



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MUSSELBURGH COMMON GOOD COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor J McNeil, Chair
Councillor J Caldwell
Councillor J Williamson
Councillor S Currie
Councillor F McAllister

Council Officials Present:

Ms T Brown, Finance Business Partner
Mrs F Stewart, Clerk

Applicants Present:

Ms E Neilson and Mr J Cannell (Applicants, Item 4a)
Ms C Ferguson (Applicant Item 4b)
Mr W Elgin (Applicant 4e)
Ms J Fairnie (Applicant 4g)
Mr M Blinkhorn, Ms I Visser and Mr D Wilkie (Applicants Item 4h)

Apologies:

Councillor A Forrest

Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Williamson declared that he was a Trustee of the Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau and would leave the Chamber for Item 4b.
Councillor McNeil (Chair) declared that he was a Council Representative on the Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau and would leave the Chamber for Item 4b.

At the request of the Chair, Item 2, Matters Arising, was taken at the end of the meeting.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a) Meeting of 15 November 2016

The minutes of the meeting on 15 November 2016 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3. FEEDBACK FROM ORGANISATIONS IN RECEIPT OF GRANT FUNDING

A letter of thanks had been received from Clark Community Choir awarded grant funding in December 2015. A comprehensive report of their trip to Champigny, France, together with photographs, was attached. The Chair stated that it was clear from the report that the choir members had enjoyed their trip to Champigny, the twin town of Musselburgh, and he considered that the award given to the choir was well deserved.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

4a Application for Assistance – Borders Scrap Store

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Elizabeth Neilson on behalf of Borders Scrap Store for funds of £5,000 to part fund the cost of a new van and running costs.

Decision

The Common Good Committee agreed by a majority to grant the application in part in the sum of £4,000.

4b Application for Assistance – Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Yvonne Cassidy on behalf of the Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau for funds of £9,999 to undertake building works and internal renovations at 141 High Street, Musselburgh.

Decision

The Common Good Committee agreed to defer this application to the next meeting due to being inquorate without Members McNeil and Williamson.

4c Application for Assistance – Musselburgh Golf Club

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Alex Chisholm on behalf of Musselburgh Golf Club for funds of £4,500 to develop the Shirehaugh practise area into a 6-hole mini golf course.

Decision

The Common Good Committee agreed to defer this application to the next meeting, to allow a representative from the Golf Club to attend the meeting and respond to questions from Members.

4d Application for Assistance – Neighbourhood Networks

The applicant requested that their application was deferred to the June meeting prior to today's meeting taking place.

4e Application for Assistance – Northesk Church

The Common Good Committee considered an application from William Elgin on behalf of Northesk Parish Church for funds of £5,280 to re-decorate the entire interior of the church sanctuary.

Decision

The Common Good Committee unanimously agreed to grant the application in full.

4f Application for Assistance – 297 (Musselburgh) Squadron

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Flt Lt AD Sinclair on behalf of 297 (Musselburgh) Squadron for funds of £2,800 to purchase a 2-Way VHF Radio Kit.

Decision

The Common Good Committee unanimously agreed to grant the application in full.

4g Application for Assistance – Vibrant Musselburgh

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Jane Fairnie on behalf of Vibrant Musselburgh for funds of £ 2,100 to support a programme of events as part of Vibrant Musselburgh Arts Festival, 26-28 May 2017.

Decision

The Common Good Committee unanimously agreed to grant the application in full.

4h Application for Assistance – Fisherrow Yacht Club

The Common Good Committee considered an application from Max Blinkhorn on behalf of Fisherrow Yacht Club for funds of £3,850 to cover the cost of mounting an exhibition in Musselburgh Museum, 15 June to 31 July 2017, and the publication of a commemorative book to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the club.

Decision

The Common Good Committee unanimously agreed to fund the application in full.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Old Craighall Residents and Tenants Association

The Chair stated that Old Craighall Residents and Tenants Association (ORTA) had been granted funding of £500 in November 2016 to purchase a self-propelled rugged petrol lawnmower and petrol hedge trimmer to maintain and improve the grass verges/hedges alongside the B6415 that runs through the village. The award of £500 was agreed by the Committee subject to the applicant contacting the Council’s Landscape and Countryside Team to receive guidance on the safe usage of this equipment.

The Chair advised Members that the Council’s Roads Engineering Team Manager had advised the Committee what legal requirements had to be met to ensure the safety of those undertaking the work as well as users of the public road. A Senior Solicitor of the Council had also counselled that the Council could be exposing itself to risk by awarding funds for equipment to carry out this activity. In view of this, the Solicitor had advised the Committee to review their decision to award funds to the applicant.

Councillor Currie stated that the Council should seek further legal advice on this matter as there was a range of activities which could expose the Council to risk. Advice received from Council Officers would mean that many individuals and groups seeking funding from the Council would need to complete full risk assessments and require public liability insurance before being eligible for funds. He was not comfortable applying these additional requirements to this applicant in isolation and stated there was a need to maintain a sense of proportion. He suggested that applicants for Common Good funding could either indemnify themselves against any claims or sign a waiver saying that they accept liability. He added that it was very commendable for a group of residents to wish to maintain the communal grass verges and hedges in their neighbourhood.

Councillor Williamson suggested that ORTA could approach their Area Partnership to discuss the matter.

Decision

The Common Good Committee agreed to defer this application to the next meeting in order to seek further legal advice.

Signed

Councillor J McNeil
Convener of Musselburgh Common Good Committee