
Millennium Fountain

Report by Head of Corporate Governance

Peebles Common Good Fund Sub Committee

8 May 2013

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report is brought to the Sub Committee at their request to allow them to consider matters relating to the Common Good Fund Asset known as the Millennium Fountain which is presently sited on the public footpath outside the Eastgate Theatre, Peebles.**
- 1.2 The fountain was gifted to the Common Good Fund by the Rotary Club of Peebles to mark the Millennium. The Club had raised the funds from public donations and had commissioned the Art Work from Beltane Studios, Peebles. It was originally designed to be sited within a building with water and power supplies to allow running water to be a feature of the work.
- 1.3 There have been a number of maintenance issues with the fountain and there is no water flow at present. The Common Good have sought support for these costs from the Rotary but they declined. They then requested the Local Authority to take the fountain on as a general asset but were advised that it not wish to take this on given the maintenance liability. It is now necessary for the Sub Committee to consider if they wish to authorise the reinstatement of the water flow by purchasing and installing a new water pump and have other works carried out at the cost of the fund of £650. The fountain does attract donations from the public of around £50 per annum which requires to be collected by council staff and processed appropriately.

2 CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Sub Committee consider what actions they wish to take if any in relation to the Millennium Fountain.**

3 THE MILLENNIUM FOUNTAIN

- 3.1 The Rotary Club of Peebles set up a subscription to raise funds for a suitable memorial to the Millennium in 2000. With the funds raised they commissioned a fountain of leaping salmon in bronze from the local studio, Beltane. The work was then gifted to the Common Good Fund. The Council, on behalf of the Fund, assisted in locating the sculpture in 2006 on the public footpath outside the Eastgate Theatre, Peebles which had opened following conversion works.
- 3.2 Whilst at first the electric pump ensured that the water flowed in the fountain as intended by the artist who designed the art work, this has failed to work and now the water lies in the well of the fountain. At their meeting on 10 March 2011 the then Peebles Common Good Fund Working Group, on hearing that the repair costs were in the region of £500, agreed to approach the Rotary Club to see if they would fund the repairs as the Fund had no direct budget for such repairs to this item. The Club intimated that they were not in a position to fund these repair costs.
- 3.3 At their meeting on 9 June 2011 the Working Group further considered the Fountain, and resolved to invite the Council as local authority to take over the structure, but it declined.
- 3.4 Following discussion, a proposal was made to ask that the Fountain be placed in the sensory garden to be created at the new housing development at Dovecot Road, Peebles notwithstanding there was a view that to place the Fountain within these private grounds would restrict public enjoyment. However, at the meeting on 8 September 2011 it was reported that the landlord, Eildon Housing Association declined the proposal. It was then agreed that the siting remained unchanged and there be no water running through the Fountain meantime.
- 3.5 The Chairman has had discussions with the Council's property officer for the Peebles area about the poor state of the Fountain and it was agreed that the matter be considered at a future meeting. The risk of further damage to pumps remains given the outside siting of the Fountain.
- 3.6 The Fountain does attract donations of around £50 per annum from the public by way of coins thrown in. The Council's staff collects this regularly on behalf of the Common Good and the funds are banked and credited to the Fund.
- 3.7 Unrelated to the pump/power supply, costs of £306 have already been expended by the Fund in relation to works to the Fountain (included in the Finance Outturn report 2011/12 considered by the Working Group on 9 August 2012).
- 3.8 The proposed cost of reinstatement of the power supply to the Fountain is £620. These works include the supply and fitting of a larger two piece fibreglass tank and also fitting drainage outlets to make drainage and cleaning easier. Further stone cleaning has already been carried out this financial year at a cost of £30.
- 3.9 The electricity costs are met at present by the Eastgate Theatre as there is no separate supply.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

If the Sub Committee wish to have the pump repaired the costs will require

to come from the Fund's property maintenance budget. It is not known how often such repairs will be required.

4.2 **Risk and Mitigations**

If the Sub Committee take no steps to repair the pump the Fountain will not operate as the artist intended when he created the work. There is a risk of adverse publicity in relation to this position which is countered by the decision not to repair, saving a potential repeated cost to the Fund in respect of an Asset which they were gifted by the Rotary Club.

4.3 **Equalities**

There are no equalities implications in considering this matter

4.4 **Acting Sustainably**

There are no economic, social or environmental effects of doing or not doing what is proposed.

4.5 **Carbon Management**

There is no impact on the Council's carbon emissions of doing or not doing what is proposed and evaluate any impact and/or mitigation efforts.

4.6 **Rural Proofing**

This is not a policy matter.

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

There are no changes required to the Council's Schemes of Administration or Delegation.

5 **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Head of Corporate Governance, the Head of Audit and Risk, the Head of Strategic Policy, the Clerk to the Council have been consulted. Any comments received will be incorporated in the final report.

Approved by

Head of Corporate Governance

Signature

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