

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in Via MS Teams on Wednesday, 18th
November, 2020 at 5.00 pm

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chairman), H. Anderson, S. Bell, K. Chapman,
S. Haslam, E. Small and Community Councillor L. Hayworth

In Attendance:- Treasury Business Partner (S. Halliday), Solicitor (G. Sellar), Estates
Surveyor (T. Hill), Strategic Community Engagement Officer, Democratic
Services Team Leader

1. **MINUTE**

The Minute of the Meeting of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 7 October 2020 had been circulated.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

2. **MATTER ARISING**

It was reported that Member approval had been sought for the erection by Bonnie Peebles Plus of the original sign for Victoria Park which they had recently recovered and restored. This had been agreed subject to them being responsible for ongoing maintenance.

DECISION

AGREED to ratify this decision.

3. **FINANCIAL MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director, Finance & Regulatory providing details of the income and expenditure for the Peebles Common Good Fund for the six months to 30 September 2020, a full year projected out-turn for 2020/21, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2021. Appendix 1 provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2020/21 and showed a projected surplus of £20,602 for the year. Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2021 and showed a projected decrease in the reserves of £28,752. Appendix 3 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental 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. The Treasury Business Partner highlighted the main points in the report and confirmed that there had been no expenditure incurred in respect of cleaning Haylodge Toilets. Councillor Bell asked for details in respect of the properties which showed no rental income. The Estates Surveyor advised that she was preparing a report but the reasons for some of the non-charging required significant investigation and she agreed to provide an interim report at the next meeting in February 2021. With regard to the possibility of moving cash reserves into the Aegon Asset Management Fund it was agreed that this would be decided once the decision regarding the Eastgate Theatre Loan at paragraph 4 below was reached.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the:-

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

- (b) AGREED that an interim report on the reasons why no rental was charged in respect of several common good properties be submitted to the meeting in February 2021.**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Tatler declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion. Councillor Anderson took the Chair in his absence.

4. EASTGATE THEATRE LOAN

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 1 July 2020, there had been circulated an update from the Chairman outlining the current financial position of the Eastgate Theatre. Mr Ron Inglis, Board Chairman and Mr Ian Jenkins joined the meeting. Mr Inglis provided details of the financial problems facing the Theatre which had been helped by a recent grant of £70k from the Scottish Government Fund for such venues. However, the expected LEADER funding of around £60k, £5k less than originally expected, was not likely to be paid before the end of the year. The Board were therefore requesting that the Common Good Fund accept a payment of £10k now and give an extension of 6 months to repay the remaining £10k. Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Haslam proposed that this offer be accepted and this was unanimously agreed. Mr Jenkins thanked Members for their help over these difficult times.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to approve the request from Eastgate Theatre that they repay £10k now and the remaining £10k by the end of June 2021; and**
- (b) that, with reference to 3 above, following the repayment of this money that a further £40k be invested with Aegon Asset Management.**

5. PROPERTY UPDATE

5.1 Former Corn Exchange

The Estates Surveyor advised that the Shop had been advertised and there had been 5 viewings to date. No offers had been received so far but it was proposed that if a viable offer was received then a closing date be set.

DECISION

AGREED.

5.2 Tweed Green Pavilion

The Estates Surveyor advised that the Tweed Valley Forest Festival organisers had requested permission to display a banner and wood carving in the Tweed Green Pavilion. Members were supportive of the request but wanted a time limit imposed, a check that it did not clash with other uses of the Pavilion and that the display not commence until next year closer to the event.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the request subject to a 4 week timescale, a check that there was no clash with other events and that the display not commence until 1 month before the event.

5.3 Victoria Park

The Estates Surveyor had consulted Members on a request from the developers of the new Baptist Church to remove a section of wall and put down a temporary path to access the site. This had been approved on the basis of full reinstatement once the works were complete.

DECISION

AGREED to ratify this decision.

5.4 Use of Car Parks by Food Vendor

The Estates Surveyor advised that a request had been received from "Underdog", a food vendor to use various car parks in Peebles including those owned by the Common Good Fund. They were to be given a trial in a Council owned car park first. Members asked for further details regarding the vendor before permission was given.

DECISION

AGREED that further information on the vendor be provided.

5.5 Map of Common Good Land

The Estates Surveyor shared a plan that she was preparing which showed the location of all land owned by the Common Good Fund. She advised that further detail as required with the area in the centre of Peebles needing to be enlarged to provide more detail.

DECISION

AGREED that the final version be provided at the next meeting in February 2021

6. URGENT BUSINESS

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.

7. The Chairman advised that he had received a request from a Michelle Fraser who had recently set up a Community Interest Company in Peebles called 'Branching Upwards C.I.C. which aimed to support the physical and mental wellbeing of children, young people and adults in the Tweeddale area through Outdoor Learning and Forest School experiences. The sessions enabled participants to connect with the natural world and with each other, introduce strategies to support mental wellbeing and communication and build confidence and resilience. The request was to use of a small plot of woodland in Haylodge Park for the purpose of running Forest School sessions for SBC Inclusion and Wellbeing Team for a small group of pupils (max of 4 pupils) from Kingsland Primary School. Members were happy to support the request and asked for details of how many session there would be.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the request.

Note. The Chairman subsequently ascertained that there would be sessions on Monday 23rd Nov, 7th and 14th of December, starting again each Monday from 11th January and continuing so long as funding was available.

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

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

9. **MINUTE**

Approved the private section of the Minute of the meeting held on 7 October 2020.

10. **JEDDERFIELD FARM**

Members received an update on the current position and agreed that further information was required.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed that a Special private meeting of the Sub-Committee would be held on 25 November 2020.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm