

# Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday 8 September 2022

## Lauriston Castle: Operational and Governance Arrangements

<b>Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments</b>	<b>Executive Almond Creating a Vibrant City</b>
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### 1. Recommendation

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- 1.1 Finance and Resources Committee is asked to:
- 1.1.1 Note the information provided on the governance of the Lauriston Castle Trust (LCT) and the operational arrangements in place for day-to-day decision making in respect of Lauriston Castle, its Gardens and wider Estate;
  - 1.1.2 Agree the proposal to delegate authority to Council officers for day-to-day operational decisions (as set out in paragraphs 4.6.1 and 4.6.2);
  - 1.1.3 Agree that all other decisions on the day-to-day operational arrangements for Lauriston Castle, its Gardens and wider Estate should be reported to Finance and Resources Committee for approval until such time as new governance arrangements for LCT are implemented; and
  - 1.1.4 Approve the decisions outlined in Appendix 1.

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director of Place

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# Report

## Lauriston Castle Trust: Operational and Governance Arrangements

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 The governance arrangements for the Lauriston Castle Trust (LCT) are currently being reviewed and the outcome of this review will be reported to a future Committee.
- 2.2 Until such time as any changes to the governance arrangements are approved and implemented, Committee is asked to agree delegated authority to Council officers to take operational decisions on the basis of urgency and/or where the value of the action is up to £5,000. For operational decisions which are not urgent and where the value is greater than £5,000, it is proposed to seek Committee approval.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 Following questions raised at the Finance and Resources Committee of 5 November 2020, a review of the governance arrangements of LCT is currently being progressed. A link to the report '*The City of Edinburgh Council Charitable Trusts – Report to those charged with Governance on the 2019/20 Audit*' – can be found [here](#).
- 3.2 Within the Council, the delegated responsibility for the day-to-day administration of LCT presently rests with the Finance and Resources Committee. This has been the case since 2012 when the predecessor committee (the Finance and Budget Committee) assumed responsibility from the former Pensions and Trusts Committee.
- 3.3 Day-to-day operational decisions and service delivery is currently spread across a number of service areas, predominately: Heritage, Cultural Venues and Museums, who manage the Castle and its collections; Neighbourhood Environmental Services, who manage the grounds of the Castle; and Facilities Management, who manage the day to day maintenance of the operational buildings on the Estate.
- 3.4 In advance of any changes to the governance arrangements for LCT, officers feel that it would be appropriate to seek approval for decisions which affect the day to day operation of the Castle and the wider Estate.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 As set out in the background section of this report, the delegated responsibility for the day-to-day administration of LCT presently rests with the Finance and Resources Committee and the day-to-day operational activities for the management and maintenance of the Castle and Grounds mainly sit with the Place Directorate.
- 4.2 To date, operational decisions have been taken by individual services within their individual operational remits. However, recognising the questions raised in respect of the operating arrangements at LCT and in advance of a decision on the future governance arrangements for LCT, officers are seeking approval to put in place formal arrangements for operational decisions relating to the Castle and/or the wider Estate.
- 4.3 In setting out proposals for how and when decisions are taken, officers have sought to take account of the existing operating context and enable a balance to be struck between the delegated decisions made in the day-to-day operation of the Lauriston Castle Estate, as well as defining what decisions the Committee will consider relating to wider service delivery recommendations.
- 4.4 To support the decision-making arrangements set out, it is proposed that a single operating plan is created. This will combine details of the individual service area annual operating budgets for the Lauriston Castle Estate and will enable officers to approve day-to-day decisions - such as operational spend in line agreed delegated authority in order to keep Lauriston Castle open, accessible and trading.
- 4.5 An officer working group has been established to co-ordinate details of the operational requirements. The information gathered will be collated and presented by the Council's Heritage, Cultural Venues and Museums team.
- 4.6 Committee is asked to agree that, in respect of Lauriston Castle, the Estate and Gardens:
  - 4.6.1 Any works required urgently (for example, to address immediate safety or trading concerns) should be progressed by the Executive Director of Place (or their nominee) and be retrospectively reported to Committee for noting; and
  - 4.6.2 Any non-urgent works which are valued at £5,000 or less can be progressed by officers until such time as Trust Governance arrangements are updated and implemented and be retrospectively reported to Committee for noting; and
  - 4.6.3 All other operational decisions will be reported to Finance and Resources Committee at the earliest opportunity for approval.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 Subject to approval of the report recommendations, officers will progress with the actions required to create a single operating plan for the Lauriston Castle Estate and will prepare reports, as set out in paragraph 4.6.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There is no financial impact arising from this report. The costs of each individual activity will be considered as and when decisions are required but should be contained within existing budgets.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The changes proposed in this report are operational and therefore no relevant impact is envisaged.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 None.

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 N/a