

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL HAWICK COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the HAWICK
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE
held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 25
August 2022 at 10.00 am

- Present:- Councillors C. Ramage (Chairman), J. Cox, W. McAteer, N. Richards, A. Smart; Mr J. Campbell (Hawick CC) and Mr W. Fletcher (Burnfoot CC).
- Apologies:- Councillors S. Marshall.
- In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Pension and Investment Manager, Estates Strategy Manager, Property Officer (S. Drummond), and Democratic Services Officer (W. Mohieddeen).

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair started the meeting and welcomed Mr Steven Drummond, Property Officer to the Sub-Committee. The Chair advised that the public business in this meeting was being livestreamed for public view and also recorded. By participating in the meeting, attendees have given consent for this. The recording would be available through the link to the event livestream on the Council website for public viewing for 180 days afterwards. The recording would then be automatically deleted after this time. Everyone was reminded that the Council did not allow any other recording of the meeting than this one.

1. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 7 June 2022 and the Minute of the Special Meeting held on 27 July 2022.

DECISION

AGREED

- (a) To approve the Minute of the Meeting held on 7 June 2022 for signature by the Chair; and,**
- (b) To approve the Special Minute of the Meeting held on 27 July 2022 for signature by the Chair.**

2. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – FUTURE HAWICK

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Future Hawick for £5,000 for assistance with wage costs for Hawick Welcome Hosts for the last five weeks of the project. The Chair invited Derick Tait, Treasurer of Future Hawick to present the application and answered questions from Members. Mr Tait advised that the Welcome Hosts project had gone well and that they were approaching 3,000 visitors welcomed to the town and there had been over 400 campervans since starting. Future Hawick had opened a visitor information centre which had been received positively in attracting visitors and people local to Hawick. Six hosts had been employed and assistance was sought for funding the hosts for the last four weeks of the season. In response to questions from Members, Mr Tait advised that a report on the Welcome Hosts would be compiled following the conclusion of the project and that funding sources were normally sought however circumstances had led the group to apply to the common good fund.

DECISION

AGREED to award Future Hawick a grant of £5,000 for assistance with wage costs for Hawick Welcome Hosts.

3. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – HAWICK HONORARY PROVOST’S COUNCIL

There had been circulated copies of an application for financial assistance from Hawick Honorary Provost’s Council (HHPC) for £2,500 to support the carrying out of civic duties in Hawick included the funding of outside catering and presents for those being recognised for what they have achieved or contributed to their community. As Councillors Cox, Ramage, Richards, McAteer were members of the Hawick Honorary Provost’s Council, quorum would not be achieved after Members declared their interest. It was therefore noted that the application would be referred to Scottish Borders Council for a decision to be made. In response to questions from Councillor Smart, Councillor McAteer advised that awards conveyed by the Hawick Honorary Provost’s Council were typically a medal or glass figure with an engraving to recognise those that make a contribution to the community. The HHPC also would participate in the Colour Bussing during Hawick Common Riding and would provide catering for the Ex-Service parade. Further activities included welcoming of groups from other countries. It was advised that funding was applied for from the Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee as the HHPC for activities that supported the people of Hawick and that there were no plans for other fundraising.

4. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND HAWICK ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

There had been circulated an application for financial from Hawick Community Council and Hawick Archaeological Society for £5,000 for a commemorative plaque and educational materials to mark the anniversary of a speech by American former slave, social reformer and abolitionist Frederick Douglass in Myrselawgreen, Hawick. The Chair invited Evelyn Jackson of Hawick Archaeological Society to present the application. Members expressed support for the application and noted the educational aspect of the activities and the appropriateness of the plaque to commemorate the speech Frederick Douglass gave.

DECISION

AGREED to award a grant of £5,000 to Hawick Archaeological Society and Hawick Community Council.

5. HIRE OF HAWICK COMMON HAUGH MOTORHOME PARKING AREA

A request had been made to the Hawick Common Good Fund Sub-Committee for exclusive use of the Hawick Common Haugh motorhome parking area on 29 December 2022 – 2 January 2023 and 24 March 2023 – 28 March 2023 by the Motorhome Fun Club. The Chair invited Derick Tait to present on behalf of the group their request for exclusive use of the area. Mr Tait advised the Motorhome Fun Club were a group of campervanners from the Central Belt that were regular visitors to Hawick, visiting two or three times per year, numbering between 15 to 20 campervans per visit, and that they were requesting exclusive use of the motorhome parking area and were prepared to pay for the section being reserved to their group. The Chair advised that Kenny Stuart funfairs usually apply for use of the Common Haugh during the March dates. In response to questions from Members, the Estates Strategy Manager advised that there may be some logistics considerations of cordoning the motorhome area during the Christmas holiday when some officers may not be available and that the Kenny Stuart funfair usually occupies over one third of the Common Haugh and that they normally operate until 10.00 pm each day. The Estates Strategy Manager advised that normally spaces wouldn’t have a cost and that charges would cover the cost of the service of cordoning the area as the Car Park Order stated that there was no car park levy. Mr Tait advised that the group normally all paid £10 elsewhere to cover

services including placing barriers in sites they occupy. The Estates Strategy Manager advised it would be appropriate to raise a nominal charge to cover the costs associated with services for cordoning the motorhome parking area. Mr Tait clarified that the group paid £10 per campervan elsewhere which the Estates Strategy Manager indicated could cover arrangements that would need to be made without costs to the Council.

DECISION

AGREED to:

- (a) Make arrangements for the Motorhome Fun Club to have exclusive, cordoned-off use of the motorhome parking area of the Common Haugh on 29 December 2022 – 2 January 2023 and 24 March 2023 – 28 March 2023; and,**
- (b) To raise a charge at the value of £10 per motorhome to cover the costs associated with cordoning the motorhome parking area for use by the Motorhome Fun Club.**

6. MONITORING REPORT FOR 3 MONTHS TO 30 JUNE 2022

There had been circulated copies of a report by Acting Chief Executive that provided details of the income and expenditure for the Hawick Common Good Fund for the three months to 30 June 2022, a full year projected out-turn for 2022-23, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2023. Appendix 1 of the report provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2022-23 which showed a projected surplus of £85,459 for the year. Appendix 2 provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023 which showed a projected increase in reserves of £21,118. Appendix 3a of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected rental income and projected net return for 2022-23 and actual property income to 30 June 2022. Appendix 3b of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected property expenditure for 2022-23 and actual property expenditure to 30 June 2022. Appendix 4 of the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio which showed projected property valuations at 31 March 2023. Appendix 5 of the report showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 June 2022.

DECISION

- (a) AGREED the projected income and expenditure for 2022/23 in Appendix 1 of the report as the revised budget for 2022/23;**
- (b) NOTED**
 - (i) the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023 in Appendix 2 of the report;**
 - (ii) to note the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4 of the report; and,**
 - (iii) the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5 of the report.**

URGENT BUSINESS

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to make an early decision or to keep Members informed.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors Ramage and McAteer, and Mr William Fletcher, 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. Councillor Cox assumed the Chair.

7. CORRESPONDENCE FROM HAWICK COMMON RIDING COMMITTEE

There had been circulated copies of a letter from Hawick Common Riding Committee that expressed concern at the condition of the buildings at Hawick Moor and requested to initiate discussion on addressing their concerns. The Chief Legal Officer advised that the Estates Strategy Manager brings a report to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to discuss the content raised in the letter.

DECISION

AGREED to request a report be brought to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee advising on the contents of the letter received from Hawick Common Riding Committee.

8. 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 2 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

9. MINUTE

Members considered the Private Section of the Minute of the Meeting held on 7 June 2022 and the Private Section of the Special Meeting held on 27 July 2022.

10. COMMON HAUGH SLUICE

Members considered an update from the Estates Strategy Manager on the Common Haugh Sluice.

11. VOLUNTEER PARK STAND

Members considered an update from the Estates Strategy Manager on the Volunteer Park Stand.

12. PROPERTY UPDATE

Members considered an update on Common Good property from the Estates Strategy Manager and the Property Officer.

The meeting concluded at 5.40 pm.