

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL GALASHIELS COMMON GOOD FUND SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the GALASHIELS
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB
COMMITTEE conducted remotely by
Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 2 March
2023 at 3.00 pm.

Present:- Councillors H. Steel (Chair), N. Mackinnon, and F. Sinclair.
Apologies:- Councillor E. Jardine and Community Councillor R. Kenney.
In Attendance:- Estates Surveyor (J. Stewart), Finance Technician, Account and Reporting (E. Mihulka), Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall).

1. **MINUTE**

The Minute of the Meeting of the Galashiels Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 14 December 2022 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **MONITORING REPORT FOR 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2022 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/23**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Acting Chief Financial Officer which provided the details of the income and expenditure for the Galashiels Common Good Fund for nine months to 31 December 2022, a full year projected out-turn for 2022/23, projected balance sheet values as at 31 March 2023 and proposed budget for 2023/24. Appendix 1 to the report provided the projected income and expenditure position for 2022/23. That showed a projected surplus of £1,109, which was less than the previously reported surplus on 14 December 2022 as a result of an increase to the Central Support Charge. Appendix 2 to the report provided a projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023, and showed a projected decrease in reserves of £53,200. Appendix 3a provided a breakdown of the property portfolio, and showed projected rental income and projected net return for 2022/23 and actual property income to 31 December 2022, whereas Appendix 3b to the report provided a breakdown of the property portfolio and showed projected property expenditure for 2022/23 and actual property expenditure to 31 December 2022. A breakdown of the property portfolio, showing projected property valuations at 31 March 2023 was provided in Appendix 4 to the report. The value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund to 30 September 2022 was provided in Appendix 5 to the report. The Finance Technician, Account and Reporting, presented the report and highlighted that the proposed budget for grant expenditure remained at £500, which was an average for the previous 3 years. The projected depreciation of £54,309 was not a cash transaction, and was offset by a contribution from the Revaluation Reserve at the end of the financial year. Regarding the increase to the Central Support Charge, Ms Mihulka explained that the charge had been estimated at 2%, but there had been an uplift to 5%. A full review was expected in 2023/24.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the projected income and expenditure for 2022/23 in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised budget for 2022/23;
- (b) the proposed budget for 2023/24 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (c) to note the projected balance sheet value as at 31 March 2023 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**

The Estates Surveyor provided an update on plans to extract the timber located at the Ladhope Golf Club. Ms Stewart explained that the financial outcome of the extraction remained marginal with regards to profitability. The felling contractor preferred that a track would be placed which would provide access to the bottom of the woodland. Approximate pricing for that work had been received. The price of timber was beginning to improve, and therefore it had been suggested that it would be prudent to secure a detailed cost plan for the extraction. The preferred option for extraction would result in the least amount of disruption, but would still require access via the Golf Club road. The Estates Surveyor recommended that she would instruct the woodland consultant to produce a detailed plan of extraction, with exact pricings, to ensure that all parties were content with what was proposed. The Golf Club would require notice of the works one year in advance. In response to a question regarding how long the extraction could be delayed for, Ms Stewart explained that it would be possible to delay, but unforeseen events such as winter storms, and the ongoing effects of high levels of inflation, could have a negative impact on profitability. A detailed plan would provide Members with a firm idea of costs. In response to a question regarding whether Scottish Borders Council (SBC) could assist in the installation of the track, Ms Stewart explained that SBC could potentially undertake the work, and confirmed that the track, and its composition and permanence, would be subject to further discussions with the Golf Club. Members unanimously agreed to instruct the Estates Surveyor to proceed with the acquisition of a detailed plan of extraction.

DECISION

AGREED that the Estates Surveyor would instruct the woodland consultant to produce detailed plans of extraction for the woodland at Ladhope Golf Club.

The meeting concluded at 3.15 pm.