

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 9 February 2023

Appointments to Working Groups

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To appoint membership of the Working Groups as set out in Appendix 1 and confirm the lifespan and necessity for those Working Groups.
- 1.2 To agree the revised working group framework outlined in appendix two.

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Report

Appointments to Working Groups

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Following the Council election in May 2022, it was agreed that Working Groups would not be reappointed until after the Council had agreed its future political management arrangements, which were agreed in December 2022. To avoid unnecessary delays due to the committee cycle, it is recommended that Working Groups be reappointed by Full Council.
- 2.2 The report provides a summary of the benefits and constraints of Working Groups and encourages careful consideration of whether any Working Group should be appointed, recognising the pressure that a large number of Working Groups can exert on elected member and officer time and resource.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council approved a framework for the creation and operation of working groups on 23 October 2014.
- 3.2 The Policy and Sustainability Committee approved an amended version of this framework on 6 August 2019.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Working Groups provide a forum for elected members to develop policy and discuss operational matters with officers and stakeholders. Meetings are usually held in private and they do not have the procedural constraints and formalities of committee meetings, allowing flexibility in format, location, timing and membership. Proposals can be discussed and developed in private before being considered and agreed in public at a later stage.
- 4.2 Working Groups can, however, exert a significant amount of pressure on both elected members and officer time and resource. Despite a lack of decision-making powers, a proliferation of working groups can give the impression that business is being conducted without scrutiny or due process. Working groups can also suffer from a lack of drive or 'mission drift', where they struggle to achieve established goals, co-opt new causes and continue in establishment for longer than was

originally intended. Working groups cannot be delegated decision-making authority and this can lead to confusion about the status and authority of the body.

4.3 Council should consider the need for a working group and if a working group is the best way to achieve stated objectives.

4.4 It is recommended that Council should consider what it wishes to achieve and whether a working group is the best vehicle for doing this. The following serves as a guide as to what purposes a working group can serve:

Can be dealt with by working group	Not appropriate for working group
To develop policy or proposals for approval by parent committee	To take a decision or incur expenditure on any matter
To scrutinise policy or proposals in detail before presenting findings to parent committee	To discuss a matter where the Council/responsible committee has no authority
To scrutinise or develop implementation details before presenting for approval by parent committee	To consider any matter without reporting back to the parent committee
To allow roundtable consultation with key stakeholders on matters within the parent committee's remit	
To provide more regular and in-depth oversight of a major project or initiative	

4.5 If the matter can be dealt with by a working group, consideration should be given to whether the benefits of flexibility, privacy, officer or stakeholder involvement are required.

4.6 The Working Group Framework (appendix 2) which provides a guide for executive committees when creating working groups has been updated to reflect the need to consider alternatives to working groups and to reinforce the need for annual review.

4.7 In instances where a working group is not appropriate, or the benefits are not required, there are two main options.

4.7.1 Consider the matter at committee.

4.7.2 Establish a sub-committee with delegated power.

4.8 While these options do not provide the benefits listed above, they do allow for debate and any decision to be taken in an open and transparent manner.

4.9 Council policy usually requires that Working Groups are established by the relevant executive committee with a clearly defined remit, membership and timeline, and are reviewed annually. Following the Council election in May 2022, it was agreed that

Working Groups would not be reappointed until after the Council had agreed its future political management arrangements. In order to avoid unnecessary delays, due to the committee cycle, it is recommended that Working Groups be reappointed by Full Council.

- 4.10 Appendix 1 includes details of the Working Groups established since appointments were last made formally in 2021. Seven of these are recommended for closure; five have been established/reappointed already; and a decision is required for the remaining 16 groups.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Lead officers, including Committee Services, will liaise with Conveners to set up meetings.
- 5.2 Working Groups will be reviewed and reappointed, where appropriate, annually by the relevant Executive Committees.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Member/officer working groups provide a key vehicle for policy development and discussion with stakeholders, informing the decision-making and governance of the Council as a whole.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Review of Political Management Arrangements 2022](#) – Full Council – 15 December 2022
- 8.2 [Working Groups](#) – Policy and Sustainability Committee – 6 August 2019

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Working Groups

Appendix 2 – Amended Working Group Framework

APPENDIX 1 – CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL – WORKING GROUPS

	Working Group	Remit	Convener / Membership	Recommendation
Council	Edinburgh Extension Act 1920 (short life)	To assess whether there was support to mark this centenary, and if so what form this commemoration might take.		Close – remit completed
	Royal Burgh 900th Anniversary (short life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss whether there is appetite for a celebration to mark the 900th anniversary of Edinburgh becoming a burgh. To consider how represented stakeholders can work together to mark the occasion. To investigate opportunities for commercial and heritage funding To develop proposals to be presented to City of Edinburgh Council for approval 		Close – remit completed

Policy & Sustainability	Edinburgh Waterfront All Party Oversight Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide a forum for cross-party political leadership of the Waterfront regeneration programme. 2. To discuss significant issues and projects arising from the development of the Waterfront. 3. To provide advice and guidance to officers on the implementation of decisions. 4. To monitor progress. 	9 members – Council Leader (Chair), Convener of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work, Convener of Transport and Environment, Convener of Culture and Communities, Convener of Planning, Convener of Education, Children and Families; a representative from the SNP, Liberal Democrat, Green and Conservative Groups (if not included in the representation outlined above).	Council decision required
	Equalities Working Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support the inclusion and innovation aims of the Council's Economic Strategy 2. To improve citizens' access to Council services, including services operated on the Council's behalf 3. To improve citizens' access to events, 	5 members (1 from each group)	Council decision required

		<p>meetings and visits to Council owned buildings, parks and land.</p> <p>4. To improve citizens' access to employment and training opportunities within the Council.</p>		
	Festival and Events All Party Oversight Group	<p>1. To provide scrutiny and oversight of the delivery and impacts of major festivals and events in Edinburgh.</p> <p>2. To facilitate and engage with key stakeholders including representatives from local communities.</p> <p>3. To ensure a co-ordinated Council-wide approach to festivals and events.</p>	Council Leader as the Convener, Convener of Culture and Communities Committee and all City Centre Ward Councillors, Group Leaders and Culture Spokespeople	Full Council – 27 October 2022 – noted the re-established Festival and Events APOG that fortnightly meetings have been scheduled to oversee this year's contract.
	Forth Green Freeport Elected Member Sounding Board	Ongoing liaison during preparation of the Outline Business Case (OBC) and Full Business Case (FBC), which will include formal arrangements for the	Cross-party (one from each group)	Council to establish and appoint members – Council agreed in December 2022 to establish this board, following a

		Council's role in the Forth Green Freeport governance structure.		successful bid.
	Short Term Lets Working Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To explore and understand the issues arising from the short term letting of properties which will inform policy and operational responses. 2. To lobby for and discuss national regulations which would support the management of short term lets in the city. 3. To discuss the implementation of new licensing and planning powers. 	11 members (3 SNP, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat, 2 Green, 2 Conservative)	Council decision required
	Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review Group (short life)			Close – remit completed, recommendations reported to Committee in August 2022.
	Sustainability & Climate Emergency All Party Oversight Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To champion the prioritisation of 	6 members – Convener of the Policy and Sustainability	Council decision required

		<p>sustainability action within the Council and across the city.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. To support and drive a co-ordinated approach throughout the Council to embed sustainability outcomes in the delivery of Council services.3. To play a key role in providing additional scrutiny and oversight of the implementation of the Programme Plan.4. To provide a vehicle for the development of the 2030 Sustainability Strategy and 2050 Vision before it is submitted for debate and approval at the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee5. To provide a means to facilitate and engage with partners and the	<p>Committee, the Sustainability Champion, 1 SNP, 1 SLD, 1 Green and 1 Conservative)</p>	
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		<p>community on the developing strategy and the wider sustainability agenda throughout the City.</p> <p>6. To link in with other working groups within the Council which are progressing elements included in the Sustainability Programme or 2030 Strategy.</p>		
	Welfare Reform Working Group (short life)	<p>1. To monitor the implementation and impact of various benefits changes and to contribute to consideration of further measures to support tenants and recipients of benefits</p> <p>2. To keep under review the implementation and impact of the Council's 'no evictions' policy</p> <p>3. To consider the application and impact</p>		Close – remit completed (Working Group agreed to cease the group at meeting in December 2021)

		<p>of the Discretionary Housing Payments policy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To monitor the position in respect of rent arrears and any implications 5. To monitor the implementation of the Scottish Welfare Fund 6. To monitor the implementation and impact of PIP (Personal Independence Payments) and Universal Credit 		
	West Edinburgh All Party Oversight Group	To oversee the development of the strategic vision for West Edinburgh and to advise on major policy issues like inclusive growth, development mix, transport infrastructure, schools provision and wider social, economic and spatial issues.	8 members - Council Leader (Chair), Convener of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work, Convener of Transport and Environment, Convener of Planning, Convener of Education, Children and Families, and a representative from the SNP, Liberal Democrat, Green and Conservative, and	Council decision required

			Green Groups (if not included in the representation outlined above).	
Finance and Resources	Elected Members ICT and Digital Sounding Board (standing)	<p>The Sounding Board oversees and scrutinises the delivery of the Council's ICT and Digital Services Contract, with a specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risks associated with the delivery of the ICT and Digital Services Contract; • The financial resources required; • The cost/value of the ICT and Digital Services Contract to the Council; • The Council's need to demonstrate best value; • An assurance that ICT and Digital services contract is meeting the needs of the Council's 	8 members (2 SNP, 2 Labour, 2 SLD, 1 Green and 1 Conservative)	Council decision required

		stakeholders, including citizens.		
	Council Health & Safety Consultative Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote a low tolerance approach to health and safety risks. • To consider, review and make recommendations to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager and/or Council Health and Safety Group on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Health and safety performance; – Accident investigations and action taken; – Health and safety matters referred from the Council Health and Safety Group; – Reports from the Health and 	1 member – Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee	Council decision required

		<p>Safety Executive, where appropriate;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reports submitted by the Corporate Health and Safety Team;- Requirements for health and safety training;- Health and safety communication in the workplace;- Health and safety reports that have been submitted by Safety Representatives and that have not been resolved at a local level. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To assist in the development of Council policy, procedures and guidance on matters		
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		<p>relating to health and safety at work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To raise awareness of Council Health and Safety initiatives. 		
	Joint Consultative Group (standing)			Reappointed in September 2022
Transport & Environment	Cammo Estate Advisory Committee (standing)	To meet at regular intervals and whenever necessary for consultation with or to offer advice to the proprietors of Cammo Estate or the National Trust for Scotland on the planning, development, management or maintenance of the subjects and buildings on the property.	2 local ward members	Council decision required
	Single Use Plastics Working Group (short life)	To discuss the report on Single Use Plastics and any issues that arose from this to develop potential solutions	5 Members (1 from each group)	Close – remit completed – group last met January 2020
	Tram All Party Oversight Group (standing)	To receive updates on the project progress, finances and current issues, including interfaces with key stakeholders such as Edinburgh St James, local	8 members (Leader of the Council, Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee, Opposition Group Leaders,	Reappoint – APOG is currently meeting informally.

		businesses and residents, Community Councils and Lothian Buses.	Opposition Transport Spokespersons.)	
	Tram Programme Board (standing)			Project-led – no requirement for the Council to appoint.
	Tram Finance & Risk Working Group (standing)			Appointed by the Tram Board
	Tram Ready for Ops Group (standing)			Appointed by the Tram Board
	Transport Forum (standing)	To provide a city-wide Forum of experts and citizens to consider our future transport needs.	5 Members (1 from each group)	Council decision required
	Active Travel Forum (standing)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide a city wide Active Travel Forum of experts and citizens to consider the positive and collective roles of walking and cycling in our future transport system and lifestyle needs. 2. To effectively scrutinise, influence and enhance the city's strategies and services relating to transport, place making and leisure and to promote 	1 Member (Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee)	Close – group has not met since March 2019

		<p>increased levels of walking and cycling.</p> <p>3. The Forum is a consultative body to inform the strategic direction of medium to long term plans, budgets and integration, and review the delivery of current policy to promote its positive results and maintain the case for active travel.</p>		
	Local Access Forum (standing)	<p>1. Local Access Forums are advisory bodies established under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Every access authority (local authority / National Park authority) has one or more forums for their area.</p> <p>2. The functions of the local access forums include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the access authority with advice and assistance in the discharge of their 	1 Member (Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee)	Council decision required

		<p>duties and functions under the Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering advice and providing assistance in cases of dispute, for example, concerning the exercise of access rights 		
	Central Edinburgh Development Working Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To review and consult with lead elected members from the Transport and Environment Committee, Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee and the Planning Committee on major projects in and around the centre of Edinburgh and to discuss matters relating to city centre development. For clarification, the remit of the group excludes oversight of routine maintenance and city centre management. 	10 members (Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee, Convener of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee, Convener of the Planning Committee, 3 SNP, 2 SLD, 1 Green and 1 Conservative)	Close – group has not met since March 2019

Education Children and Families	City of Edinburgh Council Corporate Parenting Board (standing)	Replaced the Corporate Parenting Member Officer Group in November 2022. Remit to be set.	1 Member (Convener of Education, Children and Families Committee)	Established in November 2022.
	Gaelic Implementation Steering Group (standing)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support the implementation of Edinburgh's current Gaelic Language Plan (2018-22) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overseeing and providing constructive support and challenge to progress • contributing to discussions on the prioritisation of next steps 2. To support the production of annual progress reports. 3. To support the development of future Gaelic Language Plans. 	7 Members	Reappointed by E,C&F in November 2022 – first meeting was held on 23 January 2023.
	Wester Hailes Working Group (short life)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To research and understand the decisions parents and young people make about placing choices. 2. To deal with reputation and communication 	5 Members (Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee (as Convener), 1 representative from each group) Other Members	Close – remit completed

		<p>issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To strengthen the curriculum offer. 4. To strengthen the partnership with feeder primaries and nearby high schools. <p>To consider options for a “re-brand” of WHEC in response to concerns raised by some of the parents at the feeder schools, and to explore the feasibility of introducing a specialism in its curriculum such as a focus on Digital & IT skills and/or vocational skills, encouraging placement requests to come in, for those wishing to develop these skills for employment or further education.</p>	<p>One parent council representative from Wester Hailes Education Centre One parent council representative from each of the three feeder Primary Schools (Canal View, Clovenstone and Sighthill) Head Teacher, Wester Hailes Education Centre One Head Teacher to represent the three feeder Primary Schools Officers from Quality, Improvement & Curriculum, Communities and Families</p>	
<p>Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work</p>	<p>Economic Advisory Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing joint working with key economic partners. • Support business engagement in the delivery of the Edinburgh Economy Strategy. • Work with the Council to advise 	<p>1 Member (Convener of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee)</p>	<p>Council decision required</p>

		and collaborate on actions to make sure that Edinburgh's economic growth is sustainable and benefits all citizens.		
	Homelessness Task Force (standing)			Reappointed by HHFW Committee in January 2023
Culture and Communities	Meadowbank Sports Centre and Stadium Working Group (short life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive progress reports and updates from the project team. • Provide feedback on the reports and updates. • Submit reports with recommendations to appropriate Committees. • Advise on the development of communication and engagement activities with local people and user groups. • Act as ambassadors for the project and provide support to the project team at key stages during project delivery. 	5 Members (1 from each group)	Close – remit completed

	<p>Tourism and Communities Working Group (short life)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working group will seek to ensure that the views and consideration of communities and residents are taken into account in the development of a new strategy for tourism. • The elected members on the group will represent communities and residents, liaising through engagement with statutory and non-statutory groups and networks including Community Councils and Resident's Groups. • Officers will link to Council service areas as appropriate to ensure a coordinated cross-council approach is maintained throughout the process. 	<p>6 members (2 each from Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee, Transport and Environment Committee and Culture and Communities Committee, to extend invitations to City Centre Councillors and ensure cross-party representation)</p>	<p>Close – group has not met since early 2019.</p>
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Appendix 2 – City of Edinburgh Council – Working Group Framework

- The chair of a working group will be agreed by the parent committee.
- Membership of 'Working Groups' will be open to all members of the parent committee (and substitutes), or as agreed by the parent committee; with officers and outside representatives being involved, as required.
- The chair will be able to add to the membership of a working group but not remove members who must be changed by the parent committee.
- Working Groups should have a defined written remit, and a timeframe for delivery of that remit; all to be agreed by the relevant parent committee.
- Working Groups will agree flexible meeting arrangements, to recognise individual workloads **and circumstances**, wherever appropriate, **including whether the Working Group should meet in person or virtually**.
- Parent committees to consider annual re-appointment reports confirming the lifespan and necessity for a working group. Committees should confirm that working groups have clear objectives and give consideration as to whether a working group is the correct vehicle to take these forward.