with a GP in the Scottish Borders would have the right to access to Scottish health care, including the BGH. It was acknowledged that cross-Border issues were very much a concern for people living in Berwickshire and that, as had been reported at previous meetings, similar border issues can occur between East Berwickshire and East Lothian. Ms Torrance and Mr Pattinson would look into this issue in more detail and the Forum would be updated in due course.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

MEMBERS

Councillor Moffat joined the meeting prior to consideration of the following item.
Councillor Campbell left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item.

8. DRAFT INTEGRATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

Ms Torrance explained that an Integrated Children and Young People's Plan had now been in place for three years and a review of that Plan and its success so far was currently being reviewed. The new draft Plan included the aims and responsibilities of the service and the visions and priorities for the three years from 2015 – 18. These included raising attainment and achievement for all and closing the gap between the lowest and highest achievers; improving health and reducing health inequalities; keeping children and young people safe; improving the well-being and life chances for the most vulnerable children and young people; and increasing participation and engagement. Ms Torrance advised that the consultation period would conclude in January 2016 and that further information and access to the consultation document could be found on the Council's website. Opportunities of employment for young people on leaving school were recognised as central to the success of the Plan and Ms Torrance advised that schemes like those for young apprentices offered such possibilities. With regard to other opportunities for young people to develop skills, members were advised that it was now possible for 16 and 17 year olds to stand for election to Community Councils as had been the case at Coldstream. Other suggestions for community engagement for young people included involvement in local projects such as transport and access issues. The Chairman thanked Ms Torrance for her presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the presentation.

9. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) informing the Forum of SFRS activity since September 2015. Station Manager Acton was unable to attend the meeting as he was called away to deal with emergency flooding issues.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

10. POLICE SCOTLAND

Inspector John Scott attended the meeting to present the Police Scotland report for Berwickshire for the period up to 30 November 2016. With regard to crime figures for Mid Berwickshire, there were 114 recorded incidents in the current year to date, with a detection rate of 40%. This compared with 87 crimes and a detection rate of 34% during the same period in the previous year. There were 106 crimes recorded in East Berwickshire with a detection rate of 56% compared to 114 crimes and a detection rate of 48% the preceding year. In addition to the priorities previously identified for Mid- and East Berwickshire, further activities were highlighted in the report. Road safety and inconsiderate driving behaviour was being addressed by local officers who had, and would continue to carry out dedicated parking controls to both enforce legislation and discourage inconsiderate parking. General winter road safety advice had been issued and drivers were being encouraged to be prepared for winter driving. Inspector Scott advised members that the farm crime prevention event held at Whitsome East Newton Farm near Duns in October had been very successful with around 20 people attending. Crime prevention, fire safety and wildlife crime advice were covered throughout the event. In addition, funding had been secured by the Safer Communities Team at SBC to purchase forensic marking kits which would be distributed to farms throughout the Scottish Borders by local Police and Fire and Rescue Community Officers. Inspector

Scott again emphasised the drink driving laws in Scotland and advised that Police Scotland would be targeting offenders in the lead up to and over the festive period.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

11. SCOTTISH AMBULANCE SERVICE

- 11.1 With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of 3 September 2015, Mr Alexander, Scottish Ambulance Service was present at the meeting to answer questions on the service across Berwickshire. At the September meeting, Mr Alexander had indicated that ambulances were allocated on the basis of the caller's landline STD code however, the caller could dial 999 and ask to be connected to the Scottish Ambulance Service (if they wished to be transported to the BGH) or the North East Ambulance Service (if they wished to attend a hospital south of the Border.) Mr Alexander had since investigated this further and now confirmed that ambulances would be utilised based on the caller's postcode and landline STD code only. This meant that calls from north of the Border would receive the service from the Scottish Ambulance Service and calls from south of the Border would get a response from the North East Ambulance Service. Further discussion followed and Mr Alexander answered a number of queries relating to the ambulance service in the Eastern Borders. He advised that ambulances were called from the Chirnside Ambulance Station in the first instance then from Kelso as required. The Chairman thanked Mr Alexander for attending the meeting.
- 11.2 The discussion highlighted a wider concern relating to general cross-Border health provision and it was agreed that further dialogue was required to address these concerns. This would be taken forward and would involve Berwickshire Area Forum and Mr A Pattinson, NHS Borders.

DECISION

(a) NOTED.

(b) AGREED that further dialogue to address the wider concerns relating to general cross-Border health provision would be taken forward and would involve Berwickshire Area Forum and Mr A Pattinson, NHS Borders.

12. COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Dog Fouling

There was concern in some communities about the amount of dog fouling and lack of enforcement of Council policy in relation to this matter. The Forum was advised that a review of the policy was being considered at this time and that enforcement was central to the discussion. Mr Silcock would raise the concerns with the Service Director Neighbourhood Services and an update would be presented to the Forum in due course.

DECISION

NOTED.

12.2 Electronic Sign in the Layby on the A1 at Lamberton

With reference to paragraph 12.1 of the Minute of 3 September 2015, the Chairman would now write to Transport Scotland on behalf of Berwickshire Area Forum to ask if the message on the electronic sign in the layby on A1 at Lamberton could be amended to detail the cost of a penalty fine for leaving litter in the layby.

DECISION

AGREED that the Chairman would write to Transport Scotland to request that the message on the electronic sign in the layby on A1 at Lamberton be amended to include the cost of a penalty fine for leaving litter.

12.3 Reston Station

The Forum was updated on progress to date regarding Reston Station proposals and discussion followed in relation to how Berwickshire Area Forum might be involved during any future consultation process.

DECISION

NOTED.

12.4 Community Empowerment Act

The Community Empowerment Act was discussed and it was noted that there were a number of inclusions, such as the Transfer of Assets, which would have implications for local communities and Community Councils. It was agreed that further discussion was required involving Elected Members, Community Councils and others and the Chairman agreed to facilitate this in due course.

DECISION

NOTED.

13. FLAGS AT LAMBERTON TOLL

- 13.1 With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 3 September 2015, the Chairman gave a brief summary of the issues relating to this matter and the progress made so far in identifying the options for erecting flags on the Border at Lamberton Toll. Information either already gathered or still in progress related to the ownership of the flags and the legality of flying particular flags. Detailed costs for individual options had not yet been assessed. Four choices appeared to be available at this juncture, namely that (a) BAF acknowledged the research already carried out but did not wish to pursue matters further; (b) noting that a grant already existed in respect of the SBC Coat of Arms and that this could be flown however, wherever and whenever the Council wished, BAF agreed that the option of flying Saltire, Union Flag and Borders Flag be explored; (c) noting that a flag bearing the Coat of Arms of the ancient county of Berwickshire would require a grant of said coat of arms to SBC or another legal entity, BAF agreed that this option should be explored further; and (d) to request that both options (b) and (c) were explored together with the relative of merits of each option being weighed. The reason for option (d) was because should BAF agree any of the options (a), (b) (c) or (d), the matter would be remitted to officers to bring a report back to the Forum and a report such as this could readily compare options (b) and (c), and enable BAF and in due course SBC, to come to a view on the matter.
- 13.2 After discussion, the Forum was of the view that Option (d) was the most appropriate choice and it was agreed that SBC officers be asked to prepare a report for presentation to the Forum on the possibility of flying the Union Flag, the Saltire, a Borders Flag based upon the Coat of Arms of Scottish Borders Council or a flag bearing the Coat of Arms of the ancient county of Berwickshire at the National Border at Lamberton Toll.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the progress made to date.

(b) AGREED that SBC officers be asked to prepare a report for presentation to the Forum on the possibility of flying the Union Flag, the Saltire, a Borders Flag based upon the Coat of Arms of Scottish Borders Council or a flag bearing the Coat of Arms of the ancient county of Berwickshire at the National Border at Lamberton Toll.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings of the Berwickshire Area Forum were noted as follows:-

3 March 2016; and

2 June, 2016.

It was noted that these dates would be subject to change should an additional meeting of Berwickshire Area Forum be added to the Calendar.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

The meeting concluded at 8.45pm.