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## WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2017

A MEETING of the WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE will be held in the CONVENER'S OFFICE, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS TD6 0SA on WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2017 at 11.00 am

J. J. WILKINSON,  
Clerk to the Council,

18 October 2017

<b>BUSINESS</b>		
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence.</b>	
2.	<b>Order of Business.</b>	
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b>	
4.	<b>Minute.</b> (Pages 1 - 2)  Excerpt of Minute of the meeting of the William Hill Trust Fund Sub-Committee held on 21 September 2017. (Copy attached.)	3 mins
5.	<b>Application for Financial Assistance</b> (Pages 3 - 10)  Consider Application for Financial Assistance from Melrose Festival Executive, including additional information. (Copy attached.)	10 mins

### NOTES

1. Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.
2. Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

**Membership of Committee:-** Councillors D. Parker, K. Drum and T. Miers. Mr W. Windram.

Please direct any enquiries to Pauline Bolson, Tel 01835 826503  
Email: [pbolson@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:pbolson@scotborders.gov.uk)

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**EXCERPT OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE WILLIAM HILL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**5. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM MELROSE FESTIVAL EXECUTIVE**

- 5.1 There had been circulated copies of an Application for Assistance on behalf of Melrose Festival Executive. Mrs Evelyn Oliver, Honorary Secretary and Mrs Helen Chisholm, Honorary Treasurer of Melrose Festival Executive, were in attendance in support of the Application which explained that the Melrose Festival was a historical pageant that had taken place since 1936 and now provided a range of activities for the whole community, including the appointment of the Melrosian and associated events. Any events within the Melrose Abbey and its grounds were now subject to requirements by Historical Environment Scotland (HES) to protect both the Abbey and its grounds. Melrose Festival hosted a number of the ceremonial events at Melrose Abbey and now, due to the age and condition of the chairs which were currently used to seat guests and members of the public at these events, the Festival Executive was unable to comply with the requirements laid down by HES. In particular, HES required that all seating must sit on frames which protected the ground and the current chairs did not fit these frames. Due to the age and construction of these chairs, they were also extremely difficult to store and transport and the Festival Executive relied heavily on volunteers to assist with this. Further restrictions in respect of access by the public to certain areas of the Abbey grounds had made it necessary to increase the amount of seating and number of frames to accommodate the audiences at these events. Further replacement of decorative bunting was also included in the Application as the current stock was faded and potentially unsafe and could no longer be used. Mrs Oliver explained that the Melrose Festival Executive was a voluntary organisation and as such, raised thousands of pounds each year through the efforts of its members, Patrons and fund-raising events. It also received a grant from Scottish Borders Council to fund public protection measures and could not be used to purchase new or replacement equipment such as chairs. Mrs Oliver advised the Sub-Committee that no previous Application had been submitted to the William Hill Trust for Financial Assistance and that the amount requested would cover the replacement seating, frames, trolleys and bunting.
- 5.2 The Chairman thanked Mrs Oliver and Mrs Chisholm for their attendance and explanation given in support of the Application. In answer to questions from the Members, Mrs Oliver advised that the Festival Executive was currently in possession of 400 chairs and were able to borrow a further 60 from Melrose Abbey. Those owned by the Festival Executive were available for other events however the total number would not now be sufficient given the requirements by HES as detailed in paragraph 5.1 above. The Festival Executive had considered other possibilities and had identified what was considered to be the best value option at this time. Mrs Oliver did not have the information available at the meeting on the cost for each item but would submit this to the Sub-Committee within the next day or two. The Chairman indicated that the Sub-Committee would notify the Festival Executive of its decision in writing following the meeting.

**DECISION**

**AGREED that the Melrose Festival Executive would be notified of the decision of the William Hill Trust Sub-Committee in writing following the meeting.**

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Chief Executive  
Tracey Logan

Mrs Evelyn Oliver  
Honorary Secretary  
Melrose Festival Executive  
Eildon Bank  
Back Road  
Newstead  
Melrose  
TD6 9DE

*Please ask for:*  
*Direct Line*  
*Our Ref:*  
*Your Ref:*  
*E-Mail:*  
*Date:*

Pauline Bolson  
01835 826503  
  
pbolson@scotborders.gov.uk  
25 September 2017

Dear Mrs Oliver

### **Application to the William Hill Trust Fund for Financial Assistance**

On behalf of the Members, thank you for coming to the meeting of the William Hill Trust Fund Sub-Committee on 21 September 2017 in support of the application for financial assistance on behalf of the Melrose Festival Executive. I can confirm that we received the amended details you provided in respect of the number of chairs and trolleys required and the related costs and it was agreed that I notify you of the decision taken at the meeting.

The Sub-Committee is keen to help the Festival Executive and acknowledges the work that is undertaken by everyone concerned. The Sub-Committee considered all aspects of the application and was eager to look at ways in which it might be able to assist with funding as detailed on the application form. The William Hill Trust Fund has a limited budget available for allocations for financial assistance and might not be in a position to grant the full amount that was requested by the Festival Executive. It is therefore important that the Sub-Committee has as much information available as is necessary to reach an informed decision that will benefit the whole community. To that end, I have been asked to request that you provide further detail relating to –

- (a) any inventory of existing chairs etc to establish how many might be suitable for continued use in order to reduce the number of new chairs required;
- (b) whether borrowing or renting chairs and trolleys from other local organisations/festivals/businesses (for example the wedding chairs used by the Abbey) has been considered and the outcome of such enquiries; and
- (c) whether the Festival Executive has considered ways in which new chairs etc might be used/shared by other organisations/groups within the community when they are not being used for festival events.

I would be grateful if you could respond to me either by email or letter and the information you provide will then be considered by the Sub-Committee.

2

I shall keep you informed of progress and if you wish to discuss this matter further or require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Bolson  
Democratic Services Officer.

Chairman:  
Ex-Melrosian Michael  
Crawford  
Pavilion  
MELROSE  
TD6 9BN  
Tel: 01896 822030

Secretary:  
Mrs Evelyn Oliver  
Eildonbank  
Back Road  
Newstead  
MELROSE  
TD6 9DE  
Tel: 01896 823277

Treasurer:  
Mrs Helen Chisholm  
Upper Ravensbourne  
Douglas Road  
MELROSE  
TD6 9QT  
Tel: 01896 823003

Pauline Bolson  
Democratic Services Officer  
Scottish Borders Council  
Council Headquarters  
Newtown St Boswells  
MELROSE  
TD6 0SA

### **Application to the William Hill Trust for Financial Assistance**

Many thanks for your letter in regard to our application for funding.

In response to your request for further clarification: -

- (a) Having examined the chairs following the 2017 Festival, we concluded that they were no longer fit for purpose. They came to us second-hand over 15 years ago, when they were being disposed of by the Braw Lads' Executive. They are all in a state of disrepair and it takes a huge amount of time to straighten legs etc. to get them to fit into the frames which Historic Environment Scotland requires us to use. This further weakens the frames of the chairs and could potentially result in collapse.

The reason 200 extra chairs are required is also because of Historic Environment Scotland requirements. They are now preventing any access to areas where spectators have traditionally leaned against the stonework. The ceremonies in the Abbey last about an hour, which is a considerable length of time to stand unsupported, especially for those who are elderly or infirm.

- (b) We already use the Abbey wedding chairs, which are on site and easily accessible. We also bring forward all the benches which are normally placed around the grounds for visitors to the Abbey. There are no other organisations / businesses within the town, of which we are aware, who could help us with this kind of folding seating, which could be easily transported, could be used outdoors and would fit the frames we are required to use.

If we borrowed chairs from other festivals, we would have to spend time collecting and returning them and hire a van to transport them.

Each year, it becomes increasingly difficult to find volunteers willing to give their time and effort to support the Festival. A local business currently donates 3 or 4 hours of their working time free of charge on each of two consecutive days to collect / set out / remove / return the chairs and they also provide one of the two vans required. The time required increases as the chairs deteriorate and there will be double the number of chairs to put out next year. This is not sustainable. Replacement chairs and trolleys would satisfy three major requirements: safe seating for participants and spectators; much less time commitment required; and greater likelihood of volunteers continuing or new ones coming forward.

It takes 4 or 5 people to manhandle the chairs from storage to van to Abbey and back. The chairs are in high stacks to fit in our storage area and have to be manually dragged and lifted into / out of vans, up and down steps and carried across the Abbey grounds from the gate. To continue with this arrangement would leave Melrose Festival open to potential liability claims if an accident were to occur. This would be entirely avoidable if we were able to purchase furniture which is more suitable for purpose.

(c) If other organisations / groups in the community required the chairs and agreed to return them in the condition in which they were borrowed, we would be more than happy to help. Also, if we had chairs which could be moved easily and quickly, this would enhance the Festival's activities, as we could also use them at our annual Appointment Night, as well as the Children's Sports, Football Fives, Netball competition, Fancy Dress and Barbecue, for those who are elderly and infirm and would benefit from having a seat.

As you can see from our accounts, without the donations from the Melrose Festival Supporters' Group and the grant from Scottish Borders Council, Melrose Festival would cease to exist, hence the crucial nature of this application. Although the Festival's use of the chairs would focus on particular times in the year, they would be well looked after and would last for many, many years and, to reiterate, we would be glad to assist other organisations in the town should they require it.

We would also like to underline the fact that, if this application were to be successful, it would benefit the entire Melrose community, for many of whom the Melrose Festival Week is the highlight of their year.

Your letter does not mention our request for new bunting. As you will be aware, Melrose once experienced a fatality related to frayed bunting and we certainly do not wish to risk any further incident.

We feel, therefore, that the application is justified and hope that you, as trustees of the fund, will be able to support it.

I attach details of the chairs and trolleys we have priced. If you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Evelyn Oliver  
Honorary Secretary to the Executive



Mail - melrosefestival@hotmail.com Polypropylene Folding x +

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Robert Crook

3238 02/10/2017

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Size Converter

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