

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the PEEBLES
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 23
February 2022 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chair) , H. Anderson, S. Bell, S. Haslam, E. Small
Absent:- Councillor K. Chapman, Community Councillor P. Maudsley
In Attendance:- Treasury Business Partner (S. Halliday), Solicitor (G. Sellar), Estates
Surveyor (T. Hill), Democratic Services Team Leader

1. MINUTES

- 1.1 The Minutes of the Meeting of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 17 November and 15 December 2021 were circulated.
- 1.2 With reference to paragraph 1 of the Minute of 15 December 2021 and in response to a question from Councillor Anderson, Ms Sellar advised that there had been a good response to the consultation so far but it would be helpful to receive more. The Chairman suggested that Members publicise at Community Council meetings.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minutes for signature by the Chairman.

2. BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2021 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Director, Finance & Corporate Governance providing details of the income and expenditure for the Peebles Common Good Fund for the nine months to 31 December 2021, a full year projected outturn for 2021/22, projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2022 and proposed budget for 2022/23. Appendix 1 provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2021/22 and showed a projected surplus of £3,914, for the year which was less than previously reported as a result of additional works at Venlaw Quarry. Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2022 and showed a projected decrease in the reserves of £51,797. Appendix 3a provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected rental income and net return for 2021/22. Appendix 3b provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing projected property expenditure for 2021/22. Appendix 4 provided a breakdown of projected property valuations at 31 March 2022. Appendix 5 showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 31 December 2021. The Treasury Business Partner highlighted the main points in the report and advised that although a loss was projected no disinvestment would be required. Councillor Bell queried the large increase in costs for the cleaning of Haylodge toilets in 2022/23 and Ms Halliday undertook to look at that again. Councillor Bell proposed that the allocation of £14,000 for grants in 2022/23 be increased to £20,000 and this was unanimously approved.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) the projected income and expenditure for 2021/22 in Appendix 1 to the report and the revised budget for 2021/22;
- (b) the proposed budget for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report subject to the allocation for grants being increased to £20,000.
- (c) to note the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2022 in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (d) to note the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report; and
- (e) to note the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 to the report.

3. PROPERTY UPDATE

3.1 Bookings for Common Good Fund Parks

The Estates Surveyor reported that the following bookings had been received:-

- Orienteering event - Haylodge Park in February
- Kenny Stuart Funfair – Victoria Park in April
- Family Event – Victoria Park in June
- Bike festival – Haylodge Park in September
- Trail run – Haylodge Park in September/October

3.2 Provision of Lighting in Victoria Park and Tweedgreen

The Estates Surveyor advised that she had met with officers from Street Lighting and Parks and asked for preliminary estimate for the works. These officers would not recommend extra lighting in either park but preferred the usual lantern style rather than bollards which they felt were more susceptible vandalism and required more energy to operate. Initial rough estimates for costs were provided but detailed design requirements needed to be understood before final costs could be confirmed. Members agreed that they needed more information before they could take a final decision and asked if a detailed report could be provided to the next meeting in June to include final costs and any other low impact solution that could be considered. It was noted that residents adjoining the park would also need to be consulted. With regard to the works on the steps it was agreed that these proceed now and not wait until a decision on lighting had been taken

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the park bookings;
- (b) that, subject to available officer time to prepare a report, a detailed report on the provision of lighting be provided at the Sub-Committee meeting in June 2022; and
- (c) that the Estates Surveyor instruct the required works to the Victoria Park steps.

4. HAYLODGE PARK TOILETS

The Chairman advised that a request had been received from Peebles Community Council to open the Haylodge toilets all year round. The Estates Surveyor advised that the cost for cleaning had been £300 per week in 2021. Weekend opening over the winter period was suggested and it was agreed that a paper be presented to the next meeting in June detailing the options and associated costs.

DECISION

AGREED that a report be provided detailing the options and associated costs of opening Haylodge toilet outwith the current schedule.

5. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There had been circulated copies of a request for funding of £1884.91 from the Peebles Christmas Light Association to purchase new “ribbon” bulbs and radio harnesses/shoulder microphones and speakers. Councillor Haslam advised that she did not feel the community benefit section was sufficient and suggested that the Association be put in touch with Hannah Lacon, Community Engagement Officer to improve this section of the application. Unfortunately due to an oversight Mr. Bruce had not been invited to attend the meeting to answer Members questions. The Chairman considered that the application should be approved but received no support for this. It was therefore agreed to continue consideration of the application to allow an improved application form to be submitted

DECISION

AGREED to continue consideration of the application to allow the Association to work with the Community Engagement Officer to improve the community benefit section of the application.

6. PRIVATE BUSINESS

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 Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. MINUTE

The Private Minute of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 was approved.

The meeting concluded at 5.50 p.m.