

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL LAUDER COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the LAUDER
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in Convener's Office, Council
Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells on
Thursday, 21 September 2017 at 1.30 pm

Present:- Councillors K. Drum, T. Miers and Smith
Apologies:- Councillor D. Parker
In Attendance:- Senior Finance Officer (J Yallop), Principal Solicitor (H MacLeod), Estates
Officer (A Phipps), Democratic Services Officer (P Bolson).

1. **MINUTE.**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 20 June 2017.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD TO 30 JUNE 2017.**

2.1 There had been circulated copies of the income and expenditure for the three months to 30 June 2017, including the full year projected outturn for 2017/18 and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2018. Mr Yallop highlighted the main points of the report and appendices. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected Income and Expenditure position for 2017/18, showing a projected deficit of £3,355. Appendix 2 to the report detailed the projected Balance Sheet value as at 31 March 2018 and showed a decrease in the reserves of £14,848. The breakdown of the property portfolio showing the actual rental income and property expenditure was shown in Appendix 3. Appendix 4 provided details of investments externally managed in the Newton Fund and the value of the Fund to 30 June 2017. The report explained that the projected outturn included an estimate for the interest receivable on cash deposited with Scottish Borders Council however, as the amount was dependent on interest rates and the average cash revenue balance invested over the full year, this would not show as an actual income until 31 March 2018. It was also noted that the proposed budget was based on a distribution of 2.4% and that this would be subject to the overall performance of the Newton Fund. With reference to the grant of £5,000 recently given to Lauder Golf Club, it was recommended that the Grants Budget be increased by £5,000 to offset that award, leaving a balance of £1,300 available for allocation.

2.2 Discussion followed and Mr Yallop explained that following concerns over the Newton Fund's performance during 2016/17, this had improved at the beginning of 2017. Performance, however, was measured over a five year period and figures showed that overall, performance had fallen below expectations. The report by KPMG commissioned by Scottish Borders Council recommended that a procurement exercise be undertaken in respect of future Fund providers. This exercise will be progressed and further updates will be provided to Members in due course.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED:-**

- (i) **the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2018 in Appendix 2;**
- (ii) **the summary of the property portfolio as contained in Appendix 3;**
- (iii) **the current position of the investment in the Newton Fund in Appendix 4;**

- (b) **AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2017/18 in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2017/18.**

3. **APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Lauder Amateur Dramatics Society (LADS). The application was for the sum of £500 to assist with covering the cost of staging the production, costumes and other associated outlays. The application explained that LADS put on an annual show for a period of four evenings in Lauder in the spring of each year and that the performances were always very well supported. The show in 2016 did not go ahead due to illness of cast member(s) and the loss of income had resulted in a low bank balance to produce the 2017 show. In addition, the cost of hiring Lauder Public Hall from LiveBorders had increased and this added to the pressure on funds. LADS had already raised money through donations and by increasing the ticket price but there remained a shortage of funds. Following discussion, it was agreed that financial assistance be granted to Lauder Amateur Dramatics Society in the sum of £500 towards the costs of staging a production in 2018, costumes and other associated outlays.

DECISION

AGREED that financial assistance be granted to Lauder Amateur Dramatics Society in the sum of £500 to cover the costs of staging a production in 2018, costumes and other associated outlays.

4. **LAUDERHILL FARMHOUSE.**

Ms Phipps, Estates Surveyor, advised that a request had been received for some work to be carried out in Lauderhill Farmhouse, namely an amount of pointing and replacement of cupboards and worktops in the kitchen. The work was to make good general wear and tear to the property. The total cost would be £3,206 from an available budget of £10,000. Ms Phipps answered Members' questions in relation to the request and the work to be undertaken.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the works at Lauderhill Farmhouse in respect of building pointing and replacement cupboards and worktops.

5. **LAUDER WOODLAND/PLANTING.**

With reference to paragraph 2 of the meeting of Lauder Common Good Sub-Committee held on 14 December 2016, Ms Phipps, Estates Surveyor provided Members with a verbal update on woodland planting on Lauder Common. Ms Phipps advised that a meeting had taken place recently with Andy Tharme, SBC Ecology Officer, Steven Adlard of SAC Consulting and Hugh Chalmers of the Tweed Forum to discuss the potential scheme, including the possibility of funding being provided from the Penmanshiel Compensatory Replanting Scheme grant and the Forestry Grant Scheme. The Penmanshiel Replanting Scheme was set up by a wind farm developer to provide for the replacement of trees which had been previously cut down at Penmanshiel. Current grant projections showed a surplus of £17,000 and decisions were now required in respect of determining whether the landlord or tenant would arrange for the trees to be planted. Payment would be made directly to whoever arranged for the planting, along with the responsibility for the maintenance of the woodland and the management of cash flow for the duration of the contract. Discussion followed and it was agreed that a further meeting with Hugh Chalmers be arranged in order to clarify any outstanding issues and progress the project.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the update.**

- (b) **AGREED that a further meeting with Hugh Chalmers be arranged to clarify outstanding issues and progress the project.**

The meeting concluded at 2.20 pm