

Borders Railway

Report by John Blair, Director Resources

1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines the arrangements by Council to recognise and to capitalise on the establishment of the Borders Railway which is scheduled to open for service in September 2015.

2 Background

- 2.1** Borders Railway Project will see four new stations built in Midlothian and three in the Scottish Borders. Trains will run every half hour at peak times and journey times between Tweedbank and Edinburgh will take less than one hour.

The new stations being constructed as part of the Borders Rail project are:

- Shawfair
- Eskbank
- Newtongrange
- Gorebridge
- Stow
- Galashiels
- Tweedbank

As the longest new domestic railway to be constructed in Britain for over 100 years the Borders Railway supports the Scottish Government's strategy of ensuring that transport connections are strengthened and made more reliable to maximise opportunities for employment, business, tourism and leisure.

Business and Tourism

It is envisaged that local tourism will see a boost as visitors from Edinburgh, and beyond, take advantage of the improved transport network. It is also expected that rail links will widen economic and housing opportunities, with the knock-on effect that companies in the local area will also see a boost in their levels of business.

Environment

The new line will significantly reduce residents' reliance on the car and in turn reduce carbon emissions. The railway will help reduce the

congestion on the main roads between the Borders and Edinburgh. It has also been estimated that the railway could cut, on average, six road accidents a year.

The opening of the railway will enhance the promotion of the Council's core priorities of:

- Economic Growth and Business Support
- Positive Destinations for Young People Leaving School

Following the creation of the railway, transport links to Edinburgh College sites at Eskbank, Milton Road and within Edinburgh City will be enhanced thus improving accessibility for students. Similarly the journey to Queen Margaret University at Musselburgh will be simplified and more accessible particularly for students from parts of Midlothian and Scottish Borders who can access the railway directly or via other public transport links. A number of young people attend Heriot Watt University at Galashiels and again the railway will open up further opportunities for this group.

A copy of the Transport and Tourism Strategy is included in appendix 01. Appendix 02 provides details of the Council's tourism assets.

2.2 Timeline

The following timeline provides Council with details of the key events relating to the re-establishment of a railway in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders.

Date	Event
1969	Waverley Line is closed.
1999	Scottish executive commissioned a Feasibility Study into the re-opening of the Waverley Line between Edinburgh and Carlisle.
2003	Order to provide authorisation to rebuild the railway. The Waverley Railway Bill was lodged with the Scottish Parliament.
2006	The Bill given Royal Assent and became the Waverley Railway (Scotland) Act 2006.
2008	Role of authorised Undertaker, in agreement with the Waverley Rail Partnership, was the responsibility of Transport Scotland. The Waverley Railway Project became known as the borders Railway Project.
2010	Advance works begin.
2011	Network Rail announced as partner to undertake construction of the railway.
May 2012	Demolition work at Beechbank Place, Galashiels begins.
July 2012	Eskbank footbridge removed.
October 2012	Mining remediation works underway. Transfer of Responsibility from Transport Scotland to Network Rail formalised and signed.
27 March 2013	Anniversary of the Beeching Report which led to the closure of the Waverley route. Fifty years later, the Borders Railway project will enable trains to run through Midlothian and the Borders.
April 2013	Main construction of the Borders Railway commences. First works involve excavations on the northern section of the line.

Date	Event
June 2013	With around 1.5 million tonnes of spoil to be excavated along the Borders Railway route, earthworks have been the main priority for the project during the relatively settled weather in spring and early summer.
September 2014	First Minister's announcement of date of opening.
October 2014	Trench laying begins, commencing at Northern Section of line
September 2015	Opening of Borders Railway with commencement of services between Edinburgh, Midlothian and Scottish Borders.

2.3 Key Dates

To recognise the significance and celebrate the opening of the railway line key events are being proposed over the inaugural weekend.

Friday 4 September 2015

- The Inaugural journey of the Borders Railway
- Entertaining and exclusive day involving a member of the Royal family and invited Guests
- Emphasis on the Sir Walter Scott connections in theming and entertainment
- Journey on an iconic steam train return on the 'wrapped' ScotRail train advertising the area
- Plaque unveiling at Tweedbank
- Reception at Abbotsford

Saturday 5 September 2015

- The Inaugural journey of the Borders Railway – THE GOLDEN TICKET DAY
- Entertaining and exclusive day involving members of the local community from along the Railway route
- An Inaugural Journey from each of the nine stations (non-stopping)
- VIP lists coordinated by each of the three local authorities

3 Marketing and Promotion Opportunities

3.1 Borders Railway Blue Print

The Borders railway will have 30 miles of new track operating between ten stations, seven of them new, connecting Edinburgh Waverley through Midlothian to the Scottish Borders. The £300m investment will provide a half hourly service during the week and an hourly one at weekends. Infrastructure works at and around the new stations connect passengers to towns and transport infrastructure and local services. This line provides real opportunities for tourism and other economic developments to communities throughout Midlothian and the Scottish Borders areas.

The Borders Railway provides a once in a generation and opportunity to better connect Midlothian and Scottish Borders residents, businesses and visitors fully into Scottish business, political, educational, cultural and artistic, leisure and sporting lives. The railway will provide visited to the

numerous attractions and activities which can be accessed along the route.

During the Edinburgh Festival venues in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders will become more accessible. It is envisaged that tourism will provide a stimulus to local communities and businesses, bus services and other connections to towns and visitor attractions will be developed to ensure that benefits are spread across Midlothian and Scottish Borders towns.

Borders Railway is a once in a generation event and it is necessary for the Council and all partners to consider the level of Marketing support to coincide not only with the launch of the railway but the ongoing promotion and marketing of Midlothian.

3.2 Borders Railway Opening Ceremony

As detailed in section 2.3, the railway will open with a VIP steam train journey and series of other celebratory events with publicity and marketing opportunities maximised. Train and event logistics and marketing plans are currently being established and will be progressed over the coming months.

3.3 Borders Railway Marketing

Plans are being worked up by Visit Scotland for integrated campaigns for the run up to railway opening and for the first year which will inspire visitors to take the train on days out to Midlothian and Scottish Borders attractions. Plans to promote and market the railway line and to 'wrap' a regular train service with Borders Railway marketing are being developed. Work is ongoing with all partners led by Visit Scotland to invest in the marketing and promotion of the line. Accordingly the Council will be advised of any financial requirements going forward.

3.4 Future Proofing the Line

There remains an aspiration to extend the railway line in the future, potentially and ultimately to Carlisle. This follows the old Waverley Line and it is intended to ensure that future infrastructure development which does not constrain this aspiration.

3.5 Tourism Assets and Potential all Along the Line

The tourism assets at and near the stations will be afforded a unique opportunity, so that tourism opportunity and marketing is considered coherently within the 'line experience'. Attractions within reasonable proximity to the line include: Dalkeith Country Park with its planned £3.5m upgrade investment: National Mining Museum Scotland at Newtongrange, a world class venue with 60,000 visitors per year and substantial further development potential scope. Butterfly World which is the world's longest running indoor butterfly house with hundreds of free flying exotic butterflies in an indoor tropical rainforest is also accessible. There are a range of heritage and leisure options near Gorebridge; within the Borders sector exists the potential for walking and other outdoor

activities out of Stow and retail and textile heritage attractions at Galashiels; and the Great Tapestry of Scotland home, Abbotsford and nearby Melrose at Tweedbank.

In addition to these major leisure and tourism facilities it is anticipated that visitors will utilise the leisure, retail and hospitality services available within both Council areas.

3.6 Safety Advisory Group

The Council has established a Safety Advisory Group chaired by the Head of Commercial Operations to oversee the opening events. The Midlothian Council Safety Advisory Group will liaise with all relevant partners regarding the opening weekend activities and plans. The remit of the Councils Safety Advisory Group is as follows:

- having health and safety arrangements in place to control risks;
- ensuring co-operation and proper co-ordination of activities;
- providing appropriate health and safety information;
- ensuring the competency of staff involved;
- to promote a consistent and co-ordinated, multi agency approach to event planning and management;
- to ensure appropriate contingency and emergency plans are in place,
- to encourage arrangements to minimise disruption to local communities; and
- to promote clarity of roles and responsibilities.

3.7 Infrastructure

Station Naming

In addition to the named stations the following initial station signage options are being proposed to advise customers of onward attractions and facilities.

Shawfair

‘alight here for bus link to Royal Infirmary’

Eskbank

‘alight here for Dalkeith Country Park’

‘alight here for bus link to Dalkeith’

Newtongrange

‘alight here for The National Mining Museum Scotland’

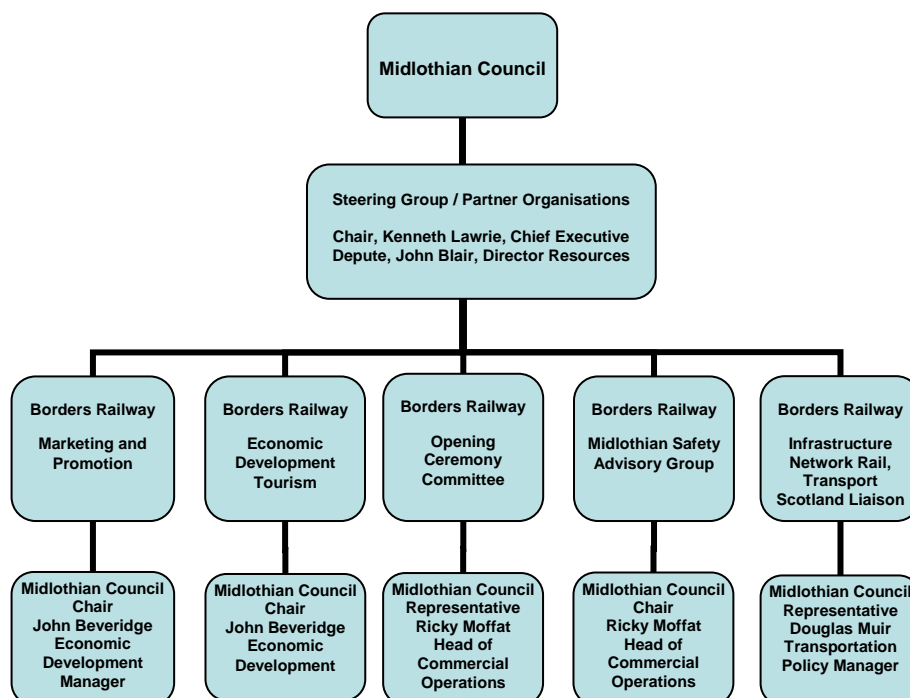
4.0 Midlothian Council Governance

4.1 Borders Railway Steering Group

It is intended to manage, organise and promote the Borders Railway events via the existing Council governance arrangements.

The Chief Executive intends to establish a steering group to ensure a co-ordinated and cohesive programme to coincide with the establishment of the Borders Railway. Sub groups have or will be established and these are shown in the diagram below. A similar approach was adopted for the Olympic Torch Relay in 2012, and in 2014 the Queen's Baton Relay and the Midfest event and it is intended to utilise the knowledge and expertise gained from these events adapted to co-ordinate and to ensure joined up work with partners.

The following diagram outlines the proposed governance arrangements.



5 Report Implications

5.1 Resource

Staff costs will be met from existing budgets through the reassigning of staff to specific duties. Any significant costs emerging will be subject to reports to Council by Director, Resources.

5.2 Risk

There are no direct risks associated with this report.

5.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☒ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

5.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

As set out in section 2.1 the establishment of the railway positively impacts the Council's key priorities of:

- Economic Growth and Business Support
- Positive Destinations

5.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The provision of a railway and the opening of the line will provide a unique opportunity to involve Midlothian residents and visitors and promote the Council area. The long term benefits arising from the establishment of the railway will positively benefit Midlothian residents, visitors and people who work in the area.

5.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Borders Railway will contribute indirectly to the well being of Midlothian residents and visitors.

5.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The proposed governance arrangements as set out in section 4.1 have been designed to involve Network Rail, Transport Scotland, Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Community Partners Midlothian residents and other key partners.

5.8 Ensuring Equalities

The steering group will ensure that all events are inclusive and available where possible accessible to all.

5.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

As set out in section 2.1, it is envisaged that the Borders Railway will improve the environment.

5.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

6 Recommendations

Council are invited to note:-

- a) Progress to date with arrangements for the establishment of Borders Railway and the associated opening events;
- b) The proposed working groups and governance arrangements; and
- c) The intention to provide regular updates on key events, including publicity.

Date: 23 October 2014

Report Contact:

John Blair Tel No: 0131 271 3102

john.blair@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Scottish Borders: Transport and Tourism Strategy

Appendix 2: Midlothian – Tourism Assets: Potential Along the Line

Appendix 3: Map of Borders Railway

Declaration Box

Instructions: This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.

Title of Report: Borders Railway

Meeting Presented to: Midlothian Council

Author of Report: John Blair, Director Resources

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

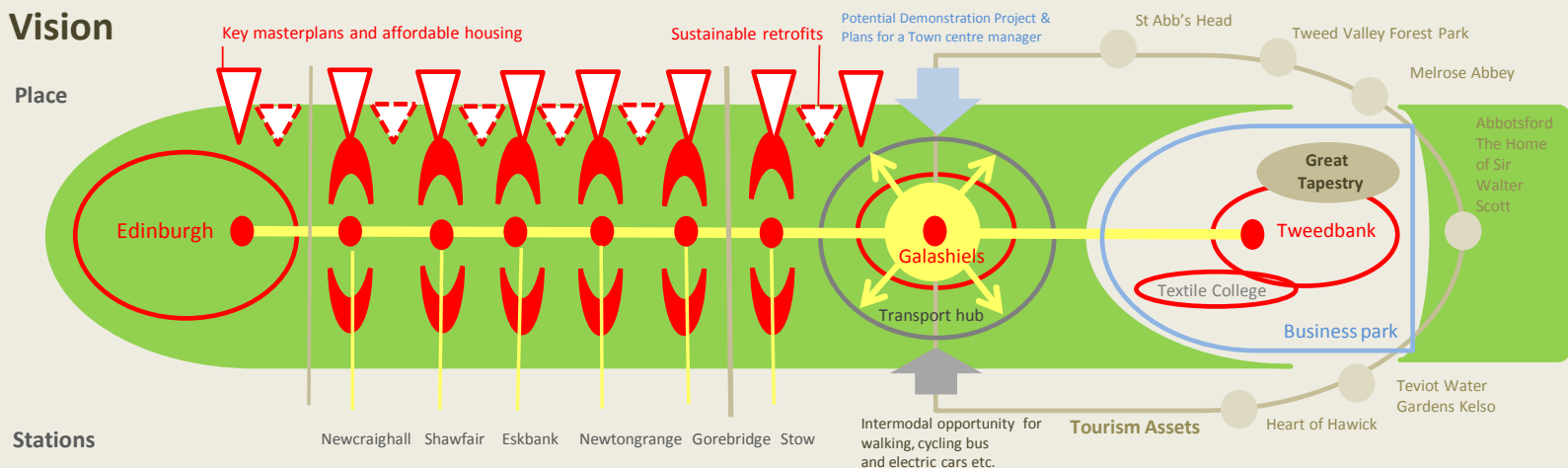
- ☐ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Integrated Service Support.*
- ☐ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☐ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☐ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

For Cabinet reports, please advise the Council Secretariat if the report has an education interest. This will allow the report to be located on the Cabinet agenda among the items in which the Religious Representatives are entitled to participate.

Likewise, please advise the Council Secretariat if any report for Midlothian Council has an education interest. The Religious Representatives are currently entitled to attend meetings of the Council in a non-voting observer capacity, but with the right to speak (but not vote) on any education matter under consideration, subject always to observing the authority of the Chair.

Scottish Borders: Transport and Tourism Strategy

Vision



Tourism	Edinburgh & the Lothians	Midlothian	Note:	Borders	Note:
Top 5 attractions & visitor no's.	National Museum of Scotland 1,768,090 Edinburgh Castle 1,420,027 St Giles Cathedral 940,530 Scottish National Gallery 933,296 Edinburgh Zoo 760,897	Vogrie Country Park, Gorebridge 170,000 Rosslyn Chapel 148,973 Gore Glen Woodland Park, Newtongrange 100,000 Edinburgh Butterfly & Insect World, Lasswade 82,314 National Mining Museum, Newtongrange 61,766	Path required to make the Mining Museum more accessible	Tweed Valley Forest Park 361,000 Heart of Hawick 155,933 Teviot Water Gardens Kelso 155,737 Melrose Abbey 47,010 St Abb's Head 46,815	Abbotsford is not, yet, a top 5 attraction but could be a key influence for a Charter train package.
Additional Tourist Themes	Retail Parks & Gardens Nature based tourism Food & drink Tours Attractions Events & festivals Cycling Walking	Parks & Gardens Historic Houses Nature based tourism Cycling Walking Attractions & Activity (esp. Snowsports) Events & festivals		Parks & Gardens Golfing Historic Houses & Castle Nature based tourism Cycling Walking Attractions Events & Festivals Food & drink	

Approach



Time line

Short term 2014-15	Medium term 2015-20	Long term 2020-25	10 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch and pilot Steam Train Experience Joint commitment to house the Tapestry at Tweedbank Business Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop tourist destinations on/around the rail link Invest and expand the Business park Pilot Galashiels Town centre demonstration project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop housing developments (with affordable provision) Nurture & promote a centre of skills & learning via Heriot Watt Improve further train routes and connectivity i.e. Carlisle 	

PLACE

MIDLOTHIAN - TOURISM ASSETS: POTENTIAL ALONG THE LINE

The re-opening of the Borders railway is a significant railway scheme in the context of passenger travel in the Edinburgh City Region and it is anticipated that the re-opening of the line will act as a catalyst for economic development and regeneration throughout the Midlothian railway corridor. This includes the communities of Dalkeith / Woodburn, Newtongrange and Mayfield / Easthouses and Gorebridge – former coalfield communities which are still suffering from the effects of industrial decline in recent decades. These areas have been designated “priority areas” for investment and attention by the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership. It is anticipated that these areas will benefit from the new employment and other opportunities (e.g. education and training) brought about by the new railway line.

The Borders railway will support a wide range of national, strategic and local objectives. At the local level these include:

- Promotion of a more sustainable mode of transport compared to the private car.
- Improvement in accessibility to employment opportunities for all sections of the Midlothian community, thus supporting social inclusion objectives.
- Improvement of access to labour markets and product markets for existing businesses throughout the Edinburgh City Region and beyond.
- Provision of infrastructure that supports major land releases.
- Support to urban and rural regeneration.

From a Midlothian perspective, the Borders railway forms an integral part of local strategies including:

- Ambitious Midlothian – the Midlothian Economic Recovery Plan.
- Midlothian Tourism Action Plan 2013/15.
- Midlothian Local Development Plan.
- Single Midlothian Plan.
- Emerging Midlothian cycling strategy.

The potential for tourism, economic development and regeneration in Midlothian afforded through the development of the Borders railway is tremendous. Midlothian is likely to become increasingly attractive as a location for business and for development i.e. the new railway line can open up areas and transform their attractiveness for residential and commercial development.

This briefing paper focuses in and around the four Midlothian stations – Shawfair, Eskbank, Newtongrange and Gorebridge. However, it is anticipated that the socio-economic benefits of the railway will ripple out throughout Midlothian to, for example, five star rated visitor attractions such as the world famous Rosslyn Chapel and National Mining Museum Scotland.

- **Shawfair**

The Shawfair area was identified in 1994 as a location for substantial housing and economic growth. Shawfair station will support a large community in the area and will eventually be at the heart of the new town centre planned for the south east of Edinburgh. Along with the neighbouring communities of Danderhall, Newton and Millerhill, the station will serve over 4000 new homes as part of a £ 200 million development plan recently unveiled by developers Buccleuch Property and house builders Mactaggart and Mickel working together as Shawfair LLP. The new development will also see the construction of two primary schools and a secondary school along with an estimated one million sq.ft. of commercial and retail space available for businesses. The new station will have bus links and easy access to Midlothian's extensive path and cycle network. The station will be within easy reach of Dalkeith Country Park, where exciting plans have recently been unveiled for a £3.5 million redevelopment of the Park over a two year period and beyond. The investment will see a series of upgrades, refurbishments and introduction of new facilities all designed to enhance and maximise the tourist offering. In addition, by proactively utilising various existing and planned transport links, there is the potential to "ripple out" the economic benefits to neighbouring town centres such as Dalkeith and to tourism businesses / attractions in the Lasswade /Melville area of Midlothian.

- **Eskbank**

Located close to the communities of Bonnyrigg and Dalkeith, the new Eskbank station will provide ready access to the Midlothian Community Hospital and will also offer a ten minute rail link between Edinburgh College (Midlothian Campus - Hardengreen) and the Edinburgh College campus at Brunstane.

- **Newtongrange**

This station is located close to the National Mining Museum Scotland, a five star visitor attraction based at the former Lady Victoria Colliery, Newtongrange. The Colliery was opened in 1895 as Scotland's first super pit and ceased production in 1981. It now serves as an example of one of the best preserved Victorian Collieries in Europe. The four acre site in Newtongrange effectively captures the developments in mining over generations. National Mining Museum Scotland staff have been working on a range of ticketing deals, events, exhibitions, displays and promotions to maximise the economic benefits of the railway line. In addition, the Newtongrange station is likely to be adopted by the Museum. Close partnership working has also been undertaken with the Borders Community Rail Partnership and the Midlothian Tourism Forum. Newtongrange station will also be located close to the communities of Mayfield / Easthouses. There will be

increased employment, educational and other opportunities for current resident populations ie those living within the catchment area of the new station will have access to a greater number and quality of employment opportunities.

- **Gorebridge**

Located at the previous station site, the new Gorebridge station will be close to Gorebridge town centre and proposed major new housing developments in the area over the coming years. It is anticipated that the railway line will inject a new lease of life into an area that has not been served by a mainline railway for over forty years. There are major potential socio-economic benefits for Gorebridge and its environs following completion of the line. In addition to potential spin off benefits for Gorebridge town centre businesses, there are several tourist / visitor attractions in the area that could benefit from increased visitor numbers. These include:

- Crichton Castle.
- Gore Glen Woodland Park.
- Vogrie Country Park.
- Borthwick castle (currently under refurbishment).
- Arniston House.

Plans are also in place to create 700 homes, community facilities and a new primary school at Redheugh, near Gorebridge. The new Redheugh settlement was identified in the current Midlothian Local Plan and, in addition to the housing element, has capacity for a 7 hectare employment site.

Map of Borders Railway

