

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

MEETING 11

28 APRIL 2016

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Item no 5.1

QUESTION NO 1

By Councillor Corbett for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

In light of the revelation that an estimated £128m of Lothian Pension Fund assets are invested in companies which trade in the military or defence sectors, what representations will be made by the council to the review being carried out, in 2016, by the Scheme Advisory Board of the Scottish LGPS into investment criteria of public pension funds; and what account will be taken of members' views in that process?

Answer

The Scheme Advisory Board of the Scottish LGPS, of which I am a member, is taking legal opinion of the fiduciary duty and considering providing advice based on that opinion to the LGPS funds on such matters. We understand that the review aims to clarify the extent to which the situation in Scotland is different from that in England and Wales. It is hoped this will be available this calendar year.

Item no 5.2

QUESTION NO 2

By Councillor Burgess for answer by the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

Will the Council confirm the intention to remove £1 million from the annual advice services budget; explain where that savings target has come from; and outline how its impact on the welfare of the city's most disadvantaged residents will be taken into account?

Answer

As part of the transformation of services within the Council and to deliver the significant savings required over the next four years, a comprehensive programme of service reviews has been developed. Part of the as yet unspecified savings assigned to Safer and Stronger Communities is a Council approved target of £1.242m for 2017/2018 (savings reference CF/ST10).

A review of advice services, inclusive of in-house and commissioned provision across the city is planned for this year to contribute towards this savings target.

Planning for this review is in the early stages, but its aim is to design a more joined up, cohesive service, improving and simplifying access routes for members of the public who need advice, making sure that those in need can access advice in the most efficient and effective way.

The savings that can be achieved from this service will emerge as the review progresses and will contribute to the £1.242m target.

Item no 5.3

QUESTION NO 3

By Councillor Corbett for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

In light of the fact that Parliament House (or Parliament Hall) appears to be registered as belonging to Scottish Ministers, what update is there on what the Scottish Government response has been to the City Council's request to have Parliament House restored to the city as a Common Good asset; when will the council publish correspondence with ministers on the same matter; and when will elected members be given a copy of any legal advice provided to the Council.

Answer

The Council and the Scottish Government corresponded regarding this matter, which culminated in a meeting between Council officers and the Cabinet Secretary. The outcome of this was that the Council should discuss the matter with the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service which is the party with the right to the registered title. Council officers met and corresponded with the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service. They were subsequently advised that the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service would not transfer title to the Council.

Elected members who have sought a copy of the advice have been offered a face to face briefing to review the advice and discuss it with officers from legal services.

Item no 5.4

QUESTION NO 4

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Leader of the Council at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question (1) To list the regular council committee meetings and other meetings supported by council officers such as Licensing Board, which are currently normally open to the public

Answer (1) By law, all formal meetings of the Council must be open to the public, unless the meeting decides the matter contains private or exempt information. This applies to the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees. Some meetings, mostly appeals, contain exclusively private information, and are therefore never held in public.

The requirement to hold meetings in public does not apply to informal meetings, such as working groups, which have their own governance arrangements.

Question (2) In each case to specify whether the meeting is currently normally webcast

Answer (2) The table below lists the Council's main Committees, and Boards, indicating when they are held in public, and also webcast. A number of Sub-Committees are also appointed by the Executive Committees. In the main these are held in public, but are not webcast

Question (3) In each case where the meeting is not currently webcast what are the estimated additional costs of doing so.

Answer (3) An additional cost of £40.69 per hour would be incurred for any meeting not currently webcast.

COUNCIL/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES		
	IN PUBLIC	WEBCAST
COUNCIL/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES		
Full Council	Yes	Yes
Corporate Policy and Strategy	Yes	Yes
Communities and Neighbourhoods	Yes	Yes
Culture and Sport	Yes	Yes
Economy	Yes	Yes
Education, Children and Families	Yes	Yes
Finance and Resources	Yes	Yes
Health, Social Care and Housing	Yes	Yes
Transport and Environment	Yes	Yes
OTHER COMMITTEES		
Governance, Risk and Best Value	Yes	Yes
Police and Fire Scrutiny Committee	Yes	No
Leadership Advisory Panel	Yes	No
Petitions	Yes	Yes
Pensions	Yes	No
Planning/Development Management Sub	Yes	Yes
Regulatory/Licensing Sub	Yes (but with "B" agendas)	Regulatory Committee only
Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest	Yes	No
Neighbourhood Partnerships	Yes	No
APPEALS		
Committee on Discretionary Rating Appeals	No	No
Personnel Appeals Committee	No	No
Committee on Pupil/Student Support	No	No
Placing in Schools Appeals	No	No
Social Work Complaints Review Committee	No	No
RECRUITMENT		
Recruitment Committee	No	No
JOINT BOARDS etc		
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	Yes	No
Licensing Board	Yes	No
SEStran	Yes	No
Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority	Yes	No
Integration Joint Board	Yes	No

Item no 5.5

QUESTION NO 5

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

What action is the council taking to make recycling easier for residents, in particular residents of tenements?

Answer

The introduction of the new kerbside recycling service to over 140,000 householders over the past 18 months has resulted in a significant improvement in recycling performance from householders with individual recycling and landfill bins. This has been achieved by:

- Simplifying the service with same day collections and more materials collected in the one bin.
- Increasing the amount of recycling bin capacity.
- Decreasing the amount of landfill bin capacity.

With regards to making it easier for residents who live in tenements to recycle, the following actions have taken place in the past 6 months:

- There are 941 new Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) bins for cans, plastics, paper and cardboard, which replicate the same materials collected in the kerbside wheelie bins.
- There are 617 new glass bins.
- There is a new online communal bin map – find my nearest communal recycling and landfill bin. The Internal testing phase is live and it is due for public launch 2 May 2016.

<https://edinburghcouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c4ceb8650c5d4b6cb9ca642a4cceeccf>

- We completed an audit of 60,000 communal properties in March 2016 to identify where upgraded recycling provision is required.

- We have accessed funding from Zero Waste Scotland to provide 100,000 free rolls of biobags and food waste leaflets to householders using communal food waste bins.

Throughout 2016/2017 the following improvements to on-street recycling facilities are planned:

- Complete the audit of the remaining 40,000 properties.
- Rollout new DMR/Glass service citywide
- Rollout increased recycling provision and reduced landfill provision (subject to approval at June T&E committee)
- Aim to 'group' on-street recycling and landfill bins to make it easier to recycle.
- Comprehensive communications plan targeting residents in high density housing areas.

Item no 5.6

QUESTION NO 6

By Councillor Aitken for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

Parents are expressing their concern about the future safety of the 17 school buildings in PPP1. What reassurances will be given to parents to enable them to have confidence in the fabric of the schools when they reopen?

Answer

We will not take risks with the safety of our school children. Schools won't reopen until Edinburgh Schools Partnership can assure us of their safety. This assurance will be subject to scrutiny by independent structural engineers separately provided by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Item no 5.7

QUESTION NO 7

By Councillor Rose for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

Given the ongoing reports of waste collection, and the reorganisation of council staff, is the Convener satisfied that sufficient resources have been committed to a) collecting waste and b) dealing with complaints about uncollected waste.

Answer

I am acutely aware of the importance of our waste collection service to residents.

There are several proposed savings that are allocated to our waste collection service, which have the potential to impact on service delivery. To mitigate this, the service will be subject to continual assessment to ensure that the quality of our service to residents is not reduced.

Complaints were at an unacceptable level, particularly in December and January but the level of complaints continues to drop as a result of improvements made by management and implemented by frontline staff within the service, with the most recent data showing a 64% decrease in complaints compared to the high point in January.

Members will be aware of a presentation that was recently given to the Transport and Environment Committee on planned improvements for waste collection. I am confident that the implementation of these improvements will allow us to move our waste collection service to the standard which we all want.

With regards to the comment about having resources in place to handle complaints about uncollected waste, this has been considered as part of the new structure for Waste and Cleansing services and we will ensure that residents do get their complaints answered in a timely and professional manner. Ultimately though, the aim will be to substantially reduce the level of complaints across the Service.

Item no 5.8

QUESTION NO 8

By Councillor Rose for answer by the
Convener of the Finance and
Resources Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 28 April 2016

VERA/VR DASHBOARD – April 2016

Question

- (1) Reasons for declining VERA (972)
- a) Please show break-down by work area
 - b) Please display break-down as a % of the applications received for each of those areas

Answer

- (1) VERA declines now sit at 1,070. The breakdown of current VERA declines is as follows:

Department	Accepted	Withdrawn	Declined	OVERALL TOTAL	Percentage Declined
City Strategy and Economy	10	7	2	19	10.53%
Resources	107	31	38	176	21.59%
Communities and Families	72	33	196	301	65.12%
Health and Social Care	92	14	296	402	73.63%
Place	243	88	538	869	61.91%
Total	524	173	1070	1767	60.55%

Question

- (2) Agency Expenditure (Feb 16 - £997.2k)
- a) Please explain the reason for the increase in costs and numbers of staff involved
 - b) Please provide a break-down of agency staff numbers per work area and the roles being occupied

Answer

- (2) a)** In some instances, service areas are using agency workers to backfill vacancies in areas that are under review. It is envisaged that once the transformation programme is concluded agency spend will reduce significantly. In other instances, agency staff are required to fill difficult to fill roles, cover staff absences or for certain highly paid specialists on a short term basis.

All agency hire is authorised by a Head of Service and Executive Director unless the post is pre-authorised for recruitment purposes. Agency spend is also regularly reviewed and challenged at the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

March agency spend with the Adecco, the Council's contracted provider of temporary agency staff is detailed below. The data is broken down by Service Area and by Job Class.

b) March agency spend by Role

Row Labels	Values Sum of Spend
Manual Labour	£259,625.44
Admin & Clerical	£206,577.89
Trade & Operatives	£138,009.52
Engineering & Surveying	£105,064.54
Social & Health Care (qualified)	£86,122.83
Facilities & Environmental Services	£44,221.04
Housing, Benefits & Planning	£35,227.40
Procurement	£30,178.12
Management	£22,073.82
Information Systems	£20,637.95
Social & Health Care (non-qualified)	£11,281.92
Marketing	£10,926.97
Financial	£9,296.47
Human Resources	£8,847.20
Grand Total	£988,091.11

Agency posts at end of March by service area

Service Area	Job Title	Equivalent FTE
Children and Families	Administrator GR3	3.9
	Administrator GR4	3.2
	Business Manager - GR7	0.7
	Catering, Hospitality and Domestic Grade 1 - 3	0.8
	Cook GR3	0.4
	Facilities Assistant GR3	1.2
	Facilities Manager GR7	0.8
	Librarian GR6	0.6
	Residential Care Officer GR6	0.2
	Residential Childcare Officer	1.9
	SEEMIS Administrator - GR7	0.4
	Senior Social Worker GR8	0.6
	Social Worker GR7	1.0
Children and Families Total		15.7
Corporate Governance	Administrator GR3	2.5
	Administrator GR4	8.9
	Administrator GR5	1.0
	Benefits Assessor GR5	6.7
	Catering, Hospitality and Domestic Grade 1 - 3	0.5
	Commercial Manager GR11	0.1
	Commercial Operations Officer GR6	0.6
	Contract Manager GR8	0.8
	Customer Service Advisor GR 4	23.5
	Customer Support Officer GR3	0.3
	Data Analyst GR5	0.8
	Finance Officer GR5/6	1.5
	Implementation Advisor	0.1
	Marketing Officer GR7	0.8
	Procurement Specialist GR7	0.8
	Revenues Officer GR4	1.0
	Senior Organisational Development Leader	0.9
Corporate Governance Total		50.8
Economic Development	Economic Development Assistant - Gr 6	1.6
Economic Development Total		1.6
Health and Social Care	Administrator GR3	4.0
	Administrator GR4	1.5
	Catering, Hospitality and	19.2

	Domestic Grade 1 - 3	
	Community Equipment Technician GR4	1.7
	Cook GR3	1.7
	Cook GR4	1.5
	Customer Service Advisor GR 4	1.0
	Equipment Cleaner GR3	3.1
	Mobile Telecare Support Officer GR4	1.8
	Occupational Therapist Gr 7	1.1
	Programme Manager	0.2
	Recruitment Coordinator GR5	1.0
	Residential Care Officer GR6	6.4
	Residential Care Officer GR6 CRANE	1.1
	Senior Social Worker GR8	0.9
	Social Worker GR7	4.9
	Store Assistant GR3	0.4
	Health and Social Care Total	51.5
Services for Communities	Accommodation Planner GR7	0.8
	Administrator GR3	11.4
	Administrator GR4	4.4
	Architect GR8	2.3
	Architectural Assistant GR6	1.6
	Asbestos Officer - Grade 7	0.8
	Asbestos Technical Admin Officer - GR5	0.8
	Asset Officer GR8	0.8
	Assistant MOT Assessor	0.8
	BEMS Engineer GR7/8	0.9
	BEMS Project Manager GR9	0.8
	Blacksmith GR6	1.7
	Building Services Team Leader GR7	1.9
	Bus Station Operational Assistant – GR4	4.9
	C1 Driver GR4	0.6
	C2 Driver - Refuse GR4	14.6
	CAD Engineer GR5	0.8
	Catering, Hospitality and Domestic Grade 1 - 3	5.1
	CDM Coordinator GR7	1.5
	Civil Engineer GR7/8	1.8
	Clerk of Works GR6	0.8
	Cook GR3	1.1
	Cook GR4	0.3

Customer Service Advisor - GR3	2.5
Customer Service Advisor GR 4	0.6
Customer Service Manager GR8	0.6
D1 Driver GR3	27.2
Edinburgh Fringe Street Cleaner	3.3
Electrical Engineer GR7	2.6
Electrical Team Leader GR7	0.9
Energy Surveyor GR8	0.9
Environment Services Development Officer	0.8
Escort GR2	6.1
Estates Surveyor GR7 - 8	0.8
Facilities Assistant GR3	1.8
Facilities Manager GR7	1.1
Finance Assistant GR4	5.0
Finance Officer GR5/6	1.6
Gardener GR3	0.9
Interim Fleet & Travel Manager	0.8
Labourer GR4	1.5
Library Assistant GR3	1.3
Mechanical Engineer GR7	1.8
MOT Assessor	0.8
Painter / Decorator GR5	0.0
Painter Roads GR6	0.4
Passenger Operations Manager - GR7	1.3
Personal Assistant GR5/6	1.6
Project Manager	0.1
Quantity Surveyor GR8	1.0
Recycling Advisor - GR4	1.8
Refuse Collector GR3	50.3
Road Inspector GR6	0.8
Road Sweeper GR3	2.9
Road Technician GR6	3.4
Road Worker GR4	2.5
Site Manager GR5	1.0
Store Assistant GR3	1.3
Transport Supervisor - GR5	0.9
Travel Co-ordinator GR5	1.0
Services for Communities Total	193.7
Grand Total	313.3

Item no 5.9

QUESTION NO 9

By Councillor Rust for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question (1) What discussions have taken place between the Council and the Scottish Qualifications Authority in relation to the PPP1 Schools and pupils from those schools due to sit examinations, and what was the outcome of those discussions?

Answer (1) The SQA Director of Operations has been in regular contact with the Council. An officer has been identified as the dedicated lead for SQA issues for the Council. The officer has been working closely with the SQA Operations Manager and they are currently carrying out a series of visits to each of the schools to identify issues regarding verification and assessment of practical exams, evidence retrieval and secure storage for course work awards and special arrangements for examinations. The necessary paperwork is being delivered to the correct locations and arrangements in place for secure storage of exam papers prior to the actual diet of exams. Arrangements are now in place as to where pupils will sit their exams. This will be in the schools that they are currently attending. Drummond, Firrhill and The Royal High in situ. Gracemount pupils in Liberton and Craigmount pupils in Tynecastle.

The Council will ensure that the SQA have a full understanding of the arrangements in place and the issues facing all pupils affected who are sitting examinations.

Question (2) Will "In Service" days currently arranged at PPP1 schools for the remainder of the academic year be cancelled?

Answer (2) No. The only remaining in-service day this session is on 5 May 2016. This has meant that pupils will not be in schools on that day and that has been a great support in our planning for the SQA exams as the Nat 5 and Higher English exam take place that day and they involve many pupils who will now all be able to be accommodated in their

host schools or partially open schools.

Question (3) Which Councillors and which Councils Officials attended meetings with (a) the Edinburgh Schools Partnership and (b) the Scottish Government in relation to the issues with PPP1 Schools this year?

Answer (3) Since the event occurred on 29 January 2016 there have been numerous meetings with ESP and their representatives attended by Council Officials at appropriate levels. These discussions have been led and coordinated by the Chief Executive of the Council.

These have ranged from day to day operational matters through to technical, contractual and progress issues.

While the majority of operational and technical meetings have been attended by the current PPP Contract Management Team there have been numerous meetings attended by Principals from both the Council and ESP. These meetings are typically chaired by the Chief Executive with appropriate Executive Director and Head of Service attendance. ESP are represented on these occasions by their Board representatives and their Operational Manager.

There have been no direct meetings with the Scottish Government, however senior politicians and Scottish Government officials have been in regular contact with the Council, including telephone conferences with the Scottish Government's resilience meeting.

Question (4) Were there any discussions (a) between City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh Schools Partnership and (b) between either of those and Glasgow City Council or other body following the discovery of building defects at Lourdes Primary School, Glasgow in November 2012, and if so what action was taken?

Answer (4) This incident took place four years ago and there is no documentary evidence that anyone in the City of Edinburgh Council was aware of this event at the time. When the City of Edinburgh Council became aware of the significance of the issues in our PPP1 estate a communication was sent to alert Scottish Government and also other Local Authorities.

Item no 5.10

QUESTION NO 10

By Councillor Mowat for answer by the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 April 2016

Question

To ask why the planned dispersal order for Hunter Square has been abandoned, who was involved in the decision and what evidence was used in making this decision and what plans are in place to deal with the anti-social behaviour regularly occurring in the square that was the reason for seeking the dispersal order?

Answer

Police Scotland had developed a proposal for a Dispersal Order to operate in a designated area of the city centre, namely North Bridge, Hunter Square and immediate surrounding areas for a short time.

The proposal was discussed with Council officials and partners, as is standard procedure for joint working, and the outcome was that Police Scotland decided not to pursue the Order at this time, given the emphasis on this issue from a range of initiatives – either underway or in development.

These involve the Council, Police Scotland and voluntary sector partners working collaboratively to address the challenges posed by homelessness, begging and drug and alcohol-related problems across the city, including the city centre (Inclusive Edinburgh, Community Improvement Partnerships for hate crime, begging, Community in Motion project, etc.).

Council-funded police officers have also been requested to increase their focus on the area and engage with those responsible for causing a nuisance or displaying anti-social behaviour.