



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

TUESDAY 29 MARCH 2022
VIA DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY

Committee Members Present:

Provost J McMillan (Convener)	Councillor C Hoy (from Item 4)
Councillor S Akhtar	Councillor S Kempson
Councillor L Bruce	Councillor K Mackie
Councillor S Currie	Councillor C McGinn
Councillor F Dugdale	Councillor F O'Donnell
Councillor J Findlay	Councillor T Trotter
Councillor A Forrest	Councillor J Williamson
Councillor N Hampshire	Councillor C Yorkston
Councillor J Henderson	

Council Officials Present:

Ms M Patterson, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services
Ms S Fortune, Executive Director for Council Resources
Mr D Proudfoot, Executive Director for Place
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance
Ms M Ferguson, Head of Corporate Support
Mr I Gorman, Head of Operations (Health and Social Care)
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Ms S Saunders, Head of Communities
Ms M Sullivan, Head of Development
Ms J Tait, Head of Children's Services
Mr J Baker, Service Manager – Economic Development
Mr S Cooper, Team Manager – Communications
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer
Mr K Dingwall, Service Manager – Planning
Mr R Edgar, Team Manager – Policy & Strategy (Planning)
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance
Mr D Henderson, Finance Manager – Service Accounting
Mr E John, Service Manager – Sport, Countryside and Leisure
Mr S Kennedy, Emergency Planning, Risk and Resilience Officer
Ms C Molloy, Project Manager – Development
Mr P Vestri, Service Manager – Policy, Improvement and Partnerships

Visitors Present:

None

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies

Councillor N Gilbert
Councillor J Goodfellow
Councillor G Mackett
Councillor P McLennan
Councillor K McLeod

Declarations of Interest:

None

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that the meeting was being held remotely, as provided for in legislation; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. She noted that the Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to six months from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded attendance by roll call.

The Provost reminded Members that the pre-election period had now commenced and that comments of an overtly political nature or which may indicate support for particular political party or candidate standing for election must not be made. In the event that any such comments were to be made, he would take appropriate action in accordance with Standing Orders.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the following meeting were approved:

- a. East Lothian Council, 22 February 2022
- b. Special East Lothian Council, 1 March 2022

2. MINUTES FOR NOTING

The minutes of the following meeting were noted: Local Review Body (Planning), 27 January 2022.

3. OUTLINE OF THE 2022-27 COUNCIL PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the proposed outline of the 2022-27 Council Plan for approval.

Paolo Vestri, Service Manager for Policy, Improvement and Partnerships, presented the report, advising that Appendix 1 to the report provided the basis for the new Council Plan, which would be presented to the Council for approval following the local government election in May. Mr Vestri provided a summary of the 2017-22 Council Plan, which contained 75 commitments and actions, and drew Members' attention to the progress made, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report. He noted that the recovery and renewal from COVID-19 (outlined in

Sections 3.14 to 3.16 of the report) would feature prominently in the coming years. He also made reference to the context for the 2022-27 Council Plan (Sections 3.17 to 3.30 of the report), which focused on financial constraints, demographic changes, economic growth, housing, public sector reform, climate change, and poverty and inequality. Mr Vestri highlighted the importance of partnership working and the need to take account of national priorities. He summarised the proposed objectives, themes and priorities for the new Council Plan (set out in Sections 3.42 to 3.44 of the report).

Councillor Currie asked how officers would ensure that the manifesto of the new Administration was incorporated into the new Council Plan. Mr Vestri advised that the political party manifestos would be reviewed during the election period, and assured him that the commitments of the new Administration would then be incorporated into the Plan. He anticipated that the new Council Plan would be brought to Council for approval in August 2022.

Welcoming the inclusion of the Residents' Survey in the process, Councillor Akhtar asked what the Council would be doing as regards employability and positive destinations. Douglas Proudfoot, Executive Director for Place, made reference to positive links to the business sector through the Connected Economies Group, as well as the continuation of the modern apprenticeship programme in a number of sectors. He also highlighted the benefits of working in partnership with other organisations on this issue.

Councillor Hampshire remarked that the challenges facing the Council would remain, regardless of who was in Administration following the election. He noted that the challenges would affect every service, but that the Council Plan would provide guidance to take these issues forward.

Speaking in support of Councillor Hampshire's comments, Councillor Currie stressed the need for longer-term financial planning, as the ability of the new Administration to make any significant changes in the short term would be limited. As regards the changes to service delivery as a result of COVID-19, he suggested that reflecting on 'lessons learned' would be helpful as the Council recovers from the pandemic, noting that some service areas would recover more quickly than others. He also highlighted the importance of recruitment and retention of staff.

Councillor Forrest thanked staff for continuing to work towards delivering the Council Plan during a very difficult period. In particular, he paid tribute to staff in the Housing Service for their efforts in tackling homelessness and to those involved in delivering more affordable housing, and also to those staff responsible for maintaining local amenities.

Councillor Akhtar drew Members' attention to the progress made in delivering the 2017-22 Council Plan. She stressed the importance of local decision-making. She highlighted the achievements of the Health and Social Care Service during the pandemic, including the delivery of PPE; the rollout of the vaccination programme; the contribution made by day centres, partners, volunteers and community groups; and the management of delayed discharge (noting that East Lothian was the top performing area in Scotland). She thanked all those involved for their efforts in keeping communities safe.

Councillor McGinn praised Council staff, community groups and volunteers for their contributions during the pandemic, noting that the new Council Plan would provide hope and aspiration, despite the challenges ahead.

The Provost concluded the debate by making reference to the strong leadership shown by the Council Management Team and to the partnership working with others. He commented that the Council Plan provided an opportunity for the Council to focus on policy development and deployment.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the update on progress with strategic goals, commitments and actions set out in the 2017-22 Council Plan, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- ii. to note the context, challenges and opportunities that would inform the development of the 2022-27 Council Plan, as outlined in Sections 3.17-3.40 of the report;
- iii. to approve the outline of the 2022-27 Council Plan, as set out in Sections 3.41-3.50 of the report, and summarised in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- iv. to instruct the Chief Executive to present a final 2022-27 Council Plan based on the outline presented in the report following May 2022 local government elections for consideration by the new Council

4. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2022

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the Council with an update on the Corporate Risk Register for awareness and approval.

Sederunt: Councillor Hoy joined the meeting.

The Executive Director for Place, Douglas Proudfoot, presented the report, updating Members on progress made since the report to Council in December 2021. He pointed out that a number of COVID-19-related risks (CR5, CR6 and CR7) had been reduced, but noted that this remained a very dynamic and challenging situation, and that current levels of the virus were high which had impacted on staff absence. He added that the Council was prepared for the recovery and renewal phase. Mr Proudfoot advised that new risks, relating to the war in Ukraine and the proposed National Care Service, had been added to the Risk Register. He also indicated that supply lines and labour costs continued to be a risk, and the financial impact of this would be closely monitored and reported to Council as required.

The Provost asked how often the Risk Register was reviewed. Mr Proudfoot pointed out that it was a live document, reviewed on a day-to-day basis, and discussed by CMT on a fortnightly basis. In addition, regular reviews were carried out by each service area. Scott Kennedy, Emergency Planning, Risk and Resilience Officer, added that he also reviewed service area risks regularly, with any new risks being added to the Corporate Risk Register as appropriate, and regular reports on the Corporate Risk Register were presented to the Audit & Governance Committee and Cabinet.

Councillor Hampshire highlighted the importance of the Corporate Risk Register, especially in the current financial environment, and at a time when East Lothian was undergoing significant growth. With reference to the proposed National Care Service, he noted that the Scottish Government had not yet made a final decision, but noted that this could present a significant challenge for the Council. He also referred to risks in a number of areas, including information security, and the impact of the war in Ukraine on Council resources.

The Provost welcomed the improved position as regards 'red' risks, and hoped that this could be sustained. He also made mention of challenges facing the rural economy caused by Brexit and the war in Ukraine.

Councillor Akhtar stated the importance of local decision-making in the management of risk. On the proposed National Care Service, she noted that this would need significant resources, and that there would be an impact on staff working in that field.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed to approve the Corporate Risk Register and in doing so, agreed that:

- This was a live document which would be reviewed by the CMT, SMT, risk owners and the Corporate Risk Management Group on a regular basis and reported back to Council if required;
- The relevant risks had been identified;
- The significant of each risk was appropriate to the current nature of the risk;
- The total profile of corporate risk could be borne by the Council at this time in relation to the Council's appetite for risk but in the context of the planned mitigations; and
- While corporate risks would require close monitoring and scrutiny over the next year, many were long-term risks for the Council that were likely to be a feature of the Risk Register over a number of years.

5. ALLOCATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID ECONOMIC RECOVERY FUND (LACER) 2022/23

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place outlining and making recommendations for the use of the Economic Development element of the 2022/23 Local Authority COVID Economic Recovery Fund (LACER Fund), and updating the Council on the 2021/22 ELC COVID Business Recovery Investment Fund.

The Service Manager for Economic Development, Jamie Baker, presented the report, informing Members that the Council had been allocated additional funding of £1,517,000 to support the recovery from COVID-19, with £758,500 of that being allocated to economic development (details provided in the table at Section 3.9 of the report). He noted that this funding would support 60 businesses, provide c. 20 grants of £15-20k to businesses for capital projects, and support c. 280 start-ups. There would also be funding for employability support and a number of local events. Appendix 2 of the report provided a summary of 2021/22 funding.

In response to a question from Councillor Akhtar on employability support, Mr Baker advised that there would be a focus on the rural economy and hospitality.

With reference to the SOLE project, Councillor Mackie claimed that some traders had not been satisfied with the rollout of this project, and asked if concerns raised had been addressed. Mr Baker advised that he and the Provost (as Economic Development Spokesperson) had recently met with traders and a way forward had been agreed. He added that the UK Government had extended the timescale for implementation. Councillor Hampshire explained that the SOLE project aimed to allow traders to market their business online as well as from their premises, which would have a positive impact on business.

Councillor Hoy welcomed the investment in infrastructure for retailers, but stressed the need for footfall to return to pre-pandemic levels in order for businesses to succeed.

Councillor Currie agreed with the proposed allocations of the funding, but was concerned that much of this funding was non-recurring. He highlighted the importance of footfall on high streets, noting that the retail sector provided thousands of jobs, and that it was vital to have a wide range of shops and good quality products and services available.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the additional funding, and also the advice and support that the Council had provided to businesses during the pandemic. He made reference to a recent article in the *Financial Times*, which had reported that East Lothian had coped well during the pandemic. Councillor Hampshire also welcomed funding for events, as these would attract more visitors to the area. He called on the Council to do what it could to assist businesses and protect the county's high streets.

Councillor Forrest was particularly pleased to see funding being made available to support start-up businesses and small businesses.

Concluding the debate, the Provost pointed out that local traders provided support for charities and other good causes. He highlighted the SOLE project as an innovative initiative, led by the Council, and he welcomed the cross-party and cross-sector efforts to support businesses and encourage digital working, thanking those officers and partners involved.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. that in line with LACER Fund Guidance (attached at Appendix 1 to the report):
 - to adopt the approach and measures outlined in Sections 3.7 to 3.9 of the report; and
 - that the LACER funding be managed flexibly, by the Economic Development Service, in response to feedback, evaluation, and changing economic conditions through 2022/23, within the targeted areas for intervention identified in this paper; and
- ii. to note the progress made with the Business Recovery Investment Fund 2021/22 (Appendix 2 to the report) and those areas where funds would be carried forward to 2022/23 to continue supporting businesses and the East Lothian economy.

6. RESPONSE TO DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4

A report was submitted by the Executive Director Place outlining the Council's response to the draft of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The report outlined some of the key points that required to be made and was supported by a full response (Appendices 1 and 2 of the report), which would be submitted to the Scottish Government.

The Service Manager for Planning, Keith Dingwall, presented the report, drawing attention to an amendment which had been circulated to Members. Mr Dingwall reminded Members that the Scottish Government had produced NPF4 in November, and that it was subject to consultation until the end of March. He advised that Community Councils, Area Partnerships and other stakeholders had been encouraged to submit their own responses to the consultation. He highlighted the key aspects of the Council's response in relation to the spatial strategy, including the delivery of infrastructure, reducing the impact of climate change,

restoring biodiversity loss, improving place-making, and addressing inequalities. However, there were some concerns about the spatial strategy, including the need for a joined-up approach to growth, and government investment in infrastructure. Mr Dingwall welcomed the reference to Cockenzie, Blindwells and the Climate Evolution Zone and their role in delivering sustainable and inclusive development. He referred Members to Appendix 2, which provided a detailed response regarding these areas. Mr Dingwall also stressed the need to maintain East Lothian's rural identity, arguing that this should be referenced in the 'Southern Sustainability' Action Area. He highlighted the 18 national developments set out in NPF4, noting that Cockenzie no longer had this status. On national planning policies, Mr Dingwall advised that the Council was in agreement with most, but had raised concerns with a number of them, as outlined in the response. On the delivery of the strategy, Mr Dingwall emphasised the need for an 'infrastructure first' approach. As regards housing land requirements, he drew Members' attention to Annex B of NPF4. He sought approval to the Council's response, subject to the amendment issued to Members.

Responding to a question from Councillor Akhtar on the 'infrastructure first' approach, Mr Dingwall confirmed that the Heads of Planning Scotland Group (of which he was a member) had done a great deal of work on draft NPF4 and he confirmed that all members of that group were aligned with this approach. Douglas Proudfoot, Executive Director for Place, added that the importance of 'infrastructure first' had also been highlighted in the Regional Prosperity Framework. Michaela Sullivan, Head of Development, noted that there would be further opportunities to raise this issue in future through the action planning process, following the finalisation of NPF4.

Councillor Findlay thanked Mr Dingwall for taking account of his comments which had resulted in the amendment. He stressed the importance of protecting agricultural land.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the report and proposed response to the consultation. He made reference to concerns raised by CoSLA Leaders relating to the central Scotland-based nature of the national plan, arguing that it was important to ensure that it delivered what was required and relevant for East Lothian. He was concerned at the potential for development in the countryside, and hoped that the Council's policies would not conflict with the national plan on this issue. He hoped that the Scottish Government would take the views of the Council into account.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the content of the report;
- ii. to approve the content of Appendix 1 (East Lothian's response to draft NPF4) (as amended) as the Council's submission to the Scottish Government; and
- iii. to approve the content of Appendix 2 as the Council's specific submission to the Scottish Government on NPF4 as it relates to Blindwells, Cockenzie and the Climate Evolution Zone [noting that there was a questionnaire for the submission of response to NPF4; however, this did not lend itself to specific submissions about important matters, hence Appendix 2 being in the form of a separate letter to the Chief Planner, drawing attention to important issues in relation to the Council's significant development proposals in the Blindwells and Cockenzie area].

7. REVIEW OF HOMEWORKING AND WORKSMART POLICIES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval for amendments to the Homeworking and Worksmart Policies.

The Head of Corporate Support, Morag Ferguson, presented the report, informing Members that since the Homeworking Policy had come into effect in September 2021, c. 200 of the c. 800 employees in scope had applied for contractual homeworking. She reported that the policy was working well; however, as a result of feedback and review of the policy, it was now proposed that the policy should provide more flexibility, and should allow those staff who can carry out at least 60% of their role at home to apply (it was previously 80%). She also outlined changes to the Worksmart Policy, which would allow local (non-contractual) arrangements to be put in place by managers and staff – this would provide an opportunity for staff, managers and teams to try homeworking without committing to contractual homeworking in the first instance. Ms Ferguson advised that the Trades Unions had been consulted on the proposed changes, and that, where possible, their views had been taken into account in finalising the changes. She indicated that both policies would be reviewed regularly to reflect new ways of working. She believed that the policies would help with recruitment and retention of staff, and would also feed into the asset management review. She noted that guidance would be prepared and issued to managers and staff, and that the Organisational Development Team would assist with the upskilling of managers to ensure that staff were properly supported.

Councillor McGinn asked about the arrangements for reviewing the policies. Ms Ferguson advised that future reviews would be aligned to the development of infrastructure and the progress of the Asset Management Plan. She believed it would be more useful to report back once milestones had been reached rather than set an arbitrary date for a review. Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, advised that a 'Town Hall' event had been held with staff, and that others were planned, the feedback from which would be used to further develop policy; this would be reported back to Council in due course.

In response to a question from Councillor Akhtar regarding support for managers, Ms Ferguson commented that remote management of teams was not new for all managers. She recognised the importance of communication, and accepted that interaction between managers and staff may be affected by homeworking; however, managers would be supported to identify methods to maintain engagement with staff. She also pointed out that a trial period could be put in place, with an opportunity to review the arrangements, and that staff could be asked to attend the workplace for face-to-face meetings.

Councillor O'Donnell asked if the needs of staff would be prioritised over the implementation of the asset review. Mr Reid assured her that the asset plan was being carried out in consultation with staff and teams, and that any feedback received was taken into account before final decisions were taken. He added that the Trades Unions had also been involved in the process.

Councillor Currie welcomed the increased flexibility, but questioned whether a review could be carried out on a policy where this was subject to contractual arrangements. Ms Ferguson replied that it was key to have flexibility within the policies in order to adapt to people's circumstances. She assured Councillor Currie that any future review of the homeworking arrangements would be based on enhancing flexibility rather than reducing it, and therefore there were no concerns about having to revisit staff contracts.

Councillor Dugdale asked if measures were in place to ensure the health and wellbeing needs of staff were being met. Ms Ferguson explained that senior managers were mindful of this aspect, and that through the Organisational Development Team, tips and guidance were regularly issued to staff regarding achieving a suitable work/life balance. She added that officers could draw on the two years' experience of homeworking to support staff.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the amendments to the Homeworking Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- ii. to approve the amendments to the Worksmart Policy, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- iii. to note that these policies enhance flexible working options for those employees whose roles can be undertaken from home to support the progress of the asset rationalisation plans whilst also supporting employees to consider flexibility as they prepare for a return to workplaces post-pandemic. The arrangements would also support the attraction and retention of employees.

8. REVIEW OF BUDGET DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources providing an update on the financial risks facing the Council for the period from 2023/24 onwards, and seeking approval for the proposed budget development framework and timetable to support financial planning.

The Head of Finance, Ellie Dunnet, presented the report, reminding Members of the financial challenges facing the Council, and noting that the scale of challenges was likely to increase in future years. She advised that in order to deal with these challenges, a new approach to budget development was required. She drew Members' attention to the outline proposals, set out at Sections 3.12 to 3.16 of the report. She undertook to bring back the detailed proposed budget development framework to Council in June 2022.

Referring to the financial challenges facing the Council, Councillor Hampshire welcomed the review of the budget development process, in particular that the process would start earlier and would involve cross-party working. His comments were echoed by the Provost.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the financial environment detailed within Sections 3.3-3.11 of the report;
- ii. to approve the proposed principles for taking forward the review of the budget development framework, including the establishment of a cross-party budget working group, as set out at Section 3.15 of the report; and
- iii. to note the proposed next steps for development of the budget and medium-term financial strategy for 2023/24 onwards, set out at Section 3.16 of the report.

9. ELECTION RECESS ARRANGEMENTS 2022

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval of the transitional arrangements for business management until the formation of the new Council.

The Clerk set out the proposed arrangements for dealing with urgent business during the election recess (in accordance with Standing Order 15.6). She also proposed that minutes of the most recent meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees be submitted to the relevant Convener for verification, and that the verified minute would be accepted as the true and accurate record with any further verification by Council

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to adopt the recess business arrangements as outlined at Rule 15.6 of the Council's Standing Orders during the period 30 March to 4 May 2022, until the new East Lothian Council is elected on 5 May 2022 (set out at Appendix to the report);
- ii. that any business approved under (i) above would be lodged in the Members' Library; and
- iii. that the minutes of the most recent meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees that could not be submitted to the relevant committee for approval be signed and verified as a true and accurate record by the relevant Conveners.

10. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place seeking approval to appoint the Council Leader as a director of the companies within the East Lothian Council (ELC) and Queen Margaret University (QMU) Joint Venture Company Structure (Holdco JV, Hub Holdco, and Hub Opco); seeking approval to appoint an ELC Project Manager within the Growth Delivery Team as a director of the companies within the Joint Venture Company Structure (Holdco JV, Hub Holdco, Hub Opco, and Hub Devco); and noting the continued appointment of the Council Leader (until 4 May 2022) as a director of Newco (which would become Hub Devco).

Catherine Molloy, Project Manager – Development, presented the report, advising that the Council was required to appoint a director to the bodies outlined above. She noted that these appointments would lapse on 4 May 2022 due to the local government election, and that new appointments would be made on the formation of the new Council. In the interim period, the Council-appointed Project Manager would have two votes to maintain parity.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the appointment of the Council Leader as a director of the following companies within the ELC and QMU Joint Venture Company Structure until 4 May 2022: (1) Holdco JV, (2) Hub Holdco, and (3) Hub Opco;

- ii. to approve the appointment of an ELC Project Manager within the Growth Delivery Team as a director of the following companies within the ELC and QMU Joint Venture Company Structure: (1) Holdco JV, (2) Hub Holdco, (3) Hub Opco, and (4) Hub Devco;
- iii. to note the continued appointment of the Council Leader (until 4 May 2022) as a director of Newco, which would become Hub Devco.

11. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE, 8 FEBRUARY TO 14 MARCH 2022

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources noting the reports submitted to the Members' Library since the meeting of the Council in February 2022.

Decision

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 8 February and 14 March 2022, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

12. EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL RECOGNITION FOR FORMER COUNCIL LEADER WILLIE INNES

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval for proposals to recognise the former Council Leader Willie Innes.

The Chief Executive presented the report, highlighting the contribution made by Councillor Innes to the lives of many people in the community over many years, and that in honour of his contribution, it was proposed that the East Lothian Youth Games, and associated trophy, and the Sports Award Scheme should be named after him. This would provide lasting recognition of Councillor Innes' impact on public life in East Lothian.

Councillor Yorkston thanked Ms Patterson and Eamon John for the report, remarking that it captured the essence of Councillor Innes. He spoke of Councillors Innes' passion for sport and its impact, particularly on young people, and also his active involvement with a number of community groups, including the Preston Lodge Learning Foundation, the Pennypit Community Development Trust, Preston Lodge Rugby Club, and Preston Athletic Football Club. He advised that the Rugby Club intended to install a bench at their ground in Councillor Innes' memory. He added that the respect for Councillor Innes in the local community was clear, and that the proposals in the report were a fitting tribute.

Councillor Currie welcomed the report, referring to the difference that Councillor Innes had made to his community and the respect in which he had been held. He agreed that the proposals were an appropriate tribute to Councillor Innes and would also bring comfort to his family.

Councillor O'Donnell thanked Mr John for his report, commenting that future generations would be reminded of the huge contribution made by Councillor Innes, especially in grass-roots sport.

Echoing comments made by other Members, Councillor Hampshire recalled the efforts made by Councillor Innes to establish a sports development strategy for the new East Lothian Council in 1995, and that, in doing so, he had attracted the support of a number of high-profile individuals. Councillor Innes had also recognised the importance of high-quality coaching, which had resulted in sports development coaches being brought into schools to work with teachers. This had increased participation levels in schools and links were created between

schools and local sports clubs. This, in turn, attracted the support of SportScotland. Councillor Hampshire pointed out that Councillor Innes had also been instrumental in improving East Lothian's sports centres, providing quality facilities in every community. He welcomed the recognition for Councillor Innes, given his contribution to the delivery of sport in East Lothian.

Councillor Bruce agreed that the proposals would be a fitting tribute to Councillor Innes.

Councillor Dugdale referred to Councillor Innes' ambitions for East Lothian, and his ability to realise these ambitions. The proposed tribute would serve as a reminder of his ambition and would also celebrate the achievements of young people each year.

Thanking Mr John for his report, Councillor Akhtar mentioned a number of sports initiatives in East Lothian, including the PAiS and Active Schools programmes. She noted that Councillor Innes recognised the importance of sport in terms of teamwork, skills and compassion. She described him as being 'ahead of his time'.

Councillor McGinn spoke of Councillor Innes' influence on him, and of the high regard in which he had been held by young people, coaches and staff. He remarked on his vision and his legacy.

Having been invited to conclude the debate, Mr John thanked Members for their kind words. He advised that Councillor Innes' family was aware that the report was being presented to Council and that they welcomed him being honoured in this way.

The Provost moved to the vote on the recommendations, taken by roll call, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve that the East Lothian Youth Games be named, from here on, as the 'Willie Innes Youth Games' and that the trophy that the secondary schools play for at the Youth Games be named and known, from here on, as the 'Willie Innes Trophy'; and
- ii. to approve that the East Lothian Sports Award Scheme be named and known, from here on, as the 'Willie Innes Sports Award Scheme.'

Sederunt: Councillor Bruce left the meeting.

VALEDICTORIES

As this was the last meeting prior to the local government election in May, the Provost advised that he would invite Members to make valedictory statements.

The Provost opened the valedictories by paying tribute to those Members who would not be seeking re-election. He thanked Councillor Henderson for her leadership of her Group, and for her leadership of the Audit & Governance Committee. He also commended Councillor Kempson for her contribution to the Council and to the Local Access Forum, on which they had served together. He wished Councillor Hoy well in his role of MSP. As regards the SNP Group, the Provost praised Councillor Williamson's approach to his work, noting, in particular, his role on the Licensing Sub-Committee. Although Councillor McLennan was not present, the Provost referenced his commitment to a number of key areas, including social enterprise and economic development. He paid tribute to Councillor Currie for his contribution to Council debates and for sharing his knowledge. On the Labour Group Members who were stepping

down, he commented that Councillor Goodfellow would be missed for his meticulous approach to all aspects of his role. He thanked Councillor O'Donnell for her work on health and social care issues, her role with Musselburgh Racecourse, and for her contribution to caring for Councillor Innes and his family. The Provost also thanked the Council Management Team, and officers across the Council, for their support.

Councillor Hampshire reflected on the past five years, particularly the challenges faced by the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic. He thanked all Elected Members and Council officers for their efforts to keep communities safe during that period. He paid tribute to Councillor Innes for his contribution to the Council, and conveyed his best wishes to Councillors Goodfellow and McLeod, who were recovering from illness. Despite all the challenges of recent years, Councillor Hampshire alluded to the Council's achievements, as evidenced in the report on the Council Plan. He wished all Members well, whether or not they would be standing again in the forthcoming election, and thanked them for their contribution over the Council term.

Councillor Currie expressed his gratitude to Council staff, especially during the pandemic, and thanked all Members for working together to find solutions. He paid tribute to Councillors McLennan and Williamson, and wished Councillor McLeod well in his recovery from illness. He made particular mention of the SNP Group's PA, Fiona Elliot, who had provided a high level of support to the Group. He also thanked his constituents for electing him as a Councillor. He spoke of Councillor Innes' contribution to the Council, and paid tribute the Provost and Councillor Hampshire in their respective roles.

Councillor Kempson noted that it had been an honour to serve her ward, and thanked Council staff for their support. In particular, she thanked her PA, Penny Short, and the Committees Team for their assistance. She wished all Members well for the future.

Councillor Williamson thanked fellow Members and Council officers for their help and support over the past 15 years, making special mention of his PA, Fiona Elliot.

Speaking on behalf of the Conservative Group, Councillor Hoy thanked the Management Team and officers for their assistance. He also thanked fellow Councillors for their support, and paid tribute to Community Councils and other community groups, who he described as 'unsung heroes'. He noted that being a Councillor had been a special period of his life, and that he had been honoured to represent his constituents.

Councillor O'Donnell thanked all those who had supported her, including those within her ward and the local Community Councils and Area Partnership. She stressed that every service in the Council was committed to serving communities. She thanked, in particular, Alison MacDonald for her leadership, commitment and expertise in health and social care, and also Peter Murray, the current chair of the IJB. She also made reference to the number of women in leadership roles in the Council, and made special mention of Wilma Grant, her PA. She expressed her gratitude to fellow councillors on the Musselburgh Racing Associated Committee, and to Carlo Grilli for his support. She also paid tribute to Councillor Innes, and to Councillor Hampshire who had supported Councillor Innes during his illness. She wished everyone well for the future.

Councillor Henderson expressed her appreciation for the advice and support she had received from staff. She made particular mention of her PA, Penny Short, and for the support she received when the Council moved to virtual meetings. She paid tribute to Councillor Goodfellow, with whom she had worked closely on ward matters, and to the Provost for his support.

Councillor Akhtar noted that had Councillor Innes been present, this would have been his last meeting as a councillor and he would have expressed his gratitude to staff and colleagues for their hard work. She thanked Councillor Hampshire for his support, particular during the past

year, and also the PAs, Wilma Grant and Carol Grandison. She also thanked the Committees Team for their work in introducing virtual meetings. She thanked her colleagues in the Labour Group for their support, paying particular tribute to Councillor Goodfellow, and to fellow Members of the IJB.

Councillor Dugdale thanked Council staff for their efforts over the past five years, especially given the challenges faced during the pandemic. She thanked in particular the Chief Executive and the Management Team of Education & Children’s Services. She also thanked Wilma Grant for her assistance and mentioned the support she had received from Councillor Goodfellow. She remarked that there were too few women in politics, and was sorry that her colleague Councillor O’Donnell would not be seeking re-election. She wished those who were stepping down well for the future, noting it had been a pleasure working with them. She concluded by paying particular tribute to Councillor Innes, Councillor Hampshire and the Provost.

Speaking on behalf of the Council Management Team and staff, the Chief Executive thanked Members for their kind words. She thanked all Members for their dedication, commitment and contribution to the work of the Council. She noted that it was a particular strength that Members were respectful of the different views and roles of others, and conveyed her best wishes to all Members for the future.

The Provost concluded the valedictories by thanking everyone for their contribution to East Lothian.

Signed

Provost John McMillan
Convener of the Council