

Business bulletin

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 10 June 2021

Virtual- Via Microsoft Teams

Policy and Sustainability Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Councillor Adam McVey</p>  <p>Vice Convener: Councillor Cammy Day</p> 	<p>Councillor Adam McVey (Convener)</p> <p>Councillor Cammy Day (Vice-Convener)</p> <p>Councillor Robert Aldridge</p> <p>Councillor Kate Campbell</p> <p>Councillor Jim Campbell</p> <p>Councillor Nick Cook</p> <p>Councillor Neil Gardiner</p> <p>Councillor Gillian Gloyer</p> <p>Councillor Graham Hutchison</p> <p>Councillor Lesley Macinnes</p> <p>Councillor Melanie Main</p> <p>Councillor John McLellan</p> <p>Councillor Rob Munn</p> <p>Councillor Ian Perry</p> <p>Councillor Alex Staniforth</p> <p>Councillor Iain Whyte</p> <p>Councillor Donald Wilson</p>	<p>Jamie Macrae, Committee Officer</p> <p>Louise Williamson, Assistant Committee Officer</p>

Recent news

Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review

The second meeting of the independent Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Review Group took place on 15 March 2021.

Discussion focussed on the various criteria identified which could be used to determine the final list of public realm features in scope, and the different research methodologies that members had shared in advance for consideration and which might be adopted for this Review. Volunteers from both the Review Group and the Advisory Group were then invited to take part in a Research Sub-committee meeting to progress the discussion in early April, and it concluded that the preferred model is the UNESCO approach which centres upon the objects in question, links with the broader societal context and assessment of the assets' relevance in the present day. Members considered this an appropriate methodology, noting that it would allow for a narrative to be scripted to demonstrate clearly, through various outputs, how the features in scope had links to slavery or colonialism, and how this in turn had benefitted Edinburgh.

This methodology was also agreed to be suitable as it is designed to include public engagement or consultation. Features will be presented thematically under categories which are familiar to us all, such as politics, finance, religion and medicine, and individual examples highlighted, rather than an exhaustive approach including all relevant street names, public building and monuments. Further information on this and the key features identified for Review will be presented to Council for initial consideration in June.

The Group has continued to liaise with the University of Edinburgh to ensure the process and outcomes of both Reviews align wherever this is useful, for example, through joint communications, public awareness-raising and engagement, and ensuring a clear remit for the internships which will begin later this year.

The Advisory Group has also been working to produce safeguarding supports and procedures for all members, after some expressed concern about the potential for online and offline abuse should their personal details be made public. Police Scotland provided a Cyber Security workshop and

Background

Contacts:

[Gillian Findlay](#)

have offered ongoing guidance and support for all involved in the work of the Review.

Short Term Lets

The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short Term Lets) Order 2021 was withdrawn by the Scottish Parliament in February 2021.

Regulations implemented on 1 April 2021 allow planning authorities to designate all or part of their area as short-term let control areas. Within designated areas, planning permission will be required for change of use of a dwelling to a short-term let.

All proposed control areas require to be considered and approved by the Scottish Government before they can come into effect. Guidance on control areas is being prepared by Scottish Government. Following the issue of this guidance, expected in June 2021, a report will be prepared for Committee to consider the designation of a control area or areas in Edinburgh, taking the guidance into account.

The Scottish Government has set up a stakeholder working group to assist in production of guidance for hosts and local authorities, and to resolve any stakeholder concerns. The Council is represented on the working group and will engage with members of the working group to ensure that a licensing system is implemented at the earliest opportunity.

The working group consists of other local authority groups such as COSLA and SOLAR, as well as trade and resident groups. The group has so far met three times [note: the 3rd meeting is on 13 May 2021].

The Scottish Government has indicated that the overall timetable for implementation of a licensing scheme for short term lets remains on course, subject to the outcome of the upcoming elections.

Elected Members will be aware that the budget agreed by the Council in February 2021 included funding for start-up costs for the regulatory systems. Work is underway to put in place the necessary staffing resource to take forward this important piece of work.

Contacts:

[Andrew Mitchell](#)

[David Givan](#)

Introduce buffer zones around clinics that provide abortion services - update

The Policy and Sustainability Committee at its meeting on 23 February 2021 considered a petition – Introduce buffer zones around clinics that provide abortion services.

The petition called on the Council to ask the Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing, to introduce buffer zone legislation to protect women in Edinburgh from harassment outside hospitals and clinics. The petition received 4880 signatures.

As agreed at Committee, the Council Leader wrote to COSLA's Community Wellbeing Spokesperson to seek a COSLA mandate from Councils across Scotland for a national position encouraging the Scottish Government to use any required statutory instruments to implement buffer zones at all clinics across Scotland.

The COSLA Community Wellbeing Board considered the matter and elected members noted and agreed legal advice provided from SOLAR (Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland) that councils are unable to establish local bye laws for buffer zones and that further discussions require to be held with the Scottish Govt to progress this matter at an official level.

Following the Board meeting, COSLA officials met with Scottish Government officials, it was agreed that the Scottish Government require to obtain their own legal advice and further meetings are required on this matter involving COSLA, Scottish Government and local authority SOLAR representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council.

Alongside the petition a report was also submitted to the Policy and Sustainability Committee in February to provide background information. Under 4.8 of that report references was made to a survey carried out in partnership between the Chalmers Centre operated by NHS Lothian and the City of Edinburgh Council over April, May and June 2020.

The results of the survey outlined in the report indicated 56% of the people surveyed entering the clinic felt very uncomfortable due to the presence of the protesters and that 9% thought it was a civil right of the protesters to voice their opinions. Whilst the results reported above are accurate, it should be noted, that the figures presented correlate only to

the period of the survey covering April, May and June 2020, further information received from NHS Lothian indicates the survey ran for a further four months until October 2019, several months after the end date presented in the report.

The figures therefore outlined in the February 2021 report were based on 54 responses received for the period April to June 2019, however the total number of responses now reported by the Chalmers Centre totals 190 and includes those received for the period July to October 2019. The Council has not received a breakdown of the responses from this further period from NHS Lothian.

A further discrepancy was noted in the year the survey was undertaken which was reported as 2020, which is incorrect, as the survey was completed in 2019.

It is also noted that the Council has received a complaint about the allegations contained in the petition and, as advised at Committee, these allegations were not verified. The petitions guidance will now be updated to ensure there is clarity on the verification process.

Forthcoming activities:
