

## Leader's Report

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**City of Edinburgh Council**  
**19 March 2004**

### **1. Meeting with S&N**

- 1.1 I had a very constructive meeting with Tony Froggatt, Chief Executive, Scottish & Newcastle plc. Mr Froggatt explained that the decision to enter into a joint venture with Caledonian Brewery and to close the Fountain Brewery had been taken to protect the independence of the company and strengthen its ability to withstand potential predators. This improves the prospects of the headquarters of the international brewing company remaining in Edinburgh.
- 1.2 Mr Froggatt offered extremely positive reassurances about measures being undertaken to redeploy and re-educate the existing workforce. Every effort will be made to secure appropriate employment for all existing staff. Indeed, managers have been incentivised on their successful redeployment of staff. Scottish & Newcastle will draw upon Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh & Lothian to assist in the smooth transition to alternative employment for existing staff.
- 1.3 Scottish & Newcastle understand the strategic importance of the Fountain Brewery site for the city. They recognise that mixed use development plans incorporating business/industrial use, residential and community facilities are essential. Scottish & Newcastle will develop plans in a participative manner working closely with the local community, planning department and heritage interests. Everyone will be sad to see the end of brewing on the site, but we can be encouraged by the approach Scottish & Newcastle are taking to minimise the impact on staff, in conjunction with partner agencies.

### **2. HBoS/RBS Profits**

- 2.1 The Edinburgh based Royal Bank of Scotland reported an 11 per cent rise in full-year underlying profits to more than £7.1bn. This is the biggest annual profit in the institutions history and the largest ever for a Scottish company. It also represents around ten per cent of Scottish economic output. It is extremely positive that the fifth largest bank in the world is based in the Edinburgh and performing so successfully. It is also most encouraging that the Royal Bank has announced that it will not move call centres or administrative operations to offshore centres.

- 2.2 Fellow Edinburgh based HBoS also saw its full year earnings soar 29 per cent. Having these two major financial institutions based, and flourishing, in the city is phenomenally important to the economy of both Edinburgh and Scotland as a whole. It is worth remembering that a sizeable share of the profits generated are paid to the Exchequer and in turn invested in our schools, hospitals and in tackling crime.
- 2.3 I know that these figures have not been universally welcomed but, for the record, this administration does believe that having such successful and profitable companies in the city is very welcome, particularly at a time when there has been so much uncertainty in the financial services sector.

### **3. Strategic Waste Fund**

- 3.1 I am pleased to confirm that the City of Edinburgh Council was awarded £83.3 million from the Scottish Executive's Strategic Waste Fund. The money is made up of a grant of £14.7 million to cover 2003/2004 to 2005/2006 and thereafter an indicative grant of £68.6 million to cover the period from 2006/2007 to 2019/2020. This funding boost will allow the council to build on its recent recycling successes that have seen the recycling rate double to over 11% and achieve over 20,000 tonnes of recycled material, which was diverted from landfill sites.
- 3.2 We will be able to introduce new kerbside recycling initiatives, for glass and cans, expand the garden waste collections to over 100,000 properties, introduce recycling banks in tenemental areas and re-develop our civic amenity sites into community recycling centres. By 2006 we expect to be recycling over 25% of our waste and a new waste awareness and education campaign is about to be launched. This funding will help in meeting the Area Waste Plan targets although a further application to the Strategic Waste Fund will be made soon to achieve higher levels of diversion of waste from landfill.

### **4. Anti-Social Behaviour**

- 4.1 I am delighted to report that the Scottish Executive has confirmed that Edinburgh will receive £1.05 million in the next financial year to take forward our strategy to tackle anti-social behaviour in the city. This will fund 4 new teams of neighbourhood wardens (in West, South, East and Central Edinburgh) as well as contributing towards the new Neighbourhood Response Teams within the Anti-Social Behaviour Division based in the housing service. The city will therefore soon have in place 9 teams of neighbourhood wardens (or "community concierges") who play a vital role in keeping neighbourhoods clean and safe.

## **5. Neighbourhood Management**

- 5.1 Neighbourhood wardens are one part of a wide range of interventions aimed at keeping communities clean and safe. They are uniformed officers who physically clean up areas, often working closely with the Environmental Task Force. They also act as the eyes and ears of the Council on the ground and work closely with the local police. This complements our programme of creating 6 teams of 6 police officers (jointly funded with Lothian & Borders Police) concentrating on anti social behaviour, and the extension of Youth Action Teams across the city. Arrangements for deployment of the Anti-Social Behaviour Teams and Youth Action Teams will soon be considered alongside the deployment of our Neighbourhood Wardens. This will ensure a comprehensive approach to tackling antisocial behaviour.
- 5.2 Alongside significant extra investment for wardens, police and the new Neighbourhood Response Teams, the antisocial behaviour strategy is also addressing prevention, support and rehabilitation. The first two years of the strategy have seen a further £3 million invested in these equally important areas. New legislation going through the Scottish Parliament will add to the tools we have already developed, particularly in terms of action which we can take to deal with antisocial behaviour by under 16 year olds. The council has adopted neighbourhood management as a framework to bring together these resources and all relevant partner agencies to make an effective and concerted effort to reduce anti-social behaviour in the city.

## **6. Delayed Discharge**

- 6.1 City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian have continued to work closely together to reduce the numbers of people in Edinburgh whose discharge from hospital is delayed. Between October 2003 and January 2004, the total number of people awaiting discharge was reduced by 10% from 308 to 276. This figure represents people experiencing delays beyond the six-week threshold, and includes all reasons for delay, such as health considerations. Within this figure, the number of people awaiting discharge for social care reasons alone has been reduced from 262 to 204 – this represents a substantial reduction of 22%. This achievement is particularly notable because it occurred during the winter months when the pressures on Health and care services inevitably increase. The Social Work Department's Community Care staff will continue to give high priority to ensuring that the City of Edinburgh Council's target figure for April of 215 people delayed for social care reasons is not merely met, but surpassed. I would like to extend my congratulations to Sue Brace, and her team, for this positive performance.

## **7. Transport Update**

## 7.1 London Congestion Charging – One Year On

The Mayor of London and Transport for London published a report on the first year of congestion charging in Central London. Since it was introduced on 17 February 2003, congestion has reduced significantly; London's bus capacity has increased and journey times for all vehicles are faster and more reliable. The report **Congestion Charging: Update on scheme impacts and operations** outlines the following key points:

- Traffic delays inside the charging zone remain 30 percent lower than before charging was introduced.
- Estimates of year-on-year changes in traffic levels during charging hours show a reduction of 18 percent in traffic entering the zone during charging hours
- Buses continue to experience significant gains in reliability in and around the charging zone
- There has been a year-on-year increase of 29,000 bus passengers entering the zone during the morning peak period, for which sufficient additional public transport capacity has been provided
- Surveys of over 700 businesses inside and immediately outside the charging zone have shown that wider economic and other factors were reported most frequently as influences on recent business performance
- When asked if the business supports congestion charging as long as there is continued investment in public transport, around 60 percent of the surveyed businesses agreed; around 20 percent of businesses disagreed and 20 percent with no change or don't know.
- Congestion charging contributes £50 million of net transport benefits to London's economy per year, mainly through quicker and more reliable journeys for road and bus users.

7.2 It was noted by Malcolm Murray-Clark, Congestion Charging Director, that "the concerns over the effects on business are misguided and that negative perceptions are unsubstantiated. The public and business are acknowledging the benefits of the charging scheme. Nobody could have envisaged that the scheme would be such a success just a year ago."

## 7.3 mPark

mPark, the system allowing motorists to pay for on-street parking using their mobile phone instead of cash, has won a national award. Itsmobile and Parkeon, who jointly developed the system for the City of Edinburgh Council, received the British Parking Award for Innovative Systems at a ceremony in London in February. The award recognises the contribution of technology to improving customer service.

- 7.4 **West Edinburgh Busway Scheme (WEBS)**  
Construction started on 22 January 2003 and works are progressing to programme, with utility, drainage and earthworks being the main areas of operation. During the execution of these works a site of interest to archaeologists has been unearthed opposite the Government buildings at Broomhouse Drive. This has been investigated by the Council Archaeologist and has been given the all clear for removal. The project is currently on programme and is due to meet its completion date of 4 October 2004.
- 7.5 **Airport Rail Link**  
It is now clear that a section of 4 track running will be required from Edinburgh Park to where the Fife line separates. This will require a wider tunnel under the City Bypass and another platform at Edinburgh Park. These additions are however considered achievable within the £500M budget.
- 7.6 **Waverley Railway Bill (Borders rail link)**  
The Bill has been submitted and the consultation process complete. 118 objections were received and further discussions are ongoing with each objector. It is envisaged that a Parliamentary Inquiry on the Bill will take place day in March and April in Galasheils. The Director of City Development has agreed to be the Council's expert witness on strategic issues. A QC has been appointed to represent the 3 promoting Councils, (namely Scottish Borders, CEC and Midlothian) at the Parliamentary Inquiry.
- 7.7 **Waverley Station**  
Work continues to identify the best redevelopment option. It is intended that the project promoters will announce the initial stages of future development at Easter.
- 7.8 **Tram Network**  
The Bills have been formally introduced and the Parliamentary process has begun with the statutory 60-day objection period from 30 January. Electronic copies of the draft Bills, alongside supporting documents including an environmental statement can be accessed at (Tram Line 1) <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/bills/index.htm#17> and (Tram Line 2) <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/bills/index.htm#18>.
- 7.9 Tram consultation responses were analysed and appraised by the tie team and considered carefully in formulating the proposals for the final route. Significant overall backing was offered for trams, with 83.6% supporting for the reintroduction of two tram lines to the north and west of Edinburgh. The timetable for the Parliament's consideration of the Bills will be determined by the Parliamentary Bureau. It is anticipated that the Bills will receive Royal Assent by end 2005 and be operational in 2009.

7.10 **tie** is currently working on proposals for a third tram line which is intended to run between the city centre and the south east of Edinburgh, including the new Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. We hope to begin public consultation on the proposals in late March 2004 and it is expected that a Private Bill, seeking the relevant Parliamentary powers for its construction, will be lodged with the Scottish Parliament at the end of the year. It is hoped that the line will be built and operational by 2013.

7.11 **Ingliston Park and Ride Site**

Design and build procurement work is in progress. Completion is expected early 2005.

7.12 **Access to Growth Areas (Public Transport Fund Award 2003-6)**

A contract for the first batch of upgraded bus stops is about to be let. This will involve 30 stops in west Edinburgh and includes shelter upgrade, provision of bus-docking kerbs to allow buses to get as close as possible to the pavement edge and better layout of facilities to make getting on and off buses easier. Designs are being worked up for over twenty sites at which improved bus priority will be introduced, together with better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

7.13 **Safety Camera Partnership**

The Partnership has been operational for more than 6 months. There are early indications that accident severity has fallen and that there has been a 50% improvement in speed limit compliance. The Partnership is now operating at near full strength in terms of staff and by April single working practices will enable mobile cameras to be operational for 6 hours (compared with 3 hours at present).

7.14 **Canongate**

SEEL have funded the purchase of slabs and kerbs for the reconstruction of the footways from St Mary's St to Browns Close. The cost of the works for refurbishing the footways over this length will be approx. £750K. The works will probably take 18 months and will make a real difference to the appearance and user-friendliness of this section of the Royal Mile.

**8. Edinburgh marks EU Enlargement**

8.1 The city will be marking EU Enlargement through a varied and informative programme of events throughout 2004. The Council has successfully secured EU funding to support the programme, which it is co-ordinating on behalf of the Edinburgh EU Enlargement Consortium. This is a city-wide partnership which has been formed to ensure a joined-up approach to planned activities in connection with EU Enlargement. Key aims are to raise awareness of the 10 accession countries who will be joining the EU on 1 May, stimulate informed debate about the issues and opportunities arising from enlargement, and identify the implications for different sectors of the population. The

programme will be launched on 8 April, with the first event being held on Accession Day. This event will be a family-oriented public event in Princes Street Gardens, with performers, information stalls, and lots of audience participation.

- 8.2 The programme also includes a 'Welcome Gala' of music, film and poetry from the 10 accession countries, a series of Polish events as part of the Scottish Festival of Writing, a business seminar, a policy seminar and conference, and a touring seminar and exhibition on the history of Scots in accession countries. The programme will conclude in October with a schools festival. I am delighted that the Council and its partner organisations are working together to mark this historic year for the EU.

## 9. BBC Radio 3 Awards for World Music

- 9.1 The Usher Hall hosted the Poll Winners Concert for the BBC Radio 3 Awards for World Music on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004. This is the first occasion that the awards finale has taken place outside London. The ceremony was co-presented by Mary Ann Kennedy (presenter of Celtic Connections on Radio Scotland) and Benjamin Zephaniah. Most of the winners were present performed on the night. The Awards were recorded for BBC 4 (and aired on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March) and Radio 3 airing Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March).

## 10. Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

- 10.1 The Council established a Short-life Working Group to oversee Park development works at the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links comprising elected members, officials of the Department of Culture and Leisure and representatives of the 'Friends' of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links. Since the Short-life Working Group was formed 18 months ago, the following major works have been carried out at the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.

• Resurfacing and repairs to all footpaths	£35,000
• Removal of 44 overmature suppressed trees	£16,000
• Replacement tree planting of 158 heavy standard trees using a diverse range of tree species	£29,000
• Drainage of Events area	£30,600
• Replacement and repair of all knee high railings	£18,000
• Removal of unnecessary chain link fencing	£ 2,000
• Top soiling, cultivation and reseeding of all worn grass areas	£ 3,500
• The design of 5 Interpretative Boards in conjunction with the 'Friends' of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links	£24,400
• Installation of two artificial trees on the Short Hole Golf Course	£ 2,000
• Installation of 30 new park benches	£12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£172,500</b>

10.2 Historic Scotland and the World Heritage Trust have been consulted on all aspects of the renewal and replacement of railings. The Meadows and Bruntsfield Links are two of Edinburgh's most historic parks greatly valued by a vibrant local community of approximately 20,000 as well as being valued and used by all of Edinburgh's citizens. The Short-life Working Group is a model example of partnership working with the local community and other agencies in achieving the Council's commitment to upgrade and enhance its Parks and Gardens.

## **11. Catering**

11.1 Following 18 months health promotion work, and a rigorous assessment by the Scheme administrators, Edinburgh Catering Services became the first Local Authority catering organisation in Scotland to be awarded the Bronze award in Scotland's Health at Work Award Scheme (SHAW). The Scheme, which has three levels (bronze, silver and gold), and is supported by the Scottish Health Boards, CoSLA, STUC and the Scottish Executive, is designed to encourage and reward employers in their health promotion efforts aimed at building a healthy workforce and a healthy organisation. I would like to congratulate all the staff involved in this achievement.

## **12. Wheeled Bins**

12.1 I have been delighted to have now secured the active support for the wheeled bins from Councillors Ponton, MacLaren and Jackson. I understand that servings of their own words may be available in the Members Lounge following the Council meeting.