

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the HAWICK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held in Lesser Hall, Town Hall, Hawick on
Tuesday, 17 May, 2016 at 4.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G Turnbull (Chairman), A Cranston, W McAteer, S Marshall,
D Paterson, R Smith, Mrs A Knight, Mr J Little.

In Attendance:- Managing Solicitor (R Kirk), Estates Surveyors (J Morison and N Curtis),
Property Officer (F Scott), Capital and Investment Manager (K Robb - Items 1
to 10), E Moir (Trainee Solicitor), Democratic Services Officer (J Turnbull).

Members of the Public 5

1. **MINUTE.**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 31 March 2016.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

2. **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

2.1 Hawick Welcome Initiative

There had been circulated copies of an application from Hawick Welcome Initiative requesting financial assistance of £1,300 towards a series of events to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the project, and, in turn, support the sustainability of their brochure and hosts. Members discussed the application, congratulated the project on its success in promoting the town and unanimously agreed the application for grant assistance.

- 2.2 The Sub-Committee requested clarification regarding the pricing structure of Hawick Town Hall to organisations such as Hawick Welcome Initiative, now that the venue was part of the Cultural Trust under Live Borders. The Clerk would ascertain outwith the meeting and advise Members accordingly.

DECISION

AGREED to award a grant of £1,300 to Hawick Welcome Initiative towards a series of events celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the project.

MEMBER

Councillor Cranston joined the meeting during consideration of the above report.

3. **MONITORING REPORT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31 MARCH 2016**

- 3.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 16 February, there had been circulated a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing details of the income and expenditure for the Hawick Common Good Fund for the year 2015/16 including balance sheet values as at 31 March 2016 and proposed budget for 2016/17. Appendix 1 to the report provided the actual income and expenditure for 2015/16. This showed a surplus of £27,005 and a projected surplus of £49,504 for 2016/17. Appendix 2 provided a balance sheet value to 31 March 2016. It showed a decrease in the reserves of £18,113 due mainly to the depreciation adjustment. Appendix 3 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing actual rental income and property expenditure to 31 March 2016 where

applicable and the 2015/16 depreciation charge. Appendix 4 showed the value of the Newton Fund to 31 March 2016.

- 3.2 Members asked for clarification on a number of points and were advised that in comparison with other investment funds held by the Council, the Newton Fund continued to give security as well as a fairly healthy dividend each year. However, the market was volatile with uncertainties over Brexit and the market in China. There would be a Members' briefing in September with Newton informing of their future investment plans and this would give Members the opportunity to ask questions of the Fund Managers. Mrs Robb would circulate to Members the cost of managing the Newton Fund. The Sub-Committee also requested that a five year projected spend be presented to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration.

DECISION

(a) AGREED:-

- (i) The proposed budget for 2016/17 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (ii) To request five year projected spend, in terms of Hawick Common Good Fund, be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.**

(b) NOTED:-

- (i) The actual income and expenditure for 2015/16 in Appendix 1;**
- (ii) The final balance sheet value as at 31 March 2016 in Appendix 2;**
- (iii) The summary of the property portfolio in Appendix 3; and**
- (iv) The current position of the investment in the Newton Fund in Appendix 4.**

4. COMMON HAUGH

- 4.1 There had been circulated a briefing note by the Asset Manager advising that the Council would be undertaking repairs to the surface of the car park area at the Common Haugh as part of the repair programme being carried out under the Bellwin Scheme. Whilst undertaking the assessment under Bellwin, the opportunity had been taken to assess all the car park surface to identify if there were any other areas which would benefit from repair. This exercise had identified a further 475 square metres which could be repaired but could not be included within the Bellwin claim. The majority of the additional repairs were towards the pedestrian entrance near the Burns Club, with approximately 75 square metres being near the Lawson Footbridge. The permanent repair to these additional areas had been priced at £14,000.
- 4.2 The Memorandum of Understanding, (MOU), between The Hawick Common Good Fund and Scottish Borders Council, confirmed that the car park would be maintained by the Roads Authority of Scottish Borders Council *"on a prioritisation process, to a similar standard as the Roads Authority applies across its entire adopted road network"*. The MOU further confirmed that *"the Roads Authority shall only be financially liable for any repair works they identify. If the Hawick Common Good Fund required such repair works to be carried out to a higher standard the difference in costs shall be funded by the Hawick Common Good Fund"*.
- 4.3 It had been estimated that for the Roads Authority to undertake the repairs to the additional areas, *"to a similar standard as would be applied across its entire adopted road network"*, would be in the region of £500. This therefore would be the only financial contribution from the Roads Authority if it was the Hawick Common Good Sub-Committee's decision to undertake the repairs to a higher standard. The repair works were programmed to be undertaken during the second half of June, following Hawick

Common Riding. The Committee discussed the report and it was agreed to request that the Council proceed with the additional repairs which could not be included within the Bellwin claim, the costs of the repairs to be funded from the Hawick Common Good Fund budget.

**DECISION
AGREED**

- (a) **That additional repair works be undertaken at the Common Haugh Car Park on the 475 square metres which could be repaired but could not be included within the Bellwin claim; and**
- (b) **The cost of the additional repairs, estimated at £13,500k, be funded by the Hawick Common Good Fund.**

5. **HAWICK FLOOD GROUP**

Councillor Marshall advised that Hawick Flood Group had requested the Sub-Committee consider the installation of a barrier to both entrance and exit of the Common Haugh Car Park. This would deter motorists from using the car park when a flooding event occurred. At the last two flooding events this area had been chaotic and dangerous with spectators and motorists congregating in the area.

DECISION

AGREED to request the Asset Manager investigate the cost of installation of a barrier to the exit and entrance of the car park and report back to Members.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors McAteer and Marshall, as Members of Hawick Flood Group, declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above item but remained for consideration of the report.

6. **PROPERTY UPDATE**

6.1 Woodlot

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 16 February, Mr Morison advised that following the Woodlot Associations' presentation, there had been no interest in taking on management of the Burgh Woodlands. Discussion with the Woodlot Association was continuing but a potential tenant seemed unlikely.

6.2 Common Haugh Circus

The Bid Kid Circus had confirmed their dates and would use the grassed area next to the Common Haugh Car Park. The dates were Thursday, 21 to Sunday 24 July 2016.

6.3 Common Haugh BT Wayleave

BT have requested a wayleave to install an underground duct and cables from Albert Road to the proposed new electronic information sign at the pedestrian entrance to the Common Haugh. A plan, attached with the report, showed the route which was eight metres long. No payment was proposed from BT for the wayleave as it was requested as part of the Council's project for information signs. The Sub-Committee agreed that the Estates Manager arrange for the wayleave to be signed and returned to BT and asked that if possible the installation works be completed when the Common Haugh repairs were being carried out.

6.4 Common Haugh – Electric Charger

The Sub Committee requested that the Fleet Manager be asked to relocate and reinstate the electric charging point.

6.5 Common Haugh – Sandbag store

The Sub-Committee requested that the dedicated car parking space next to the sandbag store be hatched to ensure that vehicles did not park in this area. This would ensure that the sandbags were accessible from the store.

- 6.6 St Leonards Farm
Mr Morison advised that the he would rearrange a visit to the property.
- 6.7 Pilmuir Farm
Mr Scott advised that the repair work to Pilmuir had been instructed and that repairs to the verges would be carried out before the Common Riding.
- 6.8 The Common Riding Hut, St Leonards
Mr Scott would investigate the damp in the hut. He also reported that expenditure was required to the Millpath Stables and the gates to the Moors were due to be replaced.
- 6.9 Estates Surveyor
The Chairman advised that this was the last meeting Mr Morison would attend as he was leaving the employment of Scottish Borders Council. Members thanked Mr Morison for his guidance in the past and wished him well for the future in his new venture.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the reports.**
- (b) **AGREED:-**
- (i) **To request that the Fleet Manager relocate and reinstate the electric car charging point at the Common Haugh Car Park; and**
- (ii) **To request that the car parking space next to the sandbag store be hatched, to ensure no parking in this area.**

7. **HORNSHOLE**
With reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of 16 February 2016, Mr Kirk, advised that he was establishing with the owners' solicitors, the actions required to secure the title and would report back to the next meeting.

DECISION NOTED.

8. **WILLIESTRUTHER RESERVOIR**
With reference to paragraph 7 of the minute of 31 March 2016, Mr Scott, clarified that the cost of SEPA managing a high risk reservoir was £419 for 2016/17. Williestruther reservoir was registered as high risk. To appeal against the registration category would cost in the region of £5k to £10k.

DECISION NOTED.

9. **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 the Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

10. **MINUTE**
Members approved the private section of the Minute of 31 March 2016.
11. **HAWICK GOLF CLUB**
Members considered a private presentation by Hawick Golf Club.

12. **PILMUIR FARM**

Members considered a private briefing note by Estates Surveyor.

13. **APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Members re-considered the application for financial assistance from Escape Youth Services.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm