

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of Meeting of the HAWICK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 8
December 2020 at 4.00 pm

Present:- Councillor G Turnbull (Chairman), W McAteer, S Marshall, D Paterson, C Ramage, N Richards. Mr J Campbell (Hawick CC) Mr W Fletcher (Burnfoot CC) (from para 2.2)

In Attendance:- Estates Strategy Surveyor (N Curtis), Managing Solicitor (R Kirk), Pensions and Investment Manager (K Robb), Property Officer (F Scott), Project Manager (R Warrington), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

1. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 2 September 2020.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes of the meetings held on 2 September for signature by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE

- 2.1 With regard to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 22 September 2020, Mrs Robb advised that Hawick Reivers Association had reimbursed £566.00 to Hawick Common Good.
- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 4.2 of the Minute, relating to Hawick Recreation Association's request for a grant of £7,374.00. It was noted that the Association had been advised that the Council were not liable for the heating system at the Auld Baths. Mr Scott, Property Officer advised that the original quotation, received with the application, had been forwarded to the Council's Heating Engineer. However, approval was still awaited and modifications might be required. The Committee were concerned at the delay and asked that the matter be progressed timeously. It was noted that at the last meeting, the Association had been asked to apply for funding from alternative sources and advise with progress of their application to the Community Fund. Once this information had been ascertained and the heating costs quantified a Special Meeting of Hawick Common Good was to be arranged. It was also noted that Hawick Recreation Association would fund 10% of the costs.

2.3 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR MARSHALL

Councillor Marshall seconded by Councillor Turnbull, moved that Hawick Common Good Fund 50% of the new heating system, when costs had been quantified. The Council to consider contributing 50% of the costs. The Motion was unanimously agreed.

DECISION

AGREED

- (a) To fund 50% of the costs for a new heating system at The Auld Baths, Hawick, the figure to be advised to Members when quantified;
- (b) To request that the applicant advise of the outcome of funding applications submitted to alternative sources;
- (c) The Council to consider funding 50% of the heating costs;
- (d) That the tenancy agreement for the Auld Baths be clarified; and
- (e) A Special Meeting of the Hawick Common Good to be arranged when costs had been quantified.

(Note: Following the meeting Mr Kirk advised that in terms of the Scheme of Administration the Committee did not have the vires to ask the Council to consider paying 50% of the costs of the new heating system.)

3. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

3.1 Hawick Volunteers Group

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Hawick Volunteers requesting £13,424.00 to re-wild the Hornshore site. The Chairman thanked Mr Hogg, Chair of Hawick Volunteers Group, for joining the meeting remotely. The Sub Committee congratulated the Group on their detailed application and welcomed the support from the community and volunteers for the project. Mr Hogg advised that because of additional funding received, the assistance required was now £10,724.00, the Group also continued to explore other sources of funding. The Sub-Committee unanimously agreed the funding and that the amount be rounded up to £11,000.00

DECISION

AGREED to award £11,000.00 to Hawick Volunteers Group for the re-wilding of the Hornshore site.

3.2 Future Hawick

There had been circulated copies of an application from Future Hawick requesting £9,500.00 for the Town of the Horse Project. The grant was required to fund a Business Plan and Quantity Surveyor's report which would enable other funding options to be explored. The Chair thanked Mr Bouglas, Project Leader, for joining the online meeting. The Sub-Committee discussed the application and raised concern that there was no Project Plan with associated costs, resources from other sources/organisation and details of a public consultation. In response to questions Mr Bouglas advised that SOSE required a Business Plan to enable other funding options to be assessed. The Business Plan would also inform a public presentation/consultation on what the Town of the Horse project was looking to achieve at St Leonard's Park (Hawick Moor). Future Hawick was also setting up a Steering Group for the Project which would include representatives from other organisations in the town. Any new building would use renewable green energy and the Business Plan would provide further details. Mr Bouglas advised that the Business Plan would be completed, ready for public presentation by May/June 2021. The Sub-Committee agreed to award Future Hawick £9,500.00 for a Business Plan and Quantity Surveyor's report.

DECISION

AGREED to award £9,500.00 to Future Hawick for a Business Plan and Quantity Surveyor's report for the Town of the Horse project.

4. APPLICATION FOR USE OF COMMON HAUGH

There had been circulated copies of an application from K Stuart Family Fund Fair for use of the Common Haugh for a Family Fun Fair, from Sunday, 21 March 2021 to Saturday 3 April 2021. The supplement to the application explained that if Covid-19 restrictions were still in place, the applicant would put fencing around the area to control numbers and have a track and trace system in place. There would also be a one way system, social distancing and hand sanitiser stations. Officers advised that because of flood protection works, space was limited and there was also restricted use for parking of cars, buses and campervans. The Wee Haugh was also been occupied as a laydown site by the Flood Protection team. Because of limited space available at the Common Haugh, the Sub-Committee unfortunately refused the application. However, it was hoped they would be able to welcome the Family Fun Fair back to Hawick in the near future.

DECISION

REFUSED the application from K Stuart Family Fun Fair for use of the Common Haugh for a Family Funfair in March/April 2021.

5. MONITORING REPORT FOR SIX MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of 2 September 2020, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director Finance & Regulatory providing details of income and expenditure for the Hawick Common Food Fund for the six months to 30 September 2020, a full year projected out-turn for 2020/21 and projected balance sheet values at 31 March 2021. The Pensions and Investment Manager, Mrs Robb highlighted the main points of the report. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2020/21. This showed a projected surplus of £3,553 for the year, which was less than previously reported due to the proposed reduction in the Property Income budget. Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2021 and showed a projected decrease in reserves of £34,848, the main reason for which was reduction in rental from the Common Haugh car park. Appendix 3 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected income for 2020/21 and actual property expenditure to 30 September 2020. Appendix 4 showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2020. It was anticipated that this would increase in the next monitoring round. It was noted that reduction in rental income of £9,474 was due to Covid-19 restrictions restricting rental, flood protection works and reduced rental from Hawick Market. Mrs Robb advised that at the next meeting the Sub-Committee might consider further investment in the Aegon Asset Management Fund from the income received from the Pilmuir servitude and the sale of timber.

DECISION

- (a) **AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2020/21 in Appendix 1 as the revised budget for 2020/21.**
- (b) **NOTED within the appendices to the report the:-**
 - (i) **projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2021 in Appendix 2;**
 - (ii) **summary of the property portfolio in Appendix 3; and**
 - (iii) **current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 4.**

6. HAWICK MARKET

With reference to the paragraph 13.4 of the Minute of 2 September 2020, the Estates Strategy Surveyor, Mr Curtis, confirmed that Geraud Markets had served notice and no longer ran Hawick Market. The interim measures now in place was that a stallholder collected rental and reimbursed Hawick Common Good. Income from the market was £45 to £85 per week. Mr Curtis asked that the Sub-Committee consider the future for Hawick Market. Following discussion it was agreed that the market was important to the town and the traders. Members asked for a report to the March meeting, on options for Hawick Market, to include location of the market – to retain in the Common Haugh or if there was an alternative appropriate site (Wee Haugh, Civic Space, former Armstrong's site); an open day; if there were other interested parties in managing the market and how to encourage more stallholders. In response to question Mr Curtis advised that a large stall was £25.00, Medium stall was £20.00 and car boot stall £10.00.

DECISION

AGREED that officers bring back a report to the March meeting on options for the future of Hawick Market.

7. URGENT ITEM

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to make an early decision.

8. FACILITY FOR CAMPERVANS AT THE COMMON HAUGH

It was requested that officers investigate the creation of sluice facility for campervans at the Common Haugh to empty their WCs. Mr Curtis advised that a manhole with drainage facility would need to be installed and he would advise of costs and maintenance requirements the next meeting. The Sub-Committee also to consider charging campervans for use of the Common Haugh or if this should remain free of charge. It was noted that Future Hawick had agreed to contribution of £500.00 for the works.

DECISION

AGREED to request officers provide an update at the Special Meeting on the costs associated with installation of a sluice facility for campervans at the Common Haugh.

9. PROPERTY UPDATE

9.1 Toilets at Hawick Moor

With reference to paragraph 13.1 of the Minute of 2 September 2020, Mr Scott, Property Officer, advised that asbestos would be removed from the building on 11 December at a cost of £750.00. Once the asbestos was removed he would progress the demolition of the toilets.

9.2 Pilmuir Farm

Mr Curtis advised that St Leonard's Moss at Pilmuir Farm would be included in the Local Development Plan as a local biodiversity site in recognition of the areas benefits to wildlife.

DECISION

NOTED the property updates.

10. PRIVATE BUSINESS

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 Paragraphs 6 and 8 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

11. PRIVATE MINUTE

Members approved the Private Minute of Hawick Common Good Fund Sub Committee held on 2 September 2020.

12. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE

Officers provided updates on matters arising from the Minute of 2 September 2020

13. PROPERTY UPDATE

The Sub-Committee considered updates on Acreknowe Reservoir, the Woodlands and St Leonard's Cottage.

The meeting concluded at 6.35 pm