



PORTFOLIO AREA: CROSS CUTTING

Date of Meeting: 25th November 2002

Public

Key Decision: No

Recorded in Forward Plan: No

Inside Policy Framework

Title: BORDER VISIONS
Report of: Head of Economic Development
Report reference: EDU.27/02

Summary:

The report reviews the 'Border Visions' conference held at Slayey Hall on October 3-4th and explains in outline how the 'tangible outcomes' sought by the conference are being identified and progressed.

Recommendations:

That the Council notes the approach being taken to promote the cross Border issues and agrees to allocate £5,000 in 2002/3 [from existing budgets] to a fund to be used to progress issues arising from the Conference.

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TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 25TH NOVEMBER 2002.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 The 'Border Visions' conference attracted some 130 delegates. Feed back from the evaluation forms has been analysed and shows high levels of satisfaction with the event, in terms of content, organisation, venue etc. A graph showing overall satisfaction rates is attached.
- 1.2 The conference budget is expected to maintain a small surplus when all expenses, compilation and printing of conference reports etc are taken into account.
- 1.3 A theme of the conference was the need to achieve 'tangible outcomes' that would be of practical benefit to people, businesses and communities on both sides of the Border.
- 1.4 These intentions were expressed in a memorandum of agreement that was tabled at the close of the conference and which is attached to this report. This asked the conference to '*agree to commit available resources to develop joint working proposals*' in relation to eight actions set out in the memorandum. Attention has now turned to how these can be progressed in a practical way.
- 1.5 The 'Border Visions' officer steering group will prepare proposals for a programme of work leading up to the next conference in Dumfries in 2003. Discussion will be needed on this programme and it is proposed that a meeting of political leaders and senior officers from the 'Border' local authorities is arranged for December or early January to move this agenda forward. Leadership from the local authorities and periodic monitoring of progress in between the conferences as a first step to the more active engagement of other agencies and groups will be critical to progress.
- 1.6 From Carlisle's perspective it would be helpful to have some discussion of those cross border issues that the Council may wish to pursue, either within the Border Visions framework or independently for more localised issues. Following the sequence in the Memorandum of Agreement these could include:
- *Business Development*; Kingmoor Park as an employment site serving both sides of the Border

- *Local Food*; promoting collaboration on marketing and promotion of the 'Borders' product through 'Made in Cumbria' and equivalent Scottish and Northumbrian organisations
- Reaching a 'Borders' view on the Common Agricultural Policy and the need for increased resources from Europe
- *Communications infrastructure*; supporting a common approach to strategic transport priorities and lobbying, e.g. east-west road links such as the A75/A69, encouraging co-operation between broadband initiatives. The well established West Coast Rail 250 lobby already has good representation from Scottish Councils.
- *Tourism*; promoting co-operation among the sub-regional tourist boards to support cross border tourism and the 'Borders' product in the context of national and regional tourism strategies and policies
- Promoting and facilitating co-operation and sharing of good practice [e.g. in community development, rural service delivery etc] by people and communities across the Border.

1.7 The Conference ended with a plea to find funds to support a programme of work. It was suggested from the platform that organisations should find £5,000 each and at least one [one North-east] made a commitment there and then to do so. It is suggested that the Council should in principle agree to contribute this amount to a to fund to be administered by the Steering Group. It is proposed that release of a contribution to the fund from the City Council will be at the discretion of the Economic Prosperity Portfolio holder. This will be subject to agreement on the work programme being reached at a meeting of the local authorities mentioned above. The contribution can be found from existing Economic Development budgets.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date.

Proposals originate from the Border Visions conference

2.2 Consultation proposed.

With other local authorities at a meeting to be arranged

3. STAFFING/RESOURCES COMMENTS

The work funded by the proposed budget will be commissioned from outside sources or delegated to appropriate organisations to deliver. The steering group does not have the capacity to develop and manage projects directly

4. CITY TREASURER'S COMMENTS

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

6. CORPORATE COMMENTS

Not sought

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

The fund would be held by one of the participating local authorities that would act as accountable body. Which authority has not been decided.

8. EQUALITY ISSUES

Not applicable

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council notes the approach being taken to promote the cross Border issues and agrees to allocate £5,000 in 2002/3 [from existing budgets] to a fund to be used to progress issues arising from the Conference.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To progress cross Border co-operation to the benefit of businesses and communities in the Borders area

BORDER VISIONS

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

As a wide ranging group of UK, Scottish and English public sector, business, and media leaders meeting together in Northumberland on 4th October 2002 we:

recognise the challenges and opportunities for Rural Renaissance in the Border area, building on the natural resources and potential of its people; and

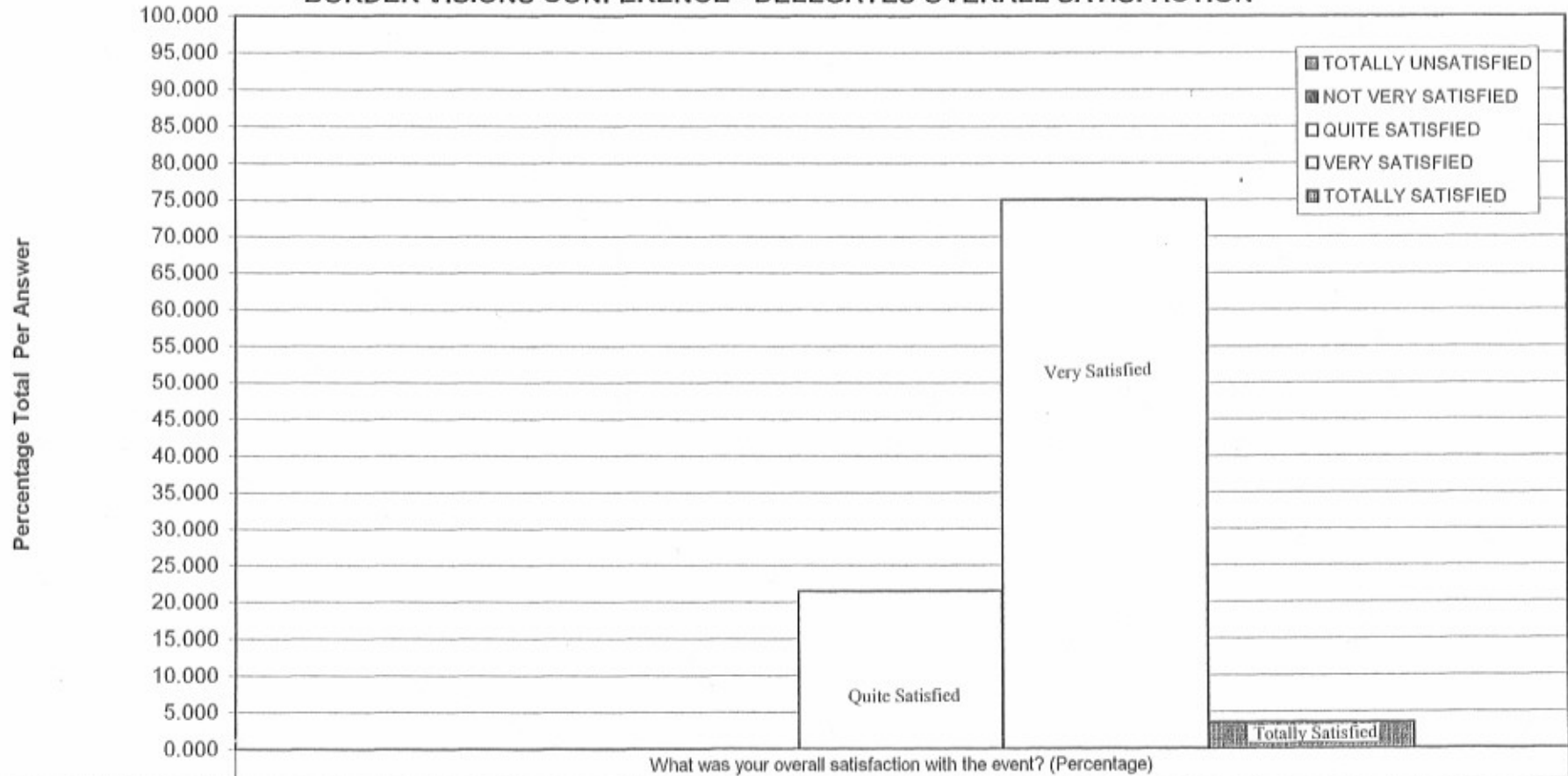
agree to commit available resources to develop joint-working proposals particularly in relation to:

- ❖ developing existing businesses and attracting new businesses in and to the Border area by working with national and regional bodies to enhance advice and support for growth and diversification;
- ❖ local food production and processing, through increased marketing and our organisations' purchasing policies;
- ❖ lobbying for increased resources from Europe and national Government sources, in particular through changes to the Common Agricultural Policy and EU Structural Funds;
- ❖ securing investment in our road and rail networks by increased campaigning and lobbying activities;
- ❖ promoting the Borders tourism product by targeting new visitors and marketing shared niche products;
- ❖ establishing Broadband links throughout the Border region by securing private/public investment in technology;
- ❖ capitalising on the Border area's natural resources and rural environment by becoming a recognised leader in the UK for these issues in terms of their use, education and research;
- ❖ ensuring that the people of the Border area have access to opportunities for training and skills development in the region.

These main activities will be actioned by agencies working with businesses and communities; lobbying on issues; and using the Border Visions web site to stimulate ideas and report on progress, and also by developing an innovative and creative attitude throughout the area by promoting entrepreneurs, young people and role-models.

Question 1

BORDER VISIONS CONFERENCE - DELEGATES OVERALL SATISFACTION



TOTALLY UNSATISFIED	0.000
NOT VERY SATISFIED	0.000
QUITE SATISFIED	21.429
VERY SATISFIED	75.000
TOTALLY SATISFIED	3.571

100% Total