

# Minute of Meeting

Midlothian Council  
Tuesday 10 October 2023  
Item No: 5.2



## Midlothian Council

Date	Time	Venue
13 September 2023	13.00pm	Council Chambers, Midlothian House

### Present:

Provost McCall (Chair)	Depute Provost Bowen (virtually)
Councillor Parry (Council Leader)	Councillor Cassidy – Depute Council Leader
Councillor Alexander	Councillor McManus
Councillor Drummond	Councillor McKenzie
Councillor McEwan	Councillor Pottinger
Councillor Milligan	Councillor Scott
Councillor Russell	Councillor Virgo (virtually)
Councillor Winchester (virtually)	Councillor Imrie
Councillor Curran	

### In attendance:

Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive	Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
Morag Barrow, Joint Director Health and Social Care	Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships
Alan Turpie, Legal and Governance Manager	Myra Forsyth, Continuous Improvement Manager (virtually)
Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions (Acting)	Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer
Lorna Gilbert, HR Strategic Lead (virtually)	

Gary Leadbetter, Democratic Services Officer
Linda Melville, Member Support

### Religious Representatives:

## 1. Welcome and Apology for Absence

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The Provost welcomed everyone to the Special Meeting of Midlothian Council, advising that this meeting is public and would be webcast live.

Apologies were received for Councillor Smail and Elizabeth Morton.

## 2. Order of Business

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As per the Agenda.

## 3. Declarations of Interest

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Alan Turpie, Legal and Governance Manager, explained that the Declaration of Interest is a three stage test as per the Code of Conduct: connection, interest and participation. Mr Turpie noted that the Standards Commission, in the Code of Conduct at paragraph 5.4, have expressly declared that being a Council Tax payer is not a connection in this regard and so at the first test there is no requirement to declare an interest in any matters regarding Council Tax.

None.

## 4. Deputations

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None.

## 5. Minutes of Previous Meetings

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No Items for discussion.

## 6. Questions to the Leader of the Council

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None.

## 7. Notices of Motion

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None

## 8. Reports

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Item No.	Report Title	Report by:
8.1	Joint Working Group on Source of Local Government Funding	Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
<b>Outline of Report and Summary of Discussion</b>		
Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions (Acting), presented the report noting that it follows Council's consideration on Tuesday, 29 August 2023, of the Scottish Government's consultation on Council Tax which was launched in July 2023. Following this consideration Council instructed officers to draft a response. This		

report provides Council with the information on the consultation and a draft response for consideration.

Council are recommended to:

- Note the information provided on the Scottish Government's consultation on a fairer Council Tax; and
- Agree the draft consultation response as at Appendix B.

Councillor Parry noted her agreement with the responses and moved to submit the consultation response as outlined. Councillor Cassidy seconded.

Councillor Milligan moved to amend the response in that Council instructs officers to respond to the consultation stating "Midlothian Council is opposed to the proposals and requests a fairer taxation system be considered and that a more equal distribution formula be implemented for local authority in the grant settlement." Councillor Milligan states that this would ensure Midlothian Council receives its fair share, taking into account its projected growth. Councillor Imrie seconded.

Councillor Imrie queried if the motion put forward by Councillor Milligan was to add the content of the motion to the response proposed by officers. Councillor Imrie further stated that the answer to question 1 of the consultation should be 'no.'

Councillor Milligan, providing clarity, agreed that the answer to question 1 should be 'no.'

The Provost queried if Councillor Parry was happy to accept the amendment proposed, given that she moved the consultation response. Councillor Parry confirmed but queried where the amendment proposed would sit within the consultation response.

Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place, noted that the proposed amendment could sit within the last question on the consultation response.

Mr Anderson noted that the response is a structured submission, so noted the caveat is if the response to question 1 is "no," this may not allow further questions to be answered. Mr Anderson stated officers will work around the formulaic position for the submission to allow the requests from Members to be accommodated.

Alan Turpie, Legal and Governance Manager, noted that Councillor Parry had moved the report, with Councillor Milligan moving an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Imrie. Mr Turpie queried if the Council response should be as proposed by Councillor Milligan and seconded by Councillor Imrie. Councillor Parry noted that the agreement was that both she and Councillor Milligan were happy with the consultation response with the additional amendment. Mr Turpie confirmed his agreement with this.

#### Decision

Officers to amend the consultation response so that question 1 is answered "no" and that the amendment proposed by Councillor Milligan is included.

#### Action

Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place

## **Date of Next Meeting**

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The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10 October at 11:00.

The meeting concluded at 14:16.