

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
November 2022 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors R Tatler (Chair) D. Begg, M. Douglas, J. Pirone, E. Small, V. Thomson, Community Councillor P. Maudsley
In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), Acting Chief Financial Officer, Estates Strategy Manager, Estates Surveyor (T. Hill), Democratic Services Team Leader, Trainee Democratic Services Officer.

1. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

In relation to Agenda Item 9(b), the Chair noted that the request for a meeting to discuss the running of the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee had been received from a number of individuals and not from Tweed Green.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of Meetings of Peebles Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 24 August and 14 September 2022 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE 3 MONTHS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

There had been circulated a report by the Acting Chief Financial Officer. The report provided the details of the income and expenditure for the Peebles Common Good Fund for the six months to 30 September 2022, a full year projected out-turn for 2022/23, and projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2023. Appendix 1 detailed a projected deficit of £10,037 for the year which was higher than the previously reported deficit on 24 August 2022, a result of an increase in the property repairs budget. Appendix 2 gave the projected balance sheet value as of 31 March 2023 with a projected decrease in reserves of £311,776. Appendices 3 and 4 detailed breakdowns of the property portfolio's projected rental income, expenditure and valuations for 2022/23 and actual property income and expenditure to 30 September 2022. Appendix 5 detailed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2022. It was advised that any reinvestment into the Fund be delayed until the end of the financial year.

DECISION

- (a) **Agreed the projected income and expenditure for 2022/23 in Appendix 1 as the revised budget for 2022/23;**
- (b) **Noted the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023 in Appendix 2;**
- (c) **Noted the summary of the property portfolio in Appendices 3 and 4; and**
- (d) **Noted the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 5.**

4. COMMON GOOD LAND PARKING

The Chair provided a brief introduction to the issue of parking revenue. While Scottish Borders Council owned both the Eastgate and Swimming Pool car parks, the revenue from which went to the Peebles Parking Fund, Greenside car park was owned by Peebles Common Good. However, the revenue from Greenside had been going to the Peebles Parking Fund and not the Common Good Fund as expected. The Chief Legal Officer advised that it was usual practice when assets maintained by the Council that they also received the revenue but she undertook to investigate further and report back at the next meeting. The Chair advised the Peebles Parking Working Group had started to consider parking issues in general in Peebles. In response to a question about Kingsmeadows car park it was confirmed that issues around a more efficient use of space that accommodated a larger number of cars, motorhomes and school/tour buses would be passed to the Roads Team for consideration and costing.

DECISION

AGREED:-

(a) **to add an item to the next agenda to consider a report on the revenue from Common Good owned car parks; and**

(b) **to request the Roads Team to undertake a review of the parking bay layout at Kingsmeadows car park**

5. UPDATE FROM THE PEEBLES STROKE GROUP ON USE OF FUNDING

The Committee welcomed the update from Peebles Stroke Group. The Chair proposed that similar updates should be requested from all previous recipients of financial assistance for the current financial year and it was agreed that any future recipients should be advised when funding was awarded that they were required to provide a report on the use of the funding.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the update.**

(b) **AGREED to request evaluations and feedback from funding recipients in 2022/23 if this had not been provided and that such feedback should be requested as part of any future awards.**

6. PROPERTY UPDATE

With reference to Paragraph 4.2 of the Minute of 24 August 2022, the Estates Surveyor provided an update and advised that the Jedderfield Bungalow renovations were out to tender with a closing date of 16 December 2022. It was anticipated that the costs would be considerably higher than first thought, due to additional work and rising inflation costs. It was requested that a special meeting of the Sub-Committee be convened to review the tenders in early January 2023.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the update.**

(b) **AGREED to convene a special meeting of the Sub-Committee in early January to consider the tenders received.**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Tatler declared an interest in the following item of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the meeting during the discussion.

7. USE OF PARKS UNDER CONTROL OF PEEBLES COMMON GOOD FUND

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Thomson presided over the following discussion. It was noted that there were inconsistencies in the charging of commercial businesses for their use of Common Good owned parks. Feedback obtained from local traders spoke

of a lack of anticipated revenue boost from the larger outdoor events and the lack of available public parking spaces during such events may have had an impact on visitor numbers to the High Street. It was mostly agreed that the issue of charging for commercial use of Common Good parks needed to be considered at a wider level across the Borders to achieve generic governance and consistency. To this end it was agreed to take the necessary action to have the matter considered at a meeting of Scottish Borders Council. In addition it was agreed that an agenda item be included at the next meeting of the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee to review the fees charged for commercial use of Common Good land in the past year.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) take the necessary action to have the matter of Common Good Land fees considered at a meeting of Scottish Borders Council; and**
- (b) include an agenda item at the next Sub-Committee meeting to review the fees charged in the past year**

The Chair rejoined the meeting.

8. MEETING REQUEST

In response to a request for a public meeting to be held to discuss the running of the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee it was noted that all meetings had been held in public both via a live stream and a recording that was accessible for 180 days following the meeting. This arrangement ensured transparency and accountability in the decision making process of the Sub Committee. Committee Members were also contactable by email which allowed the public to raise issues of concern. It was agreed that an Open Forum be held at the conclusion of the next scheduled meeting to allow a question and answer session with Members of the public. Members also agreed that in future an annual report on the work of the Sub-Committee be prepared.

DECISION

AGREED to hold an open forum at the conclusion of the next scheduled meeting and that the Sub-Committee produce an annual report on their work.

9. 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.

10. ROUND TABLE FUNDRAISER

The Chair put forward for consideration a request from the Peebles Round Table to occupy the Tweed Green Bandstand to host a Santa's Grotto fundraiser, the proceeds of which would be disbursed to community causes. The dates and times of opening were to be 3 December and 10 December from 12pm-3pm and entry fee was set at £5 for a single child and £10 for a family.

DECISION

AGREED to the request for the Peebles Round Table to occupy the Tweed Green Bandstand to host a Santa's Grotto fundraiser

11. PRIVATE BUSINESS

DECISION

AGREED That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as

defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the
aforementioned Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

12. **MINUTE**

The private section of the Minute of 24 August 2022 was approved.

13. **LEASE FOR OLD CORN EXCHANGE**

The Sub-Committee considered an application to renew the lease for the Old Corn Exchange.

The meeting concluded at 6:05 p.m.