

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, 12 June 2019 at 3.00
pm

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

Apologies:- Councillor E. Thornton-Nicol

In Attendance:- Treasury Business Partner (S. Halliday), Solicitor (J. Webster), Estates
Surveyor (A. Scott), Democratic Services Officer (F. Walling).

One member of the public

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. MINUTES

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minutes of 13 February 2019 and of the special meeting of 12 April 2019.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes for signature by the Chairman.

- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 3.3 of the Minute of 12 April 2019, the Chairman asked Ms Scott for an update on the property matters listed. In response Ms Scott confirmed that the front of the Courthouse Coffee Shop had been painted as had the steps to the Town Hall and the railings at the Court House. The railings in front of the Coffee Shop were still to be painted. Following this painting work the Green Shed would receive attention. The Property Officer also had work in hand to look at the encroaching tree behind the shed and the state of the fence. Councillor Penman confirmed that the notice board at the Cross Keys had been erected.

DECISION

NOTED

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR 12 MONTHS TO 31 MARCH 2019

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 year 2018/19, including balance sheet values as at 31 March 2019 and proposed budget for 2019/20. Treasury Business Partner, Sara Halliday, highlighted the main points of the report. Appendix 1 to the report provided the actual income and expenditure for 2018/19. This showed a deficit of £36,625 for the year which was in line with the projected deficit figure reported at 13 February 2019 meeting. Rental income was under budget by £8,964 (due to the rent-free periods agreed for the Market Place properties), however this was off-set by an increase in dividends from Kames Investment along with lower than anticipated grant expenditure. Appendix 2 to the report provided balance sheet values as

at 31 March 2019, showing a decrease in reserves of £103,266, and Appendix 3 gave a breakdown of the property portfolio showing rental income and property expenditure for 2018/19. The value of the Kames Capital Investment Fund to 31 March 2019 was shown in Appendix 4 to the report. The fund had a 3.86% unrealised gain 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 +9.41% since investment in February 2018. With regard to cash balance Ms Halliday explained the reasons behind the negative balance of (£73,022) at the year end which was mainly due to a larger than forecast net movement on debtors and creditors. £40,000 of this movement related to the delay in receipt of cash from the March 2019 Kames disinvestment, which was received in April 2019 after the balance sheet date. Adjusting for timing movements, the underlying position was that the Common Good was £33,022 overdrawn with the Council at 31 March 2019. A further disinvestment of £40,000 was therefore recommended to repay this sum and return the common good to a cash surplus. In response to a question about moveable assets owned by Selkirk Common Good Fund it was suggested that, from elected Members' personal knowledge the list of moveable assets provided within Appendix 3 was incomplete. It was noted that all the assets were listed when the Town Hall was refurbished. Members asked Ms Webster and Ms Halliday to liaise with officers from Live Borders to update the list of assets and to ascertain their present whereabouts.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED within the appendices to the report:-**
- (i) **the actual income and expenditure for 2018/19 in Appendix 1;**
 - (ii) **the final balance sheet value as at 31 March 2019 in Appendix 2;**
 - (iii) **the summary of the property portfolio in Appendix 3; and**
 - (iv) **the current position of the Kames Capital investment Fund in Appendix 4.**
- (b) **AGREED:-**
- (i) **the proposed budget for 2019/20 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
 - (ii) **to approve the disinvestment of £40,000 from Kames Capital Investment.**

4. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

4.1 Souter Stormers

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Souter Stormers. Within the application it was explained that the organisation, formed in 2015, provided the opportunity for people who knit or crochet to participate in community art projects using their skills and creativity. As well as learning and demonstrating their skills, participants enjoyed the fun, social interaction and recognition they got through being a Souter Yarn Stormer. Activities also involved local businesses, voluntary organisations and the schools, as well as bringing visitors to the town and valleys. The 2019 project was Border Bunnets, a knitted and crocheted themed hat festival (7th – 14th Sept.), with contributions being sought from across the Borders and beyond. There had already been overseas interest in Border Bunnets. Activities would include street art and displays; displays in shop windows; a pop-up shop and town trail; activities for local children and young people, who were also contributing to the displays; a themed hat competition and culminating in a celebratory Mad Hatters Tea Party at The Haining. A list of the costs for which the application was being made was given, the total of which was

£1,502. The estimated total cost of the project was £5,200. Funds had already been raised by the organisation and a grant had been received from the SBC Community Grant Scheme. In discussion of the application Members were enthusiastic in their support for Souter Stormers and agreed to grant the funding request in full.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Souter Stormers the total sum requested of £1,502.

4.2 Selkirk Rugby Football Club

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Rugby Football Club (SRFC). It was explained that SRFC currently played in National One of the Scottish Rugby Championships and were being promoted to the Premiership for season 2019/20. As well as running two senior teams, Philiphaugh hosted many events such as Triathlons, Selkirk Common Riding, First Aid Courses, Fitness Groups, Running Events and Mountain Biking. The School Teams and Selkirk Youth Club also benefited from the facilities. A sum of £5,000 was requested towards the cost of a new Grass Cutter, the total cost being £6,000 plus VAT. Club funds and money raised from various functions and gate receipts would be used to fund the difference. Keeping the ground well maintained would encourage more groups to use the facilities and ensure the community of Selkirk continued to be proud of the facilities offered. In discussing the application members recognised the importance to the town of the Rugby Club and the facilities at Philiphaugh.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Selkirk Rugby Football Club the total sum requested of £5,000.

4.3 Scottish Borders Walking Festival

There had been circulated copies of an application from Selkirk & District Community Council on behalf of the Selkirk and the Valleys Walking Festival Group for financial assistance towards the 25th Scottish Borders Walking Festival, which was being held in Selkirk and The Ettrick & Yarrow Valleys in September 2019. It was explained that the Festival aimed to provide guided walks of varying lengths and levels of difficulty for visitors and locals to explore the surrounding area. It was anticipated that the Festival would bring up to 200 walkers to the town with the associated spend on accommodation, food and entertainment to the benefit of local businesses. The Festival also promoted the local area via the website and Social Media pages beyond the actual dates of the event itself. A grant of up to £1,000 was requested for website development, regarded as a vital tool for promotion, marketing and online bookings. The estimated total cost of organising the festival was £9,675. A budget forecast was attached which detailed expected income from walks and donations including contributions from Selkirk Community Council and Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council. Members agreed to support the application.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Selkirk Community Council the total sum requested of £1,000, to be ring fenced as a contribution towards organisation of the 25th Scottish Borders Walking Festival being held in Selkirk and the valleys of Ettrick & Yarrow.

4.4 Selkirk Ex-Soldiers Association

There had been circulated copies of an application from Selkirk Ex-Soldiers Association for financial assistance towards the purchase and installation of a new bench at Bemersyde Crescent. Photographs of the current bench and proposed replacement bench were also included. It was explained that, as well as offering a contact for veterans and their families, the Ex-Soldiers were actively engaged in supporting the local community to improve the area for all. The current bench at Bemersyde Crescent was installed in 2010 as a gift to the people of Selkirk to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the formation of Selkirk Ex-Soldiers Association and was now beyond economical repair through fair wear and tear. The estimated total cost of the purchase and installation

of the new bench was £1,300. The balance of the funds required would be raised by the Associations own efforts. Members were in support of the application.

DECISION

AGREED to grant to Selkirk Ex-Soldiers Association the total sum requested of £400 towards the purchase and installation of a new bench at Bemersyde Crescent.

5. PROPERTY

5.1 Court House windows

A quote was being obtained for replacement frames and mesh to cover the windows at the rear of the Court House which had been subject to vandalism. Members agreed to this work being carried out.

5.2 Selkirk Hill

With reference to paragraph 4.1 of the Minute of 13 February 2019, discussions with the adjoining landowner regarding repairs to the march dyke on Selkirk Hill revealed that sections of the dyke were not high enough to contain stock. A compromise would be sought which would involve the erection of posts and a wire to ensure the boundary was stock proof. The Chairman asked for the lease for grazing on Selkirk Hill to be re-addressed as the vegetation growth was not being sufficiently kept back. Ms Scott agreed to look at the details of the grazing lease and ensure compliance from the tenant.

5.3 Bridge on track from Buxton – Greenhead

With reference to paragraph 3.2 of the Minute of 12 December 2018, Ms Scott had received quotes for work to bring the bridge back into a safe state of repair. Members were keen for this work to be implemented.

5.4 Shooting leases

The shooting leases had expired. Members agreed to extend these to the current holder who had expressed the wish to continue.

5.5 Shawburn Toll and Embankment

The consultation, for ideas to tidy up the area, was underway. Ms Scott would bring an update of the responses to the next meeting.

5.6 Maintenance plan for Smedheugh, South Common and Lingle Farms.

Ms Scott advised that she would bring a 5 year budget plan for maintenance of the three farms to the next meeting.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the update.**

(b) **AGREED that the matters identified above be taken forward by the Estates Surveyor.**

6. 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.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. MINUTES

The private sections of the Minutes of 13 February 2019 and the special meeting of 12 April 2019 were approved.

8. **PROPERTY**

The Estates Surveyor gave a verbal update.

The meeting concluded at 4.05 pm