



April 2015

### Residents get some satisfaction



The results of our annual residents' survey continue to offer encouragement and reassurance that, broadly speaking, residents believe we are managing their city well.

According to the [2014 Edinburgh People survey](#), the largest of its kind in the UK, over three-quarters of residents are satisfied with the way we are managing neighbourhoods. Nine in ten, meanwhile, are satisfied with Edinburgh as a place to live, with two-thirds expressing satisfaction with the Council's management of the city overall.

That said, given a backdrop of falling budgets and greater demand for our services, it is hardly surprising that some are performing less well – particularly those areas, such as refuse collection and recycling, currently undergoing significant changes to delivery.

But through this survey, and our extensive budget consultation, we are listening to what residents are telling us – and acting on their feedback.

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### Mikaeel Kular case review

Last January, we had to face the outcome that everyone dreaded, namely that Mikaeel Kular had not been found safe and well. It was a tragic situation and, although over a year has now passed, our thoughts are with his family and friends still struggling to come to terms with the circumstances surrounding his death.

We shouldn't forget the incredible show of community spirit in North Edinburgh following Mikaeel's disappearance, with hundreds of volunteers giving up their time to join the search. It was extremely moving and inspiring to see the community pull together like that and I know that spirit remains strong today.

While the independent case review, a summary of which was published this week, is clear that Mikaeel's death could not have been foreseen, it is vital that all agencies involved read and digest everything in the report.

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### City Deal for Edinburgh

I am delighted to be working with our five neighbouring local authorities to [pursue a deal](#) for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.

In creating this fund, and unlocking billions of pounds of potential infrastructure investment, we want to build on our strengths whilst tackling persistent pockets of inequality and other constraints that threaten to hold the region back.

We have written collectively to the UK and Scottish Governments seeking their agreement to develop a more detailed proposition, which we hope to finalise by the end of the year.

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### Election countdown

With less than a fortnight to go until the General Election, preparations are well underway to ensure the process is as smooth and efficient as possible across [Edinburgh's five Westminster constituencies](#).

As 67,000 postal votes hit residents' doormats earlier this week, around 900 presiding officers and their assistants were receiving the training required to run the city's 145 polling places, open for voting between 7am and 10pm on 7 May.

As per the Referendum last September, the eyes of the UK (if not necessarily the world this time!) will be on Scotland, and Edinburgh, and we want to ensure that, once again, we give them the best possible view. Media interest is already hotting up and I have no doubt that our new count venue, the [Edinburgh International Conference Centre](#), will allow us to do just that.

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### Awards success

Congratulations to the staff of [Willow](#) – a ground breaking partnership that provides support to women in the criminal justice system – on being awarded the prestigious [COSLA Gold Award](#) for tackling inequalities and improving health.

A background of offending can permanently stigmatise people and Willow is doing vital work to help reduce reoffending and help service users build better futures.

Meanwhile, the Council's Commercial Excellence programme collected an award for innovation, improvement and best practice at the recent [CIPFA awards](#). The fact that the judging panel included the Auditor General demonstrates just how far the procurement team has come over the last two years.

## Marathon Man

And finally an appeal on behalf of our Lord Provost, Donald Wilson, who is running the London Marathon this Sunday, 26 April. This will be his first ever marathon, having only taken up running last year.

Donald is running in order to raise funds for two local and very worthwhile charities, both of which are very close to his heart: The [One City Trust](#) and [Jamie Skinner Foundation](#). Please support him and these worthy causes by [giving what you can](#).

Having run my last (ever!) marathon a year ago, I can assure you he deserves every penny!

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