
LEASE OF OLD CORN EXCHANGE, HIGH STREET, PEBBLES

Report by Chief Executive

PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND

6th March 2013

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report informs the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee of the outcome of the recent advertising of the lease for the Old Corn Exchange and seek their views on future uses and proposals for the property.**
- 1.2 The front shop of the Old Corn Exchange has been vacant since Central Baguette moved out in November 2012. The rear of the property is still occupied by Ish'uze Youth Action on a temporary basis until May 2013.
- 1.3 The whole property was advertised for let in January 2013 however no offers were received.
- 1.4 The sub-division of the premises into two self contained units will probably result in greater demand for the property.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee:**
 - (a) notes the lack of interest in a lease of the whole of the Old Corn Exchange, and**
 - (b) agrees to investigate possible sub-division, renovation and improvement works to the property by an architect.**

3 BACKGROUND & PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The lease of the Old Corn Exchange was advertised in January 2013 at a rent of £24,000.
- 3.2 Approximately 20 sets of Particulars of Let were sent to interested parties however only one viewing was requested.
- 3.3 At the closing date of 20th February 2013 no offers were received.
- 3.4 Potential tenants were reluctant to commit to a lease of the whole property at an asking annual rent of £24,000. Concern was also expressed at the complication of having a temporary sub-tenant in the rear of the property.
- 3.5 Some potential tenants indicated that they would be interested in the front shop only at a rental level appropriate for the front shop only.
- 3.6 In 2006 Scottish Borders Council architects section and Ish'uze Youth Action investigated the possibility of sub-dividing the premises to create two separate self contained properties, a front shop onto the High Street and a commercial unit to the rear accessed off School Brae. The splitting of services and disruption to the occupiers were problematic and no works were carried out. The estimated cost at that time was between £100,000 and £150,000, although this was for considerable more work than a basic splitting of the property.
- 3.7 Architects fees relating to submitting planning and building standards applications in respect of the sub-division, renovation and improvements of the premises have been estimated at £2,000.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- (a) The costs of renovation and sub-dividing the premises require to be assessed by an architect.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) There is a risk that the empty front shop will deteriorate and potentially require substantial repairs and maintenance expenditure.

4.3 Equalities

There are no adverse equality implications arising from this report.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are potential effects on the sustainability of the building if it is left vacant for a long time.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions.

4.6 **Rural Proofing**

None.

4.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, Clerk to the Council, Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Head of Audit & Risk have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the report.

Approved by

Chief Executive

Signature

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Author

Name	Designation and Contact Number
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Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: 26th November 2012

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