

# Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 14 October 2020

## Training and Awareness Raising Programme

Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	<a href="#">10-15</a>

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees the priorities for training and awareness raising over the next 12 months and the indicative themes for workshops.

#### Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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# Report

## Training and Awareness Raising Programme

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 The report sets out the proposed themes and dates for the training and awareness programme for Planning Committee members, and where relevant, members from other Council committees.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 A member training and awareness raising programme has been in place for the Planning Committee over the last five administrative terms of the Council. The programme continues to support a wider group of elected members who have an interest in, or requirement to be briefed on, relevant Planning issues.
- 3.2 The programme provides a helpful way to build awareness and understanding of planning issues for Edinburgh and the wider city region. Similarly, the programme has facilitated improved awareness and mutual understanding with partner organisations and key stakeholders, including government agencies, local partners and the development sector.
- 3.3 The programme for the past year was largely undertaken with the exception of the Planning Committee Tour in June which was unable to take place due to Covid-19 restrictions.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 As per previous years, the programme will be based around two-hour interactive workshops, with a lead speaker(s). Where necessary representatives from partner organisations and the development sector will be invited to contribute to the sessions. Five dates have been added to the Council diary for Wednesday afternoons and are noted as follows:
- 4 November 2020;
  - 16 December 2020;
  - 3 February 2021;
  - 10 March 2021; and
  - 9 June 2021 (full day Planning Committee Tour).

- 4.2 With restrictions on physical meetings continuing in the short to medium term, the workshops are planned as Microsoft Teams meetings. This will be reviewed as the programme progresses. The Planning and Building Standards services are already holding staff workshops and can use this experience to deliver training for elected members.
- 4.3 The format of the Planning Committee Tour, which would normally consist of visits by coach to several sites across the city, may require a different approach on this occasion. The potential to conduct a 'virtual tour' is being explored, which would allow members to review recently completed developments and ask questions of those directly involved in the planning and delivery processes. Events such as [Doors Open Day](#) are already delivering their programme digitally through virtual tours, webinars, and audio trails and there is much to be learnt from this.
- 4.4 The Planning service is already looking at new ways to undertake committee site visits through the possible use of video and real time broadcasts. This could in some ways increase accessibility by removing barriers to physical access to sites. Members will be provided with more detail as this work progresses.
- 4.5 Following a workshop with members of the Planning Committee, focussing on the high-level actions arising from the Legal Review of Council Planning Process, it is proposed to address other planning improvements in workshops. This and the other proposed themes for the 2020/21 programme will include:

#### **Service improvements and performance monitoring**

- Outcomes from the Legal Review of the Planning service
- Service improvement planning
- Development Management Sub Committee processes and decision making (including advice on use of conditions, mixed decisions, etc)

#### **Development planning**

- Proposed City Plan 2030
- Planning for mixed use sites
- Land use strategies and the tools available - legislative frameworks and masterplan consent areas
- Carbon reduction and adaptation

#### **Planning for climate change**

- Surface water and flooding
- Trees, landscaping and biodiversity

#### **Planning Legislation**

- Short term lets – regulations and implementation
- Other relevant legislative changes

- 4.6 The workshops continue to provide the opportunity to deliver cross-Committee training on the above themes with members from the Housing, Homelessness and

Fair Work, and Transport and Environment committees invited to participate where this supports their remit.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 The proposed training and awareness themes will be delivered over the course of the coming year.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There are no new financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Provision for elected member training is contained in the service revenue budget.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The training and awareness raising programme provides elected members with a better understanding of planning issues in the city and supports the Planning Committee in their assessment of planning proposals and strategies as they come forward.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 None.

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 None.