

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
**GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of MEETING of the GALASHIELS COMMON  
GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE held in Committee  
Room 1, Council Headquarters on Thursday,  
19 December 2014 at 9.00 a.m.

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Present: Councillors B. White (Chairman), S. Aitchison, B. Herd, J. G. Mitchell.  
Apologies: Community Councillor Mr Richard Kenney (Galashiels and Langlee  
Community Council).  
In attendance: Chief Financial Officer, Legal and Licensing Services Manager, Managing  
Solicitor (H. MacLeod), Estates Surveyor (J. Morison), Democratic Services  
Officer (F. Walling).

Member of the Public: 1

**REVIEW OF HERITABLE ASSETS IN FORMER BURGH OF GALASHIELS**

1. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 4 September 2014, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services to advise Members of the outcome of the work done to review the heritable property assets held by the Council within the former Burgh of Galashiels to ensure that the correct listing was recorded with the Accounts and Registers of the Council. Managing Solicitor, Hannah MacLeod, explained that work had been undertaken to review the assets recorded in Galashiels which were currently held within the Council's General Fund. The titles for all assets held on the Council's balance sheet were identified, located and researched. Additionally the minutes and accounts of the former burgh council had been examined where questions arose as to the nature of the title of the asset. An extract of the Council asset register for the town of Galashiels as at 31 March 2014 was attached as an Appendix to the report.
2. As a result of the work undertaken the following assets had been identified as assets which were now required to be recorded within the ownership of the Galashiels Common Good Fund as Common Good assets (the reference in brackets being as identified in the asset register):-
  - Bank Street Gardens (GL040/05)
  - \*- Ladhope Drive Car Park – site only (GL006/06)
  - \*- Ladhope Golf Course (GL039/01)
  - \*- Ladhope Woodland (GL039/02)
  - \*- Ladhope Glen Park (GL039/03)
  - \*- Ladhope recreation ground (GL039/04)
    - Old Gala House (GL036/01)
    - Mercat Cross (GL041/06)
    - (Sir Walter) Scott statue (GL041/03)
    - Old Town Cemetery (GL045/04)
    - Amenity ground at Halliburton Place
    - Leabrae Playground
    - Small area of Netherdale Playing Field

\* The assets marked with an asterisk were currently recorded as owned by the Council in terms of the Ladhope Bequest.

3. The report went on to give the reasoning for the decisions regarding the designations of the above assets and their Net Book Value in the Council's accounts as at 31 March 2014. In order to reflect the determination that these assets should be included in the Common Good Assets rather than the General Fund Assets the Chief Financial Officer would make the necessary adjustments to the Balance sheet and asset registers as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. This would increase the value of Common Good property by £324,460 in perpetuity and decrease the value of Council owned assets by the same amount.
4. In discussing the report it was noted that all income from and expenditure relating to these assets, would now rest with the Galashiels Common Good Fund and not with the General Fund of the Council, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. The Chief Financial Officer advised that as the report under consideration was concerned with the title of the assets only, the financial issues would be picked up in the next monitoring report, together with details of cash and investment balances from the Ladhope Trust. In response to concern about maintenance costs associated with certain assets, such as Old Gala House, the Legal and Licensing Manager confirmed that the Council would continue to meet the cost of maintenance of those assets which it currently occupied and/or used. Members of the Sub Committee, and member of the public Mr Drew Tulley, drew attention to certain areas of land which they considered were missing from the asset register appended to the report. The Legal and Licensing Manager emphasised that the work carried out was on the assets as recorded on the lists obtained from previous councils. If, from local knowledge, it was suggested that there were additional areas of land that had been omitted from the lists these should be investigated further.
5. It was agreed that the assets identified in the report be recorded as assets of the Galashiels Common Good Fund. It was further proposed that an informal meeting be carried out to include Councillors White, Mitchell, Mr Tulley and a representative from the Council's estates section to discuss whether there were any omissions to the asset register for Galashiels which was used as a basis for the research. The Chairman thanked the Legal Services team for the significant volume of work carried out in identifying the Common Good assets.

**DECISION  
AGREED:-**

- \* (a) **to RECOMMEND that Council:-**
- (i) **approves the recording of the assets identified in the report as assets of the Galashiels Common Good Fund; and**
  - (ii) **instructs the Chief Financial Officer to amend the Asset Registers of the Galashiels Common Good Fund and the Council accordingly;**
- (b) **that further work be undertaken to ensure the accuracy of the asset register for Galashiels; and**
- (c) **that future meetings of the Sub Committee be held on a quarterly basis to facilitate financial monitoring.**

*The meeting concluded at 9.40 a.m.*