



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2021
VIA DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY

Committee Members Present:

Provost J McMillan (Convener)	Councillor J Henderson
Councillor S Akhtar	Councillor C Hoy
Councillor L Bruce	Councillor W Innes
Councillor S Currie	Councillor S Kempson
Councillor F Dugdale	Councillor K Mackie
Councillor J Findlay	Councillor P McLennan
Councillor A Forrest	Councillor K McLeod
Councillor N Gilbert	Councillor F O'Donnell
Councillor J Goodfellow	Councillor T Trotter
Councillor N Hampshire	Councillor J Williamson

Council Officials Present:

Ms M Patterson, Chief Executive
Ms A MacDonald, Director of Health and Social Care
Ms L Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services
Mr J Lamond, Executive Director for Council Resources
Mr D Proudfoot, Executive Director for Place
Ms S Fortune, Head of Finance
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 S Cooper, Team Manager – Communications
Ms L Crothers, Service Manager – Protective Services
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer
Mr J Cunningham, Interim Service Manager – Economic Development
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer
Ms F Currie, Committees Officer
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Legal and Procurement
Ms K MacNeill, Service Manager – People and Governance
Ms C Molloy, Project Manager – Development Services
Mr P Vestri, Service Manager – Corporate Policy and Improvement

Visitors Present:

None

Clerk:

Mrs L Gillingwater

Apologies:

Councillor G Mackett

Councillor C McGinn

Declarations of Interest:

Councillor K Mackie declared an interest in Item 11, on the grounds that she is a member of Eskmuthe Rowing Club.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Provost advised that the meeting was being held remotely, in accordance with the Scottish Government's guidance on physical distancing; 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. He 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 Provost also reminded Members of the need to act in accordance with the Council's pre-election guidance and the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, given that this meeting was taking place within the pre-election period for the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary Election.

The clerk recorded attendance by roll call.

Order of Business

The Provost advised that Item 6 had been withdrawn and that a revised report would be presented to the Council at its meeting on 22 June.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the following meetings were approved, subject to the specified amendment:

East Lothian Council, 23 February 2021

Special East Lothian Council, 2 March 2021

Amendment – Item 1 (p. 19, para. 5, l. 7) – change 'support staff with additional needs' to 'support children with additional needs'.

2. MINUTES FOR NOTING

The minutes of the following meetings were noted:

Local Review Body (Planning), 19 November 2020

Local Review Body (Planning), 21 January 2021

3. COVID-19 AND CONCURRENT RISKS – UPDATE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COUNCIL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on how the Council had managed the ongoing response to supporting the national public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and concurrent risks relating to Brexit, winter emergency/adverse weather and coastal/countryside implications of easing of lockdown, and action taken in support of East Lothian's recovery and renewal.

The Chief Executive introduced the report, reminding Members that the Council remained in COVID-19 response mode, with business continuity plans invoked. She explained that the situation remained dynamic, and every part of the Council had been affected.

Sharon Saunders, Head of Communities, presented the report, drawing attention to the key aspects, including: the data on COVID-19 incidence rates; support for people shielding and self-isolating; support for local businesses (as set out in Sections 3.8 and Appendix 4 of the report); the mass vaccination programme (highlighted at Sections 3.9 and 3.10 of the report); support for schools (outlined at Section 3.11 of the report); work undertaken as regards digital inclusion; challenges within social care services (set out at Section 3.14 of the report); and the work required in response to the relaxation of restrictions. Ms Saunders also highlighted a number of concurrent risks faced by the Council during this period, including adverse weather and Brexit. In addition, she advised that a Lessons Learned Log had been maintained since business continuity plans were invoked, and proposed that an interim structured debrief for Members be organised for June 2021. Ms Saunders commended the work of staff across the Council and its partner agencies as regards the response to the pandemic and the continuation of service delivery.

In response to questions from Councillor Bruce on the return to normal service delivery, the vaccination programme and education, Ms Saunders explained that business continuity mode would apply while the Council was still operating within the protection levels and Scottish Government strategic framework. She noted that work was underway as regards the future use of assets and new ways of working and delivering services. On the vaccination programme, Alison MacDonald, Director of Health and Social Care, advised that issues regarding missed vaccination appointments had been resolved, and the system was now working well. On education, Lesley Brown, Executive Director for Education and Children's Services, reported that the SQA had cancelled all formal exams and had asked local authorities to put alternative models in place. The focus for all schools was now on ensuring that pupils had completed courses and that the required assessment evidence was in place. She added that Education Scotland was in the process of reviewing each local authority's processes, and that the East Lothian approach had been viewed positively. Ms Brown also advised that schools were timetabling assessments to ensure that these were manageable for pupils, and that pupils with additional support needs were receiving additional support.

Councillor O'Donnell asked if additional funding had been made available to support people who had lost their jobs or required to be retrained. Paolo Vestri, Service Manager – Corporate Policy and Improvement, provided data on benefit claims over the period of the pandemic. Douglas Proudfoot, Executive Director for Place, highlighted the support provided by way of business support grants, the focus on resilience and recovery, and partnership working with the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chamber of Commerce.

Councillor Currie asked questions about financial planning and additional funding for education. Sarah Fortune, Head of Finance, commented that the year-end arrangements were very complex, and that there would be a report on this presented to Council in June. She would engage with Members in order that they had an understanding of the short- and longer-term financial implications for the Council. On the additional funding for education, Ms Brown

advised that this had been used to employ additional staff, purchase devices and provide support for families in hardship. She indicated that additional teaching and family support staff would be based in each cluster to support the most disadvantaged families.

Responding to a question from Councillor Hampshire regarding the reopening of community facilities to provide activities for young people, Ms Saunders provided a summary of how community facilities had been used during the pandemic, noting their ongoing prioritised use for essential Education and Social Work meetings that cannot take place within schools and office workspaces due to COVID-19 Guidance. She reported that, with the relaxation of restrictions, some small-group face-to-face indoor activities and sport would resume.

Councillor Hoy asked for additional detail on the proportion of children who had fallen behind in their learning during the pandemic. Ms Brown advised that teachers were in the process of assessing the progress of pupils in order to ascertain what additional support was required. She noted that additional staff had been placed in both primary and secondary schools to assist with closing any gaps, and that that Pupil Equity Funding would be used to support the recovery. She advised that it was too early to say how many children required additional support.

Councillor Akhtar asked about the impact of the pandemic on the delivery of adult social care services. Ms MacDonald advised that new approaches to service delivery had been adopted, and that additional staff had been recruited to meet these challenges. She warned of the likelihood of additional demand on mental health services as a result of COVID-19, and that resources had been directed to support this service.

Councillor Dugdale asked for information on cases of domestic abuse over the past year. Judith Tait, Head of Children's Services and Chief Social Work Officer, reported that the impact of this was not yet clear, but that monitoring of this would continue on a weekly basis.

Councillor Forrest asked about the availability of information relating to various benefits and support. Ms Saunders informed him that this information was available via the Council's website and on leaflets which had been dispersed as widely as possible, including through the Citizens Advice Bureau and other third sector partners. Jim Lamond, Executive Director of Council Resources, emphasised the need to ensure that such information was kept up to date as the Council moves to recovery mode, noting that the Council's Benefits Team also had a key role to play in this regard.

Responding to a number of questions from Councillor McLennan as regards reviewing the Council's response to the pandemic and the involvement of third sector partners, Ms Saunders assured him that the Council's partners had been actively involved throughout this period, and that they were also fully involved in a number of the sub-groups formed to take forward the Council's response and recovery – she referred him to Appendices 1 and 2 to the report, which provided further information on these groups.

The Provost asked how multi-agency working would be developed in future, with particular reference to the CEG. Mr Proudfoot highlighted the effective partnership working achieved by the CEG during the pandemic, and hoped that this experience would provide opportunities to look at future service delivery. He also pointed out other economic development opportunities, including the future of the Cockenzie site and the ClimatEvolution Zone, and noted that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategies would require to be refreshed, which would impact on the focus of the CEG.

The Provost referred to an amendment submitted by Councillors Findlay and Bruce, which had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. He invited Councillor Findlay to

present his amendment, which related to Recommendation 2.1 (viii) and which proposed the following (revised wording in bold type):

[Council is asked to:]

- viii. approve the proposals set out in Appendix 4 and summarised in Paragraph 3.8 within the report, **except for the 'Visitor Beach Management project'. To satisfy concerns in a number of areas surrounding the ownership of the project's collateral, long-term viability and economic benefits, officers will provide additional details on the project to the Connected Economies Group (CEG) before the CEG makes a decision on whether to proceed with the grant or not. Council additionally notes that** officers will continue to report progress thereon through the CEG and that the CEG will oversee flexibility of resource deployment in the context of the deliverability of the identified interventions.

Councillor Findlay stated that his amendment was not a criticism of officers; rather, he wanted to ensure that funds were spent wisely. Drawing attention to the proposed funding to support business recovery, detailed in Appendix 4 to the report, he asserted that the Visitor Beach Management project was not a good use of funds. He noted that the CEG had been aware of the project for some time and had been happy to support it on a cost-neutral basis; however, funding of £29k was now being sought. Councillor Findlay commented that the benefits of this investment were unclear, it was not known how much of the required equipment would be owned by the Council, information on the procurement process had not been provided, it was not clear who would own the app developed for the project, and it was also not known if further funding would be required at a later date. In addition, he questioned how many visitors would actually use the app, and whether businesses would be charged a fee to advertise through the app. He was also sceptical about the long-term benefits of the project and if it would manage the flow of visitor effectively. He expressed concern about the impact of large numbers of visitors to the coastal areas of East Lothian, and did not think the app would stop people visiting those areas. He also questioned whether this project met the criteria for the business recovery and investment fund. He called on Members to support the amendment, which would allow the CEG to make a determination on the matter based on further information provided by officers on the project's viability and value for money.

Councillor Bruce seconded the amendment, noting that further detail should be provided before the project was presented to the CEG for approval.

The Provost then moved to the debate.

Councillor Hampshire opened the debate by noting that every service in the Council had been involved in the COVID-19 response, and that the response was ongoing. He made reference to the difficulties facing the Council as regards the relaxation of restrictions, and also the financial impact on the Council. He stressed the need for the Council to be prepared in the event there was another wave of the pandemic. He praised officers for the excellent response to the situation, and also highlighted the £600k investment to support local businesses in their recovery. As regards the amendment, he believed the proposed Visitor Beach Management project would help prevent coastal areas becoming overcrowded, and that the proposed technology would bring benefits. He noted, therefore, that he would not support the amendment.

Councillor Currie paid tribute to Council staff, community groups and volunteers who had contributed to the COVID-19 response. He also thanked senior officers within the Council for their assistance to Members, and made special mention of the staff who provide administrative support to Members. He recognised that the pandemic would have ongoing financial

implications for the Council, but also welcomed the opportunities as regards different ways of working. As regards the Visitor Beach Management project, he took the view that this would be part of a range of measures to improve the visitor experience, and that the SNP Group would not be supporting the amendment.

With reference to the procurement process for the Visitor Beach Management project, Councillor O'Donnell asked if further information on this could be provided. Carlo Grilli, Service Manager – Legal, advised that the Council would always seek to achieve Best Value and ensure that proper processes were followed. He offered to discuss this further with Councillor O'Donnell outwith the meeting. Mr Proudfoot advised that this particular piece of work would be delivered in partnership with the University of Edinburgh as part of the City Region Deal, and that the app would help support businesses in the context of making people aware of East Lothian's town centres and other attractions. He reassured Members that the CEG would have some oversight as to how resources were deployed.

Councillor McLennan thanked Councillors McMillan and Findlay for their collaboration on the CEG, as well as those officers involved. Whilst he appreciated the concerns raised by Councillor Findlay, he felt that the Visitor Beach Management project was an important aspect of managing the East Lothian coastline.

Councillor Innes highlighted the extent of the work undertaken to ensure the safety of East Lothian residents and to support local businesses and community groups. He also paid tribute to the staff for their efforts during the pandemic, noting in particular the work done by staff within the Facilities Management service.

Councillor Akhtar made reference to the success of the mass vaccination programme in East Lothian, noting that the delivery of the second vaccine dose had now been completed in care homes. She called on Members to work together to meet the challenges facing the Council.

Councillor Dugdale spoke of the work undertaken to move to home learning for school pupils during the lockdown period, which had been commended by Education Scotland. She also praised school staff for their work to support children and families during this period, and she thanked them for their ongoing efforts.

Councillor Findlay thanked staff in Economic Development for their work in supporting local businesses and disbursing grant funding. In particular, he thanked John Cunningham, new to his Economic Development role, for his advice and dedication.

These sentiments were shared by the Provost, who commented that the Council should be proud of its response, but should also reflect on the lessons learned. As regards the amendment, he believed that the issues raised by Councillor Findlay could be addressed without the need for the amendment.

The Provost moved to the vote, taken by roll call, on the amendment as proposed by Councillor Findlay and seconded by Councillor Bruce:

For (6):	Councillors Bruce, Findlay, Henderson, Hoy, Kempson and Mackie
Against (14):	Councillors Akhtar, Currie, Dugdale, Forrest, Gilbert, Goodfellow, Innes, Hampshire, McLennan, McLeod, McMillan, O'Donnell, Trotter and Williamson

The amendment therefore fell.

The Provost then moved to the vote on the recommendations as set out in the report, taken by roll call, which were agreed unanimously.

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the content of the report and acknowledge the unprecedented impact the COVID-19 outbreak continued to have on the East Lothian community, partners and delivery of Council services;
- ii. to note the ongoing COVID-19 response in respect of service delivery and interventions necessary to continue to contain the spread of the virus, particularly the ongoing deployment of Business Continuity Plans in support of National Guidance and appropriate public health measures;
- iii. note the progress in deployment of the East Lothian COVID-19 vaccination programme;
- iv. note the development of COVID-19 Community Testing symptomatic and asymptomatic testing provision in support of the Scottish Government's Community Testing Strategy;
- v. note the Council's achievement in distribution of extensive Scottish Government funding arrangements deployed with the East Lothian business sector;
- vi. note the complex COVID-19 funding arrangements and consequences for the 2020/21 year-end, and onward implications impacting on 2021/22 and future years;
- vii. note the ongoing relentless focus on engagement with the public through external communications encouraging compliance with Protection Level requirements, uptake of vaccinations and access to community testing provision, to constrain the spread of the virus within East Lothian;
- viii. approve the proposals set out in Appendix 4 and summarised in Section 3.8 of the report, noting that officers would continue to report progress thereon through the Connected Economies Group (CEG) and that the CEG would oversee flexibility of resource deployment in the context of the deliverability of the identified interventions;
- ix. note that work was continuing in accordance with the Council's Recovery and Renewal Framework and that the Council remained well placed to support communities in terms of both ongoing response interventions and the journey towards recovery;
- x. note that the Council Management Team would conduct a second COVID-19 Interim Lessons Learned Debrief in May 2021, and agree to conducting a COVID-19 Interim Lessons Learned Debrief for all Elected Members in June 2021; and
- xi. note that further COVID-19 Response and Recovery reports would be brought forward when appropriate, with particular reference to the implementation of the COVID-19 Scotland's Strategic Framework Updates and incremental 'relaxation of lockdown'.

4. COMMON GOOD FUNDS – BUDGET DEVELOPMENT 2021-24

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources considering the financial implications and ongoing risks relating to COVID-19 on the Common Good Funds,

and seeking approval of the budgets for Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh and North Berwick Common Good Funds for 2021/22 and indicative budgets for 2022-24.

The Head of Finance, Sarah Fortune, presented the report, advising that the draft budgets had been updated to take account of the 2019/20 year-end balances, changes in accounting procedures, and updated assumptions. She drew Members' attention to the risks and assumptions, particularly as regards the level of investment, as set out in Sections 3.10-13 of the report. She also pointed out that a change in accounting practices meant that depreciation charges now had to be reflected in the balances, and that the budgets would remain as draft pending the finalisation of the draft accounts.

Councillor Williamson made reference to a recent email by Carlo Grilli (Service Manager – Legal) on the current position with the review of Common Good. He welcomed the confirmation that further work on the review would be carried out following the Scottish Parliament Election, as he had concerns as regards the maintenance of a number of Common Good properties in Musselburgh.

Mr Grilli reminded Members that a comprehensive review of Common Good assets had been carried out prior to the pandemic, which had identified Common Good heritable property, land and buildings. He advised that he would publish a report on this following the election and that the formal consultation would take place as soon as possible.

In response to questions from Councillor Trotter in relation to the Haddington Common Good Fund, and in particular the situation with Haddington Town House, Ms Fortune advised that the refurbishment works to the Town House were scheduled to take place during the current financial year, and that Common Good funding would be ring-fenced for this work. Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, reported that the work to Haddington Corn Exchange had now been completed and that, subject to planning consent and grant approval, the work on the Town House would commence in July and would take 6-7 months to complete. Responding to a further question on the disposal of land and the associated proceeds, Mr Grilli advised that the proceeds from selling a piece of Common Good land would go back into the relevant Common Good Fund.

Councillor Innes commented that proceeds from the sale of non-Common Good land should not go into a Common Good Fund, as the proceeds from any such sales should be used for the benefit of East Lothian as a whole. Ms Fortune clarified that if that land was part of General Services or the Housing Revenue Account, then the proceeds would go back into the relevant fund, and if the land was part of the Common Good, then the proceeds would be returned to the relevant Common Good Fund.

Councillor Forrest asked if the Council was in a position to carry out the required maintenance works to Common Good buildings in Musselburgh. Mr Reid advised that the technical work had been undertaken, and that decisions would need to be taken as to the prioritisation of projects.

Councillor Currie welcomed the report and information provided by officers. He suggested that there was a need to establish long-term plans for the maintenance of Common Good assets.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the financial implications and risks relating to COVID-19 on the Common Good Funds; and
- ii. to approve the 2021-24 budget for Dunbar, Haddington, Musselburgh and North Berwick Common Good Fund, as set out in Appendices 2a-d.

5. EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL – FOOD AND DRINK INNOVATION HUB: FINAL BUSINESS CASE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Place informing Council of the content of the Food and Drink Innovation Hub Full Business Case (FBC) in the context of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

The Project Manager – Development Services, Catherine Molloy, presented the report, reminding Members that the Outline Business Case (OBC) had been approved by Members in June 2018, with funding of £30m being allocated through the City Region Deal, and £10m being contributed by the Council. She noted that the £5m previously committed by Queen Margaret University was no longer available, and that ways of reducing the costs of the project were being considered. She advised that the FBC had been developed in accordance with 'Green Book' standards, and had been submitted to both the UK and Scottish Governments in December 2020, with a further iteration being submitted in March 2021. She pointed out that formal approval for the Food and Drink Innovation Hub had not yet been received, but that positive feedback had been received from both governments and no material changes to the FBC were anticipated. The FBC would be considered by the City Region Deal Joint Committee on 4 June.

In response to questions from Councillor Hampshire, Ms Molloy confirmed that the Council had not received any formal feedback on the FBC; however, she assured Members that both the UK and Scottish Governments would not be raising any 'red flag' issues that would require material changes to the FBC. She also advised that the QMU Court would be discussing the matter today (27 April), and that there was nothing to suggest that they would be raising any concerns.

Councillor McLeod sought clarification on a point contained within Section 4.2.4 of the FBC (Funding Plan), which indicated that that the Council would make a £6m capital contribution and had sufficient reserves to make such a contribution. Ms Molloy confirmed that the wording should reflect 'sufficient capital' rather than 'sufficient reserves'.

On project risks, Ms Molloy assured Members that the risk register would be reviewed to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures would be in place, and that this aspect would be brought before Members for consideration. Mr Proudfoot added that the risk register would be further developed as regards the commercial and delivery arrangements.

Councillor McMillan asked if the management and governance arrangements (set out in Section 5.2 of the FBC) were like to change in future. Mr Proudfoot suggested that the detail around the key principles may evolve, but would still be within the principles set out in the FBC.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the report and the work carried out by officers to get to this stage. He highlighted the importance of the Food and Drink Innovation Hub as regards research, security and sustainability of future food supplies, farming, and consumer behaviour. He believed the establishment of this facility would benefit East Lothian and Scotland, and would also lead to the creation of many jobs.

Councillor Currie welcomed the opportunities this facility would bring to East Lothian, and emphasised the importance of effective partnership working between the Council and QMU. He looked forward to Members having the opportunity to scrutinise the project. He also commented that the establishment of the Food and Drink Hub would assist with the COVID-19 recovery in East Lothian.

Councillor Forrest also spoke of the benefits this facility would have to East Lothian, in terms of investment, education and progressive thinking.

The Provost concluded the debate by echoing the comments of other Members, and adding that this facility would build on East Lothian's agricultural legacy.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the terms of the Full Business Case, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- ii. to delegate to the Head of Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Spokesperson for Economic Development and Tourism, the authority to make any non-material amendments to the Full Business Case that may be required by either the UK or Scottish Governments prior to 4 June 2021.

6. NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENTS

The Convener advised that this report had been withdrawn.

7. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OFFICERS AND STATUTORY OFFICERS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources advising the Council of the decisions of the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee to appoint Chief Officers, resulting from the review of the Council's Chief Officer structure approved by Council on 27 October 2020, and seeking approval of statutory officer appointments.

Kirstie MacNeill, Service Manager – People and Governance, presented the report, drawing Members' attention to the recruitment process, as set out in Section 3.1 of the report, and to the appointment of Chief Officers, as set out at Section 3.2 of the report. She advised that the Council was required to approve the appointment of three statutory officers, outlined in Section 3.3 of the report.

Councillor Henderson questioned the appointment of the Monitoring Officer when that person was not yet in post. Mrs MacNeill advised that approving the appointment to that post now (effective from 1 July 2021) would avoid the need to bring a further report to Council, and that she (Mrs MacNeill) would continue to act as Monitoring Officer until the new Head of Corporate Support was in post.

Councillor Hampshire welcomed the appointment of the new Chief Officers, believing that those appointed would be in a position to meet the challenges facing the Council.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to note the decisions of the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee to make the appointments set out within Section 3.2 of the report; and
- ii. to approve the following statutory officer appointments:
 - Chief Social Work Officer – Judith Tait, Head of Children’s Services
 - Section 95 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) – Sarah Fortune, Head of Finance
 - Monitoring Officer – Morag Ferguson, Head of Corporate Support (with effect from 1 July 2021)

8. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Council Resources seeking approval of the Schedule of Meetings of the Council, committees and other forums for 2021/22.

The Clerk advised that, as 2022 was a local government election year, the Council would move into recess at the end of March 2022, with the first meeting of the new Council scheduled for 24 May 2022. A schedule for the remainder of May and June 2022 would be brought to Council for approval at a later date.

Councillor Currie raised the matter of resuming face-to-face Council meetings. The Clerk advised that options were currently being explored, and that any plans to resume physical meetings would need to take account of scheduled works to Haddington Town House.

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

Decision

The Council agreed:

- i. to approve the Schedule of Meetings for 2021/22;
- ii. to note that the date of the budget-setting meeting would be set at a later date; and
- iii. to note that the schedule would be subject to change, and that any changes would be communicated to Members and officers as soon as practicable.

9. SUBMISSIONS TO THE MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE, 3 DECEMBER 2020 TO 9 APRIL 2021

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 December 2020, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Currie commented on the extent of the work undertaken under delegated powers during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. He paid tribute to Council staff for continuing to deliver services during this period.

Councillor Goodfellow made reference to the 2020/21 rent consultation exercise, noting that 89% of tenants had indicated they were satisfied with how the Council consults with them on rent levels.

Decision

The Council agreed to note the reports submitted to the Members' Library Service between 3 December 2020 and 9 April 2021, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS – EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Council unanimously agreed to exclude the public from the following business containing exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 6 (information concerning the financial or business affairs of any particular person other than the Authority) of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal – Food and Drink Innovation Hub: Commercial Heads of Terms

A private report by the Executive Director for Place regarding Commercial Heads of Terms in relation to the Food and Drink Innovation Hub was approved.

Application for Funding to Musselburgh Common Good Committee

An application for funding of £95,000 submitted to the Musselburgh Common Good Committee by Eskmuthe Rowing Club was approved, subject to conditions.