

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the SELKIRK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE held in Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells. TD6 0SA on Wednesday, 13 February 2019 at 3.00 pm

Present:- Councillors G. Edgar (Chairman), C. Penman, E. Thornton-Nicol and Community Councillor T. Combe

In Attendance:- Pension & Investments Manager, Solicitor (J. Webster), Estates Surveyor (A. Scott), Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

2 Members of the public

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of 12 December 2018.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute for signature by the Chairman.

2. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2018**

2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the details of income and expenditure for the Selkirk Common Good Fund for the nine months to 31 December 2018, a full year projected out-turn for 2018/19 and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2019. Pension and Investments Manager, Kirsty Robb, referred to Appendix I to the report which provided the projected income and expenditure position. She advised that, due to the previously approved additional expenditure on repairs to the Town Hall clock face there was a projected deficit of £37,067. The projected outturn position showed an amount of £133 relating to interest receivable on cash held by SBC. Also included were dividends from the Common Good Fund's investment in Kames Capital amounting to £11,568. Dividends earned to date amounted to £10,054 which was in line with the overall 5% target and the monthly distribution profile projections provided by Kames. A disinvestment of £40,000 was required to fund the deficit for the year. This was estimated to reduce the income by £400 giving a revised budget of £11,168. Appendix 2 provided a projected Balance Sheet value as at 31 March 2019. This showed a projected decrease in reserves of £105,025. A breakdown of the property portfolio and details of the projected annual rental income by individual property and actual property expenditure to 31 December 2018 was shown in Appendix 3 to the report. The current position of the Kames Capital Investment Fund was shown in Appendix 4 to the report. The disinvestment of £40,000, due to the projected deficit position, would be actioned during February. The fund had a 2.30% unrealised loss in market value since investment, largely due to continued volatility in investment markets. Overall, however, taking account of the income received the fund had achieved a return of 2.05% for the year.

2.2 In response to a Member's question about the Town Hall clock, which was currently not working, and other issues within the building, the Chairman advised that there would be an update from the Service Director in due course. A further question was raised about the difference in rents received in respect of the three farms owned by Selkirk Common Good. The Estates Surveyor advised that this was due to different types of tenancy

involved with each. Recent guidance about rent reviews and farm capacity would inform future reviews.

DECISION

- (a) AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2018/19 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2018/19,**
- (b) NOTED within the appendices to the report:-**
 - (i) the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2019 in Appendix 2;**
 - (ii) the summary of the property portfolio in Appendix 3; and**
 - (iii) the current position of the Kames Capital investment Fund in Appendix 4.**

3. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

3.1 Ettrick Forest Bowling Club

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Ettrick Forest Bowling Club. The applicant, who recently took over as Treasurer, explained that the Green Bowling Club had a huge community spirit with both young and older members but that there were significant financial challenges with monthly running costs of £829. The Club was currently trying to get back into a better financial position by fundraising and looking for sponsors. Funding was desperately needed for equipment, namely outside score boards, new jacks, mats and benches. The total cost and grant requested was £1,344.67. It was noted that this equipment, once replaced, should last 15 to 20 years. Members were supportive of the application but expressed some concerns about the long term financial sustainability of the Bowling Club, from the information provided. They noted that efforts were being made to put the Club back on a sound financial footing but also noted that the accounts that accompanied the application were for the year ended 31 December 2017. They queried whether there were audited accounts available for 2018. After discussion there was agreement in principle to grant the full sum requested, but that this should be subject to provision of satisfactory accounts for the year ending 31 December 2018 and also a Business Plan setting out projected income and expenditure, to give assurance of the Club's financial sustainability and longevity.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) in principle to grant the total sum requested, of £1,344.67, to Ettrick Forest Bowling Club;**
- (b) that this grant be subject to the provision of satisfactory audited accounts for year ended 31 December 2018 and a Business Plan indicating future financial management; and**
- (c) that, consideration of the information requested and the decision to authorise payment be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chairman.**

3.2 Selkirk Silver Band

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Silver Band. The Band provided musical entertainment at many functions and events associated with Selkirk Common Riding and at other engagements including Lauder Common Riding, Royal Company of Archers Parade, Selkirk 7s, Scott's Selkirk and entertainment around the town on New Year's Day. The Band was looking into

travelling to Plattling in 2020 which was Selkirk's twin town in Bavaria, Germany. A total of £2,344 was requested towards the cost of music stands (£450), stand banners (£1,420) and Band Ties (£474). It was explained that the Band organised various fundraising activities on an ongoing basis and received donations and collections at various concerts and events. The Band, along with other local groups, received a legacy in 2018 which was noted in the accounts. This money was being ring fenced for urgent work required on the band hall, including for roof repairs and soundproof flooring. The balance of the legacy would be kept for any future emergencies that may arise. Members discussed the application and, after taking into account previous grants to the Silver Band from the Common Good Fund including a grant of £1500 during the current financial year, they agreed to give a grant of £500 as a contribution towards the cost of the equipment.

DECISION

AGREED to grant £500 to Selkirk Silver Band.

3.3 Selkirk Regeneration Company

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Regeneration Company (SRC). It was explained that SRC was a community-based non-profit company whose purpose was to initiate and administer projects which would benefit the people and environment of Selkirk and surrounding area. Membership was open to any resident in the TD7 area who supported the aims of the Company; currently there were 84 members, who elected a board of Trustee/Directors. The Company was currently working towards the renovation of the former derelict shop at 5 Tower Street, which was owned on behalf of the people of Selkirk, for conversion into a community resource. Details were given of work carried out so far and the funding sources, including an Award for All grant in addition to SRC own reserves. An application had also been made to the Climate Challenge Fund for staffing and running costs for the building as a community energy advice centre and hub. Full plans had been drawn up for the renovation of the front and rear of the premises. The next stage was to obtain full planning and listed building approval and building warrants and then to seek grant funding for the capital costs to implement these plans. The immediate requirement was therefore for a grant of £1,131 to cover the planning application fee £401 and related professional fees of £730. After discussion Members agreed to grant the sum of £1,131 as requested for the immediate needs and agreed in principle to a future grant of £7,640 towards the capital costs, subject to the necessary planning permission being obtained and confirmation that other funding was in place to cover the total cost of the project

DECISION

AGREED:-

to grant £1,131 to Selkirk Generation Company to cover the planning application fee and associated professional fees for the project to renovate the former derelict shop at 5 Tower Street; and

(b) in principle to a future grant of £7,640 towards the capital cost of the project subject to the necessary planning permission being obtained and confirmation that other funding was in place.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Penman declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Chamber during the discussion.

3.4 Selkirk Means Business (Selkirk BIDS)

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Means Business (BIDS). Selkirk BIDS represented levy paying businesses within the town centre and was the first Business Improvement District in the Borders. The organisation was in place to both develop the trading environment and encourage increased footfall and tourism within the town. BIDS had delivered or were in the process

of delivering 5 projects within the first year of existence. The application was for £4,500 towards the formation of a Cycle Zone. There had already been raised £1000 towards the total cost of the project of £5,500. A detailed proposal was submitted with the application which aimed at rejuvenating a well-used though somewhat neglected area of Selkirk town centre, on the paved area beside Mungo Park tree. It was proposed to re-develop the area to create an inviting area for both local and visiting cyclists by means of a formal cycle park, including a specialist cycle repair station along with aesthetically appealing cycle racks accommodating 4-8 bicycles. There would also be minimalist seating area and focused signage directing visitors from key receptor points to the new area. It was also proposed to upgrade the appeal of the existing area by replacement of uneven paving and replacement of existing coping stone to the adjoining wall which surrounded the chestnut tree. Members were in support of the project and agreed to grant the amount requested of £4,500 subject to:-

- Selkirk BIDS accepting (or making provision for) the ongoing maintenance of the Cycle Zone, as Members noted that there was no provision for ongoing annual costs for maintenance in the project budget;
- that any consents necessary were obtained from Scottish Borders Council for the work to go ahead e.g. with - Road Safety, Planning, Economic Development.

DECISION AGREED:-

- (a) **to grant to Selkirk BIDS the full amount requested of £4,500 towards the Cycle Zone project subject to:-**
- (i) **Selkirk BIDS accepting responsibility for (or making provision for) the ongoing maintenance of the Cycle Zone; and**
 - (ii) **confirmation being provided that all necessary consents had been obtained from Scottish Borders Council for the work to go ahead.**
- (b) **that, consideration of the information requested and the decision to authorise payment be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chairman.**

4. PROPERTY

The Estates Surveyor gave a verbal update as follows:-

4.1 Selkirk Hill

Estimates of approximately £3k had been received for repairs to the march dyke. Match payment from the adjoining landowner would be sought for this work and for replacement or repair of the gates.

4.2 Smedheugh Farm

Work was underway on the conservatory and doors. It was confirmed that this work on the conservatory was the responsibility of the landlord, being categorised as 'renewals and replacements' and not as 'repairs'.

4.3 Victoria Hall

The lowest quote, of £3,485, had been accepted for repainting the railings outside the Victoria Hall. The contractor had agreed to hold this price until Spring when it was hoped there would be suitable weather conditions to carry out this work. Members confirmed their previous decision to paint the railings in the same shade of blue that had been used in the Market Place.

4.4 Shawburn Toll and Embankment

A consultation, for ideas to tidy up the area, would be launched on Scottish Borders Council's Citizen Space in April. Ms Scott would draft a consultation document and circulate to Members for comment and approval.

4.5 **The Green Shed**

A quote of approximately £1k had been received to paint the front of the shed. A price was awaited for repairs to the guttering. As the work on the shed was urgent Members agreed to delegate the decision to implement this work to officers in consultation with the Chairman once quotes had been received. Mr Combe raised again the issue of the tree branches rubbing against the roof at the rear of the shed with potential damage implications. Ms Scott agreed to investigate this.

DECISION

- (d) **NOTED the update.**
- (e) **AGREED that the work required on the Green Shed be taken forward urgently and:**
 - (i) **that the quote for repainting the front of the shed be accepted and the work to be carried out;**
 - (ii) **that the decision to implement repair work to the guttering be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, once quotes had been received; and**
 - (iii) **that the Estates Surveyor investigate potential damage to the building being caused by tree branches.**

5. **ITEMS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**

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 Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

6. **URGENT BUSINESS**

7. **MINUTE**

The private section of the Minute of 12 December 2018 was approved.

8. **PROPERTY**

The Estates Surveyor gave a verbal update.

The meeting concluded at 4.25 pm