

Deputations

City of Edinburgh Council

9.45 am Thursday, 22nd February, 2024

Main Council Chamber - City Chambers

Deputations

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CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

22 FEBRUARY 2024

DEPUTATION REQUESTS

Subject	Deputation
Council Budget	<p>3.1 Unite CEC Branch</p> <p>3.2 Edinburgh Tenants Federation</p> <p>3.3 Edinburgh Trade Union Council</p> <p>3.4 Colinton Community Council (written submission attached)</p> <p>3.5 Edinburgh EIS</p> <p>3.6 NLRP12</p> <p>3.7 UNISON</p> <p>3.8 Trinity Primary School Parent Council (written submission attached)</p> <p>3.9 James Gillespie’s High School Parent Council (written submission attached)</p> <p>3.10 James Gillespie’s Primary School Parent Council (written submission attached)</p> <p>3.11 Stockbridge Primary School Parent Council (written submission attached)</p>



Rt Hon Robert Aldridge
Lord Provost
City of Edinburgh Council
City Chambers
High Street
Edinburgh EH1 1YJ

Dear Lord Provost

**Written Deputation on behalf of Colinton Community Council to
Full City of Edinburgh Council Meeting – Thurs 22 February**

We would be grateful if you allowed the attached written deputation to be considered in relation to:

Item 4: Revenue and Capital Budgets

Yours sincerely,

David Houston and Tom McDonald
Co-Chairs, Colinton Community Council

POOR STATE OF ROAD SURFACES IN COLINTON AREA

Following a public discussion at our last meeting about the poor state of many roads in Colinton the Community Council decided that a written deputation should be made to you.

We make this deputation in the hope that our arguments will influence decisions on the budget allocation (both capital and revenue) to the renewal and maintenance of road surfaces in all parts of the Capital.

In addition, we request that a fair amount of these budgets be spent in the high tax and revenue-raising Colinton area. We know that the City-wide roads budget was increased by £11m in 2023-24 but we have seen little benefit from that in this area.

In particular, we are writing to express concern about:

- (i) the number of dangerous potholes that are appearing in our area.
- (ii) the lack of long-term investment in road re-surfacing to minimise future potholes.
- (iii) the balance of CEC spend on basic roads expenditure relative to other “headline grabbing” schemes across the City: e.g. new tramlines; traffic reduction in the city centre; and pavement parking ban.
- (iv) the poor standard of roads repairs carried out following work by contractors.

Our local concerns have been heightened recently by two serious pothole-related roads incidents in the Colinton area: a serious cyclist accident on Bridge Rd caused by a pothole; and a deep pothole in Gillespie Rd which damaged several cars leaving one driver stranded, unable to go to work or transport his children to school.

There are potholes in most roads in Colinton: however the worst road is Dreghorn Loan (despite it being a through road and a back-up bus route) and repairs here are a priority.

David Houston and Tom McDonald
Co-Chairs, on behalf of Colinton Community Council

Deputation to the City of Edinburgh Council Meeting, 22nd February 2024

Made on behalf of Trinity Primary School Parent Council

We are writing to you as you set your budget in what we recognise are incredibly challenging conditions, to ask you to prioritise the funding of schools.

Last month we made a Deputation to the Education, Children and Families Committee (see attached), in response to the proposals for £8.2m of cuts being proposed at that meeting. We are relieved and heartened to hear that these have been deferred for this year and have two further points to make:

In the short term, we urge you to support budget proposals for this year that maximise school budgets. The proposed cuts would have been disastrous, but the current situation is not healthy, sustainable or good for the long term future of Edinburgh.

Beyond the current budget, we urge you to ensure that the cuts are not applied next year either, or in any subsequent year. Everything that we said in our January Deputation still stands. The children, families and teaching staff deserve adequate resourcing to ensure the best possible outcomes from a service that delivers a universal human right. Each child only has one shot at their school experience and we are seeing increasing evidence of the impact of underfunding on all aspects of learning and teaching, particularly for those year groups and families that were impacted by pandemic lockdowns. We have had repeated assurances that you recognise the importance of funding the service appropriately and hope that you are able to action these as a full Council.

We would be very happy to meet you to discuss this matter in more detail, and look forward to sharing the results of the budget process with the families of the 580 children at Trinity Primary School.

Trinity Primary School Parent Council

parentcounciltrinity@gmail.com

Edinburgh

19 January 2024

Deputation regarding the education budget proposals

We are writing to you to express our concerns about the proposals set out in the City of Edinburgh Council's committee papers.

The challenges facing society today are well documented. We are living in an era of low economic productivity and extensive global competition, with an ageing population that will require increasing levels of support to sustain and care for it. In the meantime, one in four children lives in poverty, more and more children are presenting with mental health issues and challenging behaviours, and inequality in experience and attainment continues to slow progress. The recruitment and retention of teachers and school staff is at an all-time low. Children have missed considerable time in the classroom over the past four years.

In order to address these issues, we need to be investing in education. Schools are supposed to be the places that support learners and their families, overcome differences in experience, aspiration and opportunity and equip all learners with the knowledge and skills that they need to become productive members of society who, through their endeavours, character and taxes, will support others. We cannot achieve this if the schools are not properly resourced.

Against this background we wholly oppose the proposed cuts to education and children's services outlined in your budget. School budgets are already stretched and inadequate for the services you expect them to deliver and children are not currently getting the support they need, with impacts being felt by everyone in the classroom. Schools have not been protected from previous budget cuts because they have had to absorb the implications of cuts to other services. They are literally the last service standing. To cut budgets further might well cause them to fall over. These cuts will have short- and long-term consequences that will end up costing us all more money to put right.

We know that you agree with us that education is important to your constituents, which is why so many of you placed it prominently on your election campaign material.

These proposals have been developed with no meaningful consultation with service users (children and their families) or, to the best of our knowledge, with school teaching staff. Those of you who attend our meetings will be aware of the existing pressures on school budgets. Further cuts will, in our view, render the service unfit for purpose. You will be letting our city - and our children - down.

We ask you to reflect on the proposals, and to:

1. Agree that you will do everything in your powers to ensure that the Council Gets It Right For Every Child. Ideally this will mean increasing funding from current levels to adequately deliver the service that is required, and certainly not imposing further cuts.

2. Consider whether there are other areas of council spending where cuts would have a smaller economic or social impact than in education, and prioritise these. Not all cuts in expenditure are equal in impact and to target a service that is time-limited and delivering a universal human right will do considerable harm. The Education Committee could send a strong signal here by encouraging this approach.

3. Pause any proposals to allow for proper consultation with parents and, fundamentally, with your own teaching and support staff.

We ask all of you to work together to resolve this situation, and to take ideas to address it from all political parties. As a group of parents with different political views and priorities please know that we will consider you all more favourably if you cooperate rather than descend into party politics. We would be delighted to engage in further dialogue if that would be useful.

Thank you for your time and support.

Trinity Primary School Parent Council



James Gillespie's High School
120 Warrender Park Road
Edinburgh
EH9 1DD
[JGHS Parent Council website](#)

20 February 2024

Deputation to the City of Edinburgh Council Meeting, Thursday 22 February 2024

Re: Education budget

The proposed £8.2m cuts to the City of Edinburgh Council education budgets discussed at the Education Children and Families Committee on 23 January 2024, were of great concern to the Parent Council at James Gillespie's High School.

In particular the significant reduction in the Devolved School Management budget would have been particularly problematic for JGHS given the challenging nature of the multiple campus approach that we now have at the school, and the need to have appropriate staffing and resources in place to support the learning and teaching across the estate. In addition, the proposed removal of teacher support for P7/S1 transition period would have impacted many pupils who have benefited from assistance during this critical period in their school lives.

The JGHS Parent Council was pleased that the Education Children and Families Committee did not approve the proposed cuts, and instead recommended that the budget was referred back to the Full Council.

In the papers prepared for the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2024, we note that the Administration has now stated that the cuts proposed in January 2024 will not go ahead, and that alternative, non-education, funding sources have been identified for 2023/24.

James Gillespie's Parent Council asks the Council to note that (1) while we are pleased the proposed cuts were not approved last month, we question the basis upon which these were proposed in the first instance given the quick u-turn, and that (2) we have strong concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the financing of any new proposals given we are facing future cuts to existing services. James Gillespie's Parent Council will continue to engage with future funding provision for education in Edinburgh, to ensure the brightest possible future for all our young people and their families.

All best wishes,

Hilary Snaithe
Acting Chair, James Gillespie's High School Parent Council

James Gillespie's Primary School
Whitehouse Loan
Edinburgh
EH9 1BD

20 February 2024

Deputation to the City of Edinburgh Council Meeting, Thursday 22 February 2024

Re: Education budget

The proposed £8.2m cuts to the City of Edinburgh Council education budgets discussed at the Education Children and Families Committee on 23 January 2024, were shared at our recent Parent Council meeting and were of great concern to the parent body at James Gillespie's Primary School.

In particular the reduction in budget for PSAs would have had a significant impact and the proposed removal of teacher support for P7/S1 transition period would have impacted many pupils who have benefited from assistance during this critical period in their school lives.

The JGPS Parent Council was pleased that the Education Children and Families Committee did not approve the proposed cuts, and instead recommended that the budget was referred back to the Full Council.

In the papers prepared for the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2024, we note that the Administration has now stated that the cuts proposed in January 2024 will not go ahead, and that alternative, non-education, funding sources have been identified.

James Gillespie's Parent Council asks the Council to note that (1) while we are pleased the proposed cuts were not approved last month, we question the basis upon which these were proposed in the first instance given the quick u-turn, and that (2) we have strong concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the financing of any new proposals given we are facing future cuts to existing services.

James Gillespie's Parent Council will continue to engage with future funding provision for education in Edinburgh, to ensure the brightest possible future for all our young people and their families.

All best wishes,

Samantha Ross and Siobhan James

Co-Chairs, James Gillespie's Primary School Parent Council

Deputation to the City of Edinburgh Council Meeting, 22 February 2024

Made on behalf of Stockbridge Primary School Parent Council

Dear Councillors,

We understand that the City of Edinburgh is setting its 2024/25 budget amid an extremely challenging economic backdrop. As you make your decision, we urge you to protect the education budget and prioritise those proposals which genuinely address issues affecting education, inclusion and attainment in our schools - in particular, inadequate staffing, training and resources to support the Scottish Government's commitment to Getting it Right for Every Child.

Last month we made a Deputation - endorsed by 17 other schools - to the Education, Children and Families Committee in response to the proposed £8.2m of cuts to next year's Education budget. We are relieved that the administration now plans to defer these damaging cuts for a year, and in particular we welcome proposals to protect Devolved School Management budgets. However, we are concerned that the budget proposals from the parties show a lack of understanding and knowledge of the current state of city education. The impact of increasingly challenging conditions, exacerbated by ongoing under-resourcing, does not appear to have been assessed in any formal way.

For example, as per our deputation, and the verbal deputation from EIS to the same committee meeting, Edinburgh's teachers are expected to deliver a responsive curriculum to classes, whilst supporting an increasing number of pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN) and other health management needs. Without the necessary in-class assistance, they cannot give the targeted attention all pupils require. To do so would require more investment in trained Pupil Support Assistants and professional staff that support pupils with Special Educational Needs. We are disappointed that none of the parties' budget proposals put forward to Council explicitly address support staff ratios, or indeed any examples of direct education funding needs, despite these being a priority issue for schools and parents.

We also query the financing and deliverability of new proposals, such as SNP's proposed universal free after-school clubs on Fridays in primary schools. Whilst this proposal is headline grabbing, and would doubtless be welcomed by many of our Stockbridge Primary families, there is no concrete information about how the £5.11 million has been costed. Nor is it clear how it could be delivered "in house" in schools where there are already things happening in classrooms and shared spaces on Friday afternoons. We ask that all new initiatives in education are properly costed and planned in consultation with school leaders to ensure they are feasible. If not, then we urge that any new funding be redirected towards plugging existing (and widening) gaps instead.

We hope these concerns will be taken into consideration as you deliberate the proposals. We would be happy to discuss in more detail as required.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stockbridge Primary School Parent Council

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