

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of MEETING of the PEEBLES COMMON
GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE held in the
Members' Room, Council Offices, Rosetta Road,
Peebles on 3 December 2014 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald (Chairman), S. Bell, C. Bhatia, K. Cockburn, G. Garvie,
G. Logan.

In Attendance:- Community Councillor A. Kubie.
Chief Financial Officer, Legal and Licensing Services Manager, Estates
Manager, Democratic Services Officer (K. Mason).

Members of the Public:- 1.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

MINUTE

2. The Minute of Meeting of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee of 3 September 2014 had been circulated.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

OUTTURN FOR 2013/14, BUDGET SETTING 2014/15 AND MONITORING REPORT FOR 6 MONTHS TO END SEPTEMBER 2014

3. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer setting out the outturn for 2013/14, variances from the final budget and the effect on revenue and capital reserves at 31 March 2014. It also set out a budget for the year to 31 March 2015 for which approval was sought, together with details of transactions for the 6 months to 30 September 2014 and their projected impact upon reserves at 31 March 2015. The Chief Financial Officer highlighted the key figures for 2013/14 and projections for 2014/15 on Revenue and Capital Reserves, as shown in Appendices to the report. During the discussions which took place, the Chief Financial Officer agreed to develop a risk register for the fund and it was noted that future financial reports would be provided in a different format making them simpler to understand.

DECISION

(a) **APPROVED** the budget for 2014/15 as shown in Appendix 6 to the report.

(b) **NOTED**

- (i) **the key outturn figures for 2013/14 shown in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (ii) **the financial performance for 2013/12 as shown in Appendix 2 to the report;**
- (iii) **the grants analysis provided in Appendix 3 to the report;**
- (iv) **the balances on revenue and capital reserves at 31 March 2014 as shown in Appendix 4 to the report;**
- (v) **the key figures for 2014/15 shown in Appendix 5 to the report;**
- (vi) **the financial monitoring report for 2014/12 as shown in Appendix 6 to the report;**

- (vii) **the grants analysis for 2014/15 provided in Appendix 7 to the report;**
- (viii) **the projected balances on revenue and capital reserves at 31/3/15 as shown in Appendix 8 to the report (as amended);**
- (ix) **the review of the property portfolio provided in appendix 9 to the report;**
- (x) **that the Chief Financial Officer would prepare a risk register for the Peebles Common Good Fund; and**
- (xi) **that future reports would be provided in a different format making them easier to read.**

HAYLODGE PARK PUBLIC TOILETS

4. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of Meeting held on 9 February 2012, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services requesting consideration of the future arrangements for the opening of the public toilets sited in Haylodge Park, Peebles for the period 2015 going forward.
5. The report explained that since 2012 the Common Good Fund had met the costs of opening the Public Toilets in the Haylodge Park, the park being a common good asset maintained and operated by the Council. The Council had reviewed the provision of public toilets provision in the area in 2011 and resolved not to continue to meet the costs of this facility from the Council General Fund but Members of the then Common Good Fund Working Group decided that the inhabitants of Peebles would benefit for the service being provided by the Fund and advertised for a contractor to carry out the service. A three year award of contract for service was given and this terminated in September 2014. There was no extension provision in that original contract.
6. Members considered whether they wished to continue to fund this service from the Common Good Fund.

DECISION AGREED

- (a) **to continue to fund the provision of public toilets in Haylodge Park, Peebles from the Common Good Fund;**
- (b) **that the service contract should be procured on a three year contact with an opportunity to extend to a five year contract;**
- (c) **that invitations to tender be advertised in the "Peeblesshire News"; and**
- (d) **that Officers be instructed to take the necessary steps to put the above in place.**

PROPOSED LAND DEVELOPMENT ELIOT'S PARK GRAZINGS

7. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 7 May 2014, there had been circulated copies of an Assessment Report in relation to the suitability of land development at Eliot's Park Grazings, Peebles for planning application purposes for social housing. The Estates Manager advised that (a) the land at Eliot's Park Grazings was of a sufficient size to allow the construction of a number of houses; (b) the restricted access arrangements and the natural topography of the site, including the presence of a water course, would make any such development disproportionately expensive, especially for social housing; (c) it was considered that any application for Planning Consent would be challenged on the same grounds as were identified during the preparation of the Local Plan and that the findings of the Reporter would be given due prominence in the assessment process. The conclusion of such an application was, however, not yet tested and it might be that the gap of a number of years since the Local Plan inquiry might permit an alternative conclusion to be drawn; and (e) provision should be made for higher than normal professional fee allocation by the Sub-Committee, if it wished to instruct the submission of a formal application, to reflect the abnormal issues identified above and the time that would be required to develop a suitable submission. In relation to a question raised about the disposal of the land the Legal and Licensing Services Manager advised that no question would arise regarding such alienation of the land as the land was not of the nature in respect of which a question as to the right to alienate arose.

DECISION

AGREED that the Estates Manager draft a planning application for housing and or mixed use of the land at Eliot's Park Grazings taking into cognisance the difficulty of such a development in order to assess value for money.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

8. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 27 September 2004, the Democratic Services Officer advised that Members of the then Common Good Fund Working Group had agreed to contribute annually towards the printing of orders of service, the public address system and reasonable financial assistance towards provision of refreshments for the annual Remembrance Sunday in Peebles. No refreshments had been provided after the service for some time and it was anticipated that this would be reinstated in future years. She requested authorisation from the Sub-Committee for the provision of light refreshments from a local hotel.

DECISION

AGREED that the Peebles Common Good Fund would reimburse the costs of providing light refreshments in the Burgh Hall, Peebles after the annual Remembrance Day Service up to the sum of £300.00.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

PEEBLES GOLF CLUB

10. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 25 August 2014 there had been recirculated copies of a letter dated 25 August 2014 from Peebles Golf Club asking for assistance from the Common Good Fund to allow the Club to invest and secure their future. The Club wished to commit to a five to ten year plan to improve the course, clubhouse, member and visitor experience which would require an investment of c. £400k. It was noted that Members were not in receipt of an executive summary from the Golf Club in relation to the application and the Democratic Services Officer undertook to issue them with the summary. Mr Alan Boocock (Captain) and Mr Jim Dickson (Greens Convenor) were present and Mr Dickson gave an overview of the Club which included information relating to the finances of the Club, investment proposal, financial forecast etc. Members discussed the proposals and the Chief Financial Officer advised on the options available and Members agreed to meet with the Chief Financial Officer to progress matters after which a meeting would be held with Golf Club Officials.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the options available.**

(b) **AGREED**

- (i) **that the Democratic Services Officer would circulate a copy of the Golf Club's executive summary;**
- (ii) **Members would meet with the Chief Financial Officer to progress matters and discuss the options available.**

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

1. **Minute**

The Sub-Committee approved the private section of the Minute of Meeting of 3 September 2014.

The meeting concluded at 6.00 p.m.