



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET

TUESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWNHOUSE, HADDINGTON/
DIGITAL MEETING FACILITY

Cabinet Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar	Councillor F Dugdale
Councillor A Forrest	Councillor N Hampshire (Convener)
Councillor C McGinn	Councillor J McMillan

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor L Allan (r)	Councillor G McGuire
Councillor S McIntosh (r)	

Council Officials Present:

Mr L Rockey, Chief Executive
Ms L Brown, Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities
Ms S Fortune, Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
Ms H Barnett, Head of Corporate Support
Ms L Byrne, Head of Children’s Services
Ms E Dunnet, Head of Finance
Mr E John, Head of Communities & Partnerships
Ms W McGuire, Head of Housing
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Mr S Kennedy, Team Manager – Emergency Planning & Resilience
Mr S Cooper, Service Manager - Communications
Ms L Alexander, Policy Officer (Equalities)
Mr C Grilli, Service Manager – Governance
Mr P Ritchie, Service Manager – People & Council Support
Ms M Cockburn, Transformation & Digital Portfolio Manager
Ms S Moore, Team Manager - Procurement
Mr P Forsyth, Project Manager – Growth & Sustainability
Mr I King, Team Manager – Asset & Regulatory

Clerk:

Ms F Currie
Ms E Barclay (Meeting Administrator)

Apologies:

None

(r) = remote attendee

Declarations of Interest:

Item 6 – Councillor Dugdale advised that she was a CoSLA-appointed member of the SSTA board. However, she did not consider this interest to be of a degree which required her absence from the meeting during this item.

The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting which was being held via the hybrid system as provided for in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

The clerk advised that the meeting was being webcast live via the Council's website in order to allow the public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. East Lothian Council was the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention, and a recording of the meeting would be publicly available for five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk confirmed the attendance of Cabinet members by roll call.

The Convener announced that there would a half hour adjournment at 10.45am to allow participants to join the national two minute silence at 11am.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL: CABINET, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet on 9 September 2025 were approved.

2. CABINET ACTION NOTE

The Members agreed to the closure of Item 25/01 in the Action Note.

3. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the Corporate Risk Register as at 21 October 2025 for discussion, comment and approval.

The Team Manager – Emergency Planning & Resilience, Scott Kennedy, presented the report providing a summary of the risk matrix, report recommendations and drawing attention to the number and level of risks currently contained in the Corporate Risk Register.

Officers responded to questions from Members on management of risks associated with homelessness applications, cybersecurity, community resilience, financial reporting and addressing ongoing funding pressures, and the assessment of the risk associated with flooding and coastal erosion.

There followed a debate, with Members commenting on how the register encapsulated not only key risks and pressures but also the Council's main priorities and statutory duties. They expressed concern about the impact of underfunding on the Council's ability to meet its statutory obligations and the importance of continuing to raise these matters at the highest level. They welcomed the work being done by officers to manage the risks and continue delivering effective services for the people of East Lothian.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed, unanimously, by roll call vote, to approve the Corporate Risk Register and, in doing so:

- i. Noted that the Corporate Risk Register was maintained as a 'live' document which would be reviewed by the Council Management Team (CMT), the CMT sub-group on Risk Management, Service Management Teams (SMT), risk owners and the Corporate Risk Management Group on a regular basis and reported back to Council as and when required.
- ii. Agreed that the relevant risks had been identified.
- iii. Agreed that the significance of each risk was appropriate to the current nature of the risk.
- iv. Agreed that 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.
- v. Recognised that, while Corporate Risks required 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.

4. EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL EQUALITY PLAN 2025-2029

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy providing Cabinet with the final version of the East Lothian Council Equality Plan 2025-2029 for consideration and approval.

The Service Manager - Communications, Stewart Cooper, presented the report setting out the background and key content of the mainstreaming report and the revised outcomes in the Plan for 2025-2029. He confirmed that detailed actions would be progressed once the Plan was approved.

Officers responded to questions from Members on the revision and delivery of staff training, encouraging community partners and work done on supporting families through the cost of living crisis and the need to ensure that the wording of the Plan complies with legislation and the recent Supreme Court judgement.

In response to further questions from Members, officers agreed: to ensure that the wording in the Plan aligned with the Supreme Court's ruling on the definition of sex in the Equality Act 2010; to provide information on the mechanisms in place to ensure cross service coordination and funding, to support the implementation of the Plan, work as collaboratively as possible; to confirm whether bystander training to respond to violence against women and girls was included in the training modules available to staff; and to consider whether training on Understanding Sexual Abuse and Understanding Sexual Violence should be made mandatory for staff.

There followed a debate, where Members welcomed the progress made under the previous Plan, and the positive examples of collaborative working and improving outcomes for children and young people. They commended the new Plan as ambitious and aspirational and building on previous actions to tackle inequalities.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed unanimously, by roll call vote, to:

- i. Approve the East Lothian Council Equality Plan 2025-2029.
- ii. Note that a detailed action plan based on the six outcomes and 25 new actions would be progressed and reported publicly through biennial Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Reports.

5. ACCESS TO INFORMATION POLICY

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy requesting approval of the new Access to Information Policy for corporate adoption, including a new approach to charging for environmental information requests under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 ('the EIRs').

The Service Manager - Governance, Carlo Grilli, presented the report outlining the background and new approach to charging for EIRs. He hoped that this new policy would improve overall governance and increase awareness and transparency.

Mr Grilli responded to questions from Members on the process for considering charges for redaction of sensitive information and the Council's duty to assist individuals making a FOI or EIR request. He also confirmed the development of an improved publication scheme to ensure that as much information as possible was publicly available. However, he cautioned that this was likely to be a work in progress for some time to come.

There followed a debate, with Members welcoming the focus on transparency and on ensuring as much information as possible was publicly available. They noted the variety of routes for accessing information, the increasing number of requests and the resulting pressure on officer time.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed unanimously, by roll call vote, to approve the new policy for adoption.

6. ANNUAL PENSION REPORT 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy summarising the early retirement activity within the financial year 2024/25, in accordance with External Audit requirements and Council Policy.

The Service Manager – People & Council Support, Paul Ritchie, presented the report highlighting key aspects for the benefit of Members.

There were no questions or comments on this report.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed unanimously, by roll call vote, to:

- i. Note the content of the report with regard to the pension activity in respect of early retirements in the financial year 2024/25.
- ii. Agree that future reports were lodged in the Members' Library.

7. ELC PROCUREMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy informing Cabinet of East Lothian Council's Annual Procurement Report for financial year 2024-2025.

The Team Manager - Procurement, Susan Moore presented the report drawing attention to some of the key findings from the monitoring and review of work under the current procurement strategy.

Ms Moore and the Transformation & Digital Portfolio Manager, Michelle Cockburn, replied to questions from Members on work being done to encourage local spend and community wealth building, and the support available to local businesses to bid for contracts. Ms Cockburn agreed to provide further information to Councillor Allan. Ms Moore gave an update on progress with the actions identified in the report.

There followed a debate, with Members welcoming the outcomes and processes highlighted in the report and the collaboration with suppliers and others to maximise community benefit. They also praised the increase in the number of local suppliers and modern apprenticeship opportunities.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

There was a half hour break in the meeting.

8. OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS TO263/25, TO264/25 AND TO268/25 – INTRODUCTION AND AMENDMENTS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS, VARIOUS ROADS, MUSSELBURGH

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy asking Cabinet to acknowledge and set aside objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), TO263/25, TO264/25 and TO268/25.

The Project Manager – Growth & Sustainability, Peter Forsyth, presented the report. And responded to a question from the Convener on the arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the proposals and continue dialogue with the local community.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed unanimously, by roll call vote, to note the objections received to the advertised TROs; set aside these objections; and give approval to make the necessary Orders.

9. VARIOUS ROADS – EAST LOTHIAN, INTRODUCTION AND AMENDMENTS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS, NOVEMBER 2025

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy seeking Cabinet approval of the statutory procedures necessary to make and amend TROs to prohibit waiting, loading & unloading, introduce new and amend some speed limits, amend driving prohibition times at a school in Haddington and Stop Up a section of carriageway to facilitate an amended road layout for a new Council housing development.

The Team Manager – Asset & Regulatory, Ian King, presented the report and replied to a question from Councillor Akhtar on the timetable for implementation of the proposed TROs.

There followed a debate, with Members welcoming the proposals, commenting on the need for enforcement to address and encourage changes in driver behaviour and noting that these measures would help to improve safety and were supported by local communities.

The Convener moved to a roll call on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed unanimously, by roll call vote, to:

- i. Approve the statutory procedures necessary to initiate, consider any objections and make or amend Traffic Regulation Orders in accordance with the relevant legislation in respect of locations and proposals listed in Appendix A, B, C and D.
- ii. Instruct the Head of Infrastructure to report back to the Cabinet if representations to the proposed Orders are received and are subsequently not withdrawn.

Signed

Councillor Norman Hampshire
Council Leader and Convener of Cabinet

The webcast for this meeting will be available at the link below for five years from the date of the meeting: https://eastlothian.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1034391