

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TEVIOT & LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES of Meeting of the TEVIOT &
LIDDESDALE AREA PARTNERSHIP held
Via MS Teams on Tuesday, 7 September
2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:- SBC Councillors: N. Richards (Chair), W. McAteer, D. Paterson, C. Ramage, G. Turnbull.

Other organisations attendees: Ms H. Batsch (The Bridge), Mr W. Douglas, Ms B. Elborn (Newcastleton CC), Mr W. Fletcher (Burnfoot CC), Mr W. George, Mr P. Kerr (Southdean CC), Mr C. Knox (Hawick CC), Ms A. McGraith (Roxburgh & Berwickshire CAB), Mr D. Tait (Future Hawick), Mr A. Warburton (Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage CC), Ms R. Woods (Southdean CC), Mr F. Wight (Hawick CC).

Apologies:- Councillor S. Marshall.

In Attendance:- Service Director Customer & Communities, SBC Portfolio Manager, Locality Development Co-ordinator (G. Jardine), Communities and Partnership Manager, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

1. WELCOME AND MEETING PROTOCOLS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and the Chairman outlined how the meeting would be conducted and how those both in the meeting and watching via the Live Stream could take part.

2. FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS AND EVALUATION OF MEETINGS

The Minutes of the meetings of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership held on 8 June 2021 and 22 July 2021 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes.

3. PLACE-MAKING UPDATE

3.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 8 June 2021, the Service Director Customer & Communities, Mrs Jenni Craig, and SBC Portfolio Manager, Mr James Lamb, presented an update on progress with Place Making. Mr Lamb gave a recap of the previous meeting including the output of the workshop led by Diarmaid Lawlor of Scottish Futures Trust; transforming joint working with communities; this being a multi-year programme so not everything could not be done at once; and the central role of the Area Partnership in this process. Feedback and input was required into the joint principles, the framework and the proposals for getting started and the proposed next steps. Mrs Craig confirmed that feedback was being sought on an ongoing basis. Overall the Council wanted to take a new approach to Place Making by working in a much more collaborative way than previously. The first 7 proposed joint principles had come directly from conversations with Area Partnerships and the remaining principles had been included to add value. Details were given on the proposed joint framework which built on existing work. With regard to how

initial communities could be identified, Mrs Craig advised that Place making should be seen as an evolving, rolling programme of work, with the ambition that all communities would be supported but with limited resources there had to be a priority order. A matrix which included a number of aspects had been developed to potentially be used to prioritise communities and include smaller settlements. In terms of resources, there were additional SBC posts which could be used to help communities and co-ordinate and align resources. Feedback was sought by the end of October on the proposed joint principles and framework; the priorities; and the place making governance role.

- 3.2 Councillor Paterson commented that priorities may be regarded differently for those in different areas and asked how prioritisation would work in localities across the Area Partnerships. Mrs Craig explained that it needed to be acknowledged that every community and its plan was different and there would be different ways to deal with priorities, and officers would work with each Area Partnership to make those decisions about their own communities. Councillor Ramage referred to different ways of engaging the public e.g. the public was invited to develop ideas for the Hawick flood protection scheme, groups were arranged in a workshop and thus the public was involved. Mr Kerr welcomed the fact that communities would have a part in this and asked about rural proofing. It looked as though communities with an existing place plan were being prioritised which would lead to a widening disparity and perhaps the focus should be on those communities with no plans. Every area was different and all rural communities in particular should be invited to participate if they wished. Mrs Craig referred to the Berwickshire Area Partnership that had considered some community councils working together to develop local plans. The Council could look at supporting a town, a rural area or a combination of rural areas. Ms Elborn advised that Newcastleton did not have a place plan but it did have a development strategy, which was a different thing entirely. Ms Elborn expressed concern that older people would not be able to participate in the Citizen Space consultation and Mr Lamb explained that the intention at this stage was to target community groups with the Citizen Space survey and not the general public. Ms Elborn asked that a range of methods be used as that may not be wholly representative of communities. Ms Batsch emphasised the importance of considering the hinterland beyond towns which was fundamentally important to that town with a real symbiotic relationship with schools, shopping and GP surgeries, so using town or Community Council boundaries may not identify a true local area. Mrs Craig thanked everyone for their comments and feedback which would help shape the Place making programme.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

4 AREA PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Chair advised that the consultation on Area Partnerships had closed on 1 August and officers were in the process of forming a paper to go to Scottish Borders Council later in the year with recommendations for the development of the Area Partnerships based on the outcomes of the consultation. It was noted that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership on 6 November 2021.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

5 COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE HUB

The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, advised that the Community Assistance Hub was continuing to respond to individuals' requests for support and calls were being made to those self-isolating. Thanks were expressed to volunteers for their help. Community partners were meeting weekly to assess need and look at provision in the TD9 area. Feedback from the Older People's Survey carried out during the pandemic had

showed that people felt well supported for practical help e.g. shopping, but people's experiences of feeling connected or engaged in their community was not so good. That was currently being examined to see what help could be given, which included mapping community activity in the TD9 area. The NHS Borders Health Improvement Team was leading on this work and hoped to create a resource to signpost people to activities and services. It was acknowledged that community groups may find it difficult to start up in the current circumstances so the mapping would help identify gaps in people's wellbeing.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

6 EXTENSION OF THE BORDERS RAILWAY

Ms Elborn gave a presentation on a community project funded by the Community Fund. This had been originally named the Community Voices Project and now, with the extension of the Borders Railway, was talking about the benefits of this for the South of Scotland. Members of the community had been invited to create films about the potential benefits to them of an extension to the line, given the success of the current line. Five films had been made which was to be launched on the 'Extending the Borders Railway' social media channels the following day. The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, advised that the link could be promoted if shared with officers. All Community Councils in the area would be sent the details. Ms Elborn further advised that outcome of the UK Government connectivity review was still awaited – this had been delayed due to the larger number of responses received than had been anticipated.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

7 FLOODING UPDATE

A written update from Duncan Morrison of the Flood and Coastal Management Team had been circulated with the agenda and a more detailed update would be provided at the November Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership meeting. Mr Kerr noted that Scottish Borders Council had carried out good work in the Chesters area but the ditches that had been cleared earlier in the year were starting to fill up. There was a need to get a maintenance programme in place as this would not be a one-off task.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

8 FORESTRY/WIND FARMS PLANNING FOR NOVEMBER

Mr Kerr provided an update advising that 40% of Southdean land mass was covered by forestry. The Wheel Causeway was a core path where 80-90% was reported as being fine but 10% was overgrown causing issues. This was a heritage, historic path and Mr Kerr was keen to work with operators such as the Forestry Commission and Tillhill and neighbours to resolve this and also look at regular maintenance. Mr Kerr requested that anyone interested should contact him. With regards to climate change, Mr Kerr had made enquiries to Scottish Forestry to attend the Area Partnership to present plans for the next 10 years for the area including what to do with run off. It was noted that Scottish Forestry would be prepared to attend the November meeting. Regarding timber transport, it was noted that communities were seeing an increase in traffic. Mr Kerr was interested in seeing details of volume of traffic and on the driving of operators and he would liaise with Councillor Turnbull on the issue. Regarding wind farms, Mr Kerr added that with regard to the virtual exhibition for Hobkirk, one of the panels was over 50MB which may cause difficulties for downloading and he would raise this with developers. Big maps/files presented difficulties. A planning application was likely to be submitted to the Council at the end of this year, beginning of next, and there needed to be hard copies of maps and plans available to local communities.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

9 COMMUNITY UPDATE

9.1 Mr Tait asked about the Volunteer Park Stand and expressed concern that the project had been stopped by the pandemic. It was noted that clubs that used the stand had spent money to improve facilities. Councillor Richards advised that an update would be provided at the November meeting of the Area Partnership or before then if possible. Councillor Turnbull confirmed that he had been raising the issue for 15 years, including looking at a Trust or Foundation, and demolishing the Stand and rebuilding. He had spoken with the Chief Executive and was currently awaiting a response.

9.2 Ms Elborn asked if there was an update regarding 20mph zones. Councillor Richards advised that Napier University was analysing data and that Councillors had been invited to an update of findings in early October. Mr Kerr noted that some speed alerts only gave feedback on speeds up to 28mph and it may be more beneficial to register higher speeds and continue the slow down message to motorists. Councillor Paterson commented that there had been a mixed response on 20mph zones from the public.

10 COMMUNITY FUND

10.1 Copies of a presentation giving proposals for the governance of the Community Fund had been circulated. The Clerk to the Council gave a recap of what Scottish Borders Council had agreed in March 2021 and the Area Partnership had agreed in June 2021 with regard to the Community Fund. A number of options were given on what could happen to the funding allocated to a Community Council in the Pot A Fund where no Assessment Panel had been set up; and also details were given of a proposed way of making appointments to the Assessment Panel for the Pot B Fund. For Pot A, these options were that a Community Council could allocate their funding to another Community Council; could deal with any applications to their funding directly at one of their Community Council meetings; or could allocate their funding to Pot B, with that funding ring-fenced for that particular area until the end of 2021 and any applications would be dealt with by the Pot B Assessment Panel. It would be up to the particular Community Council to make that decision. At the end of 2021, any unspent funding for that Community Council ring-fenced in Pot B, along with unspent funding from Pot A, would transfer to the wider Pot B fund.

10.2 With regard to the Assessment Panel for Pot B, it was suggested that the number of members be set at between 7 and 11, including a maximum of 3 SBC Elected Members who would be non-voting. A recruitment campaign would be run by SBC Officers and Community Council members would be eligible to put in their application as well as members of other organisations or the public. It was further proposed that the appointment of the members of the Panel would be delegated to the Director of Customer & Communities in consultation with the Chair of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership and the SBC Executive Member for Community Development & Localities. To allow for immediate opening of the fund for Pot B, it was suggested that until the Assessment Panel members were appointed, Council officers would assess applications received using previous fund criteria, and these assessments would be brought directly to the Area Partnership for decision. This was an interim measure and once an Assessment Panel was in place it would take over the assessment of applications and recommendations to the Area Partnership.

10.3 Mr Kerr objected to the proposed membership of the Assessment Panel for Pot B, advising that the original plan was for each Community Council to be represented and that being augmented by other representatives. Ms Woods advised that they had struggled to get people not in the Community Council involved and while it was hoped to bring in people from the wider community, this was not practical at this stage. The Communities & Partnership

Manager, Ms Smith, reminded the members of the previous SCDC report which advocated a wide community involvement from other organisations not just Community Councils and also the decisions of Scottish Borders Council in March. An open recruitment campaign would comply with this. Members of the Area Partnership discussed the options and did not find favour with the proposed allocation of members to the Assessment Panel for Pot B. As a compromise, the Clerk to the Council suggested that a representative from each Community Council area could be appointed to the Assessment Panel, with an open recruitment campaign for a further 3 to 5 members, that number depending on the applications received. This was accepted by those present. The scoring matrix, application form and guidance which had been circulated for Pot A applications, was approved to also cover applications to Pot B.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) that it would be for those Community Councils without an Assessment Panel in place for their allocated Pot A fund to choose whether to allocated this funding to another Community Council, or deal with any applications directly at one of their Community Council meetings, or allocate their funding to Pot B, with the funding ring-fenced for that particular area until the end of 2021, and any applications would be dealt with by the Pot B Assessment Panel;**
- (b) that at the end of 2021, any unspent funding in either Pot A or any ring-fenced money in Pot B would transfer to the wider Pot B fund and be open to applications from across the Teviot and Liddesdale area;**
- (c) that the Pot B Assessment Panel would comprise a representative from each of the Community Council areas in the Teviot and Liddesdale area and an open recruitment would be carried out for a further 3 to 5 other members from the wider community;**
- (d) no SBC Elected Members would be included in the membership of the Pot B Assessment Panel;**
- (e) that appointment of members from the wider community to the Pot B Assessment Panel would be delegated to the Service Director Customer & Communities, in consultation with the Chair of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership and the Executive Member for Community Development & Localities;**
- (f) that applications to the Pot B Fund would open on 1 October 2021; and**
- (g) to approve the scoring matrix, application form and guidance for the Pot A Fund and that this be extended to cover the Pot B Fund.**

11 FUNDING TABLE OVERVIEW

The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, presented the overview of funds available in Teviot & Liddesdale, highlighting that the Teviot & Liddesdale Community Fund had £47,799.26 remaining and that the Build Back a Better Borders would have £30,435.40 should the applications to be considered next on the agenda were approved.

12 BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND APPLICATIONS

The Locality Development Co-ordinator, Ms Jardine, presented the summary of applications to the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund:

(a) Hawick Youth Rugby

An application had been received for £5,553 to support travel costs for the under-15s team to participate in rugby matches within and out-with the Borders and for equipment including match balls, corner flags and a team first aid kit. The application was assessed as medium, noting that the under-15s team provided a new opportunity for young people in the Hawick area, helping to re-engage young people following the postponement of team activity caused by the pandemic.

DECISION

AGREED to award Hawick Youth Rugby the sum of £5,553, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) that the Club would actively promote that the annual could be waived, where deprivation was identified, to ensure that all U15s could participate in the sport; and**
- (ii) that Hawick Youth Rugby would continue to follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance.**

(b) Roxburgh & Berwickshire Citizens Advice Bureau

An application had been received for £4,395.60 to recruit a Citizens Advice Bureau Champion to work across the Teviot & Liddesdale area on a six-month contract to promote volunteering opportunities. It was noted that the Citizens Advice Bureau requested the Champion to cover their full geographic reach and were requesting that costs were shared with Berwickshire, Cheviot and Teviot & Liddesdale Build Back a Better Borders funds. The application was assessed as high as it met a number of fund criteria. The Area Partnership discussed the application noting that a higher bid for funding would have been welcome, noting the impact of the work of Roxburgh & Berwickshire Citizens Advice Bureau and that a further application would be welcomed.

DECISION

AGREED to award Roxburgh & Berwickshire CAB the sum of £4,395.60, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance; and**
- (ii) the rate of pay given to the Volunteer Co-ordinator must meet the National Living Wage.**

(c) Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park (on behalf of Twelve Towers of Rule Team)

An application had been received for £12,566 to commission Archaeology Scotland to undertake an exploratory excavation of the Bedrule Castle site, paying for staff time and volunteer expenses. It was noted that the application was assessed as medium, recognising the ambitions of the project to help regenerate the area by attracting new interest and tourists and also providing learning opportunities for those disadvantaged by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that the applicant still needed to undertake community engagement activity to ensure workshop spaces and open day spaces were filled and volunteers were recruited.

DECISION

AGREED to award the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park (on behalf of Twelve Towers of Rule Team) the sum of £12,566, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance;**

- (ii) the Group must continue to liaise with SBC's Archaeology Officer for the duration of this project and satisfy any Officer requirements, particularly before (towards a project design for the fieldwork), during and after (for the reporting) of any fieldwork;
- (iii) the applicant must discuss with SBC ideas for the new information boards and digital/audio-visual interpretation; and
- (iv) all staff costs must meet the National Living Wage.

(d) Hornshole Gateway Development Group

An application had been received for £15,000 to fund four Wildlife Watch day workshops for young people and for people living in the Burnfoot area and beyond. It was noted the application was assessed as medium noting that the applicant may need to show flexibility in how the project engaged participants.

DECISION

AGREED to award the Hornshole Gateway Development Group the sum of £15,000, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance;
- (ii) equipment would be available for use by other Groups; and
- (iii) all staff costs must meet the National Living Wage.

(e) Alchemy Film & Arts

An application had been received for £15,000 to fund a project engaging people in creative activities leading to a film resulting from sessions with over 60 young people to be shown at a public event, digitising local archive film footage, and funding equipment and facilities. It was noted that the application was assessed as medium with Alchemy Film & Arts demonstrating an ability to deliver activities on a range of platforms.

DECISION

AGREED to award Alchemy Film & Arts the sum of £15,000, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) the applicant must follow Scottish Government Covid19 guidance;
- (ii) equipment would be available for use by other Groups; and
- (iii) all staff costs must meet the National Living Wage.

13. COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUNDING

The Chair advised that the Community Ownership Fund was part of the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund and available for community groups looking to take over community assets which provided a community need and was at risk of being lost to the community. It was stressed that community groups needed to have a well-developed business plan in place, were able to evidence community need, and could match funding. The SBC Communities and Partnerships team was available to support groups interested in applying and information was available via a link in the additional information document circulated with the meeting agenda.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

14. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR NOTING

The Chair highlighted additional information included with the agenda including links to the Area Partnership's information pack and the Community Empowerment Act which were available on the Scottish Borders Council website. Members were reminded that if there were any suggestions for additions to contact the Locality Development Co-ordinator.

DECISION

NOTED.

15. NEXT AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETING

15.1 It was noted that the next Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership meeting would take place on 2 November 2021. The Chair asked that if anyone wished to propose any items for the agenda to contact one of the Councillors, the Locality Development Co-ordinator, or another member of the Communities & Partnerships Team.

15.2 The frequency of meetings was discussed and whether there should be more frequent meetings of the Area Partnership, perhaps some specifically to consider funding applications. It was noted that there may be challenges with capacity in holding additional meetings and this would be considered.

15.3 Ms Elborn asked that the availability of Scottish Borders Council resources to support community councils be added as an item on the agenda of the November meeting. This should include consideration of having SBC staff putting information from Community Councils on the SBC website.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the update.

(b) AGREED to include SBC resources for Community Councils on the agenda of the November meeting of the Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership.

16. ANY OTHER FORMAL BUSINESS

No matters were raised.

17. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The future meeting dates of the Berwickshire Area Partnership were noted as:

- 2 November 2021
- 25 January 2022
- 22 March 2022
- 21 June 2022

The meeting concluded at 8:25pm.