

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 Monday, 9 September 2019 at 3.00
pm

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

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

1. MINUTES

There had been circulated copies of the Minutes of 12 June 2019 and of the special meeting of 26 June 2019.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes for signature by the Chairman.

2. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR 3 MONTHS TO 30 JUNE 2019

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 three months to 30 June 2019, full year projected out-turn for 2019/20 and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2020. Treasury Business Partner, Sara Halliday, highlighted the main points of the report. Appendix 1 to the report provided a projected income and expenditure position. This showed a projected deficit of £22,295 for the year. The projected cash balance at 31 March 2020 was £47,949. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2020, showing a projected decrease in reserves of £91,607. A breakdown of the property portfolio, showing projected rental income for 2019/20 and actual property expenditure to 30 June 2019 was shown in Appendix 3. The value of the Kames Capital Investment Fund to 30 June 2019 was shown in Appendix 4 to the report. The fund had a 5.17% 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 +12.61% since investment in February 2018.

2.2 In terms of section 4.5 of the report detailing grant recipients, Ms Halliday updated Members to confirm the payment of £7,640 to Selkirk Regeneration Group. As indicated in paragraph 3.3 of the Minute of 13 February 2019, it had been agreed in principle to grant £7,640 in the 2019/20 financial year for the project to renovate 5 Tower Street subject to the necessary planning permission being obtained by Selkirk Regeneration Company and confirmation that other funding was in place to cover the total cost of the project. These conditions had been met and Councillors had agreed by email to release the grant. It was noted that, after payment, the remaining unallocated grants budget for 2019/20 was £2,183. In response to a question on property valuations, Ms Halliday confirmed that the five-yearly revaluation of Common Good fixed assets was due to take place before March 2020.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED within the appendices to the report:-**
- (i) **the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2020 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.**
- (b) **AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2019/20 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2019/20.**

3. **APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM SELKIRK MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY**

Selkirk Musical Theatre Company

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance on behalf of Selkirk Musical Theatre Company, formerly known as Selkirk Amateur Operatic Society. Within the application it was explained that the annual production had been a key part of the Selkirk social calendar for over 100 years. The organisation had an active youth policy and was currently doing extremely well in terms of youth and student numbers. However the cost of staging a production was increasing and was heading towards £30,000. The company had worked hard in terms of fundraising to help offset costs of the main production which would be held in February 2020. Currently the membership fee was £60 per season with discounts for youth members. A contribution of £1,500 was requested, which would be used to offset these costs of staging the production and to help those young people who may be socially or economically challenged. Members discussed the application and noted that the Common Good Fund had also provided a grant to the company for the 2019 production. However they commented on the importance of the organisation to the Selkirk community and noted the encouragement and opportunities given to young people in particular. They also recognised the significant costs of putting on the annual production and wanted to support this. Members agreed to grant the requested amount in full but in doing so did not want it to be assumed that the Common Good Fund would necessarily provide financial assistance to the company on an annual basis, as it was not the policy to provide ongoing financial support towards the operating costs of a single organisation within the community.

DECISION

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

4. **PROPERTY**

4.1 **Shawburn Toll and Embankment**

The Estates Surveyor, Annabelle Scott, explained that the public consultation, for ideas to tidy up the area, had closed on 22 August 2019. There had been a good reaction to the consultation with approximately 250 responses. The Estates section would look at the responses and bring back a summary to the next meeting. There followed a discussion about possible ways of raising money to use for improvements to the embankment.

4.2 **Access Road over Common Good land – Community Windpower**

Ms Scott advised that she had been approached by a representative of Community Windpower regarding a potential access route over Common Good land at Smedheugh and South Common farms to facilitate haulage of wind turbine components should Faw Side Windfarm proposal, submitted by CWL Energy Limited, be approved by Scottish Government. It was noted that the proposal would have a potential long term detrimental effect to farm land. Ms Scott had explained to the Community Windpower representative that a detailed proposal should be submitted firstly to the Estates section of the Council to

enable a report to be prepared for consideration by the Common Good Fund Sub Committee.

4.3 Peat Law – Borderlink Broadband proposal

Ms Scott had talked to representatives from Borderlink Broadband who proposed the erection of relay stations on the Peat Law and Foulshiels to extend their network and to enable approximately 800 residents and 120 businesses with signal coverage and the ability to connect to the superfast broadband service. The low profile relay system would host offgrid solar panels and a small wind turbine. Members noted that the proposed location on Peat Law was on Common Good owned land and part of Linglie Farm, but that the structure was unlikely to be detrimental and would not need servicing. Ms Scott had explained to the company that a detailed proposal with a site plan should be submitted to the Estates section of the Council to enable a report to be prepared for consideration by the Common Good Fund Sub Committee.

4.4 Victoria Park – car park

For Members' information Ms Scott explained that she had been approached for permission to use part of the car park at the Common Good-owned Victoria Park for occasional use for motorbike driver training. Ms Scott confirmed that the car park was included, along with the swimming pool, under the agreement with Live Borders. The request had therefore been passed to Live Borders for consideration.

4.5 Town Hall

Councillor Penman drew attention to the invasive weed against the clock face on the Town Hall building. Ms Scott confirmed she would check that action was in hand to remove this.

4.6 Green Shed

Councillor Edgar asked Ms Scott to ensure that the previously requested work to cut back the trees around the Green Shed and carry out repairs to the guttering was actioned as a matter of urgency.

4.7 Victoria Hall

Members passed on to Ms Scott complimentary comments about the appearance of the railings at Victoria Hall which had recently been painted.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED** the update.

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

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.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

6. MINUTE

The private section of the Minute of 12 June 2019 was approved.