

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in Council Chamber, Council Offices,
Rosetta Road, Peebles on Wednesday, 1st
March, 2017 at 5.00 pm

Present:- Councillors W. Archibald (Chairman), C. Bhatia, K. Cockburn, G. Garvie, G. Logan.
Community Councillor L Hayworth.

Apology:- Councillor S. Bell

In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Solicitor (C. Kubala), Capital and Investments Manager,
Estates Surveyor (A. Graham), Democratic Services Officer (K. Mason).

Members of the Public:- 2.

1. MINUTE

1.1 The Minute of Meeting of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee of 23 November 2016 had been circulated.

**DECISION
APPROVED.**

1.2 With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute, it was noted that a report on the current position in relation to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders within car parks in Peebles would be considered at the next meeting.

**DECISION
NOTED.**

2. MONITORING REPORT FOR 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2016

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing details of the income and expenditure for the Peebles Common Good Fund for the nine months to 31 December 2016 and full year projected out-turn for 2016/17 and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2017. Appendix 1 to the report provided a projected Income and Expenditure position. This showed a projected surplus of £6,778 for the year. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected Balance Sheet to 31 March 2017. It showed a projected decrease in the reserves of £30,662. Appendix 3 to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income for 2016/17 and actual property expenditure to 31 December 2016. Appendix 4 to the report showed the value of the Newton Fund to 30 June 2016. The Capital and Investments Manager advised that she and the Chief Financial Officer would be meeting on 23 March 2017 with managers of the Newton Fund to discuss their performance and to examine what was happening in the longer term.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

(a) **the projected Income and Expenditure for 2016/17 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2016/17;**

- (b) to note the projected Balance Sheet value as at 31 March 2017 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (c) to note the summary of the property portfolio as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report; and
- (d) to note the current position of the investment in the Newton Fund as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.

3. **CALLANTS' CLUB - TREE PLANTING
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Logan and Garvie declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and took no part in the discussion.

There had been circulated copies of a request submitted by Mr John Falla, Peebles Callants' Club. Mr Falla was present at the meeting and in giving background information advised that the Callants' Club, Kingsland Primary pupils and friends from the community would like to plant trees on the Common Good land which surrounded Kingsland School. The area extended from north of the cemetery to the Rae Burn at the west end boundary. The Woodland Trust would provide the trees which would be native rowan, holly, hawthorn etc. The advantages to bird life and the landscape were apparent, and it was possible that the rainfall absorbed would reduce the amount of water running off onto the main road. There would be no financial assistance required from the Common Good and no maintenance required from the Council. All planting would be well away from the golf course and school boundary and would not restrict any of the beautiful views which existed. It was hoped that funding would soon be in place to allow the planting of bluebells and wild flowers at random suitable areas. The Estates Officer advised that a former lease of the 7 acre west most site for a ten month season provided income in the sum of £400. Members discussed whether there might be better areas and there was a concern for the land when it was planted up. Mr Falla answered Members' questions in respect of maintenance and explained this would not be high and he referred to the large number of volunteers whom could be called upon. Members were minded to accede to the request in principle, subject to an exchange of letters between Mr Falla and the Council's Legal Department and on the proviso that guidance and advice be obtained from the Council's Landscape Architects and / or the Woodland Trust or such other similar body.

DECISION

AGREED, in principle, to accede to the request for tree planting on Common Good land near Kingsland Primary School subject to an exchange of letters between Mr Falla and the Council's Legal Department and on the proviso that guidance and advice be obtained from the Council's Landscape Architects and / or the Woodland Trust or such other similar body.

4. **PEEBLES COMMUNITY TRUST
DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Community Councillor Hayworth declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and took no part in the discussion.

- 4.1 There had been circulated copies of a request from Mr Crick Carleton, Peebles Community Trust (PCT) to use the Old Corn Exchange, Peebles as a pop-up facility whilst a new tenant was being found for it. Mr Carleton was present at the meeting and advised that PCT wished to use the shop to (a) raise awareness of the PCT; (b) to provide the opportunity for local residents and businesses to pop-in to discuss issues of concern; (c) to provide a point of information (information displays, leaflets on the PCT and other projects / organisations); and (d) to address current issues (March Street Mills proposed redevelopment, community / enterprise hub, Town Team initiative, Community Right to Buy). The intention was to mount information displays both within the facility and visible from the street providing information on

current issues, projects, and opportunities; to locate temporary displays around the walls of the main room, and furnish the space with a desk and chairs, a bookshelf, a reading area and a debating circle. It was also proposed to use the facility under the control and management of the PCT but, with the prior consent of SBC Estates Management, to extend the opportunity to display material, information boards, and to hold drop-in events to other community groups as a means of making best use of the facilities in the time that the PCT might have access to them. The opportunity to use these facilities came at a crucial time in the development and expansion of the work programme of the PCT who were seeking to build support for the work of the PCT, to expand membership, and to encourage active support for its various initiatives – for which visible presence on the High Street would be hugely advantageous.

- 4.2 Members were made aware that the closing date for lodging expressions of interest in leasing the Old Corn Exchange, Peebles was the following day. Accordingly, it was agreed to continue discussion of the PCT's request in private at the conclusion of the public business to enable the Estates Surveyor to appraise Members on the current position.

DECISION

AGREED to continue consideration of PCT's request in private at the conclusion of the public business.

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

6. **TWEEDDALE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Garvie declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and took no part in the discussion.

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Tweeddale Astronomical Society in the sum of £5,000 to enable the release of other funding and the purchase of the main telescope in a timeframe which would allow sufficient time for familiarisation and training prior to the start of the Society's 2017/18 viewing season. Dr Tom Johnston, Chair, Tweeddale Astronomical Society was present and gave background information relating to the application and answered Members' questions in regard to fund-raising.

DECISION

AGREED to grant the sum of £5,000 to Tweeddale Astronomical Society to enable the release of other funding and the purchase of the main telescope.

7. **EASTGATE THEATRE (PEEBLES) LTD**

Members were advised that the application from the Eastgate Theatre (Peebles) Limited had been withdrawn.

DECISION

NOTED.

8. **NATURE UNLIMITED**

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Nature Unlimited in the sum of £9,375 towards the costs of sessional workers, basic equipment and volunteer expenses. Ms Ruth Noble was present and advised that Nature Unlimited was a Community Interest Company nurturing well-being, building resilience and creating community through teamwork (den-building, games) and nature connection activities in woodlands. Participants were supported at every stage of life, to grow and thrive, helping to reduce social and health inequalities. Sessions took place in woodlands across the Scottish Borders, which ranged from long-term employability programmes, family and community projects, mental health and well-being sessions to one-off events

such as team building days and taster sessions. Two programmes of 15 sessions would be held in woodlands in Peeblesshire for groups of up to twelve teenage girls who had, or were at risk of development mental health issues. Peebles High School was supportive of the initiative. Members considered the application and agreed that it would be more appropriate for the applicant to approach other sources of funding provided by Scottish Borders Council Community Grant Scheme and the Langhope Rig Wind Farm Fund.

DECISION

AGREED that the application be refused.

9. **PEEBLES AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bhatia declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and took no part in the discussion.

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Peeblesshire Agricultural Society in the sum of £4,700 towards updating their online entry system and developing their website/social media capacity to help increase the efficiency of the show. Members considered the application and noted that the Peebles Agricultural Society was in a sound position financially.

DECISION

AGREED that the application be refused.

10. **PEEBLES RUGBY CLUB**

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Peebles Rugby Club in the sum of £5,640 towards the purchase of a reconditioned mower to help maintain the rugby playing and training pitches at The Gytes and Hay Lodge. Members considered the application agreed that it would be more appropriate for the applicant to approach other sources of funding such as Scottish Borders Council Community Grant Scheme and the Neighbourhood Small Schemes Budget.

DECISION

AGREED that the application be refused.

11. **VALEDICTORY REMARKS**

Councillor Garvie, on behalf of the Members, thanked Councillor Archibald for Chairing the Sub-Committee over the last 5 years.

12. **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 Paragraph 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

13. **PEEBLES COMMUNITY TRUST - OLD CORN EXCHANGE, PEEBLES**

The Estates Surveyor briefed Members on the current position regarding the lease of the Old Corn Exchange, Peebles, Members agreed to continue discussion of the request submitted by Peebles Community Trust to a future meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.10 p.m.