

Motion by the Green Group

City of Edinburgh Council

Title: Revenue Budget 2022/23; Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy 2022-32; Housing Revenue Account Budget Strategy 2022-32

A BUDGET FOR CLIMATE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Introduction

1. The Green Group welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the debate about the city's budget and we pay tribute to the hard work of staff in preparing the budget papers and delivering the Council services funded by the budget.
2. Over this term Greens, at various levels, have sought to secure reforms to local government funding, with greater control over local revenue, additional powers, tax reform and funding framework all being developed. The co-operation agreement in the Scottish Parliament has committed the Scottish Government to a citizens' assembly on reform of funding for local government which will be a necessity in the coming years.

Green Budget : Climate Justice

3. The city council is one of a growing number of public bodies to declare a climate emergency. Unless cities, regions and nations all act to reduce greenhouse gases dramatically, the United Nations has warned of an increasingly bleak future, with catastrophic consequences for huge numbers of people, especially the poorest, and a devastating impact on habitats and other species. The Council has set a target for the city to be a Zero Carbon City by 2030. But declarations and targets are only meaningful if actions follow. And that includes spending priorities.
4. Greens recognise that, though drastic changes to the climate affect us all, those likely to suffer the most adverse effects are those already struggling owing to poverty and other factors. Therefore addressing the climate emergency is not just urgent but also a matter of justice.
5. That is why we believe the 2022 budget must be a budget for climate. But a climate budget does far more than deliver a reduction in greenhouse gases. It makes for a city which is more equal, more liveable and more attractive: where congestion and air pollution are slashed; where fuel poverty is ended; where community life is strengthened. It's an Edinburgh which leads the way rather than being left behind; and where, as a result, investment is attractive.
6. While these are budget choices they are also choices large-scale institutions must make. For example the Lothian Pension Fund should seek to divest from volatile fossil fuels and find opportunities to invest in zero-carbon development, renewable energy and forest regeneration.

Climate 1 : Dedicated Officers

7. We believe there are enormous opportunities to bring in additional external funding to support the city on its progress to zero carbon. However these opportunities can only be sought by officers dedicated to the task, which is why we have dedicated funding to both the current sustainability team and to bring in expertise on energy with an energy team.

Climate 2 : Transport

8. Transport accounts for a third of emissions in Edinburgh and though Covid emergency measures reduced that for a time we risk returning to previous levels without taking action. That is why our budget dedicates an extra £27 million for active travel, public transport and safety over the next four years. This incorporates our desire to present a gender budget – a budget which considers the needs of women – in making our cycleways and footpaths safer and friendlier.

9. We also believe the Council must do its own part in reducing pollution from traffic which is why we have set aside £4,300,000 in order to convert the Council's heavy fleet to an electric fleet. As well as reducing the damage we are doing to the climate this will also present savings in the long term as electric vehicles are cheaper to run.

Climate 3 : Communities

10. In addressing the climate emergency we must bring communities along with us. This is why we have included funding for Net-Zero Communities, community engagement and waste re-use hubs. This will allow us to improve quality of life while we decrease our impact on the planet.

Climate 4 : Understanding

11. As well as reaching out to communities we seek to put our own house in order and ensure that addressing climate is led from the top. Therefore as part of our commitment to carbon budgeting we have included accredited carbon literacy training for all elected members.

Green Budget : Social Justice

12. Greens recognise that climate and social justice are intersectional; that the gulf between the richest and poorest both nationally and internationally is a contributing factor both to climate change itself and to the degree at which people are adversely affected by climate change.

13. Greens also recognise that women are often those who suffer social injustice most and that therefore addressing social justice expresses our desire for a gender budget.

14. Notes that this year has seen a dramatic rise in inflation which has not been matched by an equivalent rise in average income and that the Council must do its part to address this issue.

Social Justice 1 : Rent Freeze

15. Greens have chosen to freeze rents on HRA properties this year, to avoid exacerbating the crisis in energy costs and cost of living more generally.

16. Council notes that proposals on the allocation of additional sums anticipated to be received to support (i) business recovery and low-income households and (ii) Health and Social Care Partnerships will be brought to Council in due course. It is clear, however, that these additional resources should be used to provide further support to those who need it most.

Social Justice 2 : Addressing the cost of living

17. The cost of living crisis cannot be ignored by the Council. Greens have put £1,100,000 towards the cost of living crisis which includes funding for the crisis grants programme and food distribution to those in need.

18. We have also sought to mitigate charges for school milk and freeze charges for at home care and community use of school facilities in order to avoid these essential costs rising and becoming a part of an inflationary economy which is unaffordable for many. In our aim to produce a gender budget we note that the duty of performing and organising at home care falls disproportionately on women.

Social Justice 3 : Public Toilets

19. The Green budget includes funding for temporary public toilets during the spring and summer as well as four new permanent public toilets and the staff to maintain them, as well as potentially opening existing public toilets for longer. Public toilets are crucial in allowing people to swap their car for walking knowing they will have the opportunity for a 'comfort break' as well as allowing people to enjoy the outdoors without worrying about the lack of facilities.

Funding : Hope for the Future

20. This year has seen the best result from the national budget for Edinburgh City Council in several years. However the additional funding granted by the Scottish Parliament is not ongoing which means the Council can largely only spend it on one-off expenses rather than continued investment. Likewise investment in further capital expenditure has been limited owing to the prospect of budgets becoming unbalanced in future years.

21. Council therefore notes that Council Tax is a regressive tax and that reform of funding for local councils is an urgent necessity. Council urges the Scottish Government to consult on such reform as widely but as quickly as possible and to deliver the changes that have been promised in one form or another since 2007.

22. Council notes that workplace parking levy and transient visitor levy are both welcome future additions to council funding but that the Scottish Government's insistence on restricting where councils may spend the money raised from them restricts our ability to properly address the issues we face this year and in the future. While we fully support the introduction of a workplace parking levy and have assumed some initial use of the associated income generated in 2023/24, once

further detail on the agreed scope of the scheme becomes available, we will bring forward proposals for significant further investment in the city's public transport and active travel infrastructure.

Conclusions

Council notes the following reports from the Executive Directors of Corporate Services, Place and the Chief Executive:

Council Budget Reports

- (a) Revenue Budget Framework 2022/27 – Progress Update - referral from the Finance and Resources Committee
- (b) Revenue Budget 2022/23 - Risks and Reserves - referral from the Finance and Resources Committee
- (c) Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 – Update – report by the Chief Executive
- (d) Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy 2022-2032 – referral from the Finance and Resources Committee

Housing Revenue Account

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Strategy (2022-32) – referral from the Finance and Resources Committee

Council therefore approves:

- The Revenue Budget 2022/23 as set out in the reports appended to this motion, as amended by the changes/allocations included in Appendix 1;
- A band 'D' Council Tax of £1,378.75;
- The Council Tax and Rating resolution set out in Annex 2 to this motion;
- The 2022/32 Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy as set out in the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, as amended by the changes shown in Annex 3;
- A further report to be submitted to seek approval of revised charges for Council services, the financial impact of which is contained in Appendix 1 to this amendment;
- A further report to be submitted to seek approval of the prudential indicators arising from this motion; and
- A rent freeze for all Council tenants to ease the cost of living crisis.

Moved by :

Cllr Alex Staniforth

Seconded by :

Cllr Chas Booth

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
GREEN GROUP BUDGET MOTION
REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23**

	2022/23		2023/24	
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure to be Funded				
- Resource Allocation Totals	1,139,965			
- Add: Expenditure funded through Specific Grants	<u>56,739</u>			
		1,196,704		
- General Revenue Funding and Non Domestic Rates	(826,193)			
- Ring Fenced Funding	<u>(56,739)</u>			
		(882,932)		
To be Funded by Council Tax		<u>313,772</u>		<u>398,313</u>
Council Tax at Band D		£ 1,378.75		£1,420.11
Increase on Previous Year		£ 40.16		£ 41.36
- Percentage Increase		3.00%		3.00%
Funding Requirement		313,772		398,313
Council Tax Income		<u>323,632</u>		<u>335,718</u>
		<u>323,632</u>		<u>335,718</u>
Funding (Excess) / Shortfall at Council Tax increase above as reported to Council, February 2022		(9,860)		62,595
Service Investment (see Appendix 1)	9,834		650	
Add / Less: Amendments to Draft Revenue Budget Framework (see Appendix 1)	326		(424)	
Less: Additional Savings (see Appendix 1)	<u>(300)</u>		<u>(350)</u>	
		9,860		(124)
Contributions to / (from) reserves (itemise)				
		<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>
Balance of Available Resources		<u>0</u>		<u>62,471</u>

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

GREEN GROUP BUDGET MOTION

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23

	2022/23	2023/24
SERVICE INVESTMENT	£000	£000
Ash dieback and improvement to green spaces	320	(320)
Essential repairs to Rainbow Bridge, Leith	20	(20)
For pressures on Children's Services	1,514	(1,514)
Shared repairs emergency unit	150	(150)
Private renting support unit	150	0
Quality of Life Improvements		
Addressing the cost of living crisis	1,100	(1,100)
Provision of temporary toilets in premier parks	300	(300)
Lighting improvements in parks	250	(250)
Participatory Budgeting support	100	(100)
Staffing and other operational costs for public toilets	60	60
Green budget for climate emergency		
Net-zero communities	500	(500)
Sustainability team funding	220	0
Energy team staffing	160	0
Refuse collection vehicle EV conversion (CFCR)	4,300	(4,300)
EV chargers (CFCR)	290	(290)
Waste re-use hubs	200	(200)
Community engagement on climate delivery	100	(100)
Accredited carbon literacy training for all elected members	50	(50)
Improvement to housing maintenance service	50	(50)
TOTAL SERVICE INVESTMENT	9,834	(9,184)
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET FRAMEWORK 2022/23		
Car parking charges	(500)	(500)
School milk charges	80	0
Homecare charges	66	0
Community access to secondary schools charges	30	0
Edinburgh Leisure	400	0
Revenue borrowing for active travel of £8m (against future WPL)	250	250
Offsetting funding from WPL from 2023/24	0	(500)
TOTAL AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET FRAMEWORK	326	(750)
ADDITIONAL SAVINGS	£000	£000
Savings from refuse collection vehicle EV conversion	(150)	(50)
Savings in staff travel and parking costs	(150)	0
TOTAL ADDITIONAL SAVINGS	(300)	(50)

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL TAX / RATING RESOLUTION
GREEN GROUP BUDGET MOTION**

To recommend that in respect of the year to 31st March, 2023:

1. GENERAL FUND

Revenue Estimates - the Revenue Estimates as presented and adjusted be approved;

Council Tax - estimated expenditure from Council Tax of £323.632m be met and in terms of Sections 70(1) and 74(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the 1992 Act) Council Tax be levied in respect of properties in the bands defined in Section 74(2) of the 1992 Act, as amended by The Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016, as follows:

Band	Council Tax	Band	Council Tax
	£		£
A	919.17	E	1,811.52
B	1,072.36	F	2,240.47
C	1,225.56	G	2,700.05
D	1,378.75	H	3,377.94

2. RATING APPEALS TIMETABLE

In terms of Part XI of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1947 the following dates be approved:

Main Assessment Roll

Lodging of Appeals with the Executive Director of Corporate Services by	8 July 2022
Hearing of Appeals by the Rating Authority	16 September 2022

Amendments to Main Assessment Roll made subsequent to its issue

Lodging of Appeals with the Executive Director of Corporate Services	Within six weeks of issue of Rate Demand or in terms of Section 11 of the Rating and Valuation (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 1984
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Hearing of Appeals by the Rating Authority	Periodically
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3. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Expenditure on Capital projects in progress be met.

4. BORROWING

The Council borrows necessary sums to meet the above capital expenditure.

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
GREEN GROUP BUDGET MOTION
CAPITAL BUDGET 2022 - 2027
ADDITIONS TO REVISED PROGRAMME**

	2022-23 £000	2023-24 £000	2024-25 £000	2025-26 £000	2026-27 £000	Total £000
Available Resources for Distribution						
Capital from Current Revenue (CFCR)						4,590
Prudential Borrowing (funded through additional revenue savings)						8,000
						4,590
Changes to recommended Capital Investment Programme						
Refuse collection vehicle EV conversion (CFCR)	4,300	-	-	-	-	4,300
EV chargers (CFCR)	290	-	-	-	-	290
Roads and Transport infrastructure (including North Bridge)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	-	(20,000)
Public Transport, Road Safety and Active Travel (£8m from additional borrowing)	12,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	-	27,000
Permanent additional public toilets	1,000	-	-	-		1,000
	12,590	0	0	0	0	12,590