



THIRD SECTOR DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

REPORT OF MEETINGS

Borderlands Place Programme Board

8th October 2021

THIRD SECTOR DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY SUMMARY

Working together to put our sector first
Dumfries and Galloway's Third Sector Interface

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KEY POINTS

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A PERSONAL RECORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF TSDG, NORMA AUSTIN HART. IT IS BASED ON MY OWN OBSERVATIONS. IT IS NOT A FORMAL MINUTE OF THE MEETING.

Key points

1. I have been invited to join one of the four programme boards which are being created to deliver the Borderlands (BL) plan. I have been invited to represent the third sector on this board.
2. The plan is based on four pillars: enabling infrastructure; improving places; supporting businesses; encouraging green growth.
3. The Place programme will take a place-based approach, based on 22 already identified towns in the five local authority areas which make up the Borderlands territory.
4. The membership of the programme comes from the five local authority areas: Northumberland, Cumbria, Carlisle, D&G and Scottish Borders. There are representatives also from Scottish and UK government and arms-length agencies like Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Historic England. There are two reps from the third sector; me and Community Action Northumberland.
5. The budget for this programme board is £50m of capital funding.
6. The cross-border deal is based on a series of commissioned projects and proposals; some are already committed such as the new Carlisle station, Chapelcross and Stranraer marina.
7. BL recognises that there is only one city in the BL area (Carlisle) with 100 towns ranging in from 1,00 to 46,000. These towns are experiencing decline in various ways.
8. There is a fundamental need to repurpose our towns.
9. The objectives of the Place programme are about encouraging more people to live, work and visit the area.
10. It will provide a focal point for investment for reinvigorating and revitalising our towns. The board will try to balance the interests of local, regional and national government and secure the buy-in of local communities.
11. It will be concerned with the delivery of projects but also how the programme can be replicated in other areas.

12. Towns have been prioritised after an assessment of need and opportunity. The existing quantitative data did not provide enough information so qualitative data was used as well. Some were assessed as not sufficiently in need.
13. In D&G the towns of Kirkconnel, Gretna, Stranraer, Whithorn and Wigtown were prioritised. In Scottish Borders the towns are Eyemouth; Galashiels, Hawick, Jedburgh. Further information about the prioritisation process is available from the local authorities.
14. Each town will require a place plan to be developed in partnership. The programme board can act as an adviser and guide as these plans emerge. BL wants to use the process to create an integrated approach and leave a legacy of strengthened institutional capacity once BL is finished. It will act as a catalyst to increase this capacity.
15. The plan should reflect the unique features of that town; it will build on assets and strengths.
16. There will be a 'mixed bag' of 'readiness' across the 22 towns. The towns will need time to develop and refine their plans. Increased partnership is a key outcome expected by government.
17. From each place plan there will be Borderlands Town Investment Plan (BTIP) which includes the BL eligible projects which would be funded by the BL growth deal. Other sources of funding for non-eligible projects will be pursued. Eligibility will focus on economic impact.
18. £50m is assigned to this programme. £30m from UK and £20m from Scottish Government. Most of the towns will £2.5m-£5m per town. Other funding will have to be levered in. Details of match funding compatibility have still to be ironed out, particularly in relation to UK Shared Prosperity Fund from 2022.
19. The recommendations of the Place Programme board will be decided by the Borderlands Partnership Board
20. The Place Programme also has an assurance role to monitor the process, acting as a critical friend, providing constructive challenge. It will co-produce the programme with BL.
21. The role of local authorities and other partners is to facilitate the co-design of the place plans.
22. There is still to be increased understanding about how the place plans and BTIPs will fit with the statutory place planning required by Scottish and UK governments from local authorities.
23. The next meeting will be December 2021. Mark Shucksmith from Newcastle University has been invited to be the programme board chair.

