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More than 240 sign up for first Borderlands conference as key themes for day revealed

More than 240 people, including business representatives, public sector organisations and individuals, have signed up for the first Borderlands conference taking place this month.

Organisers are delighted with the take up for the inaugural event on Monday 18 June at Dumfries' Easterbrook Hall - and urged those who haven't yet confirmed their attendance not to miss out.

The proposed Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is a unique partnership that brings together the five cross-border local authorities to promote the economic growth and competitiveness of the area that straddles the Scotland-England border.

The conference will provide the opportunity for the Borderlands Partnership to meet with stakeholders and local and national politicians at a vital time for the project. A team from both sides of the Border is building a case to present to both the UK and Scottish governments later this year.

The conference will update interested parties, from all sectors, on proposals - and hear their aspirations and ambitions for the deal.

There will be Ministerial addresses from David Mundell MP, Secretary of State for Scotland and Keith Brown, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work.

A Borderlands Partnership spokesperson said: "The possibilities raised by a Borderlands deal are being recognised by businesses and individuals from all the areas that would stand to benefit.

"There's a real feeling of momentum and we want to engage with as wide a cross-section of all those communities as possible. That way we can ensure that when proposals go forward for consideration they are representative of the views of those who live and work in the Borderlands.

"The conference breakout sessions will be a real opportunity for people to help shape the bid. That support will help strengthen our case."

There's still time for people to register to attend the conference. Places can be booked via www.borderlandsgrowth.com/get-involved

The breakout sessions will cover Borderlands' key themes: Digital; Energy; Destination Borderlands; Rural Productivity; Business Growth; Transport; Innovation and Skills and Quality of Place.



The partnership of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council, has released the following details of where they would welcome input and feedback:

- **Digital** - The best deployment of infrastructure to boost productivity and ensuring promotion of digital skills to allow business and communities to maximise benefits.
- **Energy** - Options to develop a whole system approach to the generation and use of energy across the significant geography of the 9,000 sq miles of the Borderlands region.
- **Destination Borderlands** - Maximising the appeal of the Borderlands as a place to visit and live.
- **Rural Productivity** - Equipping the area to play its full part in shaping and profiting from the creation of new economic growth post-Brexit.
- **Business Growth** - How to improve the business infrastructure to spur growth that is typically only half of that in comparative areas.
- **Transport** - From road to rail and with improving air and sea port capabilities, what are the area's transport priorities?
- **Innovation and Skills** - Better linking our businesses with further and higher education institutions to provide the talent and skills required to innovate and diversify.
- **Quality of Place** - As consumer tastes change in a digital age, how do we develop our network of towns so they become great places of tomorrow?

Borderlands partners are meeting key stakeholders on an ongoing basis. If you would like to discuss opportunities, ideas and possible working relationships, or would just like more information, visit the partnership website www.Borderlandsgrowth.com or email info@borderlandsgrowth.com

Ends

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