



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMON GOOD COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY 27 JANUARY, 10AM
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON
AND VIA HYBRID MEETING FACILITY**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor Akhtar
Councillor Allan (remote)
Councillor Bennett (remote)
Councillor Cassini (remote)
Councillor Collins (remote)
Councillor Forrest
Councillor Hampshire
Councillor McFarlane
Councillor McGuire
Councillor McIntosh (remote)
Councillor McMillan – Convener

Council Officials Present:

Mr I Forrest, Solicitor
Carlo Grilli, Service Manager - Governance
Matthew Conlon, Interim Principal Accountant
Doug Haig, Connected Communities Manager – North Berwick
Scott McKail, Connected Communities Manager - Musselburgh
Justine Wishart, Community Development Officer
Tanya Murray, Principal Solicitor
Elizabeth Gibson, Council Resources (observing)
Mrs M Scott, Clerk

Apologies:

Councillor Findlay
Councillor Jardine
Councillor Trotter

Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Forrest declared an interest in items 4c, 4d, 4f and 4g.

Transparency Statements:

Councillor McMillan made a statement to make Members aware he was a Council's Veterans Champion and was until recently a member of the Scout Committee, is a Rotarian and sits on the board of Enjoy Leisure but confirmed he had no direct connection with any of the applications.

The Convener advised that the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting, 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. 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 five years from the date of the meeting.

The clerk recorded the attendance of Members by roll call.

1. MINUTES OF THE COMMON GOOD COMMITTEE 4 SEPTEMBER 2025 FOR APPROVAL

Minutes of the Common Good Committee 13 November 2025 were approved.

2. COMMON GOOD BUDGET UPDATE

Matthew Conlon, Interim Principal Accountant presented his report to Committee which highlighted the grant and repairs and maintenance positions against the Common Good budget as of December 2025. He drew Members attention to the £74,296 worth of expenditure against the grants budget, £75,132 of expenditure against the overall repairs budget, the expenditure associated with St Margaret's Clubhouse at Winterfield Golf Club and drew out the rules around the scheme of administration.

Mr Conlon answered questions from Members. He agreed to look at implementing further data relating to income to the Common Good funds for future reports, confirmed that a new budget would be available to all Common Good funds on the 1st of April 2026 and stated any number of proposals could be made in regard to the individual Common Good budgets, which would then have to be taken through the natural process and voted on.

Decision

Members were happy to note the report.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS – EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Committee agreed to exclude the public from the following business containing exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

PRIVATE

3. SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS

A summary of Common Good applications was provided to Committee.

4. APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION:

a) Veterans of North Berwick

The North Berwick Veterans submitted an application for £1000 for the Commando Run. Mr Doug Haig, Connected Communities Manager – North Berwick provided some background information on the organisation and details of the event. He noted the

organisers had already been working with officers in event planning and landscape and countryside, have arranged a SAG meeting for the event and have engaged Blast Running Limited who are an organisation with experience of planning road races such as this one.

Mr Haig responded to questions from Members, confirming there is hope if the event is successful that it could become an annual event, and he did believe the event would be extremely popular so if the application was successful organisers would need to be mindful of this.

Mr Haig noted his colleagues did not believe the Common Good was the correct place for this application as it may set a future precedent and although starting and finishing in North Berwick was perhaps not to the benefit of the town. Discussion took place between Members around the competency checks of applications and the possibility of implementing a condition if the application was successful. It was confirmed by the Solicitor that conditions could not be added when supporting a grant.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application noting their support for the event and the likelihood of its success meaning it may not require funding in the future. They also noted the spectacular route of the run and the potential economic benefit to the town as the event will attract many visitors. Members also commented on the positive steps taken by organisers to engage with Council officers and the Safety Advisory Group.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application. Members voted to unanimously support the application in full.

Decision

The Committee agreed, by unanimous decision, to award the full amount of £1,000.

b) North Berwick Rotary Club

An application was submitted by North Berwick Rotary Club for £7,000 for the North Berwick View of the Past Exhibition. Mr Haig noted the North Berwick Community Council were generally supportive of the application but felt they were looking for too much as the overall proposal was for over £8,000 with the Rotary Club contributing just over £1,000.

Mr Haig responded to questions, confirming the local museum or library were unable to host the event due to other commitments and he was not aware of the applicant seeking funding from anywhere else.

The remaining balance for the North Berwick Common Good fund was confirmed and Committee discussed the application. A proposal was made to grant the remaining balance to the applicant as there was not enough money left within the budget to grant in full, which was seconded.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote on granting the original sum of £7,000 which would then take the grant over budget, requiring a report to Council to amend the budget or on the amended proposal of granting £2,844.08 to the applicant. Members voted unanimously to award a partial grant of £2,844.08.

Decision

The Committee agreed, unanimously to grant a partial award of £2,844.08 due to insufficient funds being available within the budget.

[Councillor Forrest left the meeting]

c) Musselburgh Athletic Football Club

Musselburgh Athletic Football Club submitted an application for £35,240 towards new fencing around the pitch. Mr Scott McKail, Connected Communities Manager – Musselburgh provided further information on the application and highlighted the football club have offered 20 free adult and child tickets to Musselburgh Grammar and also engaged with Loretto, Queen Margaret University and the Burgh Primary School. The club have also been working with East Lothian Food Bank and agreed to do collection days which they are piloting at their next home fixture, have a new SFA football Chaplain and a club charity partner in Young Lives vs Cancer. He noted the club had not yet sought permissions from ELC for building warrants and they were planning a meeting with the SFA to seek match funding for floodlights. Mr McKail stated the Musselburgh and Inveresk Community Council declined to offer feedback.

Following questions from Members, the Solicitor noted formal conditions could not be imposed when granting the application, but the Clerk explained on decision letter it clearly states if a project cannot go ahead then the money would have to be returned to the Common Good. He also made Members aware they were only making a decision on the ask for £35,240 today and not the other £30,000 mentioned within the application, this would have to be sought through a further application in the next financial year.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application, noting the new fencing would allow the club to meet SFA guidelines, increase capacity which could increase ticket sales and allow more revenue for the club and the work the club does for itself and the community.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application. Members voted to unanimously support the application in full.

Decision

The Committee agreed, by unanimous decision, to award the full amount of £35,240.

[Sederunt – Councillor McMillan rejoined the meeting]

d) 9th Musselburgh Guides

9th Musselburgh Guides submitted an application for £2,300 to purchase tents and camping fridges for their trip to the Poacher Jamboree. Mr McKail added that although the items are being purchased to support the attendance for the Jamboree, the benefit would be sustained beyond the single event.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application noting the benefit of the purchased items for the current group of guides but also for many future children joining over the years and the fundraising the guides have been doing to raise money to attend the event. However, Members did question the competency of the application due to there not being a benefit to all of the Musselburgh Community, which has been raised as an issue in the past with other applications and asked for updated versions of the boundary maps for Musselburgh. Members and officers agreed to take both of those discussions offline.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application. Members voted to unanimously support the application in full.

Decision

The Committee agreed, by unanimous decision, to award the full amount of £2,300.

[Sederunt – Councillor Forrest rejoined the meeting]

e) Changes

Changes submitted an application for £1844.78 - £3203.21 for welcome pack promotional items. Mr Mckail explained two costs were given due to their being quotes for lower and higher cost items which were all listed within the application, including t-shirts.

Mr McKail answered questions from Members, confirming if the applicant received the lower funding, they would adjust the number of welcome packs they made, and that the money was being asked to make promotional packs explaining what Changes does and not for a specific event Changes was hosting.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application highlighting the great work Changes does and how supportive Members were of their work however, they felt spending the money on tote bags and t-shirts would not be a good use of public funds as no good quality conversations would be able to happen with people handing these out at busy community events and they would rather grant money for Changes to be able to deliver services.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application, if Members were minded to support a second roll call vote would be carried out to determine the amount. Members voted to unanimously reject the application.

Decision

The Committee unanimously agreed to reject the application.

[Sederunt - Councillor Forrest left the meeting]

f) Stoneyhill Playgroup

Stoneyhill Playgroup submitted an application for £8,350 for sensory play equipment, training and pilot child care scheme costs.

The remaining balance for Musselburgh Common Good was confirmed as £19,569.91. The Common Good Committee discussed the application noting the investment would help provide an important link in the childcare ecosystem in Musselburgh, opens up employment opportunities for the local community and will offer work experience to young people at secondary school.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application. Members voted to unanimously support the application in full.

Decision

The Committee agreed, by unanimous decision, to award the full amount of £8,350.

g) 1st Musselburgh Scouts

1st Musselburgh Scouts submitted an application for £10,500 to attend the Poachers International Jamboree. Mr McKail noted an amendment to the application as the group had successfully raised £1,900, therefore the new application amount was £8.600. He confirmed this amount would be prorated amongst all attendees to allow them to attend the event.

Mr McKail responded to questions from Members stating the money was to subsidise the cost for children to attend the event whereas the cost for the Guides to attend was being fully borne by parents and families. It was confirmed there had not been a previous application submitted to the Common Good asking to cover costs to attend an event, but the application had been deemed competent. Mr McKail also made Members aware the Scouts have applied to the Musselburgh Area Partnership and in terms of evidence of need, three parents had confirmed they would not be able to send their child due to cost.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application noting it did not benefit the wider community of Musselburgh as the money was only for the Scouts attending this one trip and that the Scouts did not seem to have completed any fundraising for the event. Members also raised concerns granting the application would set a precedent of applications coming in to fund trips however, one felt that it would not be fair not to grant the Scouts any money when the Guides application was granted.

A roll call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application, if Members were minded to support a second roll call vote would be carried out to determine the amount. Members voted, by majority decision, to reject the application.

Cllr Akhtar – Support
Cllr Allan – Support
Cllr Bennett – Abstain
Cllr Cassini – Reject
Cllr Collins – Reject
Cllr Hampshire – Reject
Cllr McFarlane – Support
Cllr McGuire – Support
Cllr McIntosh – Reject
Cllr McMillan -Reject

Decision

The Committee agreed, by majority decision, to reject the application.

[Councillor Forrest rejoined the meeting]

h) Enjoy Leisure

Enjoy Leisure submitted an application for £2,162.11 for a one off purchase of essential equipment to enhance the swim and gymnastics programmes in Musselburgh.

There were no questions on the application.

The Common Good Committee discussed the application and were extremely supportive, noting the benefits to both mental and physical health and incredible value for money.

A call vote was taken where Members were asked to vote whether to grant the application in full or reject the application. Members voted unanimously to grant the application in full.

Decision

The Committee agreed, by unanimous decision, to award the full amount of £2,162,11.

Signed
Councillor John McMillan
Chair of the Common Good Committee