

Supplementary Questions and Answers

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00 am Thursday, 15th December, 2022

Main Council Chamber - City Chambers

Supplementary Questions and Answers

Contacts

Email: gavin.king@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 529 4239

Nick Smith

Service Director, Legal and Assurance

This page is intentionally left blank

Item no 10.11

QUESTION NO 11

By Councillor Aston for answer by the Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2022

Question

Will the Transport and Environment Convener lay out, given his recent comments in the press about potentially implementing a congestion charge, what criteria he will use to judge whether to proceed with a congestion charge in 2025, including reference to:

- a) The increase in public transport capacity he believes is necessary.
- b) The level of congestion on Edinburgh's roads.
- c) Any other factors which he believes are relevant.

Answer

I don't feel that it falls within my remit alone to make a decision to proceed with a congestion charge. Instead, I hope to work cross-party on this issue, and consult residents and businesses whilst working in partnership with surrounding local authorities.

The City Mobility Plan (CMP) refers to the potential to explore a 'Pay as you Drive' scheme, if necessary, under Policy Measure 39, to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel and reduce congestion.

The CMP states that the need for this tool would be considered when assessing the impact of other demand management tools in meeting this Plan's objectives. CMP has a 2 yearly review cycle, and its first formal review will be undertaken during next year with a report to Committee presented by the end of 2023. Progress against meeting CMP objectives will be a key part of the review.

**Supplementary
Question**

The convener's answer directed me to the CMP, which in turn directed to a technical note where modal change targets were set out. The target is the 30% reduction in private car km by **2030**. No intermediate target, such as a target to achieve by 2025, is stated. While I agree it is not only for the convener to determine, it is widely acknowledged that conveners have extensive 'first mover' powers and get advance sight of report and ability to shape the report schedule.

Therefore, what is the convener's personal view of the level of modal shift that needs to occur by 2025 that would lead to him not supporting pursuing a congestion charge by then?

**Supplementary
Answer**

I feel that any such trigger should be developed on a cross-party basis in partnership with residents and businesses, and also using the best information available at the time, not least post-pandemic traffic data.

Item no 10.13

QUESTION NO 13

By Councillor Aston for answer by the Convener of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2022

Question

Will the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Convener, in light of her answer to my question to her at the 24th November 2022 Council meeting, outline what steps she is taking to increase the number of larger (four and five bedroom) social rented properties which are being built to address the fact that no such properties have recently been let to families with overcrowding Silver priority who need them?

Answer

On 1 December 2022 Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work approved the “Strategic Housing Investment Programme” 2023-2028 (SHIP), which included a potential pipeline development programme that could deliver 11,937 affordable homes approved for site start and 11,375 completions over the next five years. However, the number, mix and proposed sizes of properties are not finalised until planning consent has been granted. In addition, the Council’s “Edinburgh Design Guidance”, requires that 20% of homes in new planning applications are for family housing, with three bedrooms or more.

As part of programme planning, the Council will seek to work with Registered Social Landlords (RSL) partners to increase the supply of larger homes. However, this is dependent upon suitable sites being available and affordability for Council and RSLs. Housing design takes place in the context of the needs identified through HNDA3; consultation with local housing teams; the individual site constraints; planning requirements; site capacity; and viability, which is more challenging for larger homes as grant funding and rents do not increase proportionally to cover the additional construction costs.

Three and four bedroom homes that are suitable for families are under construction on sites across the city and in design

development. Within the Council's own housebuilding programme there are currently 190 social rented homes that are in design or under development that have three or more bedrooms. When looking at the overall pipeline across all of the affordable tenures, it is currently projected that 933 homes will be built that will have three or more bedrooms.

The latest Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA3; July 2022), estimates that between 24,000 to 35,000 affordable homes will be required in Edinburgh between 2021-2040. The HNDA notes that although population is projected to increase overall it is driven by an ageing population and increasing numbers of smaller households. The numbers of one and two adult households are growing, while the number of larger households is increasing at a slower rate.

**Supplementary
Question**

The convener's answer refers entirely to properties with three or more bedrooms, while my question specifically asks about four- and five-bedroom properties. Can the convener please answer my original question solely with reference to four- and five-bedroom properties?

**Supplementary
Answer**

There are currently 12 four bedroom social rented homes under construction (six RSL homes and six Council homes).

The Council has 15 four bedroom and two five bedroom homes in design development at present. Information is not available on the housing mix of RSL homes in design development.