

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 29 August 2024

Office of the Lord Provost: Year 2 Annual Report 2023/24

Executive/routine
Wards

Executive
All

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council:

- 1.1. notes this second annual report under the current administration;
- 1.2. notes the range and breadth of civic activity undertaken in 2023/24; and
- 1.3. thanks the Depute Lord Provost, Bailies and Lord Provost Consort for their ongoing support and assistance to the Lord Provost.

Dr Deborah Smart

Executive Director of Corporate Services

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Report

Office of Lord Provost: Year 2 Annual Report 2023/24

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This annual report profiles the work and commitments of the Civic Leadership over the second year of the current administration.
- 2.2 The wide range of activity undertaken is both quantified and described in terms of key civic roles and highlights over the past year.

3. Background

- 3.1 An annual report from the Office of Lord Provost has been submitted to the Council each year since 2017. The purpose of the report is to advise members on the product and undertakings of the civic office and to flag any issues.
- 3.2 This work is outlined in the main report below which covers the roles of both the Lord Provostship and the Lieutenancy. Uniquely in the United Kingdom, the offices of Civic Leader and Lord Lieutenant are vested in the same person in the four ancient Scottish cities.

4. Main report

Summary of Civic Activity 2023/24

- 4.1 The civic programme for 2023/24 returned to operational normality with most events taking place in person, rather than virtually. Appendix one to this report quantifies the volume of activity, with a total of 579 engagements comprising 349 civic events and 230 routine business meetings.
- 4.2 A monthly average of nearly 30 civic events were supported by the civic office and other staff groupings as appropriate. 299 engagements were carried out by the civic leadership of the Council (Lord Provost, Depute Lord Provost and Bailies).
- 4.3 A further 50 civic engagements required the Lord Provost as Lord Lieutenant to assist Members of The Royal Family on official business. When necessary, Deputy Lieutenants fulfilled this role on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant (Lord Provost).

Edinburgh 900

- 4.4 Edinburgh 900 was the focus of a milestone visit by The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh in May 2024. This was ahead of a formal launch at Edinburgh Castle during Royal Week in July 2024.
- 4.5 As Chair of the All-Party Oversight Group (APOG) the Lord Provost took a key role in reigniting Edinburgh 900 to commemorate Royal Burgh status from 1124. Ten civic themes were identified from the City Collections and agreed by the APOG.
- 4.6 These themes form a core part of the events website launched in July. Edinburgh 900 activity is categorised against the themes. This includes the product of the Edinburgh 900 Civic and Community Event Funds.
- 4.7 The evolving programme runs between July 2024 and August 2025 inclusive. Partner organisations and communities across the city are strongly encouraged to contribute and participate in these celebrations.

Active Citizenship

- 4.8 Edinburgh is Scotland's leading city for volunteering. Over 152,000 people (one third of the population) regularly volunteer and contribute over 27,000 days of volunteering each week.
- 4.9 The Lord Provost is Volunteering Ambassador, and this role ensures support and recognition of the sector. During UK Volunteers Week, the Lord Provost presents Inspiring Volunteer Awards, including Volunteer of the Year. Winners of this prestigious award are named on the honours board in the City Chambers.
- 4.10 The King's Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS) provide a further mechanism for highlighting the work of volunteers in the city. In 2023, 70 volunteers at Lochend Football Academy were awarded a KAVS for high quality service provision. The Award was presented at a ceremony in the City Chambers in April 2024.
- 4.11 So that more volunteer-led charities and community groups in Edinburgh are nominated for a KAVS, Deputy Lieutenants, Volunteer Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council are working to generate nominations. The result of this effort will be known in November 2024.

Armed Forces and Veterans Matters

- 4.12 The Lord Provost is the Armed Forces and Veterans Champion for Edinburgh which is also a Garrison City, hosting 51st Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland as well as Regular, Reserve and Cadet Units of the Royal Navy, British Army and the Royal Air Force. Many leading service charities are also based here.
- 4.13 The Armed Forces and Veterans communities make a significant contribution to the local economy. Service personnel and their families are integrated in a wide range of Council services including education, housing, health and social care.

- 4.14 The Armed Forces Act 2021 placed a legal duty on public bodies “to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when exercising certain statutory functions in the fields of healthcare, education and housing”. The Duty came into effect on 22 November with the publication of Statutory Guidance which has been reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure awareness and compliance.
- 4.15 The Council is also required to renew its five-year status as a Gold Award holder under the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, whereby the employment support needs of Reservists and Veterans are fully recognised. This matter is with HR and the Lord Provost will be actively engaged with the relaunch of the Award.

OneCity Trust

- 4.16 The Lord Provost is President of the OneCity Trust which was set up 21 years ago to fight inequality and exclusion in the City of Edinburgh. By 2024, the Trust had paid out £1.3 million to some 270 local projects.
- 4.17 At its AGM on December 2023, the Board of Trustees identified a new theme for funding priorities. This was in direct response to the housing emergency declared by the Council in November 2023. Further information on the OneCity Trust is contained in Appendix 2 to this report.

International Work

- 4.18 Also key to the civic role is the promotion of the city at both home and abroad. Regular commitments include the annual visit to Contalmaison when tribute is paid to the fallen at the Battle of the Somme during World War 1.
- 4.19 The Lord Provost is an active participant in the International Strategy Group chaired by the Chief Executive. This partnership initiative ensures the necessary co-ordination of activity and approach across the various sectors of the city.
- 4.20 On a recent visit to Munich, the 70th anniversary of the twinning of the two cities was marked. Civic engagements included a meeting at the Department of Labour and Economic Affairs on economic growth and trade by foreign companies in Munich. A tour of facilities for preventing and combating homelessness also took place and there was further exploration of the benefits of twin city working.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Priorities for the year ahead include a reassessment of the City Vision 2050 initiative. The Edinburgh 900 celebrations will be rolled out with a confirmed programme of activity and events taking place through to August 2025.

- 5.2 2024 marks the 40th Anniversary of UK Volunteers Week. In recognition, there will be visits to volunteer-led charities and community groups that have received awards or are doing highly innovative work to tackle poverty and inequality, and the climate and nature emergency.
- 5.3 In August 2024, Edinburgh hosts the “First Scottish International Conference on Armed Forces in Society”. Co-ordinated by Napier University’s Centre for Military Research, Education and Public Engagement, leading researchers and policy experts will attend along with UK and international researchers and practitioners. The Lord Provost will welcome delegates to this groundbreaking event.
- 5.4 The Council’s Civic Hospitality Policy will be implemented in accordance with the decisions taken at Full Council on 22 June 2023.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The Office of Lord Provost operates within the budget allocated, amounting to £518,142 in 2023/24 (with nearly 70% of this spend relating solely to staffing costs).

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The Office of Lord Provost assists both the Council and city partners to deliver key equality and rights outcomes, and to meet the Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duties to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, (ii) advance equality of opportunity, and (iii) foster good relations.
- 7.2 Civic events organised by the Office of Lord Provost take place at the City Chambers where there are minimal barriers to participation. For third party arrangements, organisers are encouraged to use accessible venues.
- 7.3 The Lord Provost is President of the One City Trust, Edinburgh’s Social Inclusion Charity. The mission of the Trust is to fight inequality and exclusion through a strong programme of investment in projects which work to mitigate the impacts of poverty, exclusion and disadvantage across localities. The investment contributes to the objectives of the Edinburgh Poverty Commission, and details of the character of investments for 2023/24 are provided in Appendix 2.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 This report does not itself contain any direct environmental or climate related implications. The work of the civic office is in line with the Council Business Plan and assists the Council’s statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity.
- 8.2 In line with the Council’s zero emissions ambitions for 2030 and the 2030 Climate Strategy, the Office of Lord Provost endeavours to mitigate carbon impacts by utilising public transport where and when possible.

- 8.3 For the purposes of safety and security (e.g. of the civic regalia) the Office of Lord Provost continues to have the use of civic cars to be used for civic events and other official functions as appropriate.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 This report has no negative impacts on risk, policy, compliance, or governance matters.
- 9.2 Regarding community impact, the Office of Lord Provost routinely undertakes engagement and co-production with a diverse range of stakeholders, leading community representatives, and business and civic organisations.
- 9.3 Speeches and other inputs for civic events are developed through engagement and in consultation with event recipients or owners as appropriate.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 See www.edinburghlordprovost.com;
- 10.2 See <https://onecitytrust.com/>

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix One: Summary of Civic Activity June 2023 to May 2024
- 11.2 Appendix Two: OneCity Trust Activity 2023/24

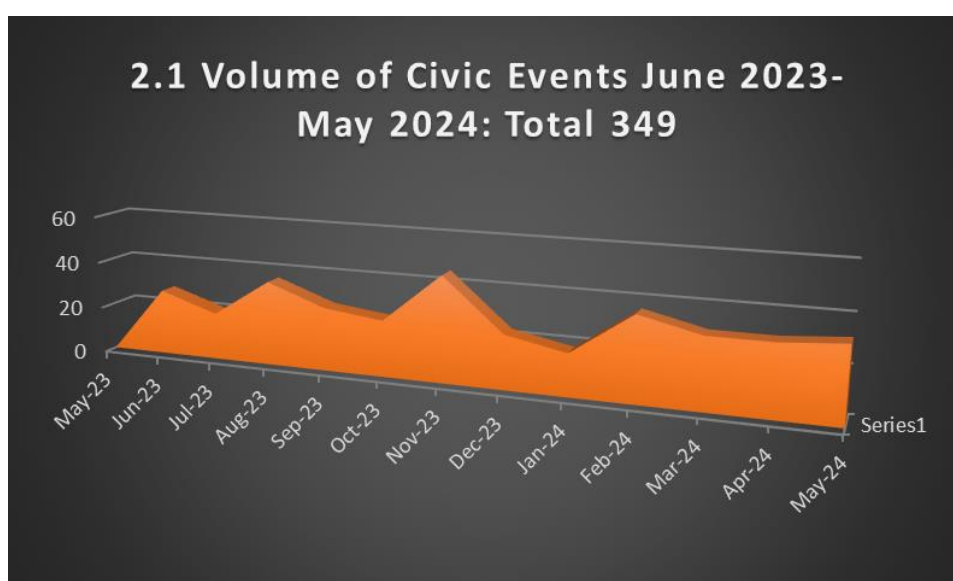
Summary of Civic Activity June 2023 to May 2024

- 1 The period of this Office of the Lord Provost (OLP) Year 2 Report is a full 12 months of activity June 2023 – May 2024. In the year, the civic diary has returned to normal operations, with events largely taking place physically, rather than virtually.

Civic Activity

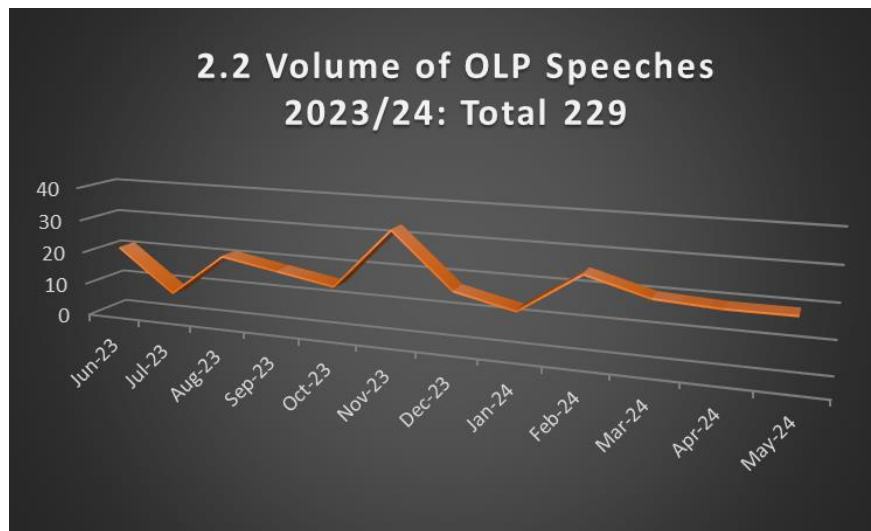
- 2 Across the year, in total 579 engagements occurred, with 349 civic events and 230 routine business meetings.

With a total number of 349 civic events held throughout this period:



- 3 The variation in the chart above reflects the return to a full programme of both standing civic events, cultural festivals and community and traditional festivals taking place in spring, summer and winter festive periods.
- 4 An average of around 29 civic events have occurred per month, with associated briefings and speeches provided by OLP staff, with assistance from other Council staff groupings and external organisations as necessary.
- 5 Over the year, 299 civic events (out-with Lieutenancy duties) were attended by the Lord Provost, Deputy Lord Provost or a Bailie.
- 6 During the year, the OLP has undertaken over 229 speeches across a diverse range of civic events including welcoming conference delegates, marking community group anniversaries, opening new facilities, and engaging with traditional cultural celebrations, military engagements, and civil society leaders and volunteers.

- 7 The graph below identifies that from June – May 2023/24, 229 speeches were delivered throughout the year, and is reflective of the periods of cultural, traditional, and community celebrations. On average 19 speeches were delivered each month.



- 8 Civic speeches are bespoke to each event, and can require detailed policy research and timeous engagement with event organisers and other external partners.

Lieutenancy activity 2023/24

- 9 The Office of Lord Provost also incorporates the responsibilities of the Edinburgh Lord Lieutenant and is required to assist Senior Members of the Royal Family and diplomatic officials, when visiting the Capital.

- 10 As part of wider Lieutenancy duties, during the period June-May 2023/24, the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants also:

- welcomed 18 senior diplomatic representatives and presented a civic gift from the citizens of Edinburgh:
- presented a number of Honours on behalf of His Majesty The King to individuals;
- presented a King's Award for Enterprise 2023 to Coolicon Lighting Ltd, and
- presented a King's Award for Voluntary Service 2023 to Lochend Football Academy. Further promotion of this scheme is taking place to improve nomination volumes, as described in the main report.

OneCity Trust Activity 2023/24

- 1 The OneCity Trust (OCT) is an independent charity, with a mission to fight inequality and exclusion in the City of Edinburgh. The Trust was established in 2003, in response to the OneCity report of the Lord Provost's Commission on Social Exclusion. The Lord Provost is ex-officio President of the Trust.
- 2 At the outset, the Council seed-funded the establishment of the OCT and further contributions were more than matched by donations from organisations and individuals. This led to the building of a significant endowment Fund that would generate funds for perpetuity.
- 3 OCT turned twenty-one years old in 2024 having by then paid £1.3 million to some 270 local projects. Of this amount, £1.1 million has been generated and distributed to around 230 projects in the past ten years.
- 4 The OCT Mission Statement is "...for the purposes of advancing, facilitating, and promoting the education, social welfare, human rights and the tackling of extreme inequalities in income and alleviation of poverty among persons within the city of Edinburgh."
- 5 At its AGM in December 2023, the Board of Trustees identified a new theme for funding priorities: "Enriching the lives of people impacted by the housing crisis." This was in response to the housing emergency declared by the Council in November 2023.
- 6 In the financial year 2023/24, OCT awarded grants totalling £173,682 to 46 organisations. This was well short of the total bid for £608,867 from 73 applicants, highlighting the level of need and demand for financial support that exists.
- 7 In 2022, 38% of OCT income was generated through Community Benefit partnership funding. This reflects the Council's contractual relationship with various organisations and the provision of a route for Community Legacy Funding through OCT. In the financial year 2023/24, this had increased to 60% with support from ten organisations.
- 8 Travis Perkins Managed Services (TPMS) is a long-term partner with OCT (since 2015), contributing over £300,000 in funding to 48 charitable projects.

- 9 OCT published the fourth anthology 'The People's City' in January 2022, which promoted the Edinburgh Poverty Commission 2020 report 'A Just Capital: Actions to end poverty'. This was referenced in the foreword of the new book. To date this book continues to receive royalties for UK and export sales.
- 10 The annual fund-raising Lord Provost's Burns Supper first took place at Prestonfield House in 2017. This year's event on 26 January 2024 attracted large organisations from across Great Britain and raised over £30,000.
- 11 The Trust won an award under the Environment category in March 2024 from TPMS for their 'Better Together' Awards, which included a £5,000 prize. Currently, the Trust is awaiting the results from the SME News Awards 2024.
- 12 Due to the retiral of the Chair in December 2023, the Board is actively seeking a new Chair and additional Trustees to improve the diversity of the Board.