

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTES of Meeting of the PEEBLES  
COMMON GOOD FUND SUB-COMMITTEE  
held in Burgh Hall, High Street, Peebles on  
Wednesday, 19th November, 2025 at 5.00  
pm

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Present:- Councillors V. Thomson (Chair), M. Douglas, J. Pirone, E. Small and G. Ramsay (PCC)

Apologies:- Councillor R. Tatler and T. Hill (Estates Surveyor)

In Attendance:- Director Corporate Governance (from 17:25), Chief Finance Officer, Property Services Manager (G. Smith) R. McDowell (Community Learning & Development) and Democratic Services Officer (L. Cuerden)

## 1. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The Chair advised of an additional item to be considered under Urgent Business; a request from Property Services/Emergency Planning to store flood barriers in Venlaw Quarry sited on Common Good land.

## 2. MINUTE

2.1 There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 6 November 2025.

2.2 There had been circulated copies of the Action Tracker. An update was provided by Gareth Smith as follows:

- The request for Kingsmeadows toilets operating costs had been superseded by the fire. An update on the site was to follow in the Property report.
- Church wall – the matter was being taken forward by Councillor Tatler.

The Chair advised that Go Tweed Valley was to progress the audit of signage around Peebles. The Chair was to begin collating information for the 2025/26 Annual Report, which was to include detail on assets and fee charging structure.

## DECISION

**AGREED the Minute and NOTED the updates to Action Tracker.**

## 3. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

There had been circulated copies of a report by Director Finance which presented the Financial Monitoring Report for six months to 30 September 2025, a full year projected out-turn for 2025/26 and high-level forecast information for the following 2 years. Also included was the final Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2025 following the completion of the annual audit of the SBC Accounts. Appendix 1 showed a summary of the total cash income and expenditure for the Common Good fund, the balance of which created the cash balance held with SBC. This showed a surplus of £23,260 at 30 September 2025 reducing to forecast surplus of £13,776 by 31 March 2026. Appendix 2 provided forecast property costs by year. It showed actual expenditure of £11,442 to 30 September 2025 with an additional £47,907 of forecast costs to be spent by 31 March 2026, primarily on improvements to Victoria and Haylodge Parks. This is offset by anticipated rental income of £60,460 for the year. Appendix 3 provided information on the approved grant budget for 2025/26 with £3,137 still available

this financial year. Appendix 4 showed the value of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund as at 30 September 2025 (£492,863) and investment income of £23,375 to be received for the year to 31 March 2026. Appendix 5 showed the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2025. Chief Finance Officer Lizzie Turner presented the report. In response to a question about final costs for the Jedderfield Farm renovations, Chief Finance Officer agreed to report back to the next meeting. Regarding Haylodge Depot income previously expected for 2025/26, Ms Turner confirmed that the loss of this was to be shown in the next financial report. The matter of £500 costs for 'Haylodge Cottage' was to be discussed with Estates Surveyor on her return from annual leave. In relation to Haylodge Park costs, Mr Smith confirmed that the figures in the report related to ongoing repair and maintenance of the boundary walls and footpaths. In response to a query on the £15k operating cost for Haylodge Park toilets the following was confirmed: SBC currently operated one site at Eastgate toilets in line with Council policy, since Kingsmeadows Toilets had been vandalised; the £15k cost included cleaning, maintenance, supplies and Legionella testing; and the toilets would close if Members were to decide that the Common Good Fund was no longer to meet the running costs.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:**

- (a) note the income and expenditure forecast for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28 within Appendix 1;**
- (b) note the summary of the property expenditure and net expenditure by property in Appendix 2;**
- (c) note the grant budget available in year within Appendix 3; and**
- (d) note the current position of the Aegon Asset Management Investment Fund in Appendix 4; and**
- (e) note the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2025 in Appendix 5.**

## **4. PROPERTY UPDATE**

Gareth Smith, Property Manager, provided a property maintenance report which detailed expenditure totalling £1038.88 since 3 September 2025 as follows: £538.88 for work at Haylodge Depot and £300 for safety work to a large sycamore tree at Tweed Green. Members and attendees were alerted to the possibility that the tree was not on Common Good land. Mr Smith agreed to confirm the Common Good land boundary at Tweed Green and ensure that the costs were met by the appropriate budget. An update on Kingsmeadows Toilets was provided. Since the arson attack on 5 October, the immediate area had been fenced off and secured. Property officers had liaised with insurers and loss adjusters, whose final report was pending. A local contractor had been commissioned to clear debris and undertake a semi-permanent repair to the roof structure to allow safe working access and render the structure wind and watertight by 21 November. The associated costs to date totalled £5,395, to be reimbursed to the Common Good. An update was to be given at the next meeting on 25 February 2026. With reference to paragraph 8.2 of the Minute of 3 September 2025, Members heard the amended proposal to install gates rather than bollards at a second site in Victoria Park. Following discussions with the Neighbourhoods team, Mr Smith recommended the fabrication and fitting of two gates, one pedestrian and one for authorised vehicular access. The quote for this was to be considered under Private Business, and Mr Smith advised of his intention to obtain an additional quote. With reference to paragraph 2.2 of the Minute of 3 September, Mr Smith advised that as a result of further investigation, the remedial works at Ninian's Haugh/Priorsford Bridge was to include the following: clearing of the site; installation of aqua channels for drainage; and repairs to the footpath approach to Priorsford Bridge. The associated quote was to be considered under Private Business. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 26 February 2025, the Chair raised the matter of ongoing public concern over the condition of the trees on Tweed Green. Quotes for remedial work were to be considered under Private Business.

**DECISION**  
**NOTED the update**

5. **HAYLODGE PARK SHELTER CONSULTATION UPDATE**

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of 3 September 2025, The Chair introduced Richard McDowell, Community Learning & Development Officer. Mr McDowell gave a summary of progress. In relation to the Victoria Park shelter modifications, there had been a meeting between Aegir and some young people known to the CLD team to gather ideas and to start the drawings, preferably before Christmas to support external funding applications. The Chair confirmed that the costs were agreed and payment was pending. Aegir had also met informally with the U-16s rugby club to begin scoping the Haylodge Park shelter. A meeting with Kenny Harrow, Communities and Partnership Team had confirmed that external funding was required, though an initial investigation by Iain Gibson had found that funds were either closed or the project did not meet criteria. However, a fund for ironmongery was to open in March 2026 and an application for the Victoria Park modifications was to be submitted. The need for a public consultation on the Haylodge Park shelter proposal was acknowledged. An update was to be provided at the next meeting on 21 January 2026.

**DECISION**  
**NOTED the update**

6. **HAYLODGE PARK PLANTING PLAN**

The Chair updated attendees on recent discussions with Fiona Cameron, Parks and Environment Operational Manager as follows:

- Recruitment was ongoing for a new Parks officer;
- Officers were keen to liaise with Members in 2026 to develop the plan further, with a view to planting from October 2026;
- The acorns planted up by the school pupils were to be ready for planting out in another couple of years' time; and
- The siting of any fruit trees that may be gifted to the Common Good was to be discussed with Campbell Johnston at Eshiels Depot.

**DECISION**  
**NOTED the update**

7. **HAYLODGE ICE HOUSE**

With reference to paragraph 2.3 of the Minute of 3 September 2025, The Chair provided an update on a proposal to repair the Haylodge Park Ice House. Following a site meeting held on 31 July 2025, the necessary bat survey had been carried out and found no evidence of bats. As the site was considered unsuitable for bats, the subsequent hibernacula survey was unnecessary. The area around the Ice House had been cleared by Parks staff to allow safe access. Officers from Legal, Archaeology, Ecology and Heritage & Design were preparing to liaise with AOC Archaeology and Mr Richard Welander, the project proposer, with a view to bringing a report to a future meeting.

**DECISION**  
**NOTED the update**

8. **OPEN FORUM**

The Chair advised that no new questions had been posted to the forum. The Chair took the opportunity to highlight that the loan secured by the Committee from Scottish Borders Council was for £150k, and not £190k as initially forecast.

9. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.**

The Chair advised Members of a request from Emergency Services to store 200m of flood barriers on Common Good land at Venlaw Quarry, Peebles. The barriers were now surplus to requirements following completion of Hawick flood defences. In response to a question about the impact of their deployment further downstream of the River Tweed, the Chair referred to flood mapping work which had been undertaken previously and stressed that they were to be used only if safe to do so. There was also a request that the barriers be used in Tweeddale. On the matter of removal of the barriers to the quarry and for deployment, there was a request that a plan was put in place with clear responsibilities. Director Corporate Governance assured Members that the question around safe usage was a consideration in any final decision to store the barriers at the quarry, and there was to be a plan in place for their removal to the quarry and subsequent deployment. Members agreed to the storage of the barriers at Venlaw Quarry.

#### **DECISION**

**AGREED to the storage of 200m flood barriers on Common Good land at Venlaw Quarry, Peebles.**

#### 10. **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**

#### 11. **MINUTE AND ACTION TRACKER**

Members noted the Private Minute of the meeting held on 3 September and agreed the Private Minute and Action Tracker of the meeting held on 6 November 2025.

#### 12. **PRIORSFORD BRIDGE MAINTENANCE**

Members considered and agreed to a quote to carry out remedial drainage works and footpath surface repairs at Priorsford Bridge/Ninian's Haugh.

#### 13. **VICTORIA PARK ACCESS**

Members considered a quote to fabricate and install metal gates in Victoria Park. Further quotes for alternative solutions were to be brought back to the next meeting.

#### 14. **TWEED GREEN TREE POLLARDING**

Members considered a quote to pollard trees on Tweed Green. Further quotes were to be brought back to the next meeting.

***The meeting concluded at 6.05 pm***