



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles & District

07 February 2024

Jenni Craig
Director – Resilient Communities
Scottish Borders Council
Council HQ
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA

cc **Mr. David Robertson CEO**
cc **Elected Tweeddale Councillors**

Dear Ms. Craig

Draft Community Councils Best Practice Guidance.
Ref: JC/CM/FC – 13 February 2024

Thank you for your letter of the 14 February. We are pleased to see that our analysis was correct, and we have no reservations in accepting your apologies for the errors made.

We are also pleased to note that there is no intention of stopping Honoraria payments to our secretary, nor we would hope any other community council officer, except perhaps the Chair, who goes beyond what could be reasonably expected of them. A grant of £1,365 per annum, as was, hardly allows any level of corruption whatsoever and most of us absorb our own expenses.

Our community council has formally commented back to the working group. We wrote to your CEO because we were concerned about the importance of the specific items that we raised. These issues were raised by our treasurer, a chartered accountant, and should not be taken lightly. Indeed, your original reply demonstrates that we were correct to raise them.

We are also pleased to note that there is a review of the wider support that may be available to community councils. In this respect, we believe that it is important to regenerate the SBCCN in a way that encourages a true buy in from



the 69 community councils in the Borders. In my view, this may only be achieved through the Area Partnerships. However, although improved, the Area Partnerships themselves are still too weak and need to be strengthened further. We know that the East Lothian model is under consideration, and I would certainly support this. Strong Area Partnerships can feed an elected representative into the SBCCN in a manageable form, where the independent community councils just seriously overload the management and coordination.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Maudsley
Chairman