

Council Questions and Answers

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00 am Thursday, 30th June, 2022

Main Council Chamber - City Chambers

Questions and Answers

Contacts

Email: gavin.king@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 529 4239

Nick Smith

Service Director, Legal and Assurance

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Agenda Annex

Item no 10.1

QUESTION NO 1

By Councillor Lang for answer by the Leader of the Council at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Further to the answer given by the then Leader of the Council to question 10.4 at the March 2022 meeting of the Council;

Question (1) Did the statutory process for the Redetermination Order required to deliver the proposed changes to the Davidsons Mains roundabout commence by the end of March 2022 as suggested?

Answer (1) No, I have asked officers to complete this as quickly as possible

Question (2) Was the street lighting design completed by the end of March 2022 as suggested?

Answer (2) The lighting design was completed in June 2022.

Question (3) Was the Stage 2 Road Safety Audit on the proposals started by end of May 2022 as suggested?

Answer (3) This scheme has been included in the programme of Road Safety Audits planned for June/July 2022.

Item no 10.2

QUESTION NO 2

By Councillor Lang for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Further to the answer given by the then Convener of Transport and Environment to question 13.1 at the October 2021 meeting of the Council, how many of the 57 streets listed have had speed reduction measures implemented as planned by the end of March 2022?

Answer

Seven. It is anticipated that a minimum of 25 more streets will have measures in place by the end of September.

I share your concern about this delay, it is one of many across the Transport and Environment remit. I hope that from August TEC will be able to provide transparent and open scrutiny of project delivery to help ensure schemes have adequate resources to be delivered on time and on budget.

QUESTION NO 3

By Councillor Younie for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) What is the current rationale for the bollards and extended pavements on Barnton Avenue?

Answer (1) These were implemented through Spaces for People to provide more space for pedestrians on the route to The Royal High School.

Question (2) What traffic order is in place for the extended pavements on Barnton Avenue?

Answer (2) A Traffic Order is not required for these temporary footway widenings.

Question (3) What risk assessment was carried out prior to the installation of these bollards with respect to the safety of cyclists using the NCR1 cycle route?

Answer (3) A risk assessment was undertaken for all of the temporary pedestrian walkways implemented at schools under the Spaces for People programme. This risk assessment did not identify any specific risks to cyclists at this location. Please contact me to see a copy of the risk assessment.

Question (4) When is a decision to be taken on whether to retain or remove these bollards?

Answer (4) A decision on whether to retain, modify or remove the existing measures will be agreed through the school travel plan, which is anticipated will be considered in August 2022.

Item no 10.4

QUESTION NO 4

By Councillor Flannery for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

To ask the Convener of Transport and Environment, what target is the administration setting for city wide recycling rates for the end of this council term?

Answer

We plan to update the Council Business Plan later in the year and this will be addressed as part of that. Rather than selecting arbitrary targets which are unachievable, I am working with Officers to understand what is possible (1) within existing budgets, (2) with additional investment and if the cuts planned by the Scottish Government are passed on pro-rata to this service area.

Item no 10.5

QUESTION NO 5

**By Councillor Dilkstra-Downie for
answer by the Convener of the
Transport and Environment
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

The October 2021 meeting of the Transport and Environment Committee considered a report 'Active Travel Measures – Traveling Safely Update'.

Paragraph 4.13 of the report said that "it is expected that the review [of School travel plans] will be completed, and draft plans developed by early 2022".

- Question** (1) Is the review of school travel plans now complete?
- Answer** (1) In the context of the report, paragraph 4.13 referred only to the school travel plan reviews for those 35 schools that had temporary measures put in place as part of the Spaces for People programme. The reviews for all of these schools are currently in the final draft stage, with formal sign off by the schools expected to take place at the beginning of the new term in August. However, as the plans are largely complete, officers will be progressing some of the measures identified within them for early delivery over the summer break.
- Question** (2) Which if any school travel plans reviews have yet to be completed?
- Answer** (2) As above, the reviews for all 35 schools are currently in the final draft stage, with formal sign off expected in August.
- Question** (3) Which schools now have revised draft travel plans in place?
- Answer** (3) The 35 schools are:
- Bonaly Primary School
 - Boroughmuir High School
 - Brunstane Primary School
 - Bruntsfield Primary School

Buckstone Primary School
Carrick Knowe Primary School
Castleview Primary School
Corstorphine Primary School
Craigentenny Primary School
Craigour Park Primary School
Dalry Primary School
Davidson's Mains
Ferryhill Primary School
Gracemount Primary School
Granton Primary School
Gylemuir Primary School
Hermitage Park Primary School
Holy Cross RC Primary School
James Gillespie's Primary School
Juniper Green Primary School
Leith Walk Primary School
Longstone Primary School
Lorne Primary School
Murrayburn Primary School
Parson Green Primary School
Pirniehall / St David's RC Primary Schools
Preston Street Primary School
Prestonfield Primary School
Royal High School
Rudolph Steiner School
Sciennes Primary School
St Catherine's RC Primary School
St Francis RC / Niddrie Mill Primary Schools
St George's School
St John Vianney RC Primary School

Item no 10.6

QUESTION NO 6

By Councillor Caldwell for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) How many individual pieces of feedback have been received regarding the communal bin review (“Bin Hubs”) since their installation in March 2022, broken down by ward?

Answer (1) The table below summarises the number of enquiries received from March 2022 in relation to the bin hubs installed as part of Phase 1 of the Communal Bin Review (CBR).

Ward	No. of hubs installed	Enquiries Received
Leith Walk	165	38
Leith	94	36
Craigtinny/ Duddingston	100	48
Inverleith	1	3

Question (2) Will the convener meet with myself and other councillors representing tenemented areas such as Leith Walk ward to discuss residents' concerns with the new Bin Hubs, particularly regarding noise from glass recycling being installed directly outside residents' windows?

Answer (2) I would be very happy to work with Ward Councillors (within existing budgets) to seek a solution to any problems that exist.

Question (3) What assessment (including consultation with outside organisations) has been made of the accessibility of new roadside Bin Hubs situated for residents, including those with mobility issues and whether improvements are required?

Answer (3) The Communal Bin Review team carried out an Integrated Impact Assessment which can be found [on the City of Edinburgh Council website](#). The Access Panel and the Royal National Institute of Blind People were engaged as part of the preparation of the Integrated Impact Assessment.

Question (4) What additional enforcement is available to-combat the increased fly-tipping around bin hubs in Leith Walk ward?

Answer (4) The Street Enforcement Team will continue to patrol the area and enforcement action will be taken where there is sufficient evidence to identify those responsible for failing to dispose of their waste correctly.

Waste collection crews proactively report fly-tipping which is then removed by street cleansing crews. Information on how residents can dispose of bulky items is on the bins and within communication materials which were circulated to residents.

In general terms, the level of fly-tipping in Edinburgh is unacceptable, and I am committed to reversing the sharp rise we have seen over the past five years. It impacts on the wellbeing of residents, and Edinburgh's international reputation.

I see the CBR being part of the solution, but I am also eager to investigate other opportunities.

Item no 10.7

QUESTION NO 7

By Councillor Osler for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

On the Council website under EV Charging it states the following - We have been awarded £2.2m of funding from Transport Scotland through the [Switched on Towns and Cities Challenge Fund](#) to put in more electric vehicle charging points across the city.

We are putting in another 81 charging points with 141 electric vehicle charging bays across the city which should be ready to use by **summer 2022**.

Question

(1) Of the 141 electric vehicle charging bays:

How many are currently operational (broken down by site)

Answer

(1) 21 of these chargers are now operational at Ingliston Park and Ride:

- 6 rapid 50kW chargers serving 6 charging bays
- 15 standard 7kW chargers serving 30 charging bays

Question

(2) Of the ones NOT operational:

- a) Why are they not operational (broken down by site)
- b) When will they be operational (broken down by site)

Answer

(2) The table below provides details of each site and the current status of installation. The timetable set out assumes that appropriate grid connections can be established in July 2022.

The Council is working with third-party operators and contractors to install these chargers. This includes working with the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) to provide a connection to the power grid. Progress is often dependent on their work programmes and supply chains.

Location	Charger Install	Grid Connection	Testing and Commissioning
Ingliston Park and Ride	Complete	Complete	Complete
King's Road	Complete	Complete	04/07/2022
Fettes Avenue	Complete	Complete	04/07/2022
Montgomery Street	Complete	Complete	11/07/2022
Comely Bank	Complete	Early July	Late July
Thirlestane Road	Complete	Early July	Late July
East London Street	Complete	Early July	Late July
Sheriff Brae	Complete	Early July	Late July
Heriot Row	Complete	Early July	Late July
Maxwell Street	Complete	Early July	Late July
Stewart Terrace	Complete	Early July	Late July
Hermiston Park and Ride	Complete	Complete	04/07/2022 *

* Due to sickness absence, this may be delayed.

Item no 10.8

QUESTION NO 8

By Councillor Osler for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

On the 26th August 2021, Council unanimously agreed that the then Convener of Transport and Environment would write to both of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy and the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport in order to seek sufficient increased funding to make critical improvements which will be necessary to protect communities from future flooding. On the 28th October 2021 the Convener of Transport and Environment agreed that any response received would be made public.

- Question** (1) For each communication, has a response received?
- Answer** (1) A single response was received on behalf of the Scottish Government
- Question** (2) When?
- Answer** (2) The response is dated 21 December 2021.
- Question** (3) By Whom?
- Answer** (3) The response was provided by Màiri McAllan, Minister for Environment and Land Reform.
- Question** (4) Can the response be circulated?
- Answer** (4) The response was circulated to (then) members of the Transport and Environment Committee on 1 February 2022. I will arrange for it to now be shared with all Councillors for information.

Item no 10.9

QUESTION NO 9

By Councillor Young for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Please provide the following information, as up to date as possible, regarding any outstanding placing requests for catchment schools (primary and secondary).

Question

(1) A list of schools where they have been unable to accommodate all catchment children (and numbers affected)

Question

(2) Of those totals at (1) how many children having siblings at the school already?

Answer

(1) Note catchment deadline of 24 December 2021 to be guaranteed a place in the catchment school.

(2)

Broughton Primary (2) no siblings in attendance

Fox Covert ND Primary (2) both have siblings in attendance

Gilmerton Primary (3) no siblings in attendance

Kirkliston Primary (1) – there may be a sibling from August 2022

Towerbank Primary (1) sibling to be confirmed

Boroughmuir High (16) no siblings in attendance

James Gillespie's High (7) no siblings in attendance

Leith Academy (2)

Liberton High (1)

Portobello High (2)

St Augustine's High (5) catchment; non baptised RC; late requests

Question (3) How many of the total children at (1) are considered more vulnerable (for example but not limited to additional support needs, looked after children, refugee status, adoption). Please provide totals for the city (not per school) but under the different vulnerability categories.

Answer (3) This information is still being analysed and will be provided within the next 10 business days however, at the current time approximately 40% of children and young people across Edinburgh are assessed as having additional support needs (ASN).

In January 2022, two Senior Education Officers and a Senior Transactions Officer, reviewed all the placing requests for non-catchment schools that were received up to **24 December 2021**.

The reasons presented by parents/guardians were considered carefully and where necessary, further information was requested.

The children considered to have exceptional reasons were then presented to the Committee on Pupil Student Support, along with supporting information.

Once agreement was reached, the children were then placed as priority on the requested school waiting list.

Requests received after 24 December are late and are therefore not considered for exceptionality for the requested non-catchment school.

This is in accordance with the policy agreed by committee

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/school-places/start-secondary-school/1>

Currently, the groupings considered for exceptionality and priority on any waiting list are:

- Grouping 1: Care Experienced
- Grouping 2: Child on Child Protection Register
- Grouping 3: Child adopted
- Grouping 4: Parent died
- Grouping 5: Complex physical, medical needs
- Grouping 6: Parent occupation
- Grouping 7: Situation involving police
- Grouping 8: Complex family circumstances

Parents/guardians have the right of appeal once they have received a letter that indicates the authority is not able to allocate a place. This applies to any requests received irrespective of the fact that they may not have been considered for exceptionality and priority.

The Placing in Schools Committee can consider reasons presented by the parent/guardian. This committee has the power to allocate places irrespective of the fact the intake limit of any school has been reached.

Question

- (4)** For children included in (3), please provide the following:
- a) When will all outstanding appeals be completed?
 - b) For those allocated a space, what plans are in place to aid transition considering they have missed the standard settling in days already undertaken.
 - c) For those unsuccessful in securing a space, what other options will be available for appeal or how will they be supported in attending a neighbouring school?

Answer

- (4)** a) The outstanding appeals for P1 and S1 places will be scheduled to be heard before the start of term in August.
- b) For children who have missed 'normal' transition, no additional settling in would be required unless it was determined a specific need, in which case this would be coordinated by the Support for Learning staff; for children with additional support needs who miss part of their enhanced transition – arrangements would be reviewed and coordinated by the Pupil Support Leader and Support for Learning Coordinators. The Headteacher, or DHT acts as a single point of contact (Named Person) and remits decisions around support at transitions to staff as stated above. Any parent/carer who feels that support is required should contact their current Headteacher.
- c) The arrangements to support pupils in transition are the same regardless of whether the school is catchment or not. The current Headteacher or Head of Centre is the Named Person/single point of contact, who coordinates support. Most children transition with no enhanced support. Enhanced support is provided for children with additional support needs. The nature of the ASN will determine the enhanced transition support and can often start up to two years before transition takes place.

Item no 10.10

QUESTION NO 10

By Councillor Thornley for answer by the Convener of the Culture and Communities Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

- Question** How much Scottish Government funding was provided to the Council in 2021/22 as a result of the SNP's manifesto pledge to spend £60 million to refurbish all play parks?
- Answer** The Council received £414,000 for this purpose.
- Question** (2) How much of this 2021/22 funding has been spent?
- Answer** (2) The Council spent £323,474 in 2021/22. The funding which wasn't spent in 2021/22 has been carried forward into 2022/23
- Question** (3) Which play parks were upgraded as a result of the 2021/22 funding?
- Answer** (3) Upgrades were made to:
- Fauldburn Park;
 - Harrison Park (East and West);
 - Meadows;
 - Inverleith Park;
 - Inch Park;
 - Spylaw Park;
 - Sevenacre Park;
 - Campbell Park;
 - Echline Park; and
 - Sighthill Park.

Question (4) How much play parks funding has been allocated from the Scottish Government for 2022/23?

Answer (4) The Council will receive £406,000 in 2022/23.

Question (5) Which play parks will be upgraded as a result of the 2022/23 funding?

Answer (5) Works have been completed on two parks already this year: Loganlea Avenue; and Glenvarloch Crescent.

In addition, tendering has been completed for: Dundas Park, Morningside Public Park and Clovenstone Gardens.

Work has started at Figgate Park and works are planned at Montgomery Street Park and Saltire Street.

Replacement toddler units will be progressed at Victoria Park, Dumbryden Grove, Hailesland Garden and Morvenside.

If funding allows, Dean Park Place, Westfield Court and Southhouse Square will also be considered for upgrade.

Item no 10.11

QUESTION NO 11

By Councillor Parker for answer by the Convener of the Culture and Communities Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) How many new trees have been planted in Edinburgh per year during each of the last five years, and how many trees are planned to be planted per year during 2022, 2023, 2024?

Answer (1) The Council's records show the number of trees planted in Edinburgh each year for the last five years as:

2017/18 - 11,800

2018/19 - 19,865

2019/20 - 10,411

2020/21 - 267

2021/22 - 24,332 (net)

Each year from 2022/23 until 2031 the Council plans to plant around 25,000 new trees each year as part of Edinburgh Million Tree City project.

Question (2) When new trees are planted, what is the process to select materials under trees if not natural mulching, and what factors are considered in this process?

Answer (2) Typically, but not exhaustively, trees in grass or soft landscaping areas may be left with bare bases or mulched. In hard standing, trees will be planted in prepared tree pits and may be left bare, covered with a tree grille, or resin. The factors considered in this process include existing surfaces, reinstatement, future maintenance requirements, and budget.

Question (3) Please share the council's current tree watering plan, split between trees of different maturities.

Answer (3) This plan is currently being developed and will be shared with Culture and Committee when available.

- Question** (4) On a weekly basis, how much water does a newly planted tree require, and how long does it take to provide water to all newly planted trees across the city (including water filling time, transportation time and watering time)?
- Answer** (4) A newly planted tree requires between 0-20 litres, depending on uptake of overtime by the arborist squads. Filling time approximately 1hr per 1000ltrs. Transportation time depends on location of trees, traffic and road works so is variable. Time per tree depends on how many trees are at each location but approximately 5 mins per tree to administer 20ltrs once tree has been reached.
- Question** (5) Please indicate the council's current FTE for tree watering, are there any unfilled vacancies, and how does the council ensure flexibility of resource to respond to extreme weather events such as hot weather and drought?
- Answer** (5) Due to the variability in demand, there are no dedicated resources for this work currently. While some watering can be carried out during normal working hours, overtime is also used where resources are available. This is especially important at critical times e.g, especially dry periods.
- Maintenance is also important, and officers are looking at how best to resource this as part of Edinburgh Million Tree City project.
- Question** (6) What is the current policy and process to work with volunteers and local groups who water trees?
- Answer** (6) There is no policy or process to use volunteers; however, it is something that is being looked at as part of Edinburgh Million Tree City and Thriving Greenspaces projects. Labels are attached to new trees to encourage local people to water the trees but there is no way to calculate their effectiveness. We encourage all residents and businesses to look after young trees nearby.

Item no 10.12

QUESTION NO 12

By Councillor Mowat for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) Why has there been a six-month delay in publishing the ETROs for the conversion of Spaces for People to Travelling Safety?

Answer (1) The preparation of the necessary plans and documents for the various Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) has taken much longer than originally expected. The proposed orders are complex and require changes to the existing permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). As a result, unfortunately, it has taken longer than planned to prepare and check the large ETRO packages.

I share your concern about this delay, it is one of many across the Transport and Environment remit. I hope that from August TEC will be able to provide transparent and open scrutiny of project delivery to help ensure schemes have adequate resources to be delivered on time and on budget.

Question (2) Who has prepared the drawings and consultation for the ETROs and why is there no information advertising these further changes on the front page of the Council's website or in the Consultation Hub?

Answer (2) Project Centre Limited prepared the plans and documents. Proposed changes to TROs are not advertised on the Consultation Hub, these have been advertised on the Council's Traffic Orders webpage, following a stakeholder notification.

Question (3) A number of Spaces for People schemes were officially graded as having a negative impact on people with mobility issues. Has the extra time been used to improve designs to reduce the negative impact and, if so, please can examples be provided?

Answer (3) The majority of schemes are a straight transition from the existing measures to ETRO trial. Some changes have been made on schemes to improve parking access and to increase the provision of Blue badge parking spaces. However, the measures installed in the Town Centres were officially graded as having a negative impact on people with mobility issues. These have now been removed apart from a few minor measures at specific locations.

Question (4) The six-month delay has provided even more time for data collection on usage of cycle lanes, which is desirable when preparing for and carrying out an experiment. Please can detail of the additional data collected during this time period be provided?

Answer (4) There have been some further traffic surveys carried out for certain schemes to provide additional data on the usage. This information will be used, alongside information gathered as part of the monitoring and evaluation process for schemes for which Experimental Traffic Orders are made. This can be shared on request.

Question (5) In December 2021, stakeholders were invited to feedback on the proposed ETROs. Can detail of how this feedback has shaped each proposed ETRO be provided?

Answer (5) I understand that details of the recommendations and revisions from the stakeholder feedback will be incorporated into a forthcoming report to the Transport and Environment Committee.

Question (6) Good experiments answer specific and clearly posed questions. By the start of the proposed ETROs for Lanark Road and Longstone, the schemes will have been installed for 18 months.

- a) What specific questions will be answered by the proposed ETRO that cannot already be answered on the basis of existing evidence?
- b) What KPIs and targets will be used to measure whether the experiments are successful?

- Answer** (6) It was agreed by TEC and 2021 that:
- a) The proposed trial will allow officers to monitor and evaluate each scheme over the formal consultation period when future mobility patterns are better known.
 - b) The proposed monitoring and evaluation plan will be included in a future report to the Transport and Environment Committee.

Question (7) In the Scottish Government Covid 19 guidance on temporary traffic regulation orders and notices, on p3 it states: "*Traffic authorities may make temporary traffic regulation orders covering their roads for a number of reasons for up to 18 months.*" A number of Spaces for People schemes have now been in place for over 18 months, and mask wearing restrictions on public transport have been removed. What is the legal basis under which these schemes are in place currently?

Source:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47432/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-temporary-traffic-regulation-orders-and-notices.pdf>

Answer (7) Under normal circumstances (ie. without an extension from the Scottish Ministers) an individual TTRO can last up to 18 months. However, if the danger still exists, it is reasonable to make a new order. It is the professional judgment of Officers that the risk remains.

Item no 10.13

QUESTION NO 13

By Councillor Mitchell for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Please could the Convener confirm:

Question (1) The amount of money currently held by the Council from overpayments of Council Tax by residents?

Answer (1) For 2021/22 the value of Council Tax 'credits' that remain unclaimed is £2,188,863. This figure is 0.8% of the total payments made in 2021/22 and work is ongoing to reduce this amount.

Question (2) The current process of refunding?

Answer (2) Following the identification of a credit balance the Council issues a credit note which advises citizens how to progress a refund. If a customer pays by direct debit the team should process the refund without the need for a credit note to be issued. Similarly direct debit payers who leave Edinburgh and complete the Council's online change of address form will have their refund process partially automated. Work is underway to fully automate the refund process for direct debit payers, which is the most common payment method.

A regular review of high value credits is undertaken and further contact is made with these customers. Initial analysis shows that over 60% of Council Tax credits for 2021/22 are less than £100.

Item no 10.14

QUESTION NO 14

By Councillor Bruce for answer by the Convener of Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) In relation to the Electric vehicle charging point map available through the link on the council website, can we be assured that any 'out of service' charging stations are updated to this list on a timely basis?

Answer (1) ChargePlace Scotland is appointed by Transport Scotland as the network operator for all chargers owned by Local Authorities across Scotland. The ChargePlace website and map are currently maintained by SWARCO who have automated communications in place with each charging unit so they can update their systems in real time. I hope this is an acceptable alternative to Officers providing a bespoke map showing these details.

Question (2) What is the future rollout of charging point locations broken down by ward and the dates of when these will become operational?

Answer (2) The table below provides an overview of the current timetable to install chargers and includes the charger location and ward.

Location	Ward	Charger Install	Grid Connection	Testing and Commissioning
Ingliston Park and Ride	Almond	Complete	Complete	Complete
King's Road	Portobello / Craigmillar	Complete	Complete	04/07/2022
Fettes Avenue	Inverleith	Complete	Complete	04/07/2022
Montgomery Street	Leith Walk	Complete	Complete	11/07/2022
Comely Bank	Inverleith	Complete	Early July	Late July
Thirlestane Road	Morningside	Complete	Early July	Late July

East London Street	City Centre	Complete	Early July	Late July
Sheriff Brae	Leith	Complete	Early July	Late July
Heriot Row	City Centre	Complete	Early July	Late July
Maxwell Street	Morningside	Complete	Early July	Late July
Stewart Terrace	Sighthill / Gorgie	Complete	Early July	Late July
Hermiston Park and Ride	Pentland Hills	Complete	Complete	27/06/2022

Item no 10.15

QUESTION NO 15

**By Councillor Booth for answer by
the Convener of the Licensing Board
at a meeting of the Council on 30
June 2022**

Question

What steps will the Convener take to ensure that the proceedings of Board meetings remain open and transparent, and what steps will she consider to improve openness and transparency?

Answer

At the time of submitting this answer (Monday 27th) I was appointed as the Convener of the Edinburgh Licensing Board only this morning. As a new member of the Board, it's difficult to comment on how to 'improve' transparency without a baseline. The need for openness and transparency in terms of the discharge of the Board's statutory functions is a matter for the full Licensing Board, not only the Convener, and as a member of the Board, Councillor Booth's suggestions for meetings will be welcome.

My preference is to hold meetings in person in the City Chambers (as long as not contrary to any changing health advice) and whenever possible to conduct deliberations in public (rather than withdrawing to another room). That is of course subject to any confidentiality or application-specific requirements advised by the Clerk.

Board meetings have until now, not been webcast, which I understand is due to the nature of the personal information which may be discussed regarding applicants, and also to protect objectors from being 'broadcast' which, for some members of the public, may be a deterrent to participating. Again, this is a matter for the Board to discuss but I am open to reviewing this approach and to align where appropriate, with the other quasi-judicial committees of the Council.

Item no 10.16

QUESTION NO 16

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Vice-Convener of the Licensing Board at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Does the Vice-Convener believe that the Board should review its policy on Hours of Trading as part of the forthcoming review of the Board's statement of policy?

Answer

The new Board has 18 months within which to agree the terms of its new Statement of Licensing Policy. It will be for the Board as a collective to decide the manner in which the consultation is carried out and with whom it consults (though this will include a number of mandatory statutory consultees). Before the consultation process begins, the Board has to decide what it will be consulting upon. It would not be appropriate to go into the specifics of aspects of the policy and what precisely will be consulted upon, before the Board has begun that formal process.

Item no 10.17

QUESTION NO 17

**By Councillor Booth for answer by
the Convener of the Planning
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Question

Does the Convener have confidence that the Planning service has sufficient resources in place to deal with the expected increase in applications for short-term lets?

Answer

The Planning service has been experiencing a rise of applications including short-term let applications. The Planning service has recently recruited six Planning Assistants and one Planning Officer in addition to implementing service improvements to ensure the application process is efficient and the service can meet its demand.

Item no 10.18

QUESTION NO 18

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Development Management Sub-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Please can the Convener clarify whether she intends to change the start time for future committee meetings, and if so what consultation will be carried out with members before such a change is made?

Answer

The times of committees will be considered as part of the political management arrangements due to be considered by Council in September 2022 and consultation will take place with all political groups.

Item no 10.19

QUESTION NO 19

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Leader of the Council at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Please can the council leader set out the reasons behind reducing the size of the Licensing Board from 10 to 9, while also appointing a vice-convener?

Answer

The Council agreed the appointments of members to Committees, Boards and Joint Boards, including the Licensing Board at the Council meeting on 26 May 2022 (adjourned from 19 May 2022).

Item no 10.20

QUESTION NO 20

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Leader of the Council at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Will the council respond to the current consultation on the draft National Gaelic Language Plan, and if so, will the draft consultation response be considered by the Gaelic Implementation Group prior to submission?

Answer

Yes, a Council response is being prepared and will be submitted to the national consultation.

No, the Gaelic Implementation Group (GIG) will not be able to consider the response prior to submission. The GIG was a formal working group appointed by the Education, Children and Families Committee in 2021/22. This group ceased at the end of the previous Council term. Future working groups will be considered as part of the review of political management arrangements and will require to be appointed by the appropriate committee.

The consultation response will be submitted by the deadline and submitted to P&S for noting.

Item no 10.21

QUESTION NO 21

By Councillor Booth for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Will the Convener please confirm there will be no delay to the roll-out of the Leith Low Traffic Neighbourhood as expected in September 2022?

Answer

I share your concern about risk of delay this project faces, it is one of many across the Transport and Environment remit. I hope that from August TEC will be able to provide transparent and open scrutiny of project delivery to help ensure schemes have adequate resources to be delivered on time and on budget.

Officers assure me they are working towards delivery starting in November at the earliest, with a note of caution that the generally challenging market conditions and reduced capacity for tenderers to deliver to Council programme requirements could lead to delays. An update will be provided in the Business Bulletin for Transport and Environment Committee in August 2022.

QUESTION NO 22

By Councillor Mowat for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

- Question** (1) On p14 of the City of Edinburgh Council and Sustrans Walking and Cycling Index 2021, it says
- "...neighbourhoods of at least 40 dwellings per hectare...are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods. Lower density neighbourhoods have too few people to make much local business or public transport viable."*
- a) Does the convener agree with this definition?
- b) Is this the definition used in the City Plan 2030?
- Answer** (1) a) 20-minute neighbourhoods are about connectivity, mix of uses and placemaking as well as about density. The higher density a neighbourhood is, the greater the likelihood is that it will have the widest range of services, businesses and connectivity to make it a 20 Minute Neighbourhood.
- I hope to share more details on our proposed approach soon, but in the interim the Walking and Cycling Index 2021 (WACI) identified that: *72% of Edinburgh households are in neighbourhoods of at least 40 dwellings per hectare. These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods.* This reinforces that much of Edinburgh's built environment is ready to support the 20 Minute Neighbourhood approach.
- b) The glossary for Proposed City Plan 2030 defines 20-minute neighbourhoods as places where people can access services which meet daily needs within a 10-minute walk/ wheel of their house, equivalent to a 20-minute round trip.
- Question** (2) If lower density neighbourhoods have too few people to make much local business or public transport viable, it is discriminatory to force restrictions to motor vehicles outside people's homes in lower density neighbourhoods?

- Answer** (2) The Council’s approach to proposing restrictions, such as parking controls, are not based on housing density.
- The Strategic Review of Parking has considered parking pressures across the entire Edinburgh area. This review has formed a citywide strategy for addressing parking pressures, often in partnership with local residents, taking a proactive approach on policy and strategy grounds. The aim is very much to work with communities to help make their neighbourhood safer, healthier and greener.
- Question** (3) In the Walking and Cycling Index, respondents were asked: *“Q20 To what extent do you support or oppose the creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods? These are neighbourhoods where it is easy for people to meet most of their everyday needs in a short, convenient and pleasant 20 minute return walk. For example having local shops, schools, green space and public transport options within a 10 minute walk (or 20 minute round trip) of your home.”*
- 78% of respondents supported this.
- Before answering this question, were respondents given a clear definition that a 20 minute neighbourhood requires at least 40 dwellings per hectare?
- Answer** (3) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we’ll share these comments with Sustrans for consideration in preparing future surveys.
- Question** (4) In the foreword to the report on p2, it says *“Living locally has benefits for our citizens’ wellbeing....the multiple benefits of a local living approach are why ensuring residents live in and can access 20-minute neighbourhoods is such an important threat that must run through the city’s response to the climate crisis.”*
- What evidence is there that residents experience greater wellbeing when living in neighbourhoods of high density housing with a minimum of 40 dwellings per hectare, as opposed to neighbourhoods with lower density housing?
- Answer** (4) This is a matter for Sustrans but we’ll share these comments with them for consideration in preparing future surveys

QUESTION NO 23

By Councillor Munro for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

The Walking and Cycling Index, carried out by City of Edinburgh Council and Sustrans was published on 17 May 22, 12 days after the election.

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/13474/walking-wheeling-and-cycling-boost-to-environment-and-economy>

Previously known as Bike Life, this is the fourth edition of this research, which has been carried out every two years since 2015.

- Question** (1) a) How much did City of Edinburgh Council spend on the 2022 research and any associated launch?
- b) Were any costs covered by other organisations?

- Answer** (1) a) There was no direct cost to the Council associated with the research and launch. However, Council officers have spent approximately two weeks working in partnership with Sustrans on the survey and launch since the last report was published in 2019.
- b) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we'll share these comments with them for consideration in preparing future surveys.

- Question** (2) On p4 of the report it says: "*Participation in walking, cycling and wheeling on a regular basis has stayed about the same since 2019.*"

This data shows that the Spaces for People cycle lanes installed during the pandemic did not lead to more people cycling than before the pandemic.

- a) Can the convener explain why this multi-million-pound investment failed to increase the participation in cycling in Edinburgh?
- b) Given this, and the well documented negative impacts on businesses and individuals including disabled

people, what changes to the strategy of the previous administration will the convener seek to make?

Answer

- (2) a) Whilst journeys to work by bike declined during the pandemic, overall participation by Edinburgh citizens remained consistent (according to WACI) and there was an increase in non-work journeys made by bike in 2021 compared to 2019. Furthermore, there was a large increase in cycling participation by people from socio-economic group DE (people who are semi, unskilled or manual labourers, or unemployed), from 7% cycling at least once a week in 2019 to nearly a quarter of these citizens in 2021 (23%).
- b) There can be no doubt that SfP created a number of problems as well as delivering benefits. The current administration is absolutely committed to learning from this, and following best practice when investing in active travel infrastructure. There is also much to learn from cities like Paris, Manchester and London about how to work with communities to deliver transformative change.

Question

- (3) On p16 of the report it says that Edinburgh has two miles of cycle tracks physical separated from traffic and pedestrians, up from 1 mile in 2019.
- a) In a footnote, it says this does not include the 22 miles of 'pop-up' cycle lane installed in 2020/21 in response to the pandemic.
- b) Why were these 'pop-up' Spaces for People lanes not included?

Answer

- (3) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we'll share these comments with them for consideration in preparing future surveys.

Question

- (4) On page 4 of the report, two statistics are highlighted next to each other: "66% of residents walk at least five days a week" and "26% of residents cycle at least once a week."

It is not best practice to layout non-comparable data in a way that might lead the reader to directly compare them, especially when directly comparable data is available?

- Answer** (4) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we'll share these comments with them.
- Question** (5) Why did it not say "97% of residents walk at least once a week (up from 92% in 2019)" beside "26% of residents cycle at least once a week (up from 24% in 2019)"
- and/or
- a) "66% of residents walk at least five days a week (up from 65% in 2019)" beside "8% of residents cycle at least five days a week (down from 9% in 2019)"?
 - b) This misleading comparison "*66% of residents make trips by walking at least five days a week and 26% of residents cycle at least once a week*" has already been included on the Consultation Hub, in the introduction for the consultation for "Walk Wheel Cycle Burdiehouse".
 - c) If these statistics continue to be presented this way in official documents, could this lead to the public not spotting the disproportionate spend on cycling infrastructure over walking, even though walking is more accessible to all groups and top of the transport hierarchy?
 - d) Will this now be corrected in the Walking and Cycling Index 2022 to prevent a cascade of misrepresentation in official documents, using the Index as a source?

Answer (5) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we'll share these comments with them for consideration in preparing future surveys.

Question (6) City of Edinburgh Council needs to understand more about the barriers to people cycling and feeling safe.

In the 2019 Bike Life report it covered reasons why some residents do not cycle or why they cycle less often

1. Reason	2. %age of those who do not cycle or cycle less often (they could choose multiple reasons)
3. Concerned about safety	4.51%

5. Poor weather	6. 31%
7. Not confident cycling	8. 26%
9. Lack of storage facilities at home or work	10. 25%
11. Too hilly here	12. 19%
13. Living too far from my destination	14. 15%
15. Children, passengers or too much to carry	16. 14%
17. Cost of a suitable cycle	18. 13%
19. Not for people like me	20. 9%

- a) In another question, 95% of the residents who believed cycling safety needed to be improved, said that the way to improve cycle safety in Edinburgh was better road quality and fewer potholes.
- b) This data contributes to understanding about the lack of increase in cycling. Why was data on all this included in the 2019 report but not in 2021?

Answer (6) This is a matter for Sustrans, but we'll share these comments with them for consideration in preparing future reports.

Question (7) The Walking and Cycling Index 2022 shows some dramatic declines when compared with the 2019 Bike Life report.

Responses to questions	2019	2021	Drop in percentage points
%age of residents that would be helped to cycle more by better facilities - more cycle tracks along roads that are physically separated from traffic.	82%	64%	-18
% of residents support building more cycle lanes physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic	74%	57%	-17
%age who want more traffic-free cycle routes away from roads, eg through parks, or along waterways	84%	73%	-11
%age of residents wanting more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets	75%	67%	-8
% of people who agree increasing spaces for people socialising or walking	75%	58%	-17

and cycling on their local high street would improve the area			
% of people agreeing closing streets outside local schools to cars during school drop-off and pick up times would improve their local area	57%	47%	-10
% of people want to see more spent on cycling	62%	52%	-10

- a) Is there any commentary in the Index acknowledging the declines?
- b) Is there any commentary in the Index explaining the declines?
- c) This Index is used to inform and justify transport and active travel policy. Are there any policy changes informed by these declines?
- d) While there are some declines in the aggregated report across the UK, the declines in Edinburgh appear to be bigger. Is there any explanation for this?

Answer

- (7)** a) and b) There is minimal commentary in the document on any of the changes observed between 2019 and 2021.
- c) and d) It is considered likely that the declines reflect the controversy around the Spaces for People programme in Edinburgh. Nevertheless, there are still significant levels of support on all the issues covered by the questions in the table above. Furthermore, there is evidence from across the UK and Europe of the positive impact of these types of measures on levels of walking and cycling.

QUESTION NO 24

By Councillor Whyte for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Each of the Spaces for People Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) uses as its reasoning a general facilitation of improved safety with the following statement:

“The restrictions within this Order, to facilitate improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists during the current Covid-19 pandemic, supporting social distancing so that people can safely walk, wheel or cycle, will be subject to ongoing review and should it be determined that the restrictions are no longer required, then at that time the temporary restrictions shall be revoked by notice, under a separate Order.”

For each of the orders please explain:

- a) which parts of this general statement apply for that specific TTRO?
- b) what social distancing is being facilitated by that TTRO given current social distancing restrictions being imposed on the public?
- c) how it is currently facilitating improved safety directly in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic?

Answer

- a) In general cycle lanes support wheeling and cycling, and pedestrian areas support walking and wheeling.

The current TTROs can generally be split into waiting restrictions (to manage parking adjacent cycle segregation) or vehicle prohibitions (to create pedestrian areas, modal filters or temporary one-way roads).

- b) Council Officers note that the advice from the Scottish Government and our own Public Health team confirm we are still in a pandemic and suggests individuals should continue to maintain distancing between non-

family contacts.

- c) It is the professional judgment of Officers that the creation of increased pedestrian space provides more space on busy streets. Changes to road space allocation may encourage individuals to make alternative mobility choices, can allow more space for people and slow infection transmission.

Item no 10.25

QUESTION NO 25

**By Councillor Davidson for answer
by the Convener of the Transport and
Environment Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 30 June 2022**

Question

To ask the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee when he expects to provide an update on the planned roll out of Phase 2 of the Council's Strategic Review of Parking?

Answer

A report was presented to the Transport and Environment Committee on [Thursday 26 August 2021](#) in relation to Phase 2 of the Council's Strategic Review of Parking (SROP). An extract of the motion which was approved by Committee is copied below:

4) To request officers undertake further engagement with resident's groups and other local stakeholders, such as community Councils, on the final designs for Phase 2.

5) To request an additional report in Autumn 2022 at the latest (including feedback on the implementation on phase 1) to allow Committee to review the designs for the TRO process for Phase 2 schemes following the engagement set out in 4) above and prior to a traffic order being issued. These designs should be consistent with the implementation of the pavement parking ban.

The results of the Phase 1 Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation will be reported to the Transport and Environment Committee in August 2022. A detailed update on Phase 2 will follow post-Phase 1 implementation. A general update on all phases of the SROP will be provided to Transport and Environment Committee by the end of the year.

Item no 10.26

QUESTION NO 26

**By Councillor Campbell for answer
by the Convener of the Housing,
Homelessness and Fair Work
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Question

The Edinburgh Labour Party manifesto had a commitment to build at least 25k Council homes over the next ten years.

Can the Convener set out the expected timeframes for delivery for these homes, on an annual basis, ahead of the detailed plans which will be in the SHIP report due in November?

Answer

Affordable housing is developed in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and developers, with delivery of social rented housing dependent upon Scottish Government grant funding.

Officers are working with Registered Social Landlords and other partners develop a comprehensive analysis of funding and sites that could be brought forward for affordable housing development over the next five years. This forms the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which is approved annually by Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee prior to submission to Scottish Government.

The 2023/24 – 2027/28 SHIP report that is due to be considered by Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee in November will include estimated timeframes for development of Council and Edinburgh Living homes.

QUESTION NO 27

By Councillor Work for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) When did the Convener meet with representatives of Edinburgh Airport & Lothian Buses to discuss the bus lane on A8?

Answer (1) The detailed discussions with Edinburgh Airport and Lothian Buses about the A8 bus lane have been led by Council Officers. They have been in regular contact with representatives of both organisations and have kept me updated. I have discussed the situation with Edinburgh Airport, and made it clear to Lothian Buses that their views on the operation bus lane were crucial to the decision making process.

Council officers will continue to work with key stakeholders as part of West Edinburgh Transport Improvements Programme (WETIP) to accelerate a permanent package of sustainable transport measures (active travel and public transport) along the A8/A89 corridor between Maybury and Broxburn as identified by the [WETA Refresh](#) of 2016. I have discussed these significant investments in public transport with Edinburgh Airport, and have been reassured by their commitment to support improvements to active and public transport connections.

Question (2) When did the Convener meet with representatives from other bus operators who use the A8 corridor?

Answer (2) Again, the discussions with bus operators have been progressed by Council officers as part of the WETIP and Bus Partnership Rapid Deployment Fund.

Council officers have been in regular contact with representatives of bus companies that operate services along the A8 (including Stagecoach, Citylink, First and Lothian Buses). This will continue during the next stages of WETIP and the development of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Bus Partnership Fund Strategic Business Case works, which has recently been

mobilised.

Question (3) Although the bus lane was temporary and under review, did the Convener consider the bus lane being suspended only for the duration of the Royal Highland Show and why was a decision on full removal of the bus lane not taken to the next meeting of the committee?

Answer (3) All options were considered, including the reinstatement of the bus lane after the Royal Highland Show. A reinstatement would have been short-term due to the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) expiring in November 2022. The decision to remove the temporary restrictions does not require the approval of the Council.

Council officers are working on accelerating the delivery of permanent bus lanes including on the A8.

Question (4) What conversations did the Convenor have with Ward Councillors before a decision was made?

Answer (4) A briefing note was circulated informing Ward Councillors of the intention to remove the temporary bus lane along this section of road and comments were sought from them. No Ward Councillor contacted me to raise concerns regarding the proposal.

QUESTION NO 28

**By Councillor Campbell for answer
by the Convener of the Planning
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Within Portobello Craigmillar there are currently two active travel routes which have been restricted due to ongoing construction work. Both of these are accessible on either side of the closure, but neither have been opened up to allow the linked route to be restored.

One is the link from Rosefield Park to the new development at Baileyfield, and the other is a route linking Corbieshot to Redman Drive.

Question (1) Can the Convener confirm how many active travel routes across the city are currently closed or restricted due to ongoing construction?

Answer (1) It is disappointing to hear these routes have been closed. I assume that as a local Councillor you have sought alternatives, but please let me know if I can assist you and your Ward colleagues with this.

Unfortunately, Council Officers inform me it is not possible to provide that data. There is not a separate designation for an active travel route on the Scottish Roadworks Register.

Question (2) Can the convener provide a list of closed or restricted active travel routes?

Answer (2) See Answer 1.

Question (3) Does the convener recognise the importance of maintaining access for walking, wheeling and cycling even while development is ongoing, and to opening up routes as quickly possible once construction is complete?

Answer (3) Absolutely.

Question (4) What policies could the Convener implement to ensure that there is always a plan for minimising disruption to active travel routes, and to ensure that developers and construction companies are obligated to keep lengths of closures to an absolute minimum?

Answer

- (4)** The Council is bound by legislation that dictates we must coordinate works, including those carried out by statutory undertakers, who have a statutory right to maintain their apparatus on the road. Council Officers say it is their priority is always to minimise delay and disruption to all road users whilst recognising the sustainable transport hierarchy and supporting the City Mobility Plan.

There is widespread dissatisfaction in Edinburgh regarding the impact of roadworks. Before the end of the year the Transport and Environment Committee will consider a report on the issue. I will ask that the important points you raise are considered as part of this.

Item no 10.29

QUESTION NO 29

**By Councillor Campbell for answer
by the Convener of the Education,
Children and Families Committee at a
meeting of the Council on 30 June
2022**

Question (1) What progress does the administration envisage on addressing capacity issues at Boroughmuir High School?

Answer (1) The current projections published on the Council's website <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/22448/secondary-school-roll-projections> show that when the current extension is complete the school will have adequate capacity until 2031 by which point the school roll is projected to be falling.

QUESTION NO 30

**By Councillor Macinnes for answer
by the Convener of the Transport and
Environment Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 30 June 2022**

Question (1) What is the Administration's way forward on both the temporary and permanent schemes for Braid Road and what is your policy on Braid Road re-opening?

Answer (1) The reopening of Braid Road, under the Travelling Safely Programme, has not occurred yet due to project delays.

I am sure you share my concerns about this delay, it is one of many across the Transport and Environment remit. I hope that from August TEC will be able to provide transparent and open scrutiny of project delivery to help ensure schemes have adequate resources to be delivered on time and on budget.

You will recall that you supported the proposal to reopen the one-way section of Braid Road to two-way traffic, introduce a modal filter and temporary pedestrian crossing. (Expected September 2022). I am committed to progressing this in an open and transparent way, and working with residents and community groups via the ETRO process.

QUESTION NO 31

By Councillor Biagi for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) What are the plans the administration have to address the issue of Capital Contract Tenders coming in above budget?

Answer (1) The construction sector is experiencing considerable volatility with significant inflationary challenges arising from shortages of labour and materials as well as the impact of inflation in the wider economy.

The Council's Commercial and Procurement team is closely monitoring the construction market to develop procurement strategies aimed at achieving value for money. Early supplier market engagement is being adopted on large projects and collaborative discussions with the construction sector and other public sector agencies, including the Scottish Government, provide ongoing and up to date insights to support strategies on an individual basis.

In the event that tenders are higher than budget, project managers work closely with contractors to agree value engineering measures in order to reduce costs while still delivering Council objectives.

It is recognised that value engineering measures alone are unlikely to be sufficient to meet inflationary pressures. The Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy 2022-2032 therefore includes an allowance of £74.4m to mitigate the impact of inflation. This strategy will be reviewed as part of the ongoing budget process with a further report to this committee in the autumn.

QUESTION NO 32

By Councillor Nicolson for answer by the Convener of the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) The Care homes at Ferrylee, Fords Road, Clovenstone and The Jewel remain open and still admitting additional residents as they can meet their needs. The current arrangements follow decisions in the last Council term. However, the consultation process on the future of these homes are still ongoing whilst new residents remain uncertain about their longer term future. What assurances can the Convener give on the future of these homes for the residents and their families?

Answer (1) As the new Chair of the IJB Councillor Nicolson will be aware that Councillor Pogson has not been involved in the decision making of the EIJB previously and he can let Councillor Nicolson know that the IJB has not met since the election. However in response he can update on the current position regarding the wider bed based strategy and the work ahead to consider the best configuration of care for older people in the city in the future. Members may be aware that the EIJB agreed an initial phase of a bed based strategy. In doing this they considered the care home capacity across all provision. The 8 Council run care homes are currently only registered to provide care and cannot admit people to nursing care provision. At the same time, we have high levels of unmet demand and people waiting for nursing care home beds that are not available in the city. Alongside that the four older care homes are past their design life span and because of their physical limitations the service is unable to develop a nursing care model in these homes for people who have more complex physical care needs. In recognising the complexity in this the EIJB agreed the need to engage with people on the future of services for older people and that engagement will get underway now that the Local Government Election has taken place and the new IJB is formed and can make decisions on the format, scope and timescale for that engagement.

- Question** **(2)** What meeting has the Convener had with Unions and other stakeholders on the future of these homes to ensure the EIJB takes the best decision for residents?
- Answer** **(2)** As recently appointed Chair of the EIJB I have not yet attended a meeting with the Unions on this matter. However the previous Chair of the EIJB – Councillor Ricky Henderson - had met with union colleagues on a number of occasions. Union colleague have also regularly presented deputations at EIJB meetings on the bed based work and been engaged with Senior Officers. The EIJB in its discussions before May recognised the importance of Union input to the consultation and engagement process, as well as others, and I anticipate the new IJB will, in agreeing the scope of this, also recognise this. Unions are of course represented on the EIJB so will be a vital part of the decision-making around this.
- Question** **(3)** Can the Convener outline when a decision will be reached on the future of these homes and provide a final timeline?
- Answer** **(3)** I cannot – the EIJB has not met and no decisions on this have been made as yet.

Item no 10.33

QUESTION NO 33

By Councillor Gardiner for answer by the Convener of Development Management Sub-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) How will the Convener be involved in work on the City Plan 2030?

Answer (1) As a member of the Planning Committee, I alongside fellow Planning Committee members will feed into the work on City Plan 2030. The Planning service will continue to lead on the mechanisms for engagement with all members of the Committee.

Background

Reports on City Plan will be brought forward to Planning Committee as necessary. The DM Sub-Committee convener is a member of Planning Committee and will make decisions as part of that committee.

QUESTION NO 34

By Councillor Gardiner for answer by the Convener of Development Management Sub-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question (1) Does the Development Management Sub-Committee Convener agree that the Planning Policy development benefits from a Planning Convener and Development Management Sub-Committee Convener that work together?

Answer (1) The development of planning policy benefits from all members of the Planning Committee working together.

Question (2) What measures will the Development Management Sub-Committee Convener be undertaking to enable co-operation and planning policy development with the Planning Convener?

Answer (2) As a member of the Planning Committee, I will work proactively with all members to enable co-operation and planning policy development.

Background:

Members of DM Sub Committee and Planning Committee are currently the same, so will have knowledge of the work of each committee and be able to apply it to their decision making in both committees.

The service will provide information that relates to DM Sub Committee to Planning Committee via reports and business bulletin – for example on planning time performance and on appeal decisions. This will help assist with planning policy development.

QUESTION NO 35

By Councillor Mattos Coelho for answer by the Convener of Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

- Question** (1) At the budget in 2022/23 the Council agreed to allocate £700k (£100 for each child receiving free school meals). How many payments have now been made?
- Answer** (1) 8393 payments have been made with a total spend of £839,300. (NB Additional funding was reallocated from the original funding identified for financial support).
- Question** (2) How many children are within SIMD 1-4 but not currently receiving free school meal entitlement?
- Answer** (2) Further analysis is required to identify children in SIMD 1-4 who are not receiving free school meals. Currently the school information system holds the SIMD of each child's address but not whether the child is entitled to free school meals. This is because the qualifying criteria for free school meals is not directly linked to SIMD status.
- Significant progress has been made to increase free school meal take-up through activities such as single financial assessment and automation of awards and work is ongoing to support further targeted campaigns.
- Question** (3) At the budget in 2022/23 the Council agreed to allocate £150 per household qualifying for the Council tax reduction scheme, how many payments have now been made?
- Answer** (3) 31,875 payments of £150 have been made totalling £4,781,250.

Item no 10.36

QUESTION NO 36

**By Councillor McFarlane for answer
by the Convener of Housing,
Homelessness and Fair Work
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Question

To ask the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Convener what work is currently being undertaken to support women in finding alternative employment following the implementation of nil cap on existing Sexual Entertainment Venues in the City Centre Ward?

Answer

All the Council's employability services operate an open-door approach and will support anyone in need.

Venues can continue to operate until at least 1 April 2023 and officers will discuss how best to ensure that services are ready to offer support at the appropriate time. This will include offering support to those who may eventually be impacted.

QUESTION NO 37

By Councillor McNeese-Mechan for answer by the Convener of the Development Management Sub-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Having ignored the community on the first matter of policy considered on the Planning Committee, what is the Convener's understanding of how representations from residents are taken account of through the application process?

Answer

Applications for planning permission (which are considered by the quasi-judicial Development-Management Sub-Committee) are subject to a public representation period whereby members of the public can comment on proposals.

Officer reports give a summary of the comments and assess their materiality. The Sub-Committee must take account of representations when making decisions.

The Planning Committee considers reports on planning policy, guidance and designations which normally involve a period of public consultation. Responses are collated and analysed by Planning officers and summarised within the report to Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee takes account of the findings from consultations when making decisions

Item no 10.38

QUESTION NO 38

By Councillor Work for answer by the Convener of the Licensing Board at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

What meetings has the convener had with her vice convener and officers on the formation of the new Licensing Board policy statement?

Answer

Since becoming Convener this morning (at the time of submitting this answer), I have had no meetings with the new Vice-Convener or Council Officers on the policy statement. Prior to taking up the post of Convener, I had no meetings with Council Officers (or Councillor Rust) to discuss the policy.

I have had a couple of informal induction-focused meetings with officers where the only mention of the licensing policy statement at those sessions was as part of a list of responsibilities of the Board. Specific training has been provided on the Board's current policy statement by the Depute Clerks to all new Board members and discussion regarding review of that policy is a matter for the whole Board.

QUESTION NO 39

**By Councillor Campbell for answer
by the Convener of the Culture and
Communities Committee at a
meeting of the Council on 30 June
2022**

The council's public toilet strategy includes the promotion of the community toilet scheme and the use of council owned and council run buildings being made available for any member of the public to access.

During the pandemic, understandably, there were restrictions in relation to certain public buildings. The toilets in the two Edinburgh Leisure buildings on Portobello Promenade were closed to ordinary members of the public due to covid restrictions.

However, they have not reopened since restrictions were lifted, and now it has been revealed that Edinburgh Leisure has left the council's community toilet scheme.

Question (1) With increasing numbers of visitors to the Prom, and increasing demand for public toilets as a result, does the convener think it is acceptable for these buildings, which are owned and run by an arms-length organisation of the council, to remain closed to the general public?

Answer (1) No, I don't think this is acceptable and would like this position changed.

Question (2) What discussions has the convener had about Edinburgh Leisure's withdrawal from the scheme?

Answer (2) Edinburgh Leisure confirmed that they no longer wished to be part of the Community Toilet Scheme in March 2021. This was due to challenges which were not COVID-19 related. Officers have recently been in contact with Edinburgh Leisure on the question of access to their facilities at Portobello, however they have said that they are prioritising access to their toilets to customers and those with 'can't wait' cards to enable them to control access and to maintain their cleaning standards.

Question (3) Will the convener write to the Chief Executive of Edinburgh Leisure to ask that they reconsider this decision?

Answer

(3) Yes.

Item no 10.40

QUESTION NO 40

**By Councillor McFarlane for answer
by the Convener of the Regulatory
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Question (1) As Convener responsible for policy on Short Term Lets, does the Convener support the policy of a citywide control area?

Answer (1) Yes.

Question (2) How many meetings has the Convener had with the Association of Self Caterers in the last 2 years?

Answer (2) One.

Item no 10.41

QUESTION NO 41

**By Councillor McFarlane for answer
by the Convener of the Licensing
Sub- Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 30 June 2022**

Question (1) As Convener responsible for processing applications of Short Term Lets, does the Convenor support the policy of a citywide control area?

Answer (1) The Council has submitted a proposed citywide short term let control area to Scottish Ministers prior to the local government elections. The short term let control area falls under Planning legislation. I support this measure. The Licensing system will apply city wide and a condition of licence will be that STLs have the required planning permission.

Question (2) Under the new policies and rules, how will the Convener approach cases where enforcement is a feature of the decision at the Licensing Sub-Committee?

Answer (2) Each case requires to be approached on its merits, based on the information presented. The Sub-committee will apply the relevant Council policy within the context of the statutory framework.

Question (3) How many meetings has the Convenor had with the Association of Self Caterers in the last 2 years?

Answer (3) None.

QUESTION NO 42

**By Councillor Macinnes for answer
by the Convener of the Transport and
Environment Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 30 June 2022**

Question

The agreed City Mobility Plan has a number of key required actions in the drive towards a sustainable transport network for Edinburgh and our net zero carbon goals. One of the key actions regarding the further effective development of our tram facilities for mass transit is noted below.

'Policy Measure MOVEMENT 1 Mass Rapid Transit Expand the tram/mass rapid transport network to the north and south of the city as well as to Newhaven and explore the potential to develop or extend mass rapid transit routes into Fife, West, Mid and East Lothian.

The Edinburgh Strategic Sustainable Transport Study Phase 2 (ESSTS2) concludes that mass transit will contribute significantly to supporting wider policy outcomes including sustainable economic growth, reducing carbon, promoting equity and social inclusion and supporting healthier lifestyles. The ESSTS2 focusses on a potential tram extension from the north (Granton) to south east (BioQuarter and beyond), consisting of three route options. '

The development of a full business case and the legislative framework to allow this North-South tram line development will be complex, thorough and likely to take much of this administrative term to complete.

Will the Transport Convener commit to bringing this process in front of the Transport & Environment Committee at the earliest possible date to ensure that no time is wasted in taking the Council to an appropriate decision-making point?

Answer

Before the end of 2022 the administration will present plans for the biggest expansion in public transport our capital has seen this century. We will listen to residents on this issue, and work with them to transform and decarbonise the transportation system in our capital. This will also be an opportunity to invest in active transport, so we will learn any lessons from the Trams to Newhaven active travel scheme

which has been the subject of international media attention.

This investment in public transport is of national importance, so we hope to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to both develop the full business case, and fund the project. It is not our intention to deliver this scheme via PFI (as has been suggested for the Glasgow Metro), but to respect Edinburgh's culture of retaining public transport in public ownership.

Item no 10.43

QUESTION NO 43

By Councillor Rae for answer by the Convener of the Licensing Sub-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Please can the Convener outline what steps she will take to ensure the meeting times for Licensing Sub-Committee are family-friendly for those councillors with caring or childcare commitments?

Answer

This matter has already been raised at a training session and I have ensured the first meeting of the Committee will begin in the morning so that business should be completed by a reasonable hour.

Committee timetabling needs to take into the availability of Council staff and rooms and is not entirely at the discretion of the Convener. I have asked that Committees are timetable to start in the morning rather than the afternoon so that there is less likelihood of them running on into the evening. I would welcome and encourage any Committee member with particular requirements to come and discuss these with me so that I can work with Committee Services to try and accommodate these. I start from the presumption that trying to complete business within standard working hours is preferable for Council staff, attendees and Councillors remembering that Licensing Sub Committee is a Committee that has members of the public attending as applicants at each meeting.

Item no 10.44

QUESTION NO 44

By Councillor Rae for answer by the Convener of the Regulatory-Committee at a meeting of the Council on 30 June 2022

Question

Please can the Convener outline whether he considers that changes will be required to the scheme of delegation to cope with the expected increase in licence applications when the STL licensing regime is introduced later in the year, and if so, what changes he expects?

Answer

An update to the Regulatory Committee on [31 March 2022](#) highlighted this issue. The results of the statutory consultation will be presented to Committee in September. Any decision on whether to amend the Scheme of Delegation to address concerns about the volume of objections and exemption requests which may require to be considered by Committee would be discussed by the Regulatory Committee and it would be a decision for Full Council if required. It is also listed on the amended Committee work plan.