

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the HAWICK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in the Town Hall, Hawick on
Wednesday, 7 February 2018 at 5.30 pm

Present:- Councillors: G Turnbull (Chairman), S Marshall, W McAteer, C Ramage, N Richards and Mrs A Knight (Burnfoot)

Apologies Councillor D Paterson

In Attendance:- Senior Architectural Technologist (D Baptie), Estates Manager (N Hastie), Managing Solicitor (R Kirk), Senior Finance Officer (J Yallop), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull)

Members of the Public 23

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed Members, Officers and members of the community to the meeting. He advised that prior to the meeting there had been an opportunity to view design drawings for the proposed new accommodation at Hawick Moor, and to discuss the proposals with the Architectural Technologist and Estates Manager. He also advised that previously submitted comments from the earlier consultation, held on 16 January 2018, would also be considered at the meeting.

DECISION NOTED.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor McAteer declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct. Councillor McAteer did not leave the meeting but took no further part in the discussion.

2. PROPOSED NEW ACCOMMODATION AT HAWICK MOOR RACECOURSE

2.1 The Chairman invited the Common Riding Committee (CRC) to give their proposals for the building, final costings and the suggested timeline for the development. A member of the CRC advised that the building had been built in 1957 and was no longer fit for purpose. The CRC had decided to gift £125k as a contribution, to upgrade the facilities. The proposal was to build: new toilets, changing, weigh-in, stewards and committee accommodation; to improve the facilities and replace some of the existing buildings.

2.2 In response to questions the Sub-Committee advised that £125k from the CRC would be gifted to SBC and that the CRC had made a formal request for match funding in February 2017. The building would continue to be maintained by the Common Good and be used for Common Riding and other events. Trial pit excavation works had been undertaken to ascertain ground conditions for the proposed building. The Condition Survey had shown that the buildings would require a substantial amount of maintenance over the next five years and most were approaching the end of their design life. The existing tenant would need to be consulted on any proposals. The proposal had been discussed by the CRC and Scottish Borders Council (SBC). The Architectural Technologist had been asked by a working group, comprising members of the CRC and the Hawick Common Good Sub-Committee, to submit plans for the consideration of the Council's Planning Committee, which had been approved.

2.3 During the ensuing discussion a number of points were raised including:-

- Concern at the amount of money being spent on the building.
- Electricity should be supplied to the site.
- A facility similar to Springwood Park, Kelso, should be considered which would allow for a range of events to be hosted.
- No risk assessment had been carried out.
- Was the proposal value for money?
- Other users of the building had not been consulted for their views.

2.4 The Sub-Committee commended the CRC for their proposals and their funding contribution. However, it appeared that not all the CRC supported the proposals. It was therefore agreed to request that the CRC withdraw their application for match funding, revisit the proposals, discuss further with their members and other users of the facility. To then bring back a proposal, with full costings, to the Sub-Committee for consideration when a consensus on the development had been agreed.

**DECISION
AGREED**

(a) To request that the Common Riding Committee withdraw their current application for match funding and thereafter discuss their proposals further with their members and other users of the facility; and

(b) To request that the Common Riding Committee bring back to the Sub-Committee a proposal with full costings for further consideration when a consensus on the development had been agreed.

3. URGENT ITEM

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraphs should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to make an early decision.

4. GEORGE INGLIS PAINTING

There had been circulated copies of a briefing note by Councillor McAteer. The briefing note explained that a painting of 'old' Hawick Town Hall, by known local artist, George Inglis, had been offered to Hawick Common Good. The painting while in an old and dirty condition, with a badly damaged frame, was believed to be of historic significance. Live Borders' Museum Curator had arranged for the painting to be examined and had been advised that the painting could be cleaned and reframed at an approximate cost of £400.00 The Sub-Committee were asked if they wished to proceed with the restoration of the painting, refuse the offer of the painting, or offer the painting to Hawick Museum. The Managing Solicitor advised that the acquisition of any additional assets by the Council, and held on behalf of the Common Good, would require the approval of Live Borders and the painting would require to be held for the benefit of the people of the former burgh of Hawick. In addition, when the Community Empowerment Act came into force if, for any reason, a decision was made to dispose of the painting, then this could not be done without consulting with members of the community.

**DECISION
AGREED**

(a) To recommend to Live Borders that they accept the kind gift of the George Inglis painting on behalf of Hawick Common Good;

(b) Hawick Common Good to commission the restoration of the painting and replacement of the frame, to a maximum value of £400.00; and

- (c) **That the painting be added to the list of Hawick Common Good Moveable Assets and displayed in a suitable, to be agreed, location for the benefit of the people of the former burgh of Hawick.**

The meeting concluded at 6.40 pm.