

Leader's Report

The City of Edinburgh Council

3 February 2011

1 New Chief Executive for Edinburgh

The Council's new Chief Executive, Sue Bruce, took up her role on 1 January. Sue arrives from Aberdeen with an excellent track record and a formidable reputation. Sue is already making her mark within and outwith the Council. Her energy, enthusiasm, visibility and willingness to lead from the front have already shone through. I am confident that Aberdeen's loss will very much be Edinburgh's gain.

Welcome, Sue, and best wishes for a long and successful career.

2 Edinburgh Award 2010

Judo veteran George Kerr, who was awarded the CBE in the recent New Year Honours list, will be the fourth recipient of the Edinburgh Award following in the footsteps of Sir Chris Hoy, JK Rowling and Ian Rankin.

The Edinburgh Award was established in 2007 to honour an outstanding individual who has made a recent positive impact on the city and gained national and international recognition for Edinburgh.

3 Severe Winter Weather

As we all know, Scotland experienced unprecedented severe weather from the end of November until early January. December was the coldest month since records began. This required huge efforts to keep the city moving. Advance preparations included increasing the gritter fleet and a 40% increase in salt stocks. The biggest ever response to severe weather also included:

- Redeployment of Council staff and the use of private contractors to clear snow and ice – more than 650 people in any typical day;
- The use of people serving Community Service Orders;

- The use of military personnel;
- Provision of food parcels and visits/telephone calls to vulnerable residents;
- The siting of temporary skips where refuse collection had not been possible; and
- A range of grit dumps to supplement the permanent grit bins.

A [Severe Weather – Interim Report](#) was agreed at Policy & Strategy Committee on 18th January 2011 proposing a review of options for winter weather preparedness. This review will take into consideration advice on the likelihood of further episodes of severe weather. A report on the outcomes of this review will be available later in the year.

4 Drumbrae Community Hub

Work has begun on the new £5.7million Drumbrae Library, Day Centre and Adult Learning facility. The multi-purpose hub, designed in consultation with community representatives, will offer a wide range of services on one site, including: a state of the art library; a day care centre that will enable older people to remain in their own homes, a learning space for adults with learning disabilities and a base for the West Edinburgh Neighbourhood Office.

The police, through the Safer Neighbourhood Team and the Corstorphine/ Murrayfield team will also be co-located within the Centre. The new facilities will also allow improved joint working with Education, Children & Families and a greater emphasis on helping young people to avoid trouble.

The Centre, due to open in 2012, is being delivered by the hub South East Scotland Limited (hubCo) which was established to assist the public sector to develop community buildings. The sod-cutting ceremony which I attended on 18 January, along with Chief Executive Sue Bruce and Jim Mather MSP, Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism, had a real buzz about it.

It is great that our aspiration for a library in the area, desired for so long, has begun its route to reality. It is also heartening that Drumbrae is leading the way in Scotland for Hub projects.

5 WWF's Earth Hour – 26 March 2011

WWF's Earth Hour takes place on 26 March to raise awareness of the need to tackle climate change. From London to Sydney, New York and Singapore, people across the world will be switching off their lights at 8.30pm to demonstrate their support for Earth Hour. It is a reminder to us all that we only have one planet and that we must reduce the impact of our use of resources.

2010 was the biggest Earth Hour yet in Scotland with thousands of people "switching off" at landmarks such as Edinburgh Castle, the Scottish Parliament, the Falkirk Wheel, Kelvingrove Museum and the Wallace Monument. The City of

Edinburgh Council is supporting this year's event by switching off lights at Council Headquarters, the City Chambers, the Scott Monument and Calton Hill.

To support Earth Hour register at www.wfscotland.org.uk/earthhour

6 Promoting Fair Trade

Fair Trade Awards 2011

Nominations for the Edinburgh Lord Provost Fair Trade Awards are being sought. To nominate an organisation, community group or business that has helped the Fair Trade cause in the city go to [online Lord Provost Fair Trade award form](#). Closing date is 18 February 2011.

Fairtrade Schools Competition

Eco-Schools in Edinburgh are supporting Fairtrade Fortnight 2011 with a competition. This year Fairtrade Fortnight is focussing on fair trade cotton and pupils are being asked to design a t-shirt to show off their Fairtrade label. The competition is open to P6 to S2 pupils. The winning designs will be displayed at the fair trade schools event on 9th March at Stenhouse Primary school and will be used by the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Initiative for future publicity.

7 Romania Consular Office for Edinburgh

I am delighted to welcome the new Romanian Consular Office to Edinburgh. The Consulate General will join the Edinburgh and Leith Consular Corps, who make a valued contribution to the international profile of Scotland's capital city.

8 Edinburgh Partnership Away Day

As chair of the Edinburgh Partnership, I was delighted to welcome community planning and strategic partnerships to a successful 'Away Day' on 9 December 2010. Building on a good record of joint working, twenty five representatives from the public, community, voluntary and business sectors embraced the challenge to secure better outcomes for the city. Discussions focused on the need for new approaches to service provision in areas of acute need, and to review the priorities in the Single Outcome Agreement so that action can be focussed on the more intractable issues facing Edinburgh. I now look forward to working with partners to deliver real and positive change.

9 Armed Forces Day 2011

Plans for hosting the National Armed Forces Day on Saturday 25 June in Edinburgh are going well. The Council is working closely with partners to deliver the most successful national event to date. Events will take place across the city over the weekend of 24 - 26 June, with the flagship event taking place on 25 June in Holyrood Park. A full programme will be available in due course.

10 Successful Christmas and New Year

Edinburgh's Hogmanay and Edinburgh's Christmas once again lit up the dark winter nights. From late November, Edinburgh's Christmas brought the German Market, Highland Village, Ice Rink and Big Wheel to the city centre to add festive sparkle to the Mound Precinct and Princes Street Gardens.

Edinburgh's Hogmanay was launched on the 30th December with a record-breaking Torchlight Procession, and the world famous Street Party, Concert in the Gardens and Keilidh on 31st December.

2011 started with a bang from the Castle as 1,000 runners took part in the One O'clock Run and South Queensferry hosted the 25th Loony Dook. For those less inclined to jump in the icy waters of the Forth, there were live stages and haikus in Mound Precinct and a great evening performance from KT Tunstall at the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens.

Despite the worst December on record, the winter weather failed to detract from the planning and delivery of Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay. This is in no small way due to the Council team effort which includes officers from the Events Unit, Road Services, Parks, Licensing, Waste Management and Public Safety teams, along with the event contractors who delivered these important events in spite of the difficult weather conditions.

My congratulations to everyone involved in keeping Edinburgh on the international map.

11 Providing High Quality Care

New care home at Kings Inch

Liberton Primary school children have been asked to find a name for Edinburgh's latest state-of-the art care home. Residents and staff from Balmwell House and Craigour, together with the children, will vote to choose the name which will be announced in February.

The £8m home, on the site of the former Kings Inch Special School in the south of the city, will be the fourth new care home to be commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council since 2007. Residents and staff will move to the new building in the spring.

Seaview Respite Care Home

The Policy & Strategy Committee agreed a report to commence work on a new respite care facility on part of the Lismore Primary School site. Seaview, currently located in an inadequate building in Portobello, is vital for carers as it offers quality respite care to some of our most vulnerable young people. The creation

of a new facility is long overdue and I am delighted that this new facility will allow us to increase the numbers we can accommodate, thus relieving the pressures on 24 hour carers.

European Interest in Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services

I was pleased that the Council sent a speaker to the "European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Local and Regional Government" working group on 19th January in Brussels. Tricia Campbell, from Services for Communities, presented on Edinburgh's ongoing consultation on the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support services, as an example of best practice in social procurement.

Services for those with Learning Disabilities

I was very encouraged by the high level of engagement from service users, families and staff on the Council's consultation on developing services for people with learning disabilities. I am also grateful to those who took part in the consultation by attending meetings or by completing questionnaires.

Staff are now working on the next stage of the five year plan which will detail actions and timescales and will take into account the comments made during the consultation. The consultation indicated a positive response to the direction of travel and we will continue to work together with stakeholders to ensure positive outcomes for service users and carers.

Equality Act

In October 2010 the Equality Act came into force. The Act harmonised many different items of equalities legislation and placed new general duties on the Council to (i) tackle unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (ii) advance equality of opportunity and (iii) foster good relations. I very much welcome the new Act and the proposed specific duties in Scotland to be published by the Scottish Government in spring 2011. I am particularly pleased with the emphasis on the development of equalities outcomes and indicators, the renewed commitment to equalities impact assessment and the shift away from duties to establish processes and arrangements.

The Council is already able to report on a range of equalities indicators as part of the current EDHR Scheme 09/12 and the Single Outcome Agreement and is committed to an outcome framework for equalities in the next year in response to the Act. Significant changes to the current EDHR Scheme 09/12 will also be required, which will be replaced with a 'Framework for Equality, Diversity and Human Rights' during 2011/2012. This new framework will set out new priorities for the Council to tackle significant and persistent inequalities. This work is especially critical in light of the difficult economic times that lay ahead and the tough financial decisions the Council will have to make.

12 Maximising Opportunities and Learning for our Children

Boroughmuir High School

I was pleased to learn of the Scottish Government's commitment, through a new funding scheme, to partly finance the re-building of Boroughmuir High School. The Council was already committed to this through our Wave 3 programme and the Scottish Government's announcement helps bring this nearer to fruition and will mean that Boroughmuir will have the facilities to deliver a 21st century curriculum in 21st century accommodation.

New Nurseries for the City

The opening of the Clermiston Nursery on 27 January and Gracemount nursery on 24 February will ensure first rate early years provision in these two schools. As part of the school closure proposals last year this Administration committed to these new nurseries in addition to a new integrated early years centre in the old Fort primary school building – positive outcomes from a difficult process.

Foster Care can be a Career Opportunity

There is an acute shortage of foster carers to provide children with safe and caring homes while they are unable to live with their own families. Foster carers can have a huge impact on a child's life, improving their confidence and helping them towards a happy future. Caring full time for children, whilst being rewarding, can also provide a good income. A recent campaign to recruit more foster carers outlines pay rates to highlight that this could be an alternative career.

The Council welcomes foster carers from different walks of life. Foster carers can be single, in a couple, married, straight or gay and may or may not already have children. They can be a tenant or a home-owner, live in a flat or a house and may or may not be in paid employment. The most important thing is that they have patience, resilience, a sense of humour and can offer a loving home to a child/children. As well as being paid, carers receive full training and ongoing support. For further information please visit the [Edinburgh Fostering website](#).

Best Teacher at Forth One Awards

Well done to Kirsteen Innes, a teacher at Clermiston Primary School, who was named as Forth One Best Teacher at the Radio Forth Awards 2010. Kirsteen was nominated by her P1 class.

Eco Schools Competition

St David's RC Primary, Uni-Tots Nursery, St John's Primary, Bright Horizons Cramond, Dean Park Primary and Cowgate Under 5s will each receive a prize of £500 as part of the Council's BiodiverCity competition.

Launched in September 2010 as part of Council's Eco-Schools programme, the competition was open to all schools in the city and asked them to devise a plan

or project to enhance the local flora and fauna in their area. The winning schools came up with many of ideas including a wetland bog, a wildlife pond and a butterfly-friendly orchard. The prize money should enable these plans to become a reality and to contribute to a cleaner, greener and more sustainable Edinburgh.

Broughton High, Sciennes Primary, Castlebrae High, St George's, Colinton Primary and Hermitage Park Primary received runners up prizes of £250.

Fanfare Concert

The Children & Families Fanfare Concert which was postponed in December due to the bad weather took place in St Mary's Cathedral at the end of January. It was a fantastic showcase for a wide range of musically talented youngsters. It included the Edinburgh Strathspey and Reel society whose conductor Yla Steven has retired after a lifetime's dedication to music in Edinburgh.

John Byrne Award

The first John Byrne 'Today's Values' competition has just concluded. Aimed at S6 pupils, it attracted entries from Boroughmuir, Broughton, Currie, James Gillespies', Liberton and Queensferry. The challenge was to construct a presentation using a range of media including film, prose, music and art and based on Jimmy Reid's rectorial address at Glasgow University in 1973. Winners, Currie High, were presented with £7,500 and John Byrne artwork at a presentation attended by judges, including John Byrne and the generous sponsor, Andrew Paterson.

13 Promoting Edinburgh's Economic Competitiveness

Edinburgh Well Positioned to Support National Growth

Edinburgh has been named one of the most economically resilient cities in Britain in a recent report from the Centre for Cities, an urban policy think tank. The Cities Outlook 2011 argues that Edinburgh is "well positioned to support national growth by building on its diverse industrial base and high skills levels".

Edinburgh has the third highest proportion of highly skilled residents and the eighth highest average earnings of any city in Britain. The report also concluded that Edinburgh would be one of the cities least affected by the welfare cuts announced by the UK Government.

New Jobs at Blackrock International

The Council, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International demonstrated excellent joint working with Blackrock International, one of the world's major venture capital fund managers, to ensure that Blackrock selected Edinburgh to become one of its 3 Global Strategic Centres. This means that an additional 214 jobs will be created in addition to the 240 jobs that already exist.

Major Planning Applications for City

The Council has recently approved a number of major developments including the Haymarket Goods Yard site and the Festival Theatre. Revised plans for the Goods Yard Site have now been approved for new offices, hotel, retail and restaurants. The proposals have been developed over a number of years and represent a positive step in the regeneration of the Haymarket area. A key feature will be new public space with pedestrian links to Fountainbridge and the Exchange areas. An extension to the Festival Theatre has also been approved to provide additional rehearsal space with direct linkages into the main theatre. The proposals also incorporate new student housing.

Waterfront and Leith Area Development Framework

The Council has approved a draft Area Development Framework for the Waterfront and Leith area of the City. A formal consultation exercise will be undertaken to seek views on the draft Framework. This follows a series of design workshops held with stakeholders and those interested in the future of one of Edinburgh's great assets. The [draft Waterfront and Leith Area Development Framework](#) will be available to view from mid February.

Capturing Renewable Energy Investment

Following the £100million investment announcement by Mitsubishi to create 100 jobs in renewable energy research & development in the city, discussions are ongoing between the Council and Scottish Enterprise to attract future investment to ensure the manufacture of offshore wind turbines in Leith.

Capitalising on Edinburgh's International Profile

The Council's International Visits Management Scheme assists with co-ordinating requests from visiting international delegations. The scheme encourages international exchange of information and best practice and maximises opportunities for city promotion and business links. In 2010 the scheme assisted with 40 visits from 27 different countries, including 4 from Edinburgh's twin and partner cities.

Examples include:

- Barcelona Metropolitan Area - an overview of the Edinburgh Glasgow Collaboration Initiative and the Edinburgh Science Triangle;
- Committee of Internal Affairs, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany - providing a seminar on financial planning;
- Dezhou, China – Renewable Energy, co-hosted with Heriot-Watt University and the private sector;
- Tianjin, China – Economic Development Opportunities; and
- Aust-Agder Board of Health, Norway – Edinburgh's Plan for Older People, Getting It Right for Every Child and Action for Alcohol and Drugs.

Princes Street – Public Spaces Public Life

Since Jan Gehl's Public Spaces Public Life report was prepared in 1998, various events have highlighted the issues affecting Edinburgh's city centre, including concerns about the quality of the public spaces. Jan Gehl Architects have undertaken a 'refresh' of the study providing a candid reflection on the city centre including its potential and problems 12 years on. A range of recommendations have been made which includes the proposal to use temporary projects as a way of testing ideas. This approach was used in New York and Melbourne, where Gehl Architects' work has been integral to detailed programmes for bringing changes to public spaces. The outcomes of the study will be presented to the Council in the spring and will provide a base to understand how the city is currently performing and enable the development of an action plan for change.

Coastal Interpretation Project

Edinburgh's coastline and the wider Firth of Forth is recognised as internationally important for its fascinating coastal and marine biodiversity. The estuary supports the habitats of thousands of seabirds such as knot, redshank, great crested grebe, teal and goldeneye. The Council is supporting a project led by the Forth Estuary Forum to install interpretation panels at key locations along the coastline. The panels will provide information on Edinburgh's marine and coastal biodiversity and tell the story of our historic and present maritime uses and the importance of sustainable future uses. This new project complements the longer term Edinburgh Promenade project.

Fire safety assessments

The Council is set to embark on a £7m Fire Safety Works Programme. Four members of staff in City Development have achieved certification for the Fire Risk Assessment Course. Ken Wong, Ronan Smyth, Bob Robson and Ian Vaughan will now undertake the Council buildings' fire safety assessments.

14 Promoting a Modern, Effective, Integrated Transport System

Trams

The Council and BSC, the consortium appointed to deliver the Edinburgh Tram project, have agreed to enter into mediation to reach a satisfactory outcome to a range of issues. This process will be progressed on a constructive and confidential basis. I am encouraged that Chief Executive, Sue Bruce, will represent the Council in these talks aimed at seeking a resolution to the current impasse.

Promoting High Speed Rail between London and Scotland

I was greatly encouraged by the high level of support given by the many MPs, Peers and city business leaders who attended the Westminster high speed rail briefing event in January at which Councillor Gordon Matheson, Leader of Glasgow City Council, and I jointly presented. Decisions on whether Scotland is

part of the UK High Speed Rail network will have serious long-term implications for our national prosperity. The potential economic benefit to Scotland is reckoned to be in the region of £55billion.

The economic and environmental benefits are also important for the rest of the UK. It is only when a high speed rail line comes to Scotland that the Government gets maximum return for the public investment required. Studies show that the benefit cost ratio for building the high speed line from London to Birmingham is positive – at £2 of value for every pound spent. However, by extending the line from Manchester to Scotland the benefit/cost ratio increases significantly to 7.6:1. Extending the line to Scotland also maximises the environmental benefits. Studies show that reducing rail journey times between London and Scotland to 3 hours could deliver modal shift from air in excess of 80%.

Councillor Matheson and I also presented our joint position in a meeting with both the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond MP, and the Scottish Secretary Michael Moore. It is important that Scottish business leaders, politicians and all interested parties take the opportunity to respond to the UK Government's consultation which is anticipated in March. Please sign up to the Glasgow-Edinburgh Collaboration Initiative's ezine via the following link <http://glasgow-edinburgh.co.uk/contact/subscribe-to-our-ezine.html>

Bus Tracker Triumph

Lothian Buses and the Council have won the Excellence in Technology and Innovation award at the Scottish Transport Awards 2010 for "BusTracker". BusTracker provides access to real time Lothian Buses information in and around Edinburgh, either on bus stop or via the web, iPhone or a web enabled mobile phone, the service allows the user to check bus times whether at home, at work or on the move. Go to www.mybustracker.co.uk for more information.

Station Improvements coming to Edinburgh

Edinburgh's two principal railway stations will benefit from improvements due to begin this year. The Waverley Steps will receive a major upgrade with escalators installed alongside flights of steps. Two lifts will take travellers from Princes Street via Princes Mall directly down to platform level. There will also be a glass and steel canopy to protect passengers from the strong winds that funnel down the steps. The 144 year old steps will close in February to allow work, which should be completed next year, to begin. The Council is working with Network Rail to minimise inconvenience.

At Haymarket, lifts will be installed in the existing bridge, which will take passengers from the ground level to the platforms below, making the station significantly more accessible. Meanwhile, proposals to refurbish and extend Haymarket station to create a transport interchange were recently approved at the Development Management Sub Committee, and detailed designs will be drawn up over the course of the year. The project is due for completion in 2014.

Borders Railway line

The Borders Railway line is moving closer to delivery, with Transport Scotland engaged in a competitive dialogue process with two bidders. The line will re-establish a passenger rail link between Edinburgh to Tweedbank in the Scottish Borders. This new link will transform the South East Scotland region, offering an alternative to the road network bringing with it economic and social opportunities.

All necessary land has been acquired, and utilities work began in March last year. Work has also begun to protect the sections of embankment adjacent to Gala Water. Cycle routes play an important part in the project, and Edinburgh has been collaborating with Midlothian Council and Scottish Borders Council to identify suitable replacements for sections of National Cycle Route 1, which runs along parts of the former - and future - railway line.

Improvements to the Cycle network

Significant improvements have been made to the cycle network. The signalisation of the junction between Fountainbridge and Gardner's Crescent includes new cycle lanes, advance stop lines and traffic light controlled crossing facilities, providing a link between the cycle route along the Union Canal and the off-road cycle route to the West End of the city.

The connection between the Innocent Path and Craigmillar Castle has been completed and it is now possible to walk or cycle from the Southside to Craigmillar Castle using off-road paths and quiet roads. Also, the surfacing and lighting of the Lochend Path is expected to be complete by April. This will upgrade 1.3km of off-road route.

The results of the recent public consultation for the Quality Bike Corridor show support for the scheme. The formal statutory process will now be undertaken, and it is hoped that work will start towards the end of this year.

Flood Prevention

A tender was approved last month for Phase 1 of the Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme and the construction work will begin in March. This first phase will protect over 400 homes between Stockbridge and Bonnington.

15 A Safe, Green, Clean and Environmentally Sustainable City

Garden Waste Collection

The garden waste recycling service has moved to its winter calendar with collections scheduled for every 4 weeks during January and February. Garden waste collections recommenced on the 25 January. You can find out when your garden waste will be picked up by:

- entering your post code at <http://www.greenboxday.co.uk/>

- e-mailing waste@edinburgh.gov.uk
- telephoning 0131 529 3030

Staff are currently working on re-routing the garden waste service to make improvements. Uplift dates for March onwards, when the service returns to fortnightly collections, will be widely advertised. You can also get e-mail reminders for your next recycling box collection at www.greenboxday.co.uk.

New Kerbside Recycling Streams

Residents will soon benefit from a kerbside collection of plastic bottles and household batteries. From 31 January, residents who receive the red and blue recycling box collection are also able to recycle:

- all types of plastic bottles on the red box collection day in a reusable plastic bag or in the red box; and
- household batteries in a sealed clear plastic bag with the blue box.

Recycling calendars will be delivered to all households, along with the reusable plastic bag for the plastic bottles prior to the launch of these new services.

Tackling Lunchtime Litter

In response to complaints about lunchtime littering near schools, Environmental Wardens and Community Safety Concierges have been working with school link officers carrying out patrols around school areas.

Over the next few months each high school within the South West Neighbourhood will have patrols twice a week over a four week period. Anyone over 16 caught littering will get a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £50. Offenders under the age of 16 will be cautioned by Environmental Wardens in the presence of the School Link Officers and a letter will be issued to parents.

16 Improving Local Communities

South Neighbourhood Office and Library

The South Neighbourhood Office has recently undergone a transformation, with the opening of a new library service on 17th December. The service now includes a children's area, fiction, DVDs, a teenage area, internet access, and an informal cafe area. The refurbished service offers a one-stop reception service for all Council enquiries, as well as self service for library stock.

17 Providing Safe, Warm, Affordable Homes

Greendykes and Wauchope House Refurbishment – Communal Heating System

Residents in Greendykes and Wauchope multi storey blocks have been provided with information packs on proposals to install a communal heating system. This will provide central heating and hot water, with residents able to control their

energy usage through individual energy controllers. This is an excellent opportunity to provide efficient heating at lower costs for residents.

The replacement of the heating system is part of ongoing improvements including windows, insulation, roofs renewal, kitchens and bathrooms, lift renewal and improvements to common landings and stairs.

18 Promoting Culture, Leisure and Sport

Great Edinburgh Cross Country and Great Winter Run

On 8 January Edinburgh played host to the annual Great Edinburgh Cross Country and Great Winter Run races. Holyrood Park provided a fabulous backdrop to the day's athletics, which were broadcast live on BBC 1 and showcased Edinburgh as an attractive place to visit and as a city which can stage world-class sporting action.

Excepting the European and World Championships, the Great Edinburgh Cross Country is the world's most prestigious cross country race featuring the finest endurance athletes, including several Olympic and World Champions. Kenyan athletes took top individual honours but Mo Farah (European Champion at 5,000m and 10,000m) impressed as first athlete home in the Team Challenge.

The Great Winter Run is the accompanying 5k road race round the Park, which is open to all. It was heartening to see so many runners of all ages, shapes and sizes. Junior and inter-district races completed the day's programme.

Archery World Cup

Archery organisations, including the International Federation, World Archery (FITA) have been fulsome in their praise of the Archery World Cup Final hosted in Princes Street Gardens last year. In excess of 15,000 spectators attended over the two days of competition. Archery GB has written recording their gratitude for the support and commitment that they received from the Council, particularly David Wardrop and Stuart Mullen, in *“ensuring the best possible outcome of a successful event in such prestigious surroundings.”*

City Art Centre

The City Art Centre will showcase works by Edinburgh's finest artists and craft makers with a special exhibition later this year. Submissions are invited for the exhibition which will run from November 2011 to February 2012. To qualify, exhibitors must have received funding between 2000/01 and 2009/10 from at least one of the following: Edinburgh Visual Arts and Crafts Award; Visual Arts Awards: Edinburgh; and/or Craft Maker Awards: Edinburgh. The closing date is 14 March 2011. For information contact tracy.scodellaro@edinburgh.gov.uk

19 Providing Maximum Value for Money

Finance achieves Customer Service Excellence

The Finance department has become our second department to achieve the Cabinet Office's Customer Service Excellence (CSE). Services attaining the standard must also change the way they do business and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to improving the customer experience.

The Finance department has been working towards the CSE since 2009 and not only gained accreditation but also achieved Compliance+ for best practises. The hard work, however, will continue as ongoing improvements are needed to build on the work started to ensure consistency of service delivery and inspections will ensure they not only maintain the service levels but also continue to improve.

**Councillor Jenny Dawe
Leader
City of Edinburgh Council**