


Business Bulletin

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 22nd August 2024

Dean of Guild Courtroom, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

Policy and Sustainability Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Convener: Councillor Cammy Day</p> 	<p>Councillor Cammy Day (Convener) Councillor Danny Aston Councillor Jule Bandel Councillor Alan Beal Councillor Marco Biagi Councillor Chas Booth Councillor Kate Campbell Councillor Euan Davidson Councillor Sanne Dijkstra-Downie Councillor Simita Kumar Councillor Kevin Lang Councillor Lesley Macinnes Councillor Jane Meagher Councillor Joanna Mowat Councillor Alex Staniforth Councillor Mandy Watt Councillor Iain Whyte</p>	<p>Jamie Macrae, Committee Officer</p> <p>Jacqueline Boyle, Assistant Committee Officer</p>

Gaelic Plan 2024-2029

The City of Edinburgh Council Gaelic Language Plan 2024-2029 was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 7 May 2024 and published bilingually on the Council Website 23 July 2024.

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/council-planning-framework/gaelic-language-plan>

Contact

[Ann Paterson](#)

Corporate Gaelic Development Officer.

Edinburgh Community Climate Fund Update

An impact report detailing updates on all projects delivered through the Community Climate Fund has been published online, [Edinburgh Community Climate Fund Evaluation](#). The programme aimed to empower City of Edinburgh residents to directly allocate a portion of the council's budget towards environmental projects. The evaluation highlights that the programme not only supports green initiatives but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents and encourages local involvement in activities that contribute to the City of Edinburgh Climate Strategy.

Following the process The Council has been awarded the Green PB Seal from PB Scotland, recognising the positive impact of the project and contribution to a Just Transition to Net-Zero. The cumulative impact of the projects includes:

- 7,910 volunteer hours from 697 volunteers
- 6,815 car miles replaced with bike miles
- 106 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill and reused
- £237,123 of additional funding received
- Over 29,723 individual beneficiaries
- Over 278 tonnes of CO2 saved
- 45 tonnes of food distributed

The initial evaluation identified several areas for improvement based on feedback. Implemented improvements include:

- **Registration:** In collaboration with COSLA, enhancements to the registration process now allow users to register using social media accounts (such as Facebook, Google, and Twitter) and local login options, simplifying registration and increasing accessibility.

Contact

[Daniel Greig](#)

Senior Policy and Insight Officer

- **Offline Voting:** Feedback from voters highlighted barriers faced by digitally excluded individuals. Recognising the need for improved offline processes, efforts are underway to enhance participatory budgeting (PB) processes for these individuals.
- **Engaging Young People:** Recognising the need for early engagement of young people in future PB exercises, COSLA is working on improvements to the CONSUL platform to facilitate youth participation, following positive feedback on their enthusiasm and participation.
- **Accessibility:** Successful accessibility enhancements to CONSUL include improved navigation, making the site more intuitive for users.
- **Equalities Monitoring:** COSLA is updating the system to capture more demographic data, enabling better analysis and reporting.

International Visits in May and June 2024

Earlier this year the Policy and Sustainability Committee approved two overseas trips for the Lord Provost During May and June 2024 in line with Council guidance on international travel for elected members. This bulletin provides a brief update on outcomes and activities undertaken during these visits.

Edinburgh Trade Mission to Shenzhen.

On 19th to 24th of May 2024 the Lord Provost accompanied an Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Trade Mission to the city of Shenzhen in China.

As discussed with Committee, in advance of this visit Council officers participated in Scottish Government training relating to human rights and equalities issues in connection with China relations. Following this training the Lord Provost was briefed on these issues and used the opportunity of a meeting with the Mayor of Shenzhen to:

- express the concerns of Committee in relation to cultural differences, and
- reiterate Edinburgh's commitment to the promotion of equality and human rights as expressed through the Council's Equalities and Diversity Framework and

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Strategy Manager, City Strategies.

[Nick Langan](#)

International Relations Officer

underpinned by the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) policy.

Throughout the visit the Lord Provost did not meet directly with any individual China based businesses but enhanced the profile of the Edinburgh delegation through meetings with senior officials from the Shenzhen government and established contacts for the delegation to follow up on potential Foreign Direct Investment opportunities in Edinburgh.

These meetings did not include any discussions on renewal of the dual city arrangement between Edinburgh and Shenzhen. There are at present no plans to renew this arrangement.

The Edinburgh business delegation, led by Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, established new trade links with Creative Industries companies in Shenzhen. The nine Edinburgh enterprises were able to establish new business development opportunities through meetings at the Cultural Industries trade fair.

In taking these opportunities forward it should be noted that:

- The UK government's overseas business risk guidance makes clear to UK companies the risks of operating in Xinjiang and urges them to conduct appropriate due diligence and consider their corporate responsibilities when making business decisions.
- Any downstream trade deals arising from connections established during this trade mission will undertake the above guidance with supply chain checks on a case-by-case basis.
- In addition Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce requested reassurances from the Shenzhen Government that if any trade deals occur, they would provide background checks of the China based businesses, including those third party organisations.

International Visit to Munich - 70th Twinning Anniversary

The Lord Provost and one Council officer visited Munich from 12th to 15th June 2024 as part of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of twinning relations between the two cities.

At the invitation of the Mayor of Munich, the delegation:

- Formally opened the Euro 2024 Fanzone in Olympiapark, Munich,

- Attended the opening ceremony and opening fixture of the 2024 UEFA European Football Championships between Germany and Scotland at the Allianz Arena in Munich, as a guest of the Mayor of Munich
- Met with Munich City Council leaders and officials to further develop cultural, education and other links between the two cities on issues of shared priority
- Visited homelessness centres in Munich to discuss best practice models to end poverty and prevent homelessness. As a result of this visit, officers are in discussion over plans for a potential a future staff exchange programme between homelessness practitioners in the two cities
- Met the City of Munich Culture Team to discuss areas of collaboration for a potential staff exchange visit programme
- Met City of Munich Economic development team for discussions around Munich and Edinburgh’s economy and trade opportunities and potential for a future trade mission to be led by Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce.

As a follow up to this visit, Edinburgh hosted a return delegation of elected members from the City of Munich Council on 27th to 29th June 2024. This delegation was welcomed by the Lord Provost and participated in a programme of visits and discussions on poverty and homelessness in Edinburgh, including visits to two local charities. The delegation closed with attendance at a specially arranged concert celebrating the twinning anniversary and hosted by the German Consul General in Edinburgh.

City-Wide Emissions Update

Progress against the city-wide net zero target is monitored using national data sets which have been published in July 2024. The data has a two-year time lag, meaning the most recently available data covers 2022 emissions. The next full report on the 2030 Climate Strategy and city-wide emissions is due in January 2025 therefore this business bulletin serves as an update on emissions in the interim.

As noted in the [January 2024 City-wide Carbon Emissions and 2030 Climate Strategy update](#) the council methodology for calculating

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Lead Officer (Carbon Management)

citywide emissions has been under review. This year's emissions have been calculated using the method which is likely to be used in the Scottish Climate Intelligence Service platform. Several datasets haven't yet been updated for 2022 data therefore approximately 4% of the total emissions stated have been calculated using 2021 data with updated emissions factors. The total emissions calculation will be updated once all datasets have been published.

The city-wide emissions for Edinburgh in 2022 have been calculated at 2,039,802 tonnes of CO₂e. This is approximately 2.6% below 2021 levels and a reduction of 18% since 2018, which was identified as the baseline year to measure progress towards the city-wide net zero target.

Sectors showing significant change:

- Increases in emissions in both business and household travel, 18% and 8% respectively, likely due to continuing behaviour change following Covid-19 recovery.
- Both power (grid electricity) and heat (natural gas) show reductions of over 9%, this is largely due to decarbonisation of the electricity grid and increasing take-up of alternatives to gas dependent technologies.
- Industrial processes show a reduction of over 16% - this dataset has not been updated for 2022 data yet.

Equality Mapping

This item responds to the equality mapping request in [Item 7.2](#) from Full Council (15 December 2022) and later requested at Policy and Sustainability Committee (24 October 2023), by providing an overview of:

- The purpose and alignment of the existing three Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategies at the City of Edinburgh Council (Council)
- Current equality workstreams, including the current governance and monitoring of EDI strategies
- The Council's partnership approach to EDI, and
- Findings from the ongoing mapping equality exercise and next steps.

As part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Council has 3 existing EDI strategies as follows:

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Lead Officer,
Equalities

- The Equality and Diversity Framework that sets out the Council's Equality Outcomes over 4 years,
- The existing Colleague Diversity and Inclusion strategy that will be developed into a new Workforce EDI Strategy as featured in the People Strategy (2024-2027) and,
- The Education and Children's Services Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2023-24 which ensures the Council fulfils its obligation of equity and excellence for all learners and young people.

This multi-strategy approach ensures that the Council fully complies with PSED as an employer, service delivery body, and education authority.

The Officer Equality Working Group (OEWG) has senior representatives from all Directorates and provides governance across the EDI Framework and Workforce EDI Strategy. The group is responsible for providing strategic leadership, direction, and oversight to strengthen the development and delivery of EDI practice, and capacity building across the organisation.

The OEWG consults with the Member Equality Working Group (MEWG) quarterly to ensure an open dialogue on the Council's internal EDI workstreams. This includes the development of the new EDI Framework and Workforce EDI Strategy, and the Council's progress on equality-related motions, ahead of formal reporting to the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

The Edinburgh Learns Board governs the Education and Children's Services EDI Strategy and ensures alignment with other young people-specific statutory requirements and strategies. An officer from Children, Education, and Justice Services sits on the OEWG.

The mapping exercise to date has included desk-based analysis of EDI practice across each Directorate (with follow-up conversations held), engagement with EDI key stakeholders including third sector representatives, regional local authority partners, NHS Lothian, and engagement with the PSED regulator: The Equality and Human Rights (EHRC).

The final review of the Council's current [Equality and Diversity Framework 2020-2024](#) is underway. The findings from this exercise, alongside the exploration of additional EDI workstreams (Islamophobia, LGBT+, and Gender Recognition) will filter into the development of the Council's new EDI Framework and equality outcomes.

Broad findings from the above, show that the Council is compliant with PSED delivery and reporting duties, and there is good intent

across service areas to continue to develop EDI practices. However, this exercise has also highlighted pockets of silo working and a need to support colleagues to better understand how to apply [intersectional](#) EDI practice across the Council's service delivery, ensuring a high-quality standardised approach.

A member briefing session will be held to review the full findings to date, alongside an overview of the EDI work plan for the year ahead. Officers will ensure that information set out in this business bulletin will be included in the publication of the new EDI Framework, so it is fully accessible to the public and elected members.

Corporate Property Strategy – Accessibility

In January 2024, Committee requested a timetable for accessibility surveys and information about which buildings will be prioritised for these surveys in the first instance and why, to be shared in the Business Bulletin within the next six months; and

Accessibility Audits

An initial phase of accessibility audits for a selection of building types and uses is underway and due to be complete by March 2025.

The findings of these audits will contribute to the creation of an Accessibility Strategy which will include an 'Inclusive Design Guide' to be used as a supplement to the Council's Authority Contract Requirements (design specification for newbuild and adaptation projects).

The buildings included in these audits have been selected so that works can be incorporated into planned work programmes and/or to provide evidence for the approach which will be taken to achieving future accessibility improvements in various types of properties.

The buildings that are included in the initial phase of accessibility audits are listed below:

- Waverley Court;
- East Craigs Primary School and Nursery;
- Oaklands Additional Support Needs (ASN) School;
- St Marks Primary School and Nursery;
- Niddrie Mill & St Francis Primary School;
- Leith Academy;
- Portobello Swimming Pool;
- Museum of Edinburgh, Acheson House;
- Museum of Childhood ;
- South Queensferry Community Centre;
- Rosebury Hall Community Centre;
- Mortonhall Crematorium (Main Chapel, Chapel of Remembrance and Waiting Area: Public Facing Areas);
- Seafeld Depot;
- City Chambers;

Contact:

[Lesley McMillan](#),
Strategic Asset
Partnership Manager

- Central Library;
- North East Locality Office; and
- Castlebrae High School.

An output from these audits will be the creation of key strategic benchmarks to inform inclusive design criteria which can be implemented across the estate as part of ongoing property improvement activity. Further accessibility audits will be scheduled in future years to continue to inform future property improvement programmes.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000

IPCO annual return

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office ('IPCO') is required by law to gather statistical data from all public authorities on their use of Investigatory Powers. For the Council this would include use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 ('RIPSA') to carry out Directed Surveillance or to use a Covert Human Intelligence Source.

On 30 January 2024 the Council submitted its return for 2023 to the effect that it had made no applications under RIPSA during that period.

RIPSA training

Regular training updates are required to ensure that officers are aware of their legal responsibilities and the relevant Council' policies. Over 200 people have completed a relevant course which was commissioned in 2019. This includes people from the following teams:

- CCTV;
- Family and Household Support;
- Environmental Health;
- Planning Enforcement;
- Licensing;
- Night team;
- Street and Environmental Enforcement; and
- Trading Standards and Enforcement.

Updated training is currently being procured to ensure that

Policy and Sustainability Committee last received a full annual update on the Council's use of RIPSA in [August 2022](#), with a business bulletin article following in [March 2023](#).

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officers remain aware of the latest guidance.

Edinburgh LHEES update

Following approval of the Edinburgh LHEES in December 2023, officers have established the LHEES Office and begun work to deliver the Edinburgh LHEES.

Much of the activity to date has been focused on heat networks, as set out below. Other areas of activity have included:

- Planning heat pump pilots, including bidding for funding to support pilots;
- Investigating a small grants scheme for energy efficiency;
- Assessing potential for solar installations on Council land to offset the costs of shifting to electricity-based heating;
- Supporting the trialing of new sea source heat pump technology; and
- Creating a web-based Edinburgh LHEES map.

It is intended that a new iteration of the LHEES, reflecting the outcomes of consultation along with updates to reflect new legislation, regulations, etc, will be presented to Committee in late-2024/early-2025.

Heat network delivery framework

In November 2023, the LHEES Office made an application to the Heat Network Support Unit (HNSU) for Strategic Heat Network Support funding. In May 2024, the Council was awarded £139,400 of funding. This funding will be utilised to deliver:

- An options appraisal to identify the optimal delivery model for supporting the roll-out of heat networks across Edinburgh, aligned with the report “Heat Networks Delivery Models” published by the Scottish Futures Trust in February 2024, including the role within the model for Energy for Edinburgh;
- Development of a Customer Charter setting out the Council’s expectations of the minimum level of service any customer of a heat network in Edinburgh should be able to expect (including principles around pricing of standing charges and volumetric tariffs; connection

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Programme
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Energy Officer

and disconnection terms; and dispute resolution and escalation), aligned with the emerging consumer protection regime for heat networks customers being developed by the UK Government;

- An audit and analysis of low/zero carbon heat sources in and around Edinburgh;
- A feasibility review of the prospective heat network zones identified in the Edinburgh LHEES, representing a middle ground between the baseline data on each zone set out in the Edinburgh LHEES and detailed feasibility studies for each zone;
- Refinement of the prospective heat network zones, reflecting the outcomes of the feasibility review; consultation responses; practical considerations; and commercial viability, supporting the future statutory designation of the zones; and
- Identification of the optimal route for a spinal pipe serving a city-wide heat network or linking multiple networks.

The above items will collectively form the heat network delivery framework and will greatly advance the Council in terms of the wider heat network agenda.

This work is planned to be completed in phases, with a hard deadline for completion of 28 February 2025. While this is later than originally planned, this delay has enabled the Council to secure significant additional external funding for this work.

Concurrently with the above work, the Council has instructed a feasibility study for a heat network within the Old Town and Southside heat network zone. In March, an application was made to the Heat Network Support Unit for support with the planned feasibility study and in May, the Council was awarded £50,000 to contribute towards the cost of the study.

The Council's Procurement service is setting-up a framework that can be utilised for future studies. Should the feasibility study suggest that the heat network would be viable, officers will prepare a business case for delivering the heat network utilising the preferred delivery model.

Draft-proofing grant to the Edinburgh Tool Library

The LHEES Delivery Plan was approved alongside the main LHEES document on 15 December 2023. Action 76 of the

Delivery Plan states “Explore with partners the scope to take forward low-cost interventions with disproportionately great impacts on energy efficiency, e.g. carpeting uncarpeted floors to reduce air leakage.”

While researching opportunities to fund low-cost energy efficiency measures, officers identified a lack of appropriate funding opportunities for low-cost interventions in Edinburgh. A [Business Bulletin update](#) to Committee on 28 May 2024 highlighted the potential for the LHEES Office to work with the Edinburgh Tool Library (a Scottish charitable incorporated organisation, charity number SC045162) to support the establishment of their “Retrofixes” programme. The Retrofixes programme is inspired by a longstanding project which has been operating in Reading for 10 years. In Reading, [the voluntary organisation](#), DraughtBusters spend two hours at a home, regardless of tenure, and draught proof everything they can. Reading Borough Council partially funds their work, and they ask for a flat contribution of £50 from residents, though exemptions can be applied for.

Further discussion between officers and the charity has resulted in the award of a £2,500 grant to the Edinburgh Tool Library. This grant will allow the Edinburgh Tool Library to host 10 training sessions, to upskill their volunteers which will enable them to carry out the low-cost draft-proofing measures. The Edinburgh Tool Library has estimated that the training provided will allow their team to deliver draft-proofing measures to between 30-40 properties before the end of 2025. Opportunities to expand and support Edinburgh Tool Library’s capacity to deliver draft-proofing measures throughout Edinburgh will continue to be explored.

Training and upskilling

Officers continue to participate in the Scottish-Danish District Heating Mentoring Programme.

In June 2024, the LHEES Office was invited by Scottish Enterprise to present on the Edinburgh LHEES at the Euroheat and Power Congress, a heat network event in Rotterdam, Netherlands, as well as at an event at Scotland House in Brussels, Belgium, that was joint hosted by Scotland Europa and the European Heat Pump Association. During the Euroheat and Power Congress, the attending officer attended an introductory course in establishing city-wide heat networks which was included in the invitation. The events provided excellent opportunities to build knowledge of

heat networks and create useful working relationships with Scottish Enterprise and Scotland Europa.

Officers are undertaking the National Open College Network's Accredited Level 2 Award in Understanding Domestic Retrofitting through Edinburgh College as well as the CIBSE Introduction to Heat Networks and Code of Practice course.

Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review Implementation Group - Year 1 Update

Chair Appointment

Further to the actions agreed by Committee in March 2023, Irene Mosata accepted the Council's invitation to chair an independent Implementation Group and oversee delivery of Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review report recommendations. She meets regularly with the Leader of Council to discuss progress.

Since taking up the appointment, the Chair has championed this work and created connections with public, commercial, academic and charitable partners through numerous meetings, conference papers and participation in events with stakeholders. These include the RSA, NHS Lothian, National Bank, Digby Brown, Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh Art Festival, Creative Edinburgh, The Tattoo, Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, Edinburgh Interfaith Association and Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER).

Implementation Group Recruitment

Recruitment for group members took place with a public open call over summer 2023. The following 14 people were invited to join, bringing a wide range of skills, experience and shared passion for this work to take place in Edinburgh (members' personal biographies are available at: <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/museums-galleries/review-needed/7>).

Abimbola Adeola	Alex Stobart	Kenneth Barker
Anila Mirza	Asif Khan	Stephen Kelly
Christina Sinclair	Grant Mackenzie	Nava Rizvi
Harry Mould (until June 2024)		Professor Roger Jeffrey
Harry Ross	Dr Melissa Moncrieffe	
Professor Kenneth Amaeshi		

Supporters' Network

Contact

[Gillian Findlay](#)

Curatorial and
Engagement Manager

Individuals and organisations keen to stay in touch with progress of the Group, to collaborate or to provide resource or capacity, can join a dedicated Supporter's Network which is open to all.

Group Terms of Reference

The first meeting of the Implementation Group took place in October 2023 in the Mandela Room of the City Chambers, where the Group was welcomed by the Lord Provost. Members agreed their purpose to oversee the actioning of the ESCLR report recommendations, workshopped the different approaches, opportunities and key partnerships that they might seek to progress, and signed off their terms of reference, including having two plenary meetings annually (their second meeting took place in April 2024).

Members also agreed to work, under the guidance of the Chair, in smaller subgroups dedicated to progressing each individual recommendation. Most subgroups are now active.

Fundraising and communications were discussed as key to the Group's ability to deliver its task successfully, and two additional supporting subgroups have been set up to explore options for both.

Recommendations Delivery Progress

Appendix 1 of this bulletin charts progress in delivering the ESCLR Recommendations as of July 2024.

International Travel to Helsinki by Circhive Project

Appendix 2 provides feedback and updates on the visit to Helsinki as approved by Committee on 12 March 2024 [International Travel to Helsinki by Circhive Project](#).

Contact

[Linda Anglin](#)

Parks and Openspace
Development Manager

Advertising and Sponsorship Policy

Following Committee at the end of May, the requested amendments to the draft policy have now been completed by officers and circulated to committee to note. The Policy has been uploaded to the Policy Hub and will therefore be deemed to come into effect from today.

Communication to all staff is planned. Colleagues in key areas such as Procurement and those responsible for managing key Council advertising contracts are already aware of the changes. A small officer group has been formed to support with colleague and partner questions that have arisen as a result of the policy changes. As a result of this the Executive Director for Corporate Services will attend a future SIG meeting with partners to discuss the changes to the policy and its implications.

Contact

[Deborah Smart](#)

Executive Director of
Corporate Services

Advice Shop Service Delivery Update

Contact

On 9 January 2024, Committee received a [report](#) on the delivery of the Advice Shop in 2023/24. Committee requested an update once the full 12 months of output data for 2023/24 is available.

The Advice Shop provides an independent and free information and advice service for welfare benefit and debt matters to Edinburgh's citizens. The purpose of the service is to prevent and alleviate poverty through maximising income and addressing personal debt and engaging customers with support services.

Appendix 3 summarises the outputs and outcomes for the Advice Shop in 2023/24, with over 4,000 people supported.

In 2023/24, the Advice Shop saw:

- Demand for debt advice grow significantly, as the measures put in place to protect debtors during the pandemic were gradually lifted,;
- Advisors undertake representation at the Sheriff Court to defend eviction action against 33 tenants in rent arrears, thus preventing homelessness and assisting with the repayment of arrears to help sustain tenancies;
- The drop-in service at 249 High Street, which runs twice a week, support 969 people, an average of 80 per month, reflecting the demand for urgent in-person advice;
- Issues around rent arrears (£557,000 among 93 clients) and Council Tax debt (£610,000 among 106 clients) being most prevalent. Fuel, loans, credit card and mobile phone debts also feature significantly;
- Support for Council tenants with rent arrears continue through the Multi-Disciplinary Team. 83 referrals were made and 46 were supported to retain their tenancy; and
- Income Maximisation Officers assist 501 homeless people to assess their entitlement to benefits and to support with benefit applications and disputes. Just under £500,000 in benefit income was secured.

As part of the Advice Shop service, an Advice Line is open 9.00am – 1.00pm Monday to Friday (the Friday service was introduced in March 2024). Demand for telephone advice remains lower than pre-pandemic levels, but 4,550 email enquiries were dealt with in 2023/24 (compared to 680 in 2019-20). In the past, much of this contact would have been received by telephone rather than by email.

The service also provides help to people affected by cancer. This is part-funded by Macmillan, and has developed close working relationships with teams at the Western General Hospital,

[Nicky Brown](#)

Head of Homelessness and Housing Access

St.Columba's Hospice, and with the Improving the Cancer Journey link workers across communities. 668 people affected by cancer were assisted to secure £1,881,477 income through benefits – in particular Adult Disability Payment and Attendance Allowance – and grants. This is the highest sum recorded for many years, reflecting the substantial sums that cancer patients – and their families/carers – are entitled to which otherwise they may miss out on.

Heat network consenting regime

On 22 August 2023, Committee agreed that the Council should write to the Scottish Government requesting to be designated the heat network consent authority for Edinburgh, with the timing of the request to be agreed with Scottish Government officials.

Committee further requested a report within two cycles that: set out a Council policy for the consenting of heat networks in Edinburgh (to include reasons for granting or revoking licences, etc); indicated resource implications as a consent authority; identified any gaps or uncertainties in the guidance and regulations for heat network developers; and showed options for dissemination of heat network information to interested parties (e.g. Building Assessment Reports (BARs)).

Following the Committee, officers engaged with the Scottish Government Heat Networks Regulation Team (HNRT). The HNRT requested that, as the consenting regime was not developed, the Council refrain from making a formal request. The HNRT has stated that it plans to have a functioning regulatory system (including a consenting regime) in place by 2025. A consultation on the consenting regime is scheduled to take place by the end of October 2024.

Given the above, it is considered that it would be premature for the Council to develop a consenting policy, as any such policy would require to reflect the national consenting regime. It is also not possible for the Council to identify resource implications or gaps in regulations until the regime is developed and its scope is clear. It is intended that a report will be brought to Committee once the consenting regime has been developed.

With respect to Building Assessment Reports, the Council's LHEES Office has received confirmation from the Scottish Government that these can be shared. Accordingly, the BARs page on the Council's website invites interested parties to contact the Council if they wish to see a BAR. The Council has also created an interactive online map (available via www.edinburgh.gov.uk/lhees) giving access to the spatial data from the LHEES. This map is being updated over time as more data becomes available.

Contact

[Kyle Drummond](#)
Programme
Development Officer

Forthcoming activities:

**Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review Implementation Group -
Year 1 Update - Recommendations Delivery Progress**

	ESCLR Recommendation	Progress Update	Recommendation Status
1	For the Council to publicly acknowledge the city's past role in sustaining slavery and colonialism, and to issue an apology to those places and people who suffered.	Actioned by the Lord Provost, Cllr Robert Aldridge who opened the Council meeting on 27 October 2022 with an apology on behalf of the city.	Implemented
2	Statues, monuments, buildings and street names associated with slavery and colonialism in Edinburgh are retained and re-presented in accordance with a new, dedicated interpretation strategy which explains the nature and consequences of that involvement.	<p>On the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade in March 2024, an event took place in front of the newly reinstated Melville Monument plaque to mark the day, with speakers including ESCLRIG Chair Irene Mosota, Sir Geoff Palmer, the Lord Provost and Cllr Day.</p> <p>Ranald MacInnes, Historic Environment Scotland's Head of Outreach and Learning presented to the ESCLRIG April 2024 meeting on The Empire Project.</p> <p>The ESCLRIG sub group will follow up with HES. It will also meet with the Council's Street Naming Officer.</p>	In progress
3	City-wide observance of the annual, UNESCO-designated International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition every	The inaugural event to mark this Day for Remembrance took place at City Chambers, 23 August 2023 and was jointly hosted by the Lord	In progress

Appendix 1

	<p>August 23 is introduced and resourced.</p>	<p>Provost and Leader of Council.</p> <p>The 2024 event will take place at the Cornerstone Centre in St John's Episcopal Church. This church, and the grave of Melvina Wells situated there, both feature in the ESCLR Report as features representing Edinburgh's historic part in slavery.</p> <p>A minute's silence at 11am is also being instigated by the Group as an effective, low cost and accessible way for individuals and organisations to mark the day.</p>	
4	<p>Teaching and learning materials are developed and delivered to fill the gap in respect of Scotland's and Edinburgh's role in slavery and colonialism.</p>	<p>ESCLRIG member and CEC Head of Education Curriculum and Senior Phase, Stephen Kelly presented to the ESCLRIG April 2024 meeting on work underway in Edinburgh to decolonise the curriculum.</p> <p>The law firm Digby Brown worked with ESCLRIG on an event with senior school pupils to encourage more young people of Black and South Asian heritage to consider a career in law.</p>	In progress
5	<p>Friendship agreements are initiated with cities in countries most impacted by Edinburgh's historic involvement with slavery and colonialism.</p>		To be actioned
6	<p>Universities and research bodies are encouraged to fund, develop and publish</p>	<p>The ESCLRIG Chair and subgroup met with University of Edinburgh to discuss how a</p>	In progress

Appendix 1

	<p>studies into the many under-researched aspects of Edinburgh's 6 connections with slavery and colonialism, prioritising the objectives of the new interpretation strategy.</p>	<p>collaborative approach could progress this recommendation.</p> <p>The chair also took part in the NHS Equalities Conference where NHS Scotland issued an apology and launched its research report: Atlantic Slavery and the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh – About Us (nhslothian.scot)</p>	
7	<p>A significant public artwork is commissioned acknowledging Edinburgh's links with slavery and colonialism. This initiates the development of a city-wide strategy for public art that fairly represents the diversity of the city and its histories, and capitalises on the creative potential of a multicultural city.</p>	<p>The ESCLRIG subgroup has met with Karl Chapman to consider together how this recommendation links with CEC plans underway to develop a Public Art Strategy.</p> <p>It will meet with key stakeholders Edinburgh Art Festival and Edinburgh World Heritage Trust in the autumn to explore a collective approach to delivering and funding this recommendation.</p>	In progress
8	<p>A positive programme of cultural commissions is established, empowering and resourcing emerging Black and Minority Ethnic creatives in Edinburgh to participate in and shape existing festivals, arts and heritage programmes.</p>		To be actioned
9	<p>The Council endorses the work of the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums steering group (ESSM) established by the Scottish Government, and commits to exploring how the capital can contribute to the creation of a</p>	<p>A CEC endorsement statement was released following Scottish Government acceptance of all ESSM Recommendations on 6 February 2024:</p> <p>https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/13917/support-</p>	In progress

Appendix 1

	dedicated space addressing Scotland's role in this history.	for-national-recommendations-on-empire-slavery-and-colonialism <p>The ESCLRIG subgroup is developing a proposal for a Decolonising Edinburgh Workshop Conference, referencing Museums & Galleries Edinburgh's involvement in national initiatives on Decolonisation and Anti-Racism: Anti-racist Museums Programme and Museum Transformers programme</p>	
10	An independent legacy stakeholder group is established, supported by the Council, to ensure approved recommendations are actioned, resourced and monitored, and progress is reported annually.	The Group was established in 2023 and is supported by Council officers.	In progress

International Visit - Feedback Form

Event Title	CircHive Conference
Event Location	Helsinki
Event Organiser	CircHive Research Consortium
Date (s)	21 st -23 rd May, 2024
Report by	Linda Anglin, Parks and Openspace Development Manager

Purpose of Attending	<p>Attending the CircHive Conference in May allowed three members of the Thriving Greenspaces Team to present to the whole consortium. The presentation highlighted the Council's focus around the Nature and Climate emergencies and the work responding to these across strategies, governance and projects such as the Edinburgh Nature Network and Blue Green Network.</p>
Key Areas which were particularly useful	<p>The team were able to access learning from across the EU and research partners such as the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and relate this to our Edinburgh context. Links have been made to project leads and organisations to look at our project development using different tools to baseline our city's biodiversity (as is being led by Planning) alongside approaches to natural capital accounting.</p> <p>The latter aligns with Council projects such as FIRNS (Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland), a programme funded by NatureScot and the National Heritage Lottery Fund of which the City of Edinburgh Council is the only urban project. The FIRNS project has recently secured further funding of £120k to continue to refine the metrics and develop a business case.</p>
Benefits of attending	<p>Natural Capital Accounting is a developing field. It is being increasingly used from international to local level. For example, the Scottish Government is promoting its use through the FIRNS programme.</p> <p>Due to this, it is essential for the Council to build expertise in this field and ensure we are aware of the standards of reporting and methods of good practice. This will give greater understanding of the positives and drawbacks of Natural Capital Accounting to ensure the Council can gain the most from it across strategies and governance.</p> <p>Natural Capital Accounting has the potential to be used to support the work of many teams Council-wide, and is of particular interest to Policy and Insight, Parks and Openspace, and 20-Minute Neighbourhoods. For the</p>

Council, its use aligns with Scottish Government requirements, alongside projects delivering against National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. It is therefore important to ensure it is used holistically to bring multiple benefits to people and drive forward nature restoration.

The Council is currently involved in two projects that aim to help us improve knowledge of Natural Capital Accounting:

The CirCHive Project

A key aim of the CirCHive project is to raise understanding of Natural Capital Accounting and share experience at a European and national level. The Edinburgh case study uses Natural Capital Accounting as a mechanism to give us a baseline of nature, comparable over time, to monitor improvements to our whole natural estate and the ecosystem services it provides. It will also consider how the data can be used to improve the quality of decisions in challenging development and climate change contexts.

At site level, it can be used as mechanism to measure and ensure our projects are increasing our biodiversity and greenspace quality. It also allows us to gain an understanding of how other cities are currently doing this. That data can provide pathways to investment by demonstrating the outcomes for nature to funders and investors as well as being used as a key performance indicator to show how we have improved a site or an area.

The intention with the CirCHive project is to take a holistic view of the use of Natural Capital Accounting; to ensure it is centring nature and the benefits it brings for our health, wellbeing, and economy alongside its inherent value within decision-making as opposed to a mechanism that reduces nature to monetary values.

The FIRNS Programme

FIRNS is a joint initiative between the Scottish Government, NatureScot, and the National Heritage Lottery Fund to support the development of environmental projects in Scotland. Edinburgh forms the only urban project to have been awarded FIRNS funding. The aim of the Council's FIRNS project is to create an evidence base of the socioeconomic value for potential investors and value and monetise ecosystem services, which are derived from the improvement of natural capital assets in the urban environment using particular sites that have been selected.

	<p>Learnings from the Circhive project is fed into this project via the Steering Group.</p> <p>Both projects align with strategic priorities with the Council's Business Plan such as creating good places to live and work. They also link with other Council priorities and civic duties such as the declared Nature and Climate emergencies, which will help to create a greener city with more robust biodiversity that has been baselined and valued in a way that can increase investment in nature without losing the intrinsic value of nature itself.</p> <p>The Council has been at the forefront of responding to the Nature and Climate crises – the Edinburgh Nature Network was the first in Scotland, with Nature Networks now being a Scotland-wide requirement of National Planning Framework 4 and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. Engaging in projects such as Circhive through regular online meetings and in-person conferences, ensures that the City of Edinburgh continues to pioneer across these developing sectors.</p>
Follow up actions	<p>Natural Capital Accounting and its application to drive forward nature conservation is still a developing field. Natural Capital Account data has the potential to provide the Council with a holistic overview of the state of its natural estate and measure changes over time. The data can be used a key performance indicator in responding to the nature crisis, and in informing decision-making.</p> <p>Developing a Natural Capital Account, using robust and trusted methodologies, will place the Council in a very strong position as the use of Natural Capital Accounts becomes more established.</p> <p>The Council is pioneering new methodologies and approaches through the Circhive and FIRNS programmes.</p> <p>The team will continue to update Committee and share learning, such as through holding webinars and workshops during the project process and as proposals for the use of Natural Capital Accounting are developed.</p>

Appendix 1 – Outputs and Outcomes Data

Table 1: Debt and Welfare Rights outputs

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Debt – new clients	297	190	109	101	135	201
Welfare Rights						
- new clients	2,267	1,951	1,751	1,757	1,399	3,153
- all clients	47,11	4,686	5,752	3,720	3,079	3,709
Email enquiries	650	680	4,938	3,912	4,387	4,550
Advice Line calls						
- received	13,125	11,221	7,186	8,011	6,664	5,324
- answered	8,984	9,509	5,618	5,978	4,863	4,551

Table 2: Breakdown of Debt Types 2023-24

Debt Type	Balance (£)	Count	Percentage
Bank Loan	£ 171,686	27	5%
Bank Overdraft	£ 43,332	33	6%
Benefit Overpayment (DWP)	£ 79,154	20	3%
Benefit Overpayment (LA)	£ 69,907	33	6%
Council Tax Arrears	£ 610,647	106	18%
Credit Card	£ 203,646	54	9%
Electricity	£ 49,709	17	3%
Hire purchase or conditional sale	£ 19,958	3	1%
Income Tax and NI Debt	£ 66,079	11	2%
Loan	£ 97,992	27	5%
Mail Order/Catalogue	£ 31,016	18	3%
Mobile Phone	£ 20,867	24	4%
Mortgage Arrears	£ 302,016	7	1%
Non-Domestic Rates	£ 37,334	1	0%
Other	£ 280,970	93	16%
Rent Arrears (CEC)	£ 478,681	74	13%
Rent Arrears (HA)	£ 40,314	11	2%
Rent Arrears (Private Landlord)	£ 22,672	7	1%
Utility Bills Arrears	£ 24,041	13	2%
	£ 2,650,023	579	

Table 3: Homelessness Prevention outcomes

	2022-23	2023-24
The no. of households who continue to sustain their tenancy, avoiding temporary accommodation measured at point of case closure (Multi-Disciplinary Team)	41	46
The no. of households supported to move out of temporary accommodation more quickly (Income Maximisation)	42	
Number of training sessions delivered by Income Maximisation Capacity Building Officer	99 sessions to 751 staff	74 sessions to 845 staff

Table 4: Financial Gains for Clients and Client Debt Levels

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
DEBT					
New Debt	£1,696,418	£592,581	£581,788	£1,175,629	£2,614,889
Gains	£441,066	£503,924	£238,894	£206,963	£472,944
WELFARE RIGHTS					
Gains	£11,497,227	£8,524,682	£6,997,030	£6,518,972	£6,951,066

Table 5: Distribution of Advice Shop clients by Ward 2023-24

Electoral Ward	No. of Clients	
Almond	217	6%
City Centre	297	9%
Colinton/Fairmilehead	116	3%
Corstorphine/Murrayfield	84	2%
Craigtinny/Duddingston	263	8%
Drum Brae/Gyle	143	4%
Forth	249	7%
Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	108	3%
Inverleith	110	3%
Leith	195	6%
Leith Walk	205	6%
Liberton/Gilmerton	402	12%
Morningside	81	2%
Pentland Hills	223	7%
Portobello/Craigmillar	335	10%
Sighthill/Gorgie	229	7%
Southside/Newington	168	5%
Report Total	3,425	100%

Data source: internal data held by the City of Edinburgh Council