

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the SELKIRK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE
held Via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 31
August 2022 at 3.00 pm

Present:- Councillors C. Cochrane (Chairman), L Douglas and E. Thornton-Nicol
Apologies:- Community Councillor I. King
In Attendance:- Estates Strategy Manager, Estates Surveyor (T. Hill), Property Officer (S. Drummond), Solicitor (J. Webster), Treasury Business Partner (S. Wilson), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall).

1. **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting

2. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 15 June 2022. Councillors Cochrane and Douglas advised that Community Councillor King had sent concerns that he wished to raise with the Minute via email. Those concerns were not shared with the meeting.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

3. **MONITORING REPORT FOR 3 MONTHS TO 30 JUNE 2022**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Acting Chief Executive which provided details of income and expenditure for the Selkirk Common Good Fund for the three months to 30 June 2022, a full year projected out-turn for 2022/23, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2023. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2022/23, which showed a projected surplus of £27,700 for the year. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023, which showed a projected decrease in reserves of £223,653. A breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income and projected net return for 2022/23 and actual property income to 30 June 2022 was provided in Appendix 3a, and a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property expenditure for 2022/23 and actual property expenditure to 30 June 2022 was provided in Appendix 3b. A breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property valuations at 31 March 2023 was provided in Appendix 4. Appendix 5 showed to the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 June 2022. The Treasury Business Partner, Ms Sara Wilson, presented the report and highlighted that a drop in the Aegon Investment Management Fund unit price had created an unrealised loss of £27,655, largely as a result of Covid-19. In response to a question regarding the impact of any further drops to the unit price, Ms Wilson confirmed that the performance of the Fund was carefully monitored, and that the agreed 5% return target was being achieved. In response to a question regarding rental incomes, the Estates Surveyor explained that a discussion regarding rent would take place in the private business section of the meeting. Regarding the outcome of the consultation on heritable and moveable assets, the Solicitor confirmed that a report would be brought to the Committee by the Principal Solicitor concerning the outcome of that process.

DECISION

- (a) AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2022/23 in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2022/23.**
- (b) NOTED:-**
 - (i) the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023 in Appendix 2 to the report;**
 - (ii) the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report; and**
 - (iii) the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 to the report.**

4. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

4.1 Selkirk Musical Theatre Company

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting held on 9 September 2019 there had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Musical Theatre Company (SMTC). Funding of £1,500 had been awarded to SMTC at that meeting, however due to the impact of Covid-19 the performance had not taken place. A new application for of £1,500 had therefore been submitted. It was explained that the funding applied for would be used to help offset the year round cost of rehearsal and the rental of a performance space. Members expressed their support for the application and hoped that the performance could take place as planned. The Solicitor enquired into whether SMTC could use their existing funds, and pointed out that the Selkirk Common Good Fund should only provide funding as a last resort. Mr Graham Coulson of SMTC explained that a variety of fundraising activities, including quiz nights, took place throughout the year with the goal of meeting the costs incurred by the Company.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Selkirk Musical Theatre Company the total sum requested of £1,500.

4.2 Scott's Selkirk Association

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Scott's Selkirk Association (SSA) for £500. The funding would be used to update and reprint the Selkirk Ring O' the Toon Booklet. The application explained that a booklet had previously been produced which shared information on key historical places and events within Selkirk. The Chairman highlighted that tourists visiting the town often enquired into the booklet, and expressed that an updated version of the booklet would be a positive for the town. Mr Coulson advised that there were two parts to the project, the printing of the booklet and also the provision of QR codes at the points of the ring of the town. In response to a question from the Solicitor regarding whether SSA could use their existing funds to meet the costs of the project, Mr Coulson explained that a significant proportion of the group's funding was consumed by running costs of the charity shop that it operated, and that fundraising events were planned. Members expressed their support for the application and unanimously agreed to provide the funding in full.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Scott's Selkirk Association the total sum requested of £500.

4.3 Association of Selkirk Clubs and Societies

The Chairman advised that the application from the Association of Selkirk Clubs and Societies had been withdrawn as the Association had secured funding for the project from LiveBorders.

5. **SHAWBURN TOLL AND EMBANKMENT**

With reference to paragraph 7.1 of the Minute of the meeting held on 19 February 2020, Mr Norrie Curtis, Estates Strategy Manager, explained that a public consultation had taken place in 2019 regarding the need to tidy up the area around Shawburn Toll and Embankment. The consultation had predated the Estates Strategy Manager's involvement with the Selkirk Common Good Fund Sub-Committee. The consultation had been conducted online via Citizen's Space. Mr Curtis outlined that 82.4% of respondents lived in Selkirk and all were individuals rather than organisations. 93.6% had indicated that thought that there should be changes to the Embankment, and 56.8% had expressed an interest in taking part in future discussions. Respondents had also been invited to provide comments as part of their response, Mr Curtis explained that at that time he had collated those by theme as follows: 55.6% wanted the embankment turned back into a viewing point primarily for the Common Riding; 12% wanted the ground and shrubbery tidied up; 16.8% wanted it tidied up and/or returned to its original condition; 6% said keep in its current condition; and 8% of comments were unspecific. Following the presentation of the results of the consultation to the Committee the impacts of Covid-19 had occurred, and no meetings had taken place for 6 months. Mr Curtis invited the Members to express their preferred course of action. In response to a question from the Chairman, Mr Curtis explained that approximately 250 responses had been received to the consultation. Members expressed their preference that the shrubbery and ground at Shawbank Toll and Embankment were tidied up prior to the Common Riding of 2023 took place, which was unanimously agreed.

DECISION

AGREED that the Estates Strategy Manager would instruct the Parks Department of Scottish Borders Council to carry out works to tidy up the ground and shrubbery at Shawbank Toll and Embankment prior to the Common Riding Event of 2023.

6. **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 the appropriate paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. **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 or to keep Members informed.

8. **SELKIRK REGENERATION**

Members received a report from Selkirk Regeneration.

9. **MINUTE**

The Private section of the Minute of the Meeting held on 15 June 2022 was approved.

10. **PROPERTY UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received an update on private matters relating to Common Good owned property and approved various maintenance works.

The meeting concluded at 4.15 pm