

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of MEETING of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in the Chamber, Memorial Hall, Leithen
Road, Innerleithen on Wednesday, 6 March
2013 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald (Chairman), C. Bhatia, S. Bell, N. Buckingham
(from para 2(c)), G. Garvie, G. Logan.
Apology:- Mrs A. Kubie, Royal Burgh of Peebles and District Community Council.
In Attendance:- Legal and Licensing Services Manager, Senior Financial Analyst (A.
Mitchell), Estates Manager (N. Hastie), Committee and Elections
Officer (K. Mason).

Members of the Public:- 1.

MINUTE

1. The Minute of Meeting of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee of 16 January 2013 had been circulated.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Archibald and Bell declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Chamber during the discussion. Councillor Logan took the Chair.

APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

2. (a) Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre
The Senior Financial Analyst tabled a paper at the meeting relating to donations and contributions paid and approved as at 6 March 2013. He explained that the sum of £12,400 was still available in the current financial year's budget for donations.
- (b) There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from the Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre in the sum of £5,000 towards 50% of the cost of replacing the Eastgate's existing IT systems in order to provide a suite of fit-for-purpose work stations with greater capacity and resilience together with a new integrated box office system offering online sales as well as phone and face to face bookings. Although supportive of the application, Members expressed concerns at the sustainability overall of the Theatre and were encouraged to note that the Board were working towards that. Members noted that the sum of £3,000 had already been secured and plans were in hand to raise the remaining £2,224. Members suggested it might be interesting to have a presentation on their future from the Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre at a future Tweeddale Area Forum.

**DECISION
AGREED**

- (i) to grant the sum of £5,000 to the Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre on receipt of confirmation that the remainder of the funding in the sum of £2,224 had been secured together with the sum of £3,000; and

- (ii) **that Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre be asked to give a presentation on their future plans to a future meeting of the Tweeddale Area Forum.**

MEMBERS

Councillors Archibald and Bell returned to the meeting. Councillor Archibald resumed the Chair.

- (c) Scottish Borders Council Museums and Galleries Service (Tweeddale Museum)
There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from the Scottish Borders Council Museum and Galleries Service (Tweeddale Museum) in the sum of £7,000 in respect of an application to the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund to finance work necessary to ready a collection of paintings (most of which were acquired between 1860 and 1940) for display and to carry out research and education work based on the collection. In order to take this forward, robust estimates for the cost of the project were required and following enquiries to appropriate qualified conservators quotations had been provided for the work. Members advised that at a recent meeting of the Chambers Institution Trust (CIT) earlier in the year the question of ownership of the paintings were raised and the CIT considered that the paintings might belong to them with the exception of one which might be in private ownership. The Legal and Licensing Services Manager advised that the paintings were recorded as Council assets and the CIT would need to make a claim for them.

DECISION

AGREED to continue consideration of the application subject to clarification of the ownership of the paintings.

MEMBER

Councillor Buckingham joined the meeting during discussion of the following item.

LEASE OF OLD CORN EXCHANGE, HIGH STREET, PEEBLES

3. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 16 January 2013 there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive advising of the outcome of the recent advertising of the lease for the Old Corn Exchange and seeking views on future uses and proposals for the property. The front shop of the Old Corn Exchange had been vacant since Central Baguette moved out in November 2012. The rear of the property was still occupied by Ish'uze Youth Action on a temporary basis until May 2013. The whole property was advertised for let in January 2013 however no offers had been received. The sub-division of the premises into two self contained units would probably result in greater demand for the property. There was tabled at the meeting copies of correspondence from Mr Ian Jenkins, Chairman of Tweed Youth Action Group. Mr Jenkins was present at the meeting and advised it would be good if the Sub-Committee felt able to give Tweed Youth Action Group a kind of "preferred bidder" status for the back premises and that Council Officers be authorised to explore with the Group ways of allowing the Group to continue their work in the Community, within the building which they had occupied for over 10 years and which had been improved by them in terms of accommodation, appearance and accessibility. Mr Jenkins advised that funders needed to know the length of lease, there were no benefits if the lease was staggered over 6 months, and he asked for preliminary discussions to be held. Members were mindful that the premises might be divided at a significantly reduced cost to that which had been previously reported.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the lack of interest in a lease of the whole of the old Corn Exchange.**
- (b) **AGREED:-**
- (i) **to investigate possible sub-division, renovation and improvement works to the property by an architect; and**

- (ii) **that informal discussions take place with Tweed Youth Action Group in respect of their “preferred bidder” status for the back premises.**

URGENT BUSINESS

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

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Logan declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Chamber during the discussion.

PEEBLES BURGH SILVER BAND

5. With reference to paragraph 4 of the meeting of 9 February 2012, the Legal and Licensing Services Manager reminded Members that the Working Group had agreed to grant a lease to Peebles Silver Band of the rooms referred to as the Band Hall with a market level rent of £2,250 per annum. The Silver Band indicated that they were unable to meet level of rent and sought some comfort that the Landlords would through grants ensure that they were supported to ensure that the only needed to find £600 per annum. Some Members of the Sub-Committee expressed concerns about committing grants years in advance. The Legal and Licensing Services advised that the Sub-Committee needed to come to a decision.

DECISION

AGREED to award Peebles Burgh Silver Band a three year lease plus a three year grant funded package of 80% of the lease.

MEMBER

Councillor Logan returned to the meeting.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 8 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

Minute

1. The Working Group noted the private section of the Minute of Meeting of 16 January 2013.
2. **Land Sale at Neidpath Grazing Field**
With reference to paragraph 2 of the private section of the Minute of 16 January 2013, the Estates Manager briefed the Working Group on the up-to-date position regarding the land sale at Neidpath Grazing Field.
3. **Rent Review for Peebles Golf Course**
With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of 10 March 2011, the Sub-Committee agreed on the annual rent for Peebles Golf Club for the period 2012 to 2017.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 p.m.