

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 10th June 2021

Edinburgh International Framework

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee:

- 1.1 Approve the refreshed Edinburgh International Framework
- 1.2 Approve the role outlined for City of Edinburgh Council in delivery of the framework
- 1.3 Note that the refreshed framework has been developed in collaboration with members of the Edinburgh International Group
- 1.4 Approve proposal for City of Edinburgh Council to support University of Edinburgh in joining the World Innovative Cities Co-operation Organisation to develop civic links and innovative collaborations with partner cities.

Andrew Kerr

Chief Executive

Contact: Chris Adams, Strategy Manager, Policy and Insight
Chris.Adams@edinburgh.gov.uk

Edinburgh International Framework

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report presents a refreshed framework for international collaboration between Edinburgh partners.
- 2.2 The framework is refreshed in response to changing context and challenges arising from the covid-19 pandemic and the UK's withdrawal from the EU, as well as new developments in city wide priorities.
- 2.3 The framework articulates joint aims and objectives for Edinburgh city partners in international relations, and five core themes for delivery of actions.
- 2.4 In delivery of the framework, this paper outlines the Council's approach to ensuring international activity promotes equality and diversity objectives.
- 2.5 The paper further proposes that the Council support the University of Edinburgh in joining the World Innovative Cities Co-operation Organisation to develop civic links and support innovative collaborations with partner cities.

3. Background

- 3.1 In August 2019 the Policy and Sustainability Committee approved a new framework of principles to guide future international engagement and activity by City of Edinburgh Council.
- 3.2 In August 2020, the Policy and Sustainability Committee agreed two motions relating to the role of Council international activity in supporting equalities issues.
- 3.3 In response to these motions, and to changing context for international relations as a result of pandemic and the UK's withdrawal from the EU, Committee approved a proposal to develop a refreshed Edinburgh International Framework to guide the work of the Council and city partners.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The combined impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, and the UK's withdrawal from the EU, have significantly changed the context for Edinburgh's international collaborations, and the challenges the city faces.
- 4.2 During 2020 there were unprecedented interruptions to the city's globally recognised festivals schedule, and the number of overseas workers arriving in Edinburgh fell by over 60%. These impacts continue into 2021, with significant long-term concerns over tourism businesses in the city, and projections showing that a full return to pre-pandemic levels of economic output not likely to occur before 2024 or later.
- 4.3 These challenges, and the emergence of new city-wide policy commitments for Edinburgh to become a fairer, greener city within the next decade, mean that a new approach is needed to guide the work of city partners towards shared goals in international collaborations.

Developing the framework

- 4.4 This new framework was developed in collaboration with members of the Edinburgh International Group, through group discussions and one to one interviews with members.
- 4.5 The Edinburgh International Group was established as part of the framework for collaboration published in 2019 and is the key city partnership for taking forward ambitions set out in this document.
- 4.6 The group is comprised of a number of key agencies involved in promoting Edinburgh as an open, welcoming city to the international community. The Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council and, alongside Council members such as the Lord Provost, includes representation from national and local strategic partners covering key aspects of Edinburgh's international outreach:
 - 4.6.1 Scottish Government and national agencies such as Scottish Development International, and Scottish Enterprise
 - 4.6.2 Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
 - 4.6.3 Edinburgh Airport
 - 4.6.4 Fintech Scotland
 - 4.6.5 University of Edinburgh
 - 4.6.6 Heriot Watt University
 - 4.6.7 Edinburgh World Heritage, and
 - 4.6.8 Festivals Edinburgh

Edinburgh International Framework

- 4.7 Through this refreshed framework, Edinburgh city partners aim to use their collective international relationships, partnerships and activities to support Edinburgh's recovery ensuring that:
 - 4.7.1 Edinburgh's people are proud of and benefit from the city's unique global reputation and place in the world
 - 4.7.2 Edinburgh businesses are able to thrive and take advantage of international co-operation, trade and investment opportunities
 - 4.7.3 Edinburgh is recognised as a global meeting place for ideas, culture, and innovation, with world class educational, arts and heritage sectors, and
 - 4.7.4 Edinburgh is a fairer, greener, better connected city.
- 4.8 In delivery of this framework, the role of City of Edinburgh Council will be to:
 - 4.8.1 Provide secretariat support for the Edinburgh International Group and joint working
 - 4.8.2 Use civic role to engage with international partners towards priorities set out in the Edinburgh International Framework
 - 4.8.3 Support international activity organised by city partners where senior presence and leadership support from the council will enhance the visits by partners.
 - 4.8.4 Maintain existing twinning and city partnership arrangements
 - 4.8.5 Promote learning and knowledge sharing through membership of the Eurocities network and other international collaboration forums.
 - 4.8.6 Promote Edinburgh investment propositions and participate in MIPIM activity
 - 4.8.7 Use Council managed business support services and networks to help Edinburgh businesses to trade internationally
 - 4.8.8 Ensure that Council international relations activities are aligned to the Edinburgh Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025
 - 4.8.9 Ensure that Council international activities are carried out in accordance with the Council's International Travel Policy.
 - 4.8.10 Engage with international partners to promote equalities and align to best practice guidance, such as the Scottish Government's Human Rights and Equalities Policy on international relations.
 - 4.8.11 Encourage and promote virtual online knowledge international exchanges and project collaborations.

- 4.9 Alongside City of Edinburgh Council actions, the framework outlines core collective activities to be led and delivered by members of the Edinburgh International Group.

World Innovative Cities Co-operation Organisation

- 4.10 The University of Edinburgh is Edinburgh's lead stakeholder on the World Innovative Cities Co-operation Organisation (WICCO). The WICCO was created to jointly build an open and innovative global platform, enhance exchange and cooperation in innovation across various domains among cities and organisations around the world, empower sustainable urban development with innovation, and lead innovation-driven urban economic development, social progress, and improvement of people's livelihood.
- 4.11 In line with the City of Edinburgh Council commitment to use its civic role to support international activity organised by city partners, it is proposed that the Council, through the office of the Lord Provost, join University of Edinburgh as a member of the WICCO network.
- 4.12 Membership of the network will allow the Council to develop and explore opportunities to promote innovation exchanges with other WICCO members.
- 4.13 Membership of the network carries no cost, and all activities will be taken forward within existing agreed budgets. All activity through the network membership will be carried out in alignment to the Council's Business Travel and Accommodation Guidance.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Next steps for the delivery of this framework include:
- 5.1.1 Supporting Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce in developing a city-wide programme of activities in the lead up to COP26 to showcase and promote discussion around Edinburgh's journey to be a climate ready net zero city by 2030.
 - 5.1.2 Working with Edinburgh International Group members to support city wide activities to promote recovery and resilience of the visitor economy, such as the Forever Edinburgh campaign.
 - 5.1.3 Disseminate the new Edinburgh International Framework plan to wider international partners and continue implementation of actions outlined in the framework.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Actions in this report can be taken forward within existing agreed budgets. Council membership of Eurocities is 16,500 Euros per annum.
- 6.2 Membership of World Innovative Cities Co-operation Organisation (WICCO) have no costs implications with any travel costs being paid by the organisers.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The framework and this paper have been developed in collaboration with the Edinburgh International Group representing key stakeholders and partners in international activity across the city.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Edinburgh International Framework 2019](#)
- 8.2 [Motion by Councillor Staniforth - The City's Relationship with Krakow, August 2020](#)
- 8.3 [Motion by Councillor Day - Equality and LGBT + Rights, August 2020](#)
- 8.4 [Scottish Government Human Rights Policy](#)
- 8.5 [Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix One – Edinburgh International Framework, 2021-26

Edinburgh International Framework

2021-26

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Executive Summary

Edinburgh is Scotland's international capital city, attracting workers, investors, visitors and students from all parts of the world. In recent years the city has welcomed:

- More overseas migrants than any other part of Scotland
- More foreign direct investment than any UK city outside London over the past decade
- Over 2 million visits from overseas tourists spending £1.2bn in the city every year pre-pandemic
- Over 4.5 million festival attendances per year from over 70 countries, and
- Growing numbers of international students – accounting for up to 19% of all students at Edinburgh's four Universities, and
- A growing population of non-UK born Edinburgh citizens, now accounting for some 16% of the total city population.

These global connections are important and are a key asset for making sure Edinburgh is a thriving city where everyone can enjoy the benefits of its success. Our international status provides a platform upon which the city can generate new jobs, bring in new ideas and innovations, enrich our culture, and help our citizens to engage in a global society.

Edinburgh International Group

The **Edinburgh International Group** is a collaboration of partners committed to working together, and taking a 'Team Edinburgh' approach to enhancing the city's existing international connections, finding new opportunities to build on Edinburgh's strengths, and strengthening the city's international reputation.

First established in 2019, members of the group include, City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Government, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, Edinburgh Airport, Festivals Edinburgh, Scottish Enterprise, SDI, University of Edinburgh, Fintech Scotland, and Edinburgh World Heritage.

Covid, Brexit, and the need for a new approach

In 2019 City of Edinburgh Council published its first city-wide international framework promoting joint working between city partners to maximise the impact of international connections and relationships.

Since the launch of that framework, the combined impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, and the UK's withdrawal from the EU, have significantly changed the context for those collaborations, and the challenges the city faces.

Tourism and airport visitor numbers reached an all time low in 2020, the year saw unprecedented interruptions to the city's globally recognised festivals schedule, and the number of overseas workers arriving in Edinburgh fell by over 60%. These impacts continue into 2021, with significant long-term concerns over tourism businesses in the city, and projections showing that a full return to pre-pandemic levels of economic output not likely to occur before 2024 or later.

These challenges, and the emergence of new city-wide policy commitments for Edinburgh to become a **fairer, greener city** within the next decade, mean that a new approach is needed to guide the work of city partners towards shared goals in international collaborations.

A new Edinburgh International Framework

This document provides a refreshed framework for international collaboration between Edinburgh partners. It aims to define common objectives and ambitions, immediate priorities for joint working, and an overview of key actions partners will focus on over the next few years.

Aims and ambitions

With this framework, the Edinburgh International Group aim to use their collective international relationships, partnerships and activities to support Edinburgh's recovery ensuring that:



Actions and delivery

To meet these aims the Edinburgh International Group will commit to joint working on immediate priorities for action in 2021/22 to support **Edinburgh's economic and cultural recovery from pandemic**, and **promote and co-ordinate Edinburgh's participation in COP26**.

This framework sets out further details of the actions Edinburgh International Group will collaborate on to ensure the city's renewal and

recovery over the coming years, including actions to:

- Take a Team Edinburgh approach to encouraging international trade and investment
- Support the recovery and resilience of Edinburgh's visitor economy
- Promote Edinburgh as a destination for international talent, students, and skilled workers
- Enhance Edinburgh's status as an international capital for research and innovation
- Protect, proactively support and sustainably manage Edinburgh's unique assets and heritage to promote the global sharing of ideas, arts, and culture.



1. Introduction

In 2019 Edinburgh launched its first framework for international collaboration, providing a guide for city partners working together to maximise the impact of their collective global relationships.

In the past 12 months, the combined impact of the global covid-19 pandemic, and the UK's withdrawal from the EU have prompted a need to refresh this framework and make sure that Edinburgh's international activity remains focused on meeting the needs of the city.

This document aims to provide a foundation for international collaboration by city partners over the next few years, setting out:

- Shared aims and objectives
- Immediate priorities for joint working
- Core activities, roles, and actions for delivery by partners.

In doing so, the document provides a framework around which city partners will collaborate to Edinburgh International Framework

strengthen international relationships and showcase the city. In doing so, the framework will support partners to:

- Share knowledge and information on international activities, opportunities and challenges, and
- Find new opportunities to work together to build on Edinburgh's strengths, create international knowledge exchanges on the application of historic city management practices and enhance the city's international reputation.

Edinburgh International Group

The Edinburgh International Group was established as part of the framework for collaboration published in 2019, and is the key city partnership for taking forward ambitions set out in this document.

The group is comprised of a number of key agencies involved in promoting Edinburgh as an open, welcoming city to the international community. The Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the City of

Edinburgh Council and, alongside Council members such as the Lord Provost, includes representation from national and local strategic partners covering key aspects of Edinburgh's international outreach:

- Scottish Government and national agencies such as Scottish Development International, and Scottish Enterprise
- Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Edinburgh Airport
- Fintech Scotland
- University of Edinburgh
- Heriot Watt University
- Edinburgh World Heritage, and
- Edinburgh Festivals

This group represents a powerful collection of international relationships and connections which reach across the whole world.

City of Edinburgh Council

Uses its civic role and capital city status to represent and promote the city, with the Lord Provost acting as civic head for the city and Edinburgh's ambassador on the world stage. The Council maintains Edinburgh's relationships with 10 current twin cities, as well as friendship agreements or memorandums of understanding with cities such as Kyoto and Shenzhen. The Council is a member of the Eurocities network for international collaboration, and is one of only 15 European cities to be part of the Climate-KIC Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstrator programme.

Scottish Government and agencies

Scottish Government has representative offices/hubs in Beijing, Ottawa, Washington, Brussels, Dublin, London, Paris and Berlin. Scottish Development International has 34 global offices across the Americas, Asia (Pacific), Europe, Middle East and Africa and a GlobalScot network worldwide.

Edinburgh's Universities

Heriot Watt University operates a transnational education policy via campuses in Dubai and Malaysia. The University engages with approximately 85 academic partners in 35 countries and have an estimated 29,000 students from 160 countries. The University of Edinburgh operate over 270 live partnerships with institutions in 56 countries. Edinburgh Global has offices in Santiago, Singapore, Mumbai, New York City and Shanghai, with a Global alumni network connecting over 300,000 graduates.

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce plays an important role in connecting local Edinburgh businesses with opportunities across the UK and internationally. The chamber promotes events, trade missions, training, and support to help businesses take the next step in their international journey.

Festivals Edinburgh

As well as attracting attendees from over 70 countries worldwide, Edinburgh's Festivals collectively attract nearly 40,000 performers and participants from 85 countries. More than 1,000 international producers and 1,000 international media are accredited every year.

Fintech Scotland

Fintech Scotland are creating valuable connections with other fintech hubs around the world, including connections in Japan, Spain, Belgium, France, Australia, Boston, New Zealand and Sweden

Edinburgh Airport

Scotland's busiest airport, welcoming more than 14.7 million people through our doors in 2019. The airport provides direct connections to more than 150 destinations and work with 40 airlines to welcome people to Scotland and take Scotland to the world.

Edinburgh World Heritage

Works with international collaborators to influence and improve historic city management practice - bringing knowledge, resources and good practices to the benefit of Edinburgh, its heritage and its stakeholders. Edinburgh World Heritage are a respected member of a dynamic and international network of organisations, who collaborate across international boundaries

Policy Alignment

In working together to meet shared objectives, the work taken forward through this framework will also support, align to, and influence the delivery of key national and local policies and strategies.

From a Scotland wide perspective, the framework supports local aspects of delivery of **A Trading**

Nation – the Scottish Governments plan for growing exports - and **Investing with Purpose** – Scotland's plan for driving an investment led recovery.

In doing so, the framework also supports the work of agencies in attracting and supporting investors to Scotland, helping businesses to become exporters, and supporting existing businesses who already trade internationally.

From a city perspective, the framework aligns to the development plans of individual partners while also supporting key city-wide strategies for implementation over the next decade. In particular, the framework supports delivery of the **Edinburgh Economy Strategy**, the **Edinburgh 2030 Tourism Strategy**, and, by supporting international investment in Edinburgh's green economy and infrastructure, the city's commitment to become a **Climate Ready Net Zero City by 2030**.

All City of Edinburgh Council activity taken forward through this framework is aligned to the delivery of the new **Council Business Plan**, and with core cross Council policies such as the **Equality and Diversity Framework**, and the **Council Travel Policy**.

2. Challenges and opportunities

Edinburgh’s economy will face its biggest challenge for a generation during the early part of this new decade.

Making the most of Edinburgh’s international connections and relationships will play a role in supporting the city’s economic recovery, communities and cultural resilience. The work outlined in this framework can help ensure Edinburgh retains its place an increasingly competitive international stage and bring substantial benefits to our residents.

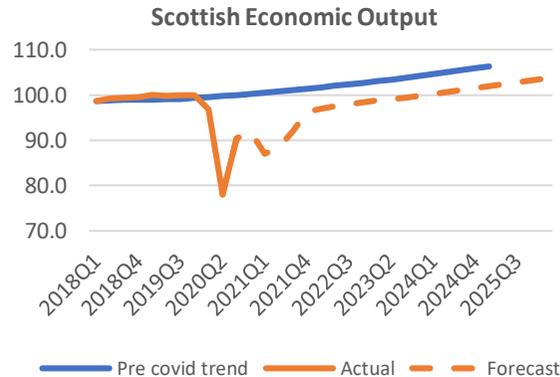
Economic impacts of pandemic

The economic disruption caused by COVID-19 has been felt across every sector and every community in the entire city-region.

Many businesses are closed, or trading at reduced levels, the risk of insolvency is high, putting many current and future jobs at risk. Many more people are dependent on benefits in Edinburgh than was the case pre-pandemic. Economic output fell in

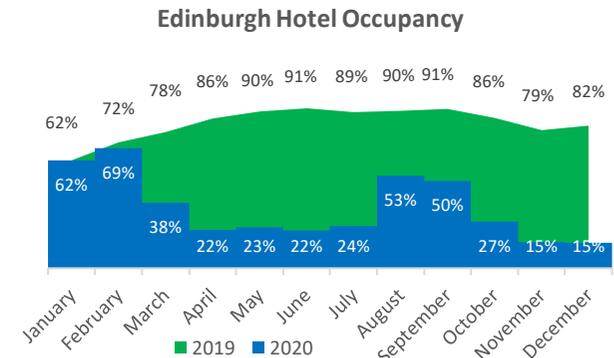
Edinburgh International Framework

2020 and, while recent early signs of recovery are promising, forecasts predict that a full return of output lost due to the pandemic may not be reached until 2026.



Visitors to Edinburgh fell significantly during 2020 severely impacting on sectors such as retail, hospitality and tourism. Whilst the summer season saw a boost in domestic tourism activity in rural areas of Scotland, in Edinburgh much of 2020 visitor numbers were significantly down on past trends. Edinburgh retains a critical role in the future of tourism to Scotland especially for overseas visitors with many using the city as a gateway to the rest of Scotland and as common feature as part of their trip.

The fall in visitors meant that many consumer facing services also suffered disproportionately due to indoor venues being one of the last areas to reopen.



UK relationships with the EU

It will take some time for the medium and longer terms structural changes in trade caused by Brexit to be fully felt and understood. Early evidence does show a drop in exports, with trade levels down for 28% of Scottish exporters in January 2021.

According to the latest ONS figures on exports from the UK, the country experienced its biggest fall in exports in early 2021, though it is unclear at present the degree to which these trends are related to pandemic or to Brexit.

One key factor noted in discussions related to Brexit has been the potential impact on the supply of labour for key sectors in Edinburgh. Latest data do show challenging trends in this area, with the number of overseas nationals registering for work in Edinburgh falling by 63% in 2020. As with other factors, including international student flows, considerable uncertainty remains over the long-term trends for such workers during the post pandemic recovery period.



Strengths and Opportunities

In 2021 Edinburgh will see the completion of major new infrastructure projects such as St James, Edinburgh Haymarket and the refurbishment of the historic former House of Fraser building at the west end of Princes Street. Such projects are among the Edinburgh International Framework

most significant in the UK this year, and represent an opportunity to build and renew the international profile and attractiveness of Edinburgh’s historic city centre.

Beyond these, the city is growing with progress in development of key strategic sites in the city expected in the next 18 months - including Granton and Edinburgh Bioquarter. These new developments provide an opportunity to develop places that offer improved spaces for communities and opportunities for inward investment.

Edinburgh is committed to becoming a Climate Ready Net Zero City by 2030. Achieving net zero will involve promotion of the city’s significant international investment opportunities for new green economy and infrastructure.

The city has strengths and competitive advantages in world class sectors such as Fintech and Life Sciences, as well as opportunities to maximise the impacts arising from Edinburgh’s status as the Data Capital of Europe.

Edinburgh’s visitor and culture economy are a core part of the city’s identity and success, and ensuring that international visitors can return safely and in a way that benefits the city is critical to a strong recovery from pandemic.

Together with new and upcoming developments, there is much to be learned from Edinburgh’s experience of emerging from previous economic recessions. The lessons of the 2008 financial crisis, for instance, showed Edinburgh’s economy to be strong and resilient, despite major challenges in one of its key internationally significant sectors.

Through recovery from this pandemic, then, it is Edinburgh’s core strengths – a skilled workforce, world class cultural, built and natural heritage, an innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem, and a globally renowned tourism and culture offer – which will help Edinburgh to be a productive, and prosperous city where all our people can thrive.

Levers for change

In addressing these challenges, and aiming to build on these strengths, the work of the city partners can focus on a number of key levers for change in

supporting and promoting Edinburgh's international assets.

- [Edinburgh's global reputation](#)

Edinburgh's long history of international appeal and success is recognised globally. This international reputation draws talent and investment to our city and our cultural offer draws in visitors from around the world. Using international relations to promote and enhance this reputation is important for this framework's success.

- [Connections, relationships and networks](#)

The Edinburgh International Group collectively engage with a wide range international networks in all our key priority action areas. These connections are a key tool in promoting the city's collective international ambitions.

- [Connectivity, physical and digital](#)

Connectivity, both physical and digital, is an important enabler for the delivery of Edinburgh's international objectives. Physical connectivity supports trade and investment and as well as international students and visitors. Edinburgh's

resilience in 2020/2021 has rested on its connectivity in a digital, virtual international environment.

- [Civic diplomacy and institutional strength](#)

City-region diplomacy is a powerful enabler for supporting our international ambitions, facilitating our engagement on a global stage on agendas that are important to Edinburgh. Our strong consular corps, supported by Edinburgh's Lord Provost, also support our international residents and inward delegations.

- [Business and investment propositions](#)

Edinburgh's strong entrepreneurial ecosystem, and portfolio of investment propositions are core assets for attracting investment and talent to the city. Promotion of these assets and opportunities will support the aims of this international framework.

Edinburgh's International Levers for Change

Global Reputation

Connections, relationships and networks

Connectivity - physical and digital

Civic diplomacy and institutional strength

Business and investment propositions

3. Aims and objectives

Through this framework and its implementation over the coming years, city partners in Edinburgh aim to make best use of our collective international relationships, partnerships and activities to support recovery from pandemic and deliver four key aims for the citizens of Edinburgh.

These aims provide a focus for international collaboration by city partners, and for the way in which Edinburgh's international assets, profile and opportunities can be used to the benefits of all Edinburgh's citizens.

The framework, and the actions outlined in the next section of this report, have been developed through engagement, both in group discussion and in one to one interviews, with members of the Edinburgh International Group, as well as review of activity, plans and strategies to which all members are working towards. As such, the framework and its actions represent an articulation of the common goals and objectives shared by all city partners involved in the international promotion of the city.

Measurement of success against these aims will be taken forward through reporting against the core city-wide strategies to which this framework is aligned – with particular reference to the Edinburgh Economy Strategy, and the Edinburgh 2030 Tourism Strategy, as well as annual reports and progress frameworks produced by City of Edinburgh Council and other Edinburgh International Group members.

Four key aims and ambitious



4. Actions for delivery

In taking forward these aims, Edinburgh International Group members will meet regularly and work together to:

- Collaborate on shared priorities for international collaboration and showcasing the city.
- Share knowledge and information on international activities, opportunities and challenges.
- Find new opportunities to work together to build on Edinburgh's strengths, and enhance the city's international reputation.

Short term priorities

In the immediate term, this joint working during 2021/22 will focus on:

- **Supporting Edinburgh's economic and cultural recovery from pandemic** – including supporting the recovery and resilience of Edinburgh's visitor economy through the Forever Edinburgh Campaign, supporting the development of

Edinburgh's Economic Recovery Strategy, and supporting the international aspects of the Scottish Government's programmes for economic renewal and recovery, and

- **Promote and co-ordinate Edinburgh's participation in COP26** – including supporting work, to be led by Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, to co-ordinate a programme of events in the lead up to COP26 showcasing Edinburgh's net zero assets and ambitions.

Medium to long term actions

This framework sets out further details of the actions Edinburgh International Group will collaborate on to ensure the city's renewal and recovery over the coming years.

The table here provides detail on these actions, structured around five core themes of activity.

In delivering this framework, Edinburgh International Group partners will:

Take a Team Edinburgh approach to encouraging international trade and investment

Support the recovery and resilience of Edinburgh's visitor economy

Promote Edinburgh as a destination for international talent, students, and skilled workers

Enhance Edinburgh's status as an international capital for research and innovation

Protect and support Edinburgh's unique assets and heritage to promote the global sharing of ideas, arts, and culture.

City of Edinburgh Council actions

In delivering these actions, the role of City of Edinburgh Council will be to:

- Provide secretariat support for the Edinburgh International Group and joint working
- Use civic role to engage with international partners towards priorities set out in the Edinburgh International Framework
- Support international activity organised by city partners where senior presence and leadership support from the council will enhance the visits by partners
- Maintain existing twinning and city partnership arrangements
- Promote learning and knowledge sharing through membership of the Eurocities network and other international collaboration forums
- Promote Edinburgh investment propositions and participate in MIPIM activity
- Use Council managed business support services and networks to help Edinburgh businesses to trade internationally
- Ensure that Council international relations activities are aligned to the Edinburgh Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025
- Engage with international partners to promote equalities and align to best practice guidance, such as the Scottish Government's Human Rights and Equalities Policy on international relations.

Collective actions for delivery

Actions to be delivered and led on by members of the [Edinburgh International Group](#) as a part of this framework are highlighted below. The actions will be reviewed to ensure relevance and remain flexible to respond to new opportunities. Individual partner international activity will develop alongside the wider collective framework.

Take a Team Edinburgh approach to encouraging international trade and investment

Promote Edinburgh investment propositions and participate in MIPIM activity.

Use business support services and networks to help Edinburgh businesses to trade internationally.

Host virtual inward and outward trade delegations and deliver advice on how to overcome barriers to export.

Deliver a Customs Declaration Service and carry out a communications campaign on international support to businesses.

Develop hubs initially identified for consideration as a Fintech Bridge for Fintech Scotland.

Partner with regional agencies to develop new strategic sites that will open up future investment opportunities, and promote Edinburgh's export, inward investment and capital investment propositions within key markets through SDI's international network.

Promote Edinburgh as a destination for international talent, students, and skilled workers

Maintain the global presence of Edinburgh's Higher Education Institutions through international offices and global alumni networks.

Through global communities, exchanges and partnerships, promote Edinburgh as a world-leading research and innovation destination.

Enhance Edinburgh's student offer and remain competitive globally as a greater place to study, recognising that international students are ambassadors for the city-region.

Support the recovery and resilience of Edinburgh's visitor economy

Promote and support delivery of the Edinburgh 2030 Tourism Strategy.

Connect and promote Forever Edinburgh initiative to UK networks.

Work in-market with the travel trade and ETAG to encourage safe return of international visitors, and support delivery of Edinburgh airport's sustainability plan.

Promote and enhance Edinburgh's international connectivity - through physical and digital connections.

Enhance Edinburgh's status as an international capital for research and innovation

Promote Edinburgh's world-leading university R & D through the international alumni and office networks

Foster international research and innovation partnerships and promote our research and innovation capabilities globally.

Promote Edinburgh's commitment to use data driven innovation and other research assets to address societal challenges such as tackling inequality and climate change.

Protect and support Edinburgh's unique assets and heritage and promote the global sharing of ideas, arts, and culture

Promote learning, knowledge sharing, and application of best historic city management through membership of the Eurocities and partners' networks.

Establish a COP26 events groups to showcase and promote discussion around Edinburgh's journey to be a climate ready net zero city.

Pursue a joint strategy of international engagement to stimulating additional programme development, attract international investment, extend knowledge exchange networks, and build the reputation and profile of Edinburgh's Festivals. Identify opportunities and collaborate to secure funding sources /mechanisms to support the conservation of the historic environment and better secure the contribution this makes to the USP of the festivals as well as city life.

Build links to Historic Cities worldwide. Use international programme to bring in expertise and resources. Use the World Heritage Leadership programme to build capacity to link the heritage sector to wider communities.

Maintain civic links with twin cities and provide Lord Provost support to partner activities.

Promote learning and knowledge sharing through membership of the Eurocities network.

Appendix 1: Edinburgh Twin Cities

TWIN CITIES

City	Country	Established
Munich	Germany	1954
Nice	France	1958
Florence	Italy	1964
Dunedin	New Zealand	1974
Vancouver	Canada	1977
San Diego	USA	1977
Xi'an	China	1985
Kiev	Ukraine	1989
Aalborg	Denmark	1991

Twinning arrangements established for limited periods of time

City	Country	Established
Vilnius	Lithuania	1994 (Expired)
Krakow	Poland	1995
St Petersburg	Russia	1995 (Expired)

Friendship link: Kyoto Prefecture (Japan), 1997 (1994 with Regional Council)

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Shenzhen (China) 2013, extended from 2018. International Friendship signed between Edinburgh and Shenzhen in May 2019.