

Policy and Sustainability Committee

2.00pm, Friday, 25 October 2019

Tourism Strategy Development Update

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Policy and Sustainability Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note a new tourism strategy for Edinburgh is being developed in partnership with national bodies and the tourism sector;
 - 1.1.2 Note the process to date to develop the strategy and the input from Elected Members to date;
 - 1.1.3 Note that a meeting of the Tourism and Communities Working Group is planned for 28 October 2019 to consider the draft strategy in advance of consultation;
 - 1.1.4 Note that consultation on the draft strategy will begin on 4 November 2019 and will be open for six weeks;
 - 1.1.5 Note that the consultation document will be presented to Committee on 26 November 2019;
 - 1.1.6 Consider whether the remit and membership of the Tourism and Communities working group should be reviewed once the new strategy is approved; and
 - 1.1.7 Agree to an additional meeting of Policy and Sustainability Committee in January 2020 to consider the final strategy.

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Report

Tourism Strategy Development Update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A new tourism strategy 'Edinburgh 2030' is currently being developed in partnership with a number of organisations in the city. A Strategy Implementation Group (SIG), chaired by the Council's Chief Executive, has been established to oversee the development, which is being supported by the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG). This report updates Committee on the process followed to date and on the next steps in the finalisation of the strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 [Edinburgh 2020](#) was launched in January 2012 and set out the city's ambitions for growth in tourism up to 2020.
- 3.2 Given the changes in the city and the increasing demands from tourism, as well as the strategy approaching the end of its lifespan, a SIG was established to develop a new strategy for the city. The strategy development began in October 2018 and is expected to be completed by January 2020.
- 3.3 ETAG are supporting the development of the new strategy in partnership with a number of city stakeholders, including the Council. Each partner has its own governance structure and the final draft of the strategy will be considered by each partner in advance of the final published document.
- 3.4 City of Edinburgh Council is represented on the SIG by the Leader of the Council, the Convener of Culture and Communities, the Convener of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work, the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Place. Other officers and Elected Members have attended meetings of the SIG where appropriate.
- 3.5 The process of developing the new strategy has three phases:
- 3.5.1 Phase 1 – Evidence Review and Analysis was a desktop exercise undertaken on ETAG's behalf. The findings from this are published on the [ETAG website](#);

- 3.5.2 Phase 2 – Consultation and Focus Groups have taken place over the summer period in 2019 and included both Councillors and Council officers. The findings of this are published on the [ETAG website](#).
- 3.5.3 Phase 3 – Strategy development, public consultation and publication
- 3.6 Regular updates on the development of the strategy have been prepared for (first) Housing and Economy Committee and then Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee (now Policy and Sustainability) with the most recent update in [September 2019](#).
- 3.7 The Tourism and Communities working group was established to ensure that resident views were also included in the strategy development.
- 3.8 On [14 May 2019](#), the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee approved, on an interim basis, a draft Policy Statement on Tourism setting out the Council's position. This is providing guidance to members and officers involved in the strategy development process

4. Main report

- 4.1 It is recognised that the Edinburgh 2020 tourism strategy was written at a particular time, when growth in the tourism sector was desired and the strategy reflects this.
- 4.2 Throughout phases 1 and 2 of the development of Edinburgh 2030 it has been clear that the new strategy will reflect a substantial policy shift from primarily being focused on tourism promotion and industry development to one which is focused on managing the impact of tourism in the city, ensuring the industry is contributing to the net carbon zero target, and ensuring the visitor economy meets the needs of citizens and communities of the city, rather than seeing the industry as a burden to be borne.
- 4.3 The development of the strategy has been informed by the draft tourism policy statement which Committee approved in May 2019, the approval of policies within the Council (e.g. [City Centre Transformation](#) and the [Climate Emergency Target of net-zero carbon by 2030](#)) as well as the desktop research undertaken and the engagement with all partners.
- 4.4 In addition to the Council's representation on the SIG, the views of officers, Elected Members and residents have been captured in a number of ways including:
- 4.4.1 Individual meetings with representatives on the Tourism and Communities working group;
- 4.4.2 A meeting with the Conveners and Vice Conveners of Culture and Communities, Housing and Economy (now Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work) and Transport and Environment;
- 4.4.3 A meeting of the Tourism and Communities working group in May 2019 with representatives of Community Councils and Residents Associations (meeting notes attached in appendix 1);

- 4.4.4 Meeting with Elected Members from Culture and Communities (meeting notes attached in appendix 2); and
- 4.4.5 Two briefings for Elected Members in August 2019 (record of attendees and summary notes attached in appendix 3).

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Tourism and Communities Working Group will meet on 28 October 2019 for an update on the draft strategy which is being prepared for consultation. A further briefing for Elected Members can be arranged if required.
- 5.2 The draft strategy will be published on the Council's consultation hub from 4 November 2019 for six weeks.
- 5.3 The draft strategy will be reviewed to ensure that it reflects any policy changes approved by the Council through October – December 2019 (e.g. the sustainability reports being considered on this agenda).
- 5.4 The draft strategy will be reported to Policy and Strategy Committee on 26 November 2019. Feedback from Committee will be fed in to the consultation process.
- 5.5 Committee is asked to approve the set up an additional meeting in January 2020 to consider the final strategy in advance of the final publication. From reviewing the Council diary, it appears that Tuesday 21 January 2020 may be available to accommodate this meeting.
- 5.6 Partner organisations will consider the final Edinburgh 2030 strategy (including the Council) early in the new year, with ETAG members discussing it at their Conference on 30 January 2020. The final strategy is expected to be launched in February.
- 5.7 A review of the remit and membership of the Tourism and Communities Working Group could be progressed once the final strategy has been approved.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The costs of producing the refreshed strategy have been estimated to be £60,000 covering all three stages. The costs include consultation events and fees for consultancy services engaged by ETAG/Scottish Enterprise.
- 6.2 These costs are being met by the Principal Partners (City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Enterprise and ETAG as well as Strategy Partners including Edinburgh Airport and Edinburgh Hotels Association).
- 6.3 With the approval of the SIG, the Council has provided ETAG with a Grant Agreement for £20,000 (£10,000 in 2018/2019 and £10,000 in 2019/2020).

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The strategy development process to date has included broad consultation with the tourism sector and stakeholders including the Council.
- 7.2 The Tourism and Communities Working Group has also participated in these discussions and has invited Community Councils and Resident Associations to participate in the process.
- 7.3 Public consultation is planned from 4 November 2019 for six weeks. This will be published on the Council's consultation hub and will be promoted through stakeholder networks and via libraries and other communication channels. Two 'drop-in' events are also planned.
- 7.4 All feedback received will be considered and reflected in the final strategy as appropriate.
- 7.5 The emerging strategy is being developed with consideration of the sustainability impacts associated with tourism. It has also included the Council's decision in May 2019 to agree a target emergency target of net-zero carbon by 2030.
- 7.6 Following Committee's consideration of the reports on sustainability and Climate Emergency which are being considered on today's agenda, arrangements will be made to ensure that these are reflected in the final strategy document.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Tourism Strategy Update Report, Housing and Economy Committee [21 March 2019](#).
- 8.2 Managing Tourism Report, Culture and Communities Committee [30 January 2018](#).

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Minute of Meeting of the Tourism and Communities Working Group with Community Councils and Resident Associations.
- 9.2 Notes of meeting with Culture and Communities Elected Members.
- 9.3 Attendance list from Elected Member Briefings in August 2019.

Note of meeting

1. **Tourism and Communities Elected Member Working Group**
 2. **3.00 pm, Wednesday, 8 May 2019, Business Centre, City Chambers, Edinburgh**
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Present

Councillors Wilson (Convener), Cameron, McNeese-Mechan, Mowat, Rankin and Watt.

Community Council's Represented:

Colinton Community Council, Trinity Council, Queensferry Community Council, Parkhead, Sighthill and Broomhouse Community Council, Isobel Thom Douglas Crescent Residents Association/West End Community Council, the Edinburgh Old Town Development Trust and Resident of the Auld Toun, Old Town Community Council, SRUC and Edinburgh East Against the Cuts (observer), West End Community Council, Residents of Lawnmarket, Drum Brae Community Council, Tollcross Community Council, Edinburgh Old Town Development Trust, Corinthian Quay Residents Association, Leith Central Community Council, and Members of GRASS and St. Columba's Episcopal Church.

Also present:

Jim Galloway (Head of Enterprise and Innovation), Morag Marshall (Service and Policy Advisor), and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided the background to the meeting. He indicated that the Working Group was formed following a motion to the Culture and Communities Committee. The groups remit was to consult citizens and ensure a balance between citizens and tourists is reflected in the new Tourism Strategy under development by Edinburgh and Tourism Action Group (ETAG).

It is important that citizens had input into that strategy. ETAG, is largely industry-led and it was necessary to get peoples' views, and this was the purpose of this meeting.

The Group wanted to hear citizen's views and those of the organisations that were represented. The spokespersons were here to put the view of the organisations that they represented. The Convener asked that comments and views should be factually based and avoided giving vague or anecdotal views.

2. Verbal Report by Community Councils

At the invitation of the Convener, the representatives of the Community Councils then introduced themselves and addressed the meeting.

2.1 Queensferry Area Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

There are iconic views of Queensferry including the Forth Bridge Heritage Site, which are attractive to tourists, especially in summer. Visitors are welcomed by the residents who recognised the benefits for the economy, however, there were some issues. Tourism tends to control Queensferry, rather than the other way around, particularly when liners came in to port. The entire area is affected by TTROs (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order) and residents and other visitors stay away from the area, which had a negative effect on local business. The Community Council were working with the Council to try to find a solution. They had made some suggestions, but they had not been accepted. As well as the traffic issues, the waste bins available were inadequate. Additionally, there were issues with the public toilets.

2.2 Colinton Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

Colinton was trying to attract tourists. There were features of interest, such as the Robert Louise Stevenson Trail, and planned activities including the possible erection of commemorative railings placed on Woodhall Road, a major project to decorate the inside of the tunnel and work on the park. This should help boost the economy of the village. Regarding the new toilets, the threat of closure had subsided, however, they were not open or operational all the time.

There was, generally, a good bus service, passing through the village.

2.3 Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

The individual representing the Community Council explained that she was a Festival Guide and gave guided tours and information to visitors, but last year was worst year that she could remember. Trying to go down the High Street with a group of people was horrendous and she could not hear herself speak because of the noise. This was very unfortunate because the guides had been providing this service for 60 years. Guides have to pass a test to do this.

2.4 West End Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

The Community Council thought that that tourism was very important, but the Council should be attracting and targeting the big spenders, rather than people who would not be spending money. (Although, it was a good idea to make special provision for people who were using camp sites.) What was good for residents was good for tourists, but not vice-versa. This Community Council supported the initiative to implement a tourist tax, which should be set at a realistic level. The tax could be used to improve roads and pavements, surfacing, litter collection and public toilets.

2.5 The Edinburgh Old Town Development Trust

An outline of the views of the Trust was provided:

They indicated that the Old Town had changed in the last 5 years. This included the provision of inappropriate tours, such as “Harry Potter” tours and people illegally selling all sorts of items. Also, the representative felt that, as a resident, he was an “endangered species” in the Royal Mile as this was now full of businesses for short-term lets. Of the 92 flats in Tron Square, 35 flats had key safes and many of the flats were being rented out. The Council was often refusing licences, in some areas, but was granting licenses in the Old Town. People could not afford to stay here anymore. Other cities had got to grips with this, but not Edinburgh, therefore, there had to be action taken now.

[Councillor Cameron indicated that she was a member of the Short-Life Lets Working Group, which dealt with this. They would like to have more powers and resources from the Scottish Government to be able to take enforcement action. There would be a consultation on this issue.]

2.6 Drumrae Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided.

They wished to raise the peripheral parts of the City where there were issues with traffic management. His community council had two of the most polluted roads in Scotland, which were Queensferry Road and St John’s Road. There were “big hitters” in the area, such as the Airport and Murrayfield. A number 200 bus had been provided, but this has brought a large number of Airbnb to the area, which could be accessed via local buses. The area was full of people who had parked their vehicles on that route. There was not an integrated traffic management system in this area.

2.7 St Columba’s Episcopal Church

An outline of the views of St Columba’s Episcopal Church was provided:

They were concerned about the depopulation of the Old Town, which was leading to homelessness and also worried about congestion and pollution. At Johnston Terrace, where all coaches parked, air pollution was dreadful. At their church, up to

40 coaches parked there, used the parking space and often idled their engines, which added to pollution. Only some of the time they were fined £20 for this. Even though the Council was apparently addressing pollution, they continued to give permission for new hotels, which led to more taxi journeys. There was also congestion on pavements, with people “setting up shop” in front of doorways, which prevented residents from getting through. There was also the issue of the “silent discos”, which were far from silent.

2.8 Corinthian Quay Residents Association

An outline of the views of the Association was provided:

Their problems were relatively small in nature. Of 91 flats in their development, only 6 were Airbnb, however, there was still a problem with issues such as rubbish and noise. His Association wanted to clarify the problem and what would be done about it. There were six common stairs in their development. Most of the time, the noise levels were reasonable, but sometimes young people made a noise after midnight such as banging on railings. They became quite abusive when challenged. The deeds to the resident’s properties did not allow this sort of activity. Consequently, the Association was asking the factor to write to the owner to say that this had to stop.

2.9 Douglas Crescent Residents Association/West End Community Council

An outline of the views of the Association/Community Council was provided:

They had done a “trawl” of the residents in Douglas Crescent. It was found that there was not much activity in the Crescent itself, but this increased in Palmerston Place. Coaches parking outside the Britannia Hotel was causing a tailback of traffic early in the morning. As a result of busy traffic, pedestrians had problems crossing over the walkway to the Water of Leith or going to the Galleries. There were also concerns about children crossing the busy road. Often the Pelican Crossing in this area was ignored. Coaches often left their engines running. There was a lack of public toilets in the area, which was causing problems.

2.10 Tollcross Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

They agreed with the earlier speakers. There was an increasing number of hotels and student residential accommodation being turned into holiday apartments. No real provision existed for the disposal of litter and there were problems with the cleaning of bins. There was an increasing number of short terms lets in the stairs, which could be seen by the proliferation of key safes. At Tollcross, there were no public toilets which was causing problems. On a more positive note, in his street, there had been an influx of families in the previous 10 years and they would not want this to be jeopardised.

2.11 Edinburgh Old Town Development Trust

An outline of the views of the Trust was provided:

They were frustrated that they only had a short time to speak and hoped that this working group had other ways of gathering evidence. The Council should use its existing powers to reduce the negative effects of tourism. The reality was that as part of a strategy, Edinburgh was being sold as a place to visit. The ETAG Group was dictating how the city was used. These businesses were creating a strategy for urban life. The Council had control over many of these aspects and as a citizen, the representative wanted to know how this group would impact on this. In respect of planning policy, there was no evidence of a change of heart in the Council on any of these structural matters, which was the source of the problem. There were certainly issues over which the Council had no power, however, the individual political parties certainly had avenues open to them. The elected members should not say that they could not do anything about it because they could take action. They needed the courage to do it.

[The Convener referred to ETAG, explaining that it could not dictate strategy. The reason the representatives from the community councils were here was to input into the strategy, which the elected members would then take forward.]

2.12 Old Town Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

They had received information from the City Centre NP. There had been useful action taken by the Council to cut down on the noise by buskers, both in terms of volume and the hours they could operate. Residents in the Grassmarket has expressed their concerns and the Council had seemed to have done a good job in cutting down on this. Residents liked a good night sleep and there were several ways for the Council to reduce noise levels. In South Queensferry, as in some other areas, tourism was controlling residents. Colinton Village were hoping to share in some of the benefits of tourism and his community council were happy for this to take place. The Old Town was doing well commercially from tourism, but needed to share this with neighbouring community councils. There were several issues to be addressed. Pedestrianisation was taking place in some areas, however, there had to be a workable strategy. Additionally, there were four Councillors from his ward in City Chambers, but some of them did not often attend meetings.

2.13 Trinity Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

Sometimes they thought that residents felt that they were the “jam in the sandwich” between developments in Leith and Newhaven and eventually Granton Harbour. There were cruise boats docking in Newhaven Harbour. These generated overspill congestion and a large number of coaches and taxis. They would like to see visitors given information about what the local attractions were. Previous speakers had mentioned Airbnb and short term lets. In Trinity these was not a great problem just now, but there were problems in the newer built areas of Leith, Newhaven and Granton. This included overspill and anti-social behaviour. They were looking forward to the development of the Shoreline, which would be beneficial.

2.14 Leith Central Community Council

An outline of the views of the Community Council was provided:

The representative had just returned from Holland, where the authorities were trying to reduce the number of tourists, through mechanisms such as a tourist tax. Similarly, the Council should reduce the number of places that were made available for tourists. In Edinburgh, it was sometimes difficult for non-tourists to use facilities, without being charged.

2.15 Resident at 457 Lawnmarket

An outline of his concerns as a resident of the Lawnmarket was provided:

The representative indicated that having been a resident in Lawnmarket for a number of years he was concerned about the way in which the area had deteriorated. There were concerns about bins being shifted and not being emptied, people wanting to conduct business displacing residents, and tourist buses parking outside the Lawnmarket.

There were further concerns about cooking odours from Deacon Brodies and the increasing number of barrels at the back of the Jolly Judge, which was apparently due to a lack of space. [The Convener indicated that this specific information should be passed on to his local Councillors].

3. Update by Elected Members

The Convener then invited the elected members to address the meeting.

Councillor Mowat indicated that she had brought forward a motion for the Council to set up the Working Group. She knew about the concerns expressed, as many of the speakers were her constituents.

Short-term lets had been a problem in the City Centre before Airbnb had become established. The Council had sought to control this through planning permission, but that did not work anymore. This provides for a situation where resident formally registers their property for let, however, events had overtaken this. That was why she was trying to look take a broader view and listen to peoples' comments.

There had been meeting of the Short Term Lets Working Group. It identified the need to address short term lets and Airbnb through the licensing system. This had been discussed through committees and in consultation with the Scottish Government which is reviewing legislation.

These Council and Government processes can be time consuming and events change very quickly.

Councillor Rankin indicated that he was not happy with planning applications being granted for so many hotels. The members of the Planning Committee were acting in a quasi-judicial capacity, which included using their relevant planning powers. However, they should be aware of the strength of feeling in the City from residents.

The Scottish Government had now started a consultation on this issue and people had been invited to respond to that. It would be beneficial to see the proposed tourist tax taken forward, which would raise a huge amount of money. Work was taking place on a proposed workplace parking levy in order to reduce congestion in the City and improve the quality of life of the citizens.

Councillor Cameron indicated that she supported some of the speaker's comments about the lack of public toilets.

She suggested that a community council could host a meeting about tourism and invite their local members to come and listen and have a dialogue. Tourism was a multi-faceted issue and this would give members the best understanding of citizens' views across Edinburgh.

It was necessary to get the legislation and appropriate powers to tackle tourism related issues. The current powers were limited and resource intensive, budgets were reducing and the population was growing. It was necessary to get to grips with this issue. There were 63 elected members and a good way to engage with them would be to go around the local community councils, to have specific meetings on tourism and use this information in the collection of further evidence.

Councillor McNeese-Mechan indicated that the community councils were a good place to hear about local issues. She had an entire sub-folder on Airbnb and short term lets, was happy to see that the on line consultation recently take place and was keen that people logged in to the on-line survey. This was a real "quality of life" issue. This ward had the highest concentration of tenement stairs and there were issues with Airbnb's, which was almost like an unregulated hotel industry and impacted on the local area and on people's wellbeing. She felt strongly about this issue. In the recent past, people rented out their spare room during the festival, whereas, consortiums were now buying up flats.

Councillor Watt indicated that it had been encouraging to hear all the issues raised here, which were issues that she was engaged with. She was not anti-business, however, the economy should serve the citizens of Edinburgh. Different wards of Edinburgh had been affected by short term lets and ugly key safes. She was receiving e-mails about cruise ships which are having a major impact. These issues and those discussed needed to be rectified and progress was being made. It should be possible to implement a tourist levy and pressure from elected members had caused the Scottish Government to take this seriously.

4. General Discussion

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- There was not a single block of flats between the Castle and the Royal Mile that had not at least one key safe. It was significant that there were virtually no residents in some of the flats anymore.
- Places of historical interest, such as the Robert Louise Stevenson Trail had great historical appeal. Visitors sometimes disembarked from a boat at Leith and saw the Castle, but not the RLS trail.
- Visitors came into the City for a limited time, only two days on average, which meant that they did not have time to see the outlying areas. Trying to encourage visitors to extend their short-term stays was challenging. They were often arriving by plane and the proposed extension of Edinburgh Airport might worsen the situation.
- In Amsterdam, the authorities had banned tourist buses to try to limit tourism. Similarly, other countries were trying to address this issue. However, in Edinburgh this was not the case. For example, when the term finished, many student flats were turned into more visitor accommodation.
- It used to be possible able to walk anywhere in Edinburgh. However, there had been increasing commercialisation and a great deal of public land been let by the Council for events. Therefore, it was necessary to get a grip of the situation. This would include stopping so many students living at a distance from their campuses, stopping tourist buses coming to the City centre and protecting green spaces.
- It was frustrating that the issue of tourism impact had not been given more priority. Some neighbourhood networks were discussing this issue. But as this was a big issue, why were more neighbourhood networks not having meetings about this?
- The Convener indicated that he would like more time to dedicate to this issue. There was also further consultations planned providing further opportunity for people to express their views. He had enjoyed hearing the various points of views. Due to timescales, it was frustrating that they were hearing this in such short space of time. He suggested that another meeting should be scheduled to allow people time to go back to their local organisations and then come back to give their views to the elected members.
- It was stated that the Council should use their existing powers to greater effect. Sometimes people were breaking the rules and nothing was done.
- People should go to their community council and make their views heard. This would then be brought back to the elected members. This meeting was about hearing the views of the community councils.
- The Council had problems with enforcement as citizens approached overworked council officers with their problems. The reduction in funding from the Scottish Government had adversely effected Council budgets, which put pressure on services. Considering the lack of resources, the Council had to be creative to generate finance to fund more council officers.

- Councillor McNeese-Mechan indicated that sometimes a constituent would contact her about an Airbnb issue. She would contact Licensing, who would send out an officer. However, the officer going to the building was not always able to make contact.
- It was stated that due to the lack of resources, there was a policing problem. For example, there was no environmental officers available to fine drivers idling their engines.
- The Council did have planning powers, but kept giving permission for new hotels. Similarly at Kings Stables Road, there were objections to new departments. The local community had asked for affordable homes, but this had been “whittled” down to four.
- The Council did not have arbitrary planning powers. They did have powers to make decisions within existing planning legislation, but did not have powers to refuse things which they did not like.
- What was the point of asking for a consultation, if the Council could not do anything?
- Planning was a quasi-judicial process and was rule-bound. Issues had to be related to the planning process.
- The Council had substantial planning powers, but did not use them to their full extent. This Council described one hotel as mixed use, whereas it was 97% hotel.
- There had been a considerable amount of consultation over the previous few decades. Tourism was growing which brought with it issues of safety and sociability. What was the chance of the Council and its partners implementing a strategy leading to a “no growth” policy?
- This was not the purpose of this meeting. The speakers came to the meeting to impart the views of the community councils, not to evaluate the effectiveness of the current strategy or to weigh up what that strategy might include. The views of this meeting would be fed into the strategy.

5. Conclusion

The Convener concluded that there had been a wide range of views expressed and everybody had been allowed to have their say. The participants views would be reflected in the note of meeting.

It was hoped that those in attendance would take the points raised during the meeting back to their community councils and groups, share this information with them and come back for another session.

He then thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

Tourism and Communities Committee, City of Edinburgh Council,

1.5 hrs, 10 May 2019

1: What does future success look like?

- A successful tourism industry that is bought into and supported by residents.
- A place where city life is vibrant and made so by the continuing existence of resident communities in the centre.
- Less seasonality without losing quieter times in the city centre hotspots
- A wider city footprint for visitors into less visited parts of the city
- Edinburgh fulfilling its role as the capital city of Scotland by operating as an effective gateway.
- An improvement in basic visitor facilities.
- A balance in what gets priority use of city centre space and a regenerated waterfront brought about by tourism development - Granton in particular
- Preservation of the core offer of the city - Old Town, New Town and the World Heritage Site.
- An overall sense that Edinburgh has been well managed as a visitor destination.
- A living wage.
- The city council having a lead role in tourism.

2. Productivity

- Living wage.
- Better understanding of the range of jobs available in the industry.
- Improved training, more job security and increased respect for tourism jobs.
- Tourism employees understanding that they have to deliver a high level of service, it is something that can't be automated.
- Data innovation to support development of the visitor economy
- Extracting more value out of assets via modernised business processes such as differential pricing and longer opening hours.
- Increased professionalisation in some sectors of tourism.
- Productivity is a challenge because of some local authority priorities such as maintaining free access to cultural establishments and an existing perception that the sector is already over commercialised.

3. Product development priorities

- Open streets, more pedestrianised areas, will be good for everyone, but must be carefully managed with the environmental impact and the impact on resident's day-to-day lives considered

- Ensuring a quality experience – the use of licensing in management issues eg tours is an important element in achieving this but there are restrictions on what the City Council can do - regimes were designed a long time ago not for Edinburgh today.
- A policy around short term lets and the ability to locate hotels in other areas to cope with increased demand for accommodation that may result from restricting Airbnb style letting
- Bringing the buildings along Princes Street back into full use, with a mix of uses including retail, hospitality and accommodation. This is part of the solution to meet demand for serviced accommodation. It has the assets to regain its position as one of Europe's premiere streets.
- Better arrangements for access to the city including drop off points on the periphery so cars and coaches don't need to/can't get into the old town. Integration with existing public transport to help manage volume coach business.
- Question mark over cruise and its value to the city, counter balanced with the benefits it is bringing to Leith and the waterfront areas. Agreement that it needs to be managed better and there needs to be close working with cruise companies to do this.
- Investment in City Council cultural property to make it more part of the visitor offer. The national institutions have the advantage of scale and profile so it is hard to compete.

4. Leading, managing and delivering tourism

- We need to say what outcomes we want for the city, we can afford to choose because of our popularity as a destination. It is not enough anymore to just say 'we want to grow'. Start with what produces good quality jobs, what drives value for the city and then look at what kind of tourism supports those things.
- Better use of licencing to manage tourism eg tours
- Technology will and should play a bigger role in city management
- Ensuring there is a sustainable approach to growth in line with the recent declaration by government of a climate emergency.
- The toolkit for European Cities contains some useful guidance to draw on.
- The council should provide the framework but it can't do everything in financially constrained times. The strategy should have clear actions and identify who is responsible as well as how they can be delivered.
- There is a governance deficit currently. A good outcome of the strategy is setting out how things work really clearly, who does what.
- A rationalisation of groups.
- The city council is responsible for the vision and a strategy and must pursue it in partnership. It must keep up our end of the bargain and take action where we are best placed to do so.
- The City Council should lead by example and encourage others to follow.

5. Image and reputation

- Edinburgh is the gateway to Scotland, we need to tell Scotland's story alongside our own and integrate the two better.

- A centre of excellence for education, Oxford -Cambridge -Edinburgh
- Build on the history of the enlightenment, a city of ideas or newness, rooted in our history but not looking backwards.
- The core is history and The festival “It’s a damn good starting place but that doesn’t mean you can’t build on it”
- Edinburgh is an international city, a global city

Attendees:

Cllr Donald Wilson

Cllr Ellie Bird

Cllr Kate Campbell

Cllr Amy McNeese-Mechan

Cllr Alasdair Rankin

Cllr Lezley Campbell

Cllr Joanna Mowat

Appendix 9.3

Elected Member Attendees at Briefings on 15 August 2019:

Councillor Aldridge;
Councillor Bruce;
Councillor Cameron;
Councillor Jim Campbell;
Councillor Child;
Councillor Dixon;
Councillor Doran;
Councillor Graczyk;
Councillor Griffiths;
Councillor Henderson;
Councillor McNeese-Mechan;
Councillor McLellan;
Councillor Mitchell;
Councillor Mowat;
Councillor Whyte;
Councillor Rose;
Councillor Staniforth;
Councillor Wilson; and
Councillor Work.