

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

MEETING 7

15 DECEMBER 2016

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Item no 5.1

QUESTION NO 1

**By Councillor Bagshaw for answer
by the Convener of the Transport and
Environment Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 15 December 2016**

Question (1) What data exist on accidents and near misses at the key junctions on Princes Street over the last two years, broken down by month?

Answer (1) The Council's Road Safety & Active Travel section holds data on personal injury collisions supplied by Police Scotland and the vetted data currently covers the period up to the end of February 2016.

No data is available on collisions that do not involve personal injury or incidents described as "near misses"; because these types of incident do not have to be reported to the Police (or to anyone else) there is no way of collecting comprehensive data. In addition, what constitutes a near miss is open to interpretation and any data would therefore be subjective.

Collision data has been provided for the period 31 May 2014 to 29 February 2016.

All junctions on Princes Street have been interpreted as "key junctions", with the exception of Castle Street. This provides the following list of nine junctions;

1. Shandwick Place/Queensferry Street
2. Lothian Road/Princes Street
3. South Charlotte Street
4. Frederick Street
5. Hanover Street/The Mound
6. South St David Street
7. Waverley Bridge
8. South St Andrew Street
9. North Bridge/Leith Street/Waterloo Place

The following table summarises the results of collision

retrievals from the Council's data base. The Council's Accident Investigation Prevention (AIP) protocol establishes a period for investigating and defining 'accident problems' as 3 years. This provides a compromise between statistical and practical factors; if there are three similar collisions within that period, the location will be given due consideration for an appropriate intervention. However, no specific location in Princes Street has been identified for AIP intervention.

Table 2: Collisions for the period 31 May 2014 to 29 February 2016.

Junction	Date of collision (by month)	Collision Type
1 Queensferry Street	N/a	No collisions recorded
2 Lothian Road	09/2015	Pedestrian
3 Sth Charlotte Street	06/2014	Pedestrian
	08/2015	Pedestrian
4 Frederick Street	12/2014	Pedestrian
	12/2014	Pedestrian
	12/2014	Pedestrian
	08/2015	Pedestrian
	02/2016	Cyclist
5 Hanover Street – The Mound	12/2014	Pedestrian
	01/2015	Cyclist
	01/2015	Cyclist
	02/2015	T.V.N.P.
	11/2015	Bus
	11/2015	Pedestrian
6 Sth St David Street	01/2016	Cyclist
	07/2014	Pedestrian
	09/2014	Bus
7 Waverley Bridge	11/2014	Bus
	09/2014	S.V.N.P.
	06/2015	Cyclist
8 Sth St Andrew Street	08/2015	Pedestrian
	07/2014	Pedestrian
	05/2014	T.V.N.P.
9 North Bridge – Leith Street	04/2015	T.V.N.P.
	06/2015	T.V.N.P.
	06/2015	T.V.N.P.
Totals	Pedestrian = 12	Cyclist = 5
25 collisions	Bus = 3	S.V.N.P. = 1
	T.V.N.P. = 4	M.V.N.P. = 0

S.V.N.P. (Single Vehicle No Pedestrian)
T.V.N.P. (Two Vehicles No Pedestrian)
M.V.N.P. (Multiple Vehicles No Pedestrian)

Question

(2) What assessment has there been of crossing waiting times and the time of green man phases at each of the key junctions on Princes Street and what plans there are to improve conditions for pedestrians?

Answer

(2) Pedestrian crossing waiting times at traffic signals along Princes are set as defined by the Department of Transport. A system called SPRUCE has recently been delivered which aims to improve waiting times for pedestrians at these junctions.. A further piece of work is currently ongoing to improve the operation of the system. This work is being carried out in collaboration with our partners at Edinburgh Trams and Lothian Buses, as major users of the transport network on Princes Street. This is aimed at further improving waiting times for pedestrians. Full implementation of the revised control scheme is scheduled for the end of January 2017.

Item no 5.2

QUESTION NO 2

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Economy Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

What action has the Council taken, both on Small Business Saturday on 3 December 2016, and throughout the year, to support small and medium sized shops?

Answer

Small Business Saturday – 3 December 2016

The Edinburgh Launch of Small Business Saturday (SBS) 15 September 2016 took place and was attended by Council officers alongside the Federation of Small Business.

SBS was launched in 2010. A national SBS team was established to take forward the initiative.

Business Gateway Edinburgh and Lothian liaised with the SBS team in the lead up to September 15th 2016 to promote the event and disseminate information.

A link to the SBS Digital Toolkit link was sent to each of the Business Improvement District (BID) Co-ordinators

Since the launch event, CEC has tried to engage the SBS team in order to further promote SBS within Edinburgh and to promote Small business Saturday 2016 which took place on December 3rd 2016. This has however been met by a disappointing lack of communication and engagement from the SBS team.

Support for small and medium sized shops throughout the year

Business Gateway services are available to all businesses throughout the year. In the last 12 months, 86 retail businesses have been supported to start or grow.

The Council also supports the city's four BIDs (Essential Edinburgh, Greater Grassmarket, West End and Queensferry Ambition) providing a total of £108,000 direct

and indirect funding. The majority of BID members are retailers who benefit from a range of services which promote the retail offer in each location throughout the year.

The Council is also undertaking a project to speculatively build 16 new light industrial units at Cultins Road using £2 million from the Strategic Investment Fund. These units will be flexible spaces capable of supporting multiple uses and supporting small to medium sized enterprises with affordable and flexible work space.

Item no 5.3

QUESTION NO 3

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Economy Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

What meetings has the council had with Forth Ports or other relevant stakeholders to discuss the prospect of renewable energy generating manufacturers siting their operations in Leith?

Answer

Council officers have had no recent meetings with Forth Ports or other relevant stakeholders to discuss the prospect of renewable energy generating manufacturers siting their operations in Leith.

The Chief Executive and Executive Director of Place met with Forth Ports on Friday 2 December 2016 however there were no discussions about renewable energy generating manufacturers locating on their site.

Item no 5.4

QUESTION NO 4

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

What meetings have been held with Scottish Government officials or ministers to discuss a low emission zone (LEZ) or clean air zone (CAZ) for Edinburgh?

Answer

A governance group has been established to oversee the implementation of 'Actions' contained in Scotland's National Low Emission Strategy - Cleaner Air for Scotland (CAFs). One of the key actions is the development of a National Low Emission Framework (NLEF) which includes LEZs and CAZs. The CAFs governance meetings are held monthly and are attended by Scottish Government Officials, Council Officials from Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh, SEPA, Non Government Organisations (NGOs) and Health Protection Scotland.

The development of NLEF is being progressed by the NLEF steering group. This has met four times in the last six months to share information on approach and content. Information is shared and discussed with the CAFs Governance Group. There will be wider group meetings to discuss such topics as, early adopters of an LEZ/CAZ, scheme design and detail and implementation.

Scottish Government Officials met with John Bury and David Leslie from City of Edinburgh Council on 10 August 2016 to discuss the NLEF process, existing funding and current transport related air quality work in Edinburgh.

A meeting of Heads of Planning and Transport and Environmental Health officials from the NLEF Governance Group (Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh) is proposed for December/January. This will be led by Scottish Governmental officials and will focus the scale and shape of NLEF options (LEZ/CAZ), resources and funding required.

Scottish Government officials are in regular contact with the Scottish Ministers providing updates to relevant Parliamentary Questions and briefing on CAFs and NLEF progress.

In addition to the above in my capacity as Transport & Environment Convener I was interviewed as part of the consultation exercise for and the preparation of the Clean Air for Scotland document. I have also attended a workshop in relation to this initiative attended by both Elected Members and representatives of the Scottish Government to discuss air quality issues. As Vice-Chair of SEStran I have also met with the Scottish Government's Transport Minister on two occasions at which I have pressed the case for continued early action on air quality issues in Edinburgh and the wider SEStrans area.

City of Edinburgh Council officials will continue to be engaged with the NLEF process.

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 15 December 2016

Question

When does the council intend to establish an air quality management area (AQMA) at Salamander Street to address non-compliance with Scottish pollution targets for PM10s?

Answer

The Council is currently discussing further monitoring and mitigation measures with key players and partners including Forth Ports and SEPA with a view to declaring the AQMA early in 2017. Information on these proposals which include Salamander Street is contained in an Air Quality Update report which will be presented to the Transport & Environment Committee on 17 January 2016.

Item no 5.6

QUESTION NO 6

By Councillor Burgess for answer by the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

What action is the council taking to ensure that the number of long term empty homes in the city is significantly reduced?

Answer

In September 2012 an Empty Homes Task Force, with representation from all political groups and key partners, was established in response to Capital Coalition Pledge 10, to investigate ways to bring empty private sector homes in the city back into use. Since September 2014 this pledge has been considered as part of the Housing Pledges Working Group.

An Empty Homes Pilot Project began in February 2015. The case management approach established during the pilot project is being continued. Officers are currently managing 55 empty homes cases, the majority of which are long term empty homes. Since February 2015, 36 empty homes have been brought back into use or are in the process of being brought back into use.

The number of empty homes in Edinburgh accounts for 3.1% of the overall homes in the city, the same as the Scottish average (NRS data June 2016). At 30 November 2016, 995 homes are currently subject to the double Council Tax penalty charge*.

In 2015/16 the average time to re-let empty council homes was 23 days, which puts Edinburgh in the top quartile of performance compared to other local authorities. The Scottish average for local authorities was 42 days.

*Properties that have lain empty for over 12 months may be charged double council tax. Some exemptions apply e.g. long term hospital stay or imprisonment.

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20111/discounts_and_exemptions/112/unoccupied_property

Item no 5.7

QUESTION NO 7

By Councillor Main for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

In November 2016 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee agreed to receive a number of child refugees to be agreed from the Calais camps.

Can an update on the numbers and progress to date be provided?

Answer

Following Policy and Strategy Committee's decision, the Council offered places for the immediate resettlement of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children displaced following closure of the Calais refugee camp. A small group of children took up these places on 30 November and are settling in. Their status is 'looked after and accommodated' under the provisions of Scottish legislation.

Some additional places were offered by the Council, should they be required, however, the indication is that these will not be taken up in the immediate future.

The Council, alongside other Scottish local authorities, is continuing to engage with COSLA and the Home Office with a view to participating in a national UASC dispersal scheme. Finalisation of this scheme awaits the resolution of a number of legal issues relating to the transfer of looked after children between England and Scotland.

Item no 5.8

QUESTION NO 8

By Councillor Mowat for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Abandoned Vehicle on Tram Tracks

Question

Regarding the report of a car found abandoned on tram tracks at Haymarket Station on 5th December 2016 could the Convener advise why it took an hour and 40 minutes to remove the car and whether she deems this an acceptable level of service.

Answer

A vehicle was reported as being abandoned on the tram tracks at Haymarket Sidings to Police Scotland by Edinburgh Trams Control Room at 04:15 on 5 December 2016.

Police Scotland Timeline:

04:21 – call logged on Police Scotland System. Incident Number: 05.12.2016 294

05:00 – Police Scotland officers on-site

05:00 – 05:18 – Police Scotland officers assessing the vehicle and attempting to contact the registered owner

05:18 – Police Scotland contact 911 Recovery to get abandoned vehicle uplifted

06:00 (just prior to) – 911 Recovery uplift and impound abandoned vehicle

While this incident caused only minimal delays to early hours tram services, I am concerned at the length of time it took to remove the vehicle and this is something which I have previously raised with both Police Scotland and Transport officials. I have again asked Senior Transport officers to raise this matter with appropriate Police Scotland colleagues with a view to ensuring that any future similar problems are resolved as quickly and effectively as possible.

Item no 5.9

QUESTION NO 9

By Councillor Aitken for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Street Lighting Repairs

Question (1) How many broken streetlights/columns are waiting for the required maintenance?

Answer (1) There are currently 1581 streetlights requiring maintenance and 315 columns to be replaced.

Question (2) If there is a backlog, what are the reasons for this?

Answer (2) The figure of 1581 streetlights requiring maintenance is in line with historic levels at this time of year.

A lengthy Scotland wide legal challenge to procurement delayed the sourcing of replacement columns throughout the country. An additional £1m was allocated to accelerate the programme for replacing Test Failed Columns. Due to the legal issue mentioned above, this funding has been carried forward and lighting columns are currently being sourced now that that this challenge has been resolved.

Question (3) What is the average waiting time for a repair?

Answer (3) The waiting time for repair varies. There are 4 different categories of repair. These are:

Category 1 – 4 hours

Category 2 – 24 hours

Category 3 – 5 days

Category 4 – 28 days

The category is assigned following consideration of a number of factors including the type of repair, the number of dark lights and the location.

Question (4) What is the date of the oldest outstanding repair?

Answer (4) The oldest outstanding repair is to replace a lighting column, first recorded 4 April 2014 and was affected by the procurement issue mentioned above. Replacement columns are now being sourced.

Question (5) How are repairs being prioritised?

Answer (5) As detailed above, when enquiries/faults are reported, the categorisation system is used. Category 1 is the most urgent and relates to life and limb situations, for example unsafe columns following a road traffic accident or bare wires.

Item no 5.10

QUESTION NO 10

By Councillor Main for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016

Question

There are growing concerns in the school community about the pressures on support available to children with additional support needs who are in mainstream education. Pupils may require support for a range of reasons, including autism, disability and home language.

Would the Convener please provide for each year since 2012, the number of primary and secondary school pupils and that number as a percentage of total school roll who have additional support needs, excluding pupils whose first language is not English and who receive language support, for each school together with the numbers of audit hours given to each school to meet the needs of these children and young people.

Answer

I regret it is not possible to provide the level of detail requested without further detailed analysis of records which will take some time to prepare.

However, the overall picture is presented in the Performance and Planning Reports to the Education Children and Families Committee. The most recent report, December 2015 documents an established upward trend in the % of pupils with significant additional support needs. The most recent figure of 21% is consistent with the Scottish average.

	Total Pupils	With ASL needs	% of Sch Popn
2011/12	43,376	7,374	17%
2012/13	44,768	8,506	19%
2013/14	46,915	9,383	20%
2014/15	46,448	9,754	21%

Over the period in question there has been a growth in the funding for additional support needs and special schools to take into account the growth in the population.

Funding for Additional Support for Learning and Special Schools
2010-15

	2010/11 Annual Approved Budget	2011/12 Annual Approved Budget	2012/13 Annual Approved Budget	2013/14 Annual Approved Budget	2014/15 Annual Approved Budget
Support in mainstream including ASL Service	£16.1m	£16.4m	£16.4m	£16.6m	£17.2m
Special Schools	£15.5m	£15.9m	£16.6m	£16.6m	£17.6m