

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 22nd March, 2016 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors J. G. Mitchell, S. Aitchison, S. Bell, C. Bhatia, J. Brown, M. J. Cook, V. M. Davidson, G. Edgar, J. G. Mitchell, D. Paterson, F. Renton and R. Smith.

Also Present:- Councillor I. Gillespie.

Apologies:- Councillors D. Parker and D. Moffat

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (People), Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Transformation and Services Director, Chief Legal Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor Parker the meeting was chaired by Councillor Mitchell.

1. PRIVATE BUSINESS DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

2. INTEGRATED SPORT AND CULTURE TRUST - MEMBER TRUSTEE LIAISON GROUP

Members considered a report by the Corporate Transformation and Services Director.

The meeting moved into Public Business to consider the following items.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

3. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting of the Executive Committee of 8 March 2016.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

4. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION - PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a Minute extract from the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 22 March 2016. This related to a request submitted to the Scrutiny Committee by Councillor Bhatia as follows – *"Protection of Private Water Supplies – in relation to Planning e.g. when a planning application is granted which requires an additional private supply or taking water from an existing private supply, how do existing householders ensure that their supply is protected? This may be purely a civil matter or the Council may have a role. This is further exacerbated with large forestry/windfarm applications."* Councillor Bhatia provided some background to the request. She explained that members of the public had raised concerns with her regarding protection of Private Water Supplies within their communities and that she had therefore asked for Scrutiny Committee to

consider the matter. Councillor Bhatia advised that the information provided by Mr Carson and Mr Barker to the Scrutiny Committee had been extensive and very informative. Members noted that there were measures and conditions which would be applied in specific situations, as detailed in the Minute extract, and that the discussion at Scrutiny Committee had further raised the profile of Private Water Supplies and the areas of concern on this issue.

- 4.2 Discussion followed in relation to the impact of tree removal on surrounding land and water levels and Members' concerns were noted. Councillor Smith, as Chairman of Planning and Building Standards Committee, agreed that this matter also be discussed at the meeting of that Committee on 25 April 2016.

DECISION

AGREED to endorse the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee that:-

- (a) **Officers from Regulatory Services work with the Council's Communications Team to progress a public awareness campaign –**
- (i) **giving information about grants/conditions available for the improvement of private water supplies;**
 - (i) **encouraging people with private water supplies not on the Private Water Supplies Register to send in their details to allow a more complete mapping of properties/source locations not currently on the Register;**
 - (iii) **placing information on the Council's website;**
 - (iv) **attending Area Fora meetings; and**
 - (v) **involving Community Councils asking for their assistance by providing a map of known properties/sources within their area and requesting them to populate these maps further using local knowledge.**
- (b) **the Director of Regulatory Services continue to ensure sufficient staff resources were available to meet the Council's statutory needs for private water supplies.**

5. FINAL REVENUE VIREMENTS AND EARMARKED BALANCES 2015/16

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 16 February 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for final budget virements and earmarked balances for 2015/16 which had been identified during the monitoring process of the General Fund Revenue Budget at the end of January 2016. Mr Robertson explained that routine virements were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and they supplemented the virements approved by the Executive Committee during the financial year. They reflected a range of virements to address projected pressures within Services from budget available from other Services; devolved budget from the Centre to DSM school budgets; future year budget adjustments required to finalised the Social Care budget to be delegated to the Integrated Joint Board; and technical accounting adjustments. Appendix 2 contained the earmarked balances and identified that budget would be required to be carried forward to support work scheduled for 2016/17. These earmarked balances supplemented those already approved by the Executive Committee during the financial year to date. The report explained when earmarking was required, namely where projects or initiatives were scheduled for completion during 2016/17; for schools DSM budget as per the approved DSM Scheme; to support the achievement of Financial Plan savings during 2016/17; and to support Corporate Transformation, including ICT, in 2016/17. Officers provided clarification, as requested by Members, in relation to a number of virements. With regard to the Advanced Young Drivers' course offered via Safer Communities, the Depute Chief Executive People advised that there had been a less than anticipated take-up of this opportunity and confirmed that additional ways in which to promote the course and engage with the target audience were being investigated.

**DECISION
APPROVED:-**

- (a) the virements detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (b) the earmarked balances detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

6. **SCOTLAND ROUTE STUDY FOR THE RAIL NETWORK**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services providing information to Members on the current consultation exercise being undertaken by Network Rail on potential future infrastructure provision on the Scottish Rail Network between 2019 and 2029 and outlined the proposed response from Scottish Borders Council to this consultation. This response had been separated into three key elements, namely Borders Rail; Borders Rail extension; and New Rail Stations. The report provided details under each heading and highlighted aspects of potential development with particular interest to the Scottish Borders. The publication of the final Scotland Route Study document was expected in July 2016. Discussion followed and Members raised a number of questions. Toilet availability at unmanned stations was mentioned and Mr Johnstone, Lead Officer for Access and Transport advised that this was a decision for the operator to make but confirmed that officers continued to discuss this matter with a view to improving the facilities. With reference to the extension of the line and in particular the blueprint and scoping study, Members were advised that officers were working on this as an area of priority. In response to a question about the frequency of trains which stopped at Stow Station, Mr Johnstone advised that this was an operational matter for Network Rail and could be influenced by demand. Members congratulated officers on the report and hoped that what had been achieved so far would be the basis for further success.

**DECISION
APPROVED the consultation response from Scottish Borders Council in relation to the Scotland Route Study produced by Network Rail.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10.55am and reconvened at 11.15am

8. **EDUCATION BUSINESS**

Present:- Mrs J Aitchison, Ms A Ferahi, Mr G Jarvie, Mr D Moore, Mr J Walsh.
Apologies:- Mr G Donald.

CHAIRMAN

Councillor Aitchison chaired the meeting for consideration of the Education Business. He welcomed Mrs Aitchison, Ms Ferahi, Mr Jarvie, Mr Moore and Mr Walsh to this section of the Executive meeting

7. **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.

MEMBER

Councillor Edgar left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business

8. **DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE - IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT 2015 - 2016**

8.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr Campbell Wilson, Head Teacher at Peebles High School who was in attendance to make a presentation on how the school was working towards

the Developing the Young Workforce agenda. Mr Wilson provided some statistics as background to his presentation, advising that in 2014, 427 young people had actively sought Jobseekers Allowance. In 2015, that figure had dropped to 198 young people. Mr Wilson went on to explain that, since 2010, Peebles High School had been one of the highest attaining schools in the country with a number of its pupils attaining 5 Highers or more however, this was not matched by the number of positive destinations for those pupils. He explained that not all young people wished to go on to university or other further education immediately after leaving school. The challenge for the school and the Council was to increase the number of positive destinations, identifying other Work Based Learning routes available to pupils to achieve their goals and finding workplaces which could provide positive experiences for around 250 young people each year. Included in Mr Wilson's presentation were interviews with young people who had opted not to go to university straight from school. One pupil had joined a local legal firm which could eventually lead to a position as a Paralegal, professional Cashier or a Law Society Solicitor. Another pupil had undertaken a work placement in a local charity shop and was currently developing skills in all aspects of retail business.

- 8.2 Mr Wilson explained that the school and the pupils worked together to identify the best route for achieving a positive destination for each individual then discussions were scheduled with partners to put in place the Work Based Learning opportunities. The Service Director Children and Young People advised Members that a further report and Business Plan would be presented to the Executive Committee in due course. She went on to emphasise the importance of information exchanges between local communities and schools and asked that Members help by sharing the information about Work Based Learning within their local areas and passing any messages from the community back to the school/department. Ms Manson also advised that further information on the Work Based Learning opportunities available in each area would be collated and circulated to Members. Courses such as Accessing Housing were made available to pupils during their senior stage at school and discussion followed in relation to developing and utilising partnerships nationally/outwith the area. Funding from the Scottish Government had made provision for the creation of a Developing the Young Workforce officer post. This position had now been filled for over two months and a range of work was in progress, including identifying and sharing Best Practice. Mr Wilson advised that the number of pupils taking a gap year before deciding on their future destination had increased. He acknowledged that further work was now required to help young people make it a valuable experience as part of planning for their futures after the gap year. The Chairman thanked Mr Wilson for an extremely interesting and informative presentation.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

MEMBERS

Councillor Brown left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business and Councillor Bell left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

9. INTEGRATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2015 - 2018

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Children and Young People which presented the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2018. The Plan set out the strategic priorities for integrating Children and Young People's Services across partner agencies in the Scottish Borders. These partner agencies included the Council, NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporter Administrator and the Third Sector. The Plan summarised the progress made during the period of the previous Plan and highlighted the priorities and key actions going forward in the next three years. A wide consultation had been undertaken which included key stakeholders, young people and their families and the wider public. The Plan set out a vision that all children and young people in the Scottish Borders would achieve their unique potential, and identified the main key priorities arising from this exercise were:

keeping children and young people safe; improving health and reducing health inequalities; improving the wellbeing and life challenges for the most vulnerable children and young people; raising attainment and achievement for all learners; and increasing participation and engagement. A high level action plan was linked to each key priority as set out in the Plan. Ms Manson advised Members that a version of the Plan would be made available in a simplified format for ease of reference. In referring to Early Years Centres and their locations, Ms Manson advised Members that a report would be presented to the Education Executive Committee and that this would provide details of the strategic direction of the Council in respect of the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan. Ms Manson explained that it was important for the success of the Plan to ensure that all stakeholders participated in the consultation process and ongoing work to implement the Plan. With regard to the statistics used in the Plan to demonstrate Areas of Deprivation, Ms Manson clarified that the figures were those for 2012 and that any significant changes would be monitored.

DECISION

NOTED the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2018.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm