

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the SELKIRK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE
held in the Council Chamber, HQ on
Wednesday, 10 June, 2015 at 3.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G Edgar (Chairman), M Ballantyne, V Davidson, and T Combe

In Attendance:- Solicitor (G. Nelson), Corporate Finance Manager (L. Mirley), Estates
Surveyor (J. Morison), Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling)

1. **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

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.

2. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the minutes of 18 February 2015 and the special meeting of 10 March 2015. With regard to the meeting of 10 March 2015 it was noted that Community Councillor Tom Combe, noted as an apology, had in fact arrived at Council Headquarters but had been delayed at reception and was unable to join this short meeting before its conclusion.

DECISION

APPROVED the minutes for signature by the Chairman.

3. **PROPERTY**

Estates Surveyor, James Morison, gave a verbal update on matters relating to property owned by Selkirk Common Good. With reference to paragraph 2 of the minute of 2 December 2014 and to paragraph 2 of the private minute of 18 February 2015, he advised that work to address the damp had been carried out on the bathroom at Smedheugh as agreed. The tenant had declined the opportunity to pay for additional refurbishment work to be carried out at the same time. With regard to South Common and with reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of 2 December 2014 quotes were being obtained for the re-wiring of the farmhouse. Mr Morison advised that a rent review for South Common had been carried out resulting in an increased rent for the next 3 year period. In response to a query regarding the agreed work to concrete in front of the Green Shed Mr Morison advised that he would ascertain from the Property Manager when this was scheduled to be carried out. Members would be taking part in a visit, on Monday 15 June, to view ongoing works on the Selkirk Flood Protection Scheme. In this respect it was noted that work to upgrade the road and landscaping works would involve Common Good land. With regard to Selkirk Hill and reference to paragraph 4 of the minute of 18 February 2015, Mr Morison advised that he would be contacting Members in the near future to agree a date for a formal visit. The Chairman asked Mr Morison to investigate the situation regarding the grazing of the hill, with the current tenant, as this ground was apparently not grazed during the last winter period resulting in an overgrowth of grass.

DECISION

NOTED the update.

4. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the year end out-turn for the Selkirk Common Good Fund for the year 2014/15 including balance sheet values at 31 March 2015 and the proposed budget for 2015/16. The Corporate Finance Manager, Lynn Mirley, highlighted the main points of the report and answered Members' questions. Appendix 1 to the report provided the actual income and expenditure for 2014/15. This showed a surplus of £13,239 and projected deficit of £3,954 for 2015/16. The final out-turn for the Central Support charge showed a reduction of £5,000 bringing this more into line with other Common Good Funds. Appendix 2 provided the balance sheet value to 31 March 2015. This showed an increase in the Reserves of £1,226,839 due to the revaluation of properties and the unrealised gain of the Newton Fund investment. Appendix 3 to the report gave a breakdown of the property portfolio, showing actual income and expenditure and the effect of revaluation of the fixed assets, which was carried out on 1 April 2014 as part of the Council's 5-year rolling programme. This resulted in an increase in valuation of £1,285,223 in total. The value of the Newton Fund to 31 March 2015 was shown in Appendix 4. This indicated that the value of the investment had increased by £7,280 and dividends of £3,465 had been received during 2014/15.
- 4.2 Members' questions related mainly to the budget of £50,000 for expenditure on property in 2015/16. Mrs Mirley clarified that approximately £25,000 of that budget was to facilitate quotes for work already approved leaving £25,000 for other work which may be proposed or for unscheduled maintenance costs. It was agreed that a rolling prioritised programme of work required on property should be set up to facilitate future budgeting. With regard to paragraph 4 of the minute of 2 December 2014, Members asked Mr Morison to discuss issues with the tenant of Linglie Farm before any exploratory work was initiated in respect of the refurbishment of the two cottages. Mr Morison advised that the tenant who had the shooting on Linglie Farm last year did not wish to rent the shooting for the 2015/16 season, so this was currently available.
- 4.3 A table within the report detailed grants and donations distributed from Selkirk Common Good to March 2015. This included two outstanding awards which were approved but not yet paid. Members agreed to carry out further investigation into the situation regarding the Selkirk Christmas Illuminations Group, for which a grant of up to £1500 had been approved. In respect of the approval in 2012 of a grant of £2,890 to Selkirk Chamber of Commerce for a project in 2013, subject to the submission of formal accounts, it was agreed that this should be removed from the list in the assumption that it was no longer required. With regard to the closing cash balance of £90,000 Members agreed to look more closely at the cash flow requirement with a view to transferring an additional amount into the Newton Fund. Mrs Mirley advised that she would email Members with a transaction list for the period.

DECISION

(a) NOTED:-

- (i) the actual income and expenditure position for 2014/15 detailed in Appendix 1;**
- (ii) the final balance sheet value to 31 March 2015 in Appendix 2;**
- (iii) the summary of the property portfolio in Appendix 3;**
- (iv) the current position of the investment in the Newton Fund in Appendix 4; and**

- (v) that the Corporate Finance Manager would circulate a transaction list to Members by email.

AGREED:-

- (i) the proposed out-turn in Appendix 1 and the budget for 2015/16;
- (ii) to set up a rolling prioritised programme of work required on property to facilitate budgeting in future years;
- (iii) to remove from the 2015/16 budget the outstanding grant of £2,890 approved in principle in 2012 but not paid; and
- (iv) to monitor cash flow requirement more closely with a view to transferring an additional amount to the Newton Fund to gain a higher return.

5. **ITEM LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**

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 Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

Minute

- 6. Members approved the private section of the Minute of 18 February 2015.

Access rights over Victoria Park, Selkirk

- 7. Members considered a report by the Service Director Commercial Services.

The meeting concluded at 4.35 pm