

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW
WORKING GROUP**

MINUTES of Meeting of the SCOTTISH
BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
SCHEME REVIEW WORKING GROUP held
via MS Teams on Tuesday, 17 October 2023
at 6.00 pm

Present:- SBC Councillor C. Cochrane (Chair)
Berwickshire
SBC Councillor J. Anderson
Community Councillor L. Inglis
Eildon
SBC Councillor E. Thornton-Nicol
Teviot & Liddesdale
SBC Councillor A. Smart
Tweeddale
SBC Councillor M. Douglas
Community Councillor K. Peebles

Apologies:- SBC Councillor P. Brown and Community Councillor M. Ladds (Cheviot),
Community Councillors J. Cleghorn and J. Calvert(Eildon), Community
Councillors C. Knox and P. Kerr (Teviot & Liddesdale)

In Attendance:- Director Corporate Governance, Participation Officer, Clerk to the Council.

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed the new members of the Group to the meeting and explained that this would pick up on the work of the previous Group members.

2. **MINUTE**

Copies of the Minute of the meeting of the Working Group held on 23 November 2021 had been circulated.

DECISION

NOTED the Minute.

3. **SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME**

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 23 November 2021, copies of proposed amendments to date to the Scottish Borders Community Council Scheme which had been agreed by the Working Group, had been circulated. The proposed amendments or additions to text in the Scheme were highlighted in yellow. The Clerk to the Council talked the Group through the proposed amendments and answered questions from the members.

DECISION

NOTED the amendments highlighted in the Scheme.

4. **SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME – ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS**

4.1 Copies of the following ancillary documents to the new Community Council Scheme had been circulated:

- (a) Community Council Training Handbook;
- (b) Community Council Election Handbook;
- (c) Community Council Constitution – example;
- (d) Community Council Standing Orders – example;
- (e) Community Council Complaints Procedure – example;
- (f) Community Council Equalities Statement – example;
- (g) Community Council Privacy Notice – example;
- (h) GDPR Briefing Document for Community Councils;
- (i) Community Council Document Retention Schedule;
- (j) Financial Management Best Practice;
- (k) Following the Public Pound Code of Practice for Community Councils; and
- (l) Planning Guidance for Community Councils.

4.2 The Clerk to the Council advised that the above documents were separate to the Scheme but would hopefully provide guidance and examples of good practice for Community Councils. By having these separate documents, it would mean they could be updated as necessary without having to go through the statutory consultation process which was required to amend the Scheme itself. Members discussed the documents and made the following comments –

- Planning guidance document - references to SESPLAN would need to be removed from the Planning Guidance document
- Training Handbook – it would be better either for a more simplified language version to be produced or consider splitting the handbook into more manageable sections so it was not off-putting for new Community Councillors
- It would be helpful to have templates for Agendas and Minutes

4.3 In response to a question around SBC Officer and resource assistance to Community Councils on windfarm or forestry applications, the Director Corporate Governance advised that she would need to speak to the Democratic Services Officers and Planning Officers out-with the meeting to see what, if any, support would be available.

DECISION NOTED.

5. **TIMELINE FOR CONSULTATION**

Details of the timeline for consultation with Community Councils both informally and formally had been given on the agenda for the meeting.

DECISION

AGREED to send out the amended Scheme and ancillary documents to all Community Councils for informal consultation, including asking for any requests for changes to number of members of a Community Council or to Community Council boundaries, with comments due back by mid-January 2023.

6. **NEXT MEETING**

The Group agreed that the next meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday 23 January 2024, starting at 6:00 pm. The meeting would be held online via Teams and livestreamed to the public

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 7.00 pm