

## **Scottish Borders Community Council Network**

### **Meeting of SBCCN Core Group**

**Held SBC HQ, Newtown on 10th August 2011 at 7.00pm**

- 1 **Attendance:** Logan Inglis (LI, Chair), Robin Thomson (RT, Treasurer), Clare Malster (CM), Raymond du Bois (RduB), Lorraine Wilson (LW), Trevor Jackson (TJ), Graeme Donald (GD), John Elliot (JE), Diana Findlay (DF), Rob Brydon (RB), Jo Pawley (JP), Margaret Paterson (MP), Barbara Prater (BP), R Garden (RG, Chirnside)

**Apologies:** John Swanson (JS), June McGregor (JG)

GD highlighted that Ross McGinn (MG) had retired from community council life following many years, during this time he made a valuable contribution to the work of SBCCN. It was agreed that LI would send a letter of thanks to RMc.

- 2 **Introduction and welcome**                      Around the table.
- 3 **Approval of Minutes from 12<sup>th</sup> May**      Minutes accepted. Proposed RT, seconded DF.
- 4 **Chairman's report on meetings attended**
- 4.1 LI reported on the NHS Borders Public Governance Committee meeting which discussed the health and wellbeing of Borderers. Eric Baijal had identified a need for top-down training on Equality and Diversity and to achieve this NHS Borders should actively seek partnership with Community Councils as well as patient groups. The next meeting will be on 15<sup>th</sup> September at Hay Lodge in Peebles.
- 4.2 LI reported on Berwickshire CC Forum (BCCF) meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> May, which heard from Paul McLennan of East Lothian Council regarding the small business loan scheme. Interest-free start-up loans up to £10,000 or business expansion loans up to £25,000 are available. RduB agreed to write to Vicky Davidson to ask whether SBC would consider a similar scheme.  
**Action 10-8/1 RduB**
- 5 **Treasurer's report**
- 5.1 RT presented the report - balance at bank £1373.65
- 5.2 SBCCN annual accounts are to be submitted to SBC.
- 6 **'Local view' reporting and feedback**
- 6.1 SBC Local View allows on-line reporting of small issues such as broken streetlights or potholes in the roads. LI reported four issues but was not given any feedback, although three items were repaired within 48 hours. Following LI speaking to Cllr Cook, SBC's Craig Blackie has e-mailed all

SBC staff to ensure that Local View reports are all closed off by phone call or e-mail to the person raising the request.

- 6.2 Discussion of Local View at the BCCF highlighted that CCs do not routinely receive feedback. LI agreed to follow this up with SBC's Rob Dickson.

**Action 10-8/2 LI**

## **7 Area Committees consultation - update**

Meeting noted that SBC may intend to introduce area forums, where CCs and members of the public will be allowed to put questions. SBC has looked at other regions to see how local devolution is implemented but until the results are available there is nothing more to report. The working group is expected to meet with Rob Dickson in late August.

## **8 Newsletter**

SBCCN has not published a newsletter for a long time. CM called for those present to provide articles. LI has a few ideas and asked CM to contact all CCs and ask for contributions.

## **9 Community Council Seminar - progress and update**

- 9.1 GD noted Scottish Government minister John Swinney's response to the demise of the Association of Scottish Community Councils and wondered whether Mr Swinney could be invited to address the Seminar. He also wondered if any of the 'gang of three' attempting to start a new national body might attend the Seminar. CM agreed to make enquiries.

**Action 10-8/3 CM**

- 9.2 Meeting agreed to include a session on Resilience Plans. Ahead of a crisis such as severe weather or flooding, a resilience plan identifies specific factors for each CC area such as resources and people to contact.
- 9.3 Meeting agreed to include a session on Planning. LI would like a hands-on introduction to the new planning website - how to find forms, local planning applications and responses from other parties. He would also like guidance on responding to planning applications, such as valid grounds for objection.
- 9.4 Meeting agreed to remove Windfarm session from the Seminar. Instead, a separate training session will be arranged, possibly in November, where the subject of windfarm contributions and how these are allocated to CCs can be addressed in more depth.
- 9.5 CM hopes to issue the finalised agenda for the Seminar before the end of August.

## **10 Any Other Business**

- 10.1 JE noted that last posting times had been changed at Duns post boxes with out any apparent consultation on or proper notice of the changes. After contacting local MP and MSP, JE had been told that Royal Mail had made a mistake but he suggested all CCs check their post boxes.
- 10.2 CM reported that the CC pages on the SBC website are to be improved. For example, it will be easier to find your CC by entering a postcode and the page for each CC will include contact details, a map, details of the CCs own website and minutes of past meetings.
- 10.3 CM reported the forming of a new CC at Newcastleton.

## **11 Date of next meeting 17<sup>th</sup> November, same venue, same time**

LI thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.