

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING 8**

**3 FEBRUARY 2010**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**QUESTION NO 1**

**By Councillor Johnstone for  
answer by the Convener of the  
Education, Children and Families  
Committee at a meeting of the  
Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question** (1) How many schools have predicted an overspend on energy budgets in the current year (2010-11)?

**Answer** (1) Budget monitoring returns have been submitted to the Finance Department from schools at month 9. These returns highlight the following number of establishments are anticipating an overspend against energy budgets in the current year.

Electricity = 92 from 109 schools are projecting an overspend.

Gas = 100 from 106 schools are projecting an overspend.

Oil = 3 from 5 schools are projecting an overspend.

The Department, working with schools, is currently considering the action that can be taken to manage the situation.

**Question** (2) What is the total estimated amount of such an overspend?

**Answer** (2) The total estimated overspend on energy is £571k in the current year.

This figure breaks down as:

Electricity - £453k

Gas - £112k

Oil - £6k

**Question** (3) What percentage of the energy budget does this account for?

**Answer** (3) 14.6% of a £3.9m budget.

**Question** (4) What is the standard temperature for schools?

**Answer**

- (4) 19 degrees centigrade is the standard average winter room air temperature expected in the majority of schools. Areas of the school, eg games halls, would be expected to operate well below this level for reasons of comfort.

A number of schools are exempted from the 19 degree average target because of the needs of their pupils, especially those who cater for children with severe mobility disabilities.

**Question**

- (5) How much would be saved annually by reducing this temperature by a) one degree and b) two degrees?

**Answer**

- (5) The 2009/10 budget identified a £644,000 saving based on a reduction of 2 degrees in the temperature in schools from an average assisted winter temperature of 21 degrees to 19 degrees. A one degree reduction was estimated to save half this amount based on the budgets available at that time.

## QUESTION NO 2

**By Councillor Johnstone for  
answer by the Convener of the  
Culture and Leisure Committee at a  
meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

### **Question**

Can the Convener advise how the city is progressing towards the target of most active city in Europe by 2020, interim targets set, and how we will know when this has been achieved?

### **Answer**

Being the most physically active city in Europe is Edinburgh's aspiration or vision, as described in the city's Sport and Physical Recreation Strategy which was launched in 2004. Because of the uneven availability of data on levels of physical activity in countries and the lack of harmonised measures and indicators, this information is not gathered nor compared at a European city level. As a result, the World Health Organisation is unable to draw a clear picture of overall trends across Europe.

However, we remain committed to creating as many opportunities as possible for people to be more active. A great deal of work is ongoing throughout the city, in partnership with NHS Lothian and other agencies, to seek to improve the physical activity levels of adults and young people. This includes the following relevant programmes and services:

- The annual Activcity events programme
- The annual Festival of Sport
- Active Schools
- Active Travel
- Community-based walking initiatives
- Promotion of cycling
- Get Up & Go
- Healthy Working Lives

The Council has now produced a legacy plan for Edinburgh from the Olympic Games in 2012 and the Commonwealth Games in 2014, which focuses on being active. Its action plan is to launch soon.

Edinburgh Leisure runs a wide range of programmes designed to encourage particular groups to be more physically active for their health.

### QUESTION NO 3

**By Councillor Morris for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 3 February 2011**

#### Question

In view of recent press coverage in this area, could the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee please confirm the extent of the Council's borrowing, for both the current and four previous financial years, in relation to:

- (i) how these levels compare to relevant prudential indicators;
- (ii) how these levels compare, on a like-for-like basis, to the Council's expenditure;
- (iii) how the Council's average borrowing rate compares to that for Scotland's other councils.

#### Answer

- (i) Since the introduction of the *Prudential Code in Capital Finance for Local Authorities* in 2004, the Council has continued to exercise appropriate professional judgement to ensure that all borrowing undertaken is prudent, affordable and sustainable in the long-term. In this vein, where additional borrowing has been required to deliver financial savings to the Council (through, for example, the purchase of Waverley Court in 2008 and acquisition of EDI and Waterfront's assets in 2009), this has always been subject both to the submission of a suitably robust business case and prior Council approval of increased borrowing limits.

As a result of these procedures, the Council has not exceeded relevant limits at any time. The extent of borrowing is, however, kept under constant review and reported regularly to Committee and Council.

- (ii) The purchase of Waverley Court was predicated upon delivering revenue savings of some £37 million relative to the existing lease over the twenty-eight year period covered by the business case. Emphasising the prudent nature of the initial projections upon which the purchase decision was made, further loans charge savings of £1 million per annum are now being delivered. In effect, the Council has therefore “swapped” the former building rental payments with these borrowing costs, delivering substantial savings in so doing, whilst also acquiring a significant capital asset valued at £90 million.

Similarly, in the case of the acquisition of EDI’s assets, the prudential borrowing costs of purchase are being fully funded through asset rentals, accessing borrowing opportunities not available to EDI and therefore markedly improving the Council’s overall group financial position.

Adjusting (i) loans charge expenditure to reflect the nature of these acquisitions and (ii) the Council’s overall expenditure figure for structural changes to the Finance Settlement in 2008/09 and 2009/10 results in the following:

	Restated loans charge expenditure as proportion of restated net expenditure
2006/07	8.82%
2007/08	9.42%
2008/09	9.15%
2009/10	9.00%

Equivalent figures for 2010/11 will be confirmed as part of closing the Council’s final accounts.

- (iii)** The Loans Fund Pool Rate measures the average cost of the Council's debt compared to the weighted average capital expenditure financed by that debt. When viewed against the Council's eight Scottish urban comparator authorities (considered a more reliable indicator than the entire local authority group), over the period from 2001/02 to 2008/09 Edinburgh went from being the authority with the highest average rate to the median of the peer group, reducing its pool rate by more than any other authority in so doing.

For 2009/10, the Council's weighted rate continued the annual reduction apparent since 2001/02. While the extent of this fall was lower than in some other authorities, the Council's strategic use of long-term fixed-rate borrowing leaves it less susceptible to anticipated subsequent upward movement in interest rates.



**QUESTION NO 4**

**By Councillor Burgess for answer  
by the Leader of the Council at a  
meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

**Question**

To ask the Leader what action she will take following publication of research by the Centre for Cities showing that Edinburgh has one of the worst rates of climate-changing pollution among UK cities.

**Answer**

The Centre for Cities, in their *Cities Outlook 2011*, found Edinburgh to be one of the most economically resilient cities in Britain with a diverse industrial base and high skills “well positioned to support national growth”.

*Cities Outlook 2011* identified that cities will be vital in achieving carbon reduction targets. At a meeting of Leaders of Scotland’s 6 cities on 1 February in Glasgow, the cities’ role in leading on sustainability was emphasised.

Tackling the causes and effects of climate change is and will remain a key priority for the Council, its partners (including the Scottish Government) and the citizens of Edinburgh.

*Cities Outlook 2011* indicates that Edinburgh, consistent with all of the other 12 major cities listed, already has CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which are **lower** than the UK average. This accords with the emissions published in the Council’s Scottish Climate Change Declaration (SCCD) Annual Report 2010 which was considered by the Policy and Strategy Committee on 30 November 2010. Of the 4 Scottish cities cited, Edinburgh is joint second lowest for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with 7.2tonnes per capita versus the best UK city (Hastings) with 4.8t per capita and the worst (Middlesbrough) with 27.4t per capita.

The Council’s SCCD Annual Report details a comprehensive list of Council activities which should lead to a reduction in Edinburgh’s area wide carbon emissions and the Council’s considerable commitment to climate change adaptation, particularly with respect to flood prevention.

The Scottish Government's recently published draft *Low Carbon Scotland - Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP)* offers an indication of how carbon emissions can be driven down across Scotland. The draft Report on Proposals and Policies fulfils the duty placed on Scottish Ministers by section 35 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 by setting out specific measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

A key challenge for the Council will be to build on its achievements to date and to work towards making an equitable contribution to achieving Scotland's emission reduction targets. The draft RPP highlights four transformational outcomes relating to energy generation, heat supply, transport and strategic integration against which the Council may be expected to show progress in future SCCD reports.

Work has already been initiated in conjunction with Heriot Watt University to prepare a first Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) for the city. A specific role of the SEAP will be to identify what action is required to reduce Edinburgh's carbon emissions by reducing the city's use of fossil fuels and increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy technology capacity.

**QUESTION NO 5**

**By Councillor Rust for answer by  
the Convener of the Finance and  
Resources Committee at a meeting  
of the Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question**

How many former City of Edinburgh Council employees have been re-employed by the Council in the past 5 years in a consultancy or other role?

**Answer**

At its meeting on 11 January 2011 the Finance and Resources Committee considered the report 'Use of Consultants – Further Report'. This showed very limited engagement of former employees in consultancy roles by the Council over the past two years.

The Committee asked for a further report on the existing guidance used in the appointment of consultants and whether this required to be updated.

In view of the considerable further work involved in fulfilling your request, I consider it appropriate to await the outcome of the Finance and Resources Committee's future deliberations on the matter before committing further resource to this task.

**QUESTION NO 6**

**By Councillor Kate MacKenzie for  
answer by the Convener of the  
Transport, Infrastructure and  
Environment Committee at a  
meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

**Question** Please provide the number of penalty notices handed out during 2008/9 and 2009/10 for issues such as dog fouling, dropping litter and fly-posting broken down by ward.

**Answer** Separate figures for fly-posting cannot be supplied because it is classed as a littering offence and any fixed penalty notices would be included under that category.

Ward	Dog Fouling		Domestic Waste		Littering		Trade Waste	
	2009/ 2010	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2008/ 2009
Almond	13	9	0	1	18	10	1	2
City Centre	4	4	72	27	175	26	397	239
Colinton/Fairmilehead	4	2	6	3	5	1	0	1
Corstorphine/Murrayfield	9	12	2	0	19	19	9	6
Craigtinny/Duddingston	3	6	12	27	28	9	10	8
Drum Brae/Gyle	9	7	1	0	24	7	6	0
Forth	36	22	2	2	22	9	4	1
Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	7	0	37	4	27	6	25	14
Inverleith	7	2	1	0	16	4	26	4
Leith Walk	19	8	4	0	76	3	55	28
Leith	25	6	2	0	69	12	40	8
Liberton/ Gilmerton	11	17	0	1	5	1	2	3
Meadows/Morningside	2	1	0	1	14	4	42	19
Pentland Hills	3	0	18	0	3	4	2	3
Portobello/Craigmillar	35	18	14	22	32	15	19	12
Sighthill/Gorgie	16	20	32	6	115	18	41	29
Southside/Newington	8	3	3	3	10	7	48	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>410</b>

**QUESTION NO 7**

**By Councillor Mowat for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question** (1) Please provide a list of all the properties owned by the City of Edinburgh Council.

**Answer** (1) A database managed by City Development contains details of the Council's legal interest in property (excluding houses managed by Services for Communities, ie housing stock). The database extends to over 3,000 records and includes land and other types of property interests such as wayleaves, as well as buildings. A printed report listing all of these legal interests would extend to more than 100 pages. If Councillor Mowat would like to view the database, staff in Corporate Property and Contingency Planning's Asset Management Team would be happy to talk Councillor Mowat through it.

**Question** (2) How many properties are standing empty?

**Answer** (2) Currently, City Development's records list 219 properties as vacant. There are entries, however, on this list which do not relate to buildings eg areas of ground including open space and amenity ground with no real economic value.

**Question** (3) How many of these properties are being actively marketed?

**Answer** (3) At present there are 20 properties being actively marketed. Details of these properties can be found on the Council's commercial property web page at:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/commercialproperty](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/commercialproperty)

**Question** (4) Please give the reasons for any properties that are not being actively marketed.

**Answer** (4) There are a variety of reasons why property is shown as vacant:

- Properties being prepared for marketing e.g. operational properties in the process of being cleared or where consultation is taking place with planning on alternative uses;
- Buildings awaiting demolition e.g. vacant schools;
- Buildings awaiting redevelopment e.g. as part of a larger development site;
- Properties in the process of being let or sold which have already been advertised;
- Properties being retained by the Council for sale at a later date when the market improves;
- Properties which are considered unlettable, eg cellars and structures such as George IV Bridge vaults and Scotland Street Tunnel.

**Question** (5) How many empty properties were subject to flooding in 2009/10 and 2010/11?

**Question** (6) Were any properties subject to flooding in both years and, if so, which ones?

**Answer** (5) Floods, burst pipes and frozen pipes are not logged using a separate code. As such, Property Care Services are not able to provide a specific answer to these questions.  
(6)

It is standard practice, however, to minimise water damage within vacant properties by draining down buildings as part of City Development's building closure procedures.

**QUESTION NO 8**

**By Councillor Rust for answer by  
the Convener of the Finance and  
Resources Committee at a meeting  
of the Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question**

How many retail premises in the City of Edinburgh Council area have a rateable value of £750,000 or more?

**Answer**

There are 41 retail properties in Edinburgh with a valuation above £750k.

**QUESTION NO 9**

**By Councillor Blacklock for answer  
by the Convener of the Education,  
Children and Families Committee at  
a meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

**Question**           (1) To ask the Convener to provide specific clarification on the re-opening date for Westfield Court Nursery School?

**Question**           (2) If no re-opening date can be provided at this time, to ask the Convener to give a full written update in order to address parental concerns about the long-term plans for Westfield Court Nursery School?

**Answer**             Transition arrangements for the children who attended Westfield Court were completed at the end of last term. All children and staff have all settled in well to their new nurseries. Parents have also been very involved with the new arrangements.

To avoid further disruption for the children and their families within this school year, the earliest date to consider any further changes would be August 2011 (at the start of the new school year).

Further work will be ongoing throughout this time to consider the future of Westfield Court Nursery School and a report will be submitted to Council in June 2011 with recommendations.



**QUESTION NO 10**

**By Councillor Day for answer by  
the Convener of the Finance and  
Resources Committee at a meeting  
of the Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question**

To ask the Council what is the latest number of second homes on the Council Tax roll and what is the Council Tax income received by the Council from such properties in the latest available year?

**Answer**

As of the end of December, the figures for the current financial year are as follows:

Total number of second home accounts – 13,502  
Total additional income raised from second homes –  
£1,318,110.

For the last full financial year (i.e. 2009/10), the equivalent figures are:

Total number of second home accounts – 16,464  
Total additional income raised from second homes –  
£1,972,232.

**QUESTION NO 11**

**By Councillor Ewan Aitken for  
answer by the Convener of the  
Culture and Leisure Committee at a  
meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

**Question**

Can you please tell me:

1. At which meeting it was decided that an Equality Impact Assessment would not be required for the Administration's proposed cut to Edinburgh Leisure's grant.
2. Who was present at that meeting?
3. What the basis of the decision was (ie was it scored as others are or were there some other criteria used)?
4. Whether there are minutes of the meeting available for scrutiny?

**Answer**

There was no such decision.

The Corporate Services Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) for Package 1 was published on 15 September 2010 and the EQIA for Packages 2 and 3 will be published in advance of the Council Budget Meeting on 10 February 2011. Within both these EQIAs there is a generic equalities impact assessment of the funding reduction to Edinburgh Leisure. These EQIAs were informed by comments made at three Edinburgh Equality Network events and the neighbourhood and citywide budget summits.

**QUESTION NO 12**

**By Councillor Child for answer by  
the Convener of the Transport,  
Infrastructure and the Environment  
Committee at a meeting of the  
Council on 3 February 2011**

**Question**

In the light of the independent research findings, reported recently, that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Edinburgh were the third worst in the UK, what step changes will the Administration make to ensure Edinburgh is on track to become the most sustainable city in Europe by 2050, as it was unanimously committed to do in 2007?

**Answer**

See answer to Question 4.

**QUESTION NO 13**

**By Councillor Henderson for  
answer by the Convener of the  
Economic Development Committee  
at a meeting of the Council on  
3 February 2011**

- Question**           **(1)** To ask the Convener to provide monthly data for the youth unemployment rate (the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seeker's Allowance), in the City of Edinburgh, running from May 2007 through to the most up-to-date statistic available?
- Question**           **(2)** To ask the Convener to provide a comparator table for the most up-to-date statistic of the youth unemployment rate in the City of Edinburgh, with all other local authority areas in Scotland?
- Answer**               See attached appendix.

## Appendix

### Part 1

The table below, table 1, provides monthly data for the Youth Unemployment rate (the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seeker's Allowance), in the City of Edinburgh, running from May 2007 through to the 'most up-to-date' statistic available, December 2010.

TABLE 1			
Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in Edinburgh aged 18-24			
Month	A: Number of claimants aged 18-24	B: % of pop. aged 18-24	C: % of all JSA claimants
May-07	1,525	2.6%	24.8%
Jun-07	1,415	2.4%	24.6%
Jul-07	1,475	2.5%	25.7%
Aug-07	1,555	2.7%	26.1%
Sep-07	1,575	2.7%	26.5%
Oct-07	1,280	2.2%	24.5%
Nov-07	1,255	2.1%	24.2%
Dec-07	1,240	2.1%	24.5%
Jan-08	1,315	2.2%	24.3%
Feb-08	1,415	2.4%	25.6%
Mar-08	1,420	2.4%	25.8%
Apr-08	1,370	2.3%	25.2%
May-08	1,375	2.3%	25.7%
Jun-08	1,385	2.4%	25.4%
Jul-08	1,485	2.6%	26.1%
Aug-08	1,590	2.8%	27.0%
Sep-08	1,560	2.7%	26.5%
Oct-08	1,580	2.8%	26.2%
Nov-08	1,645	2.9%	25.2%
Dec-08	1,760	3.1%	25.3%
Jan-09	1,900	3.3%	24.8%
Feb-09	2,345	4.1%	26.6%
Mar-09	2,525	4.4%	27.0%
Apr-09	2,430	4.2%	25.8%
May-09	2,415	4.2%	25.4%
Jun-09	2,510	4.4%	25.9%
Jul-09	2,670	4.7%	26.8%
Aug-09	2,845	5.0%	27.9%
Sep-09	2,685	4.7%	27.0%
Oct-09	2,745	4.8%	27.0%
Nov-09	2,810	4.9%	27.3%
Dec-09	2,680	4.7%	26.6%
Jan-10	2,910	5.1%	26.5%
Feb-10	3,125	5.5%	27.4%
Mar-10	3,090	5.4%	27.1%
Apr-10	2,915	5.1%	26.3%
May-10	2,820	4.9%	26.2%

<b>Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in Edinburgh aged 18-24</b>			
<b>Month</b>	<b>A: Number of claimants aged 18-24</b>	<b>B: % of pop. aged 18-24</b>	<b>C: % of all JSA claimants</b>
Jun-10	2,755	4.8%	26.3%
Jul-10	2,820	4.9%	26.7%
Aug-10	2,845	5.0%	27.0%
Sep-10	2,620	4.6%	26.2%
Oct-10	2,535	4.4%	25.8%
Nov-10	2,505	4.4%	25.1%
Dec-10	2,555	4.5%	25.1%

Column A shows the number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged 18-24 in Edinburgh between May 2007 and December 2010.

Column B shows this figure as a proportion of the total population aged 18 to 24. The average for this over the period requested is 3.7%, with the highest recorded value in February 2010 (5.5%), and the lowest in December 2007 (2.1%).

Column C shows the number of 18-24 year old Jobseeker's Allowance claimants as a proportion of the total number of claimants in Edinburgh. The average for this over the period requested is 26.0%, with the highest recorded value in February 2010 (27.9%), and the lowest in December 2007 (24.2%).

## Part 2

The table below, table 2, provides a comparator table for the 'most up-to-date' statistic of the Youth Unemployment rate in the City of Edinburgh, compared with all other Local Authority areas in Scotland. The table is in descending order based on the percentage of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged 18-24, in each Scottish local authority in December 2010, as a proportion of the total population aged 18 to 24, column B. Edinburgh has the fourth lowest rate in Scotland.

When examined as a percentage of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants as a proportion of the total number of claimants in the local authority, column C, Edinburgh also has the fourth lowest rate in Scotland.

**TABLE 2**

<b>Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged 18-24 by local authority (December 2010)</b>			
<b>Month</b>	<b>A: Number of claimants aged 18-24</b>	<b>B: % of pop. aged 18-24</b>	<b>C: % of all JSA claimants</b>
East Ayrshire	1,330	12.3%	30.1%
Clackmannanshire	525	12.2%	28.7%
North Ayrshire	1,410	11.9%	27.9%
West Dunbartonshire	945	10.7%	27.9%
South Ayrshire	925	10.2%	30.9%
North Lanarkshire	2,975	10.0%	27.0%
Falkirk	1,250	9.5%	27.6%
South Lanarkshire	2,430	9.0%	27.9%

<b>Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged 18-24 by local authority (December 2010)</b>			
<b>Month</b>	<b>A: Number of claimants aged 18-24</b>	<b>B: % of pop. aged 18-24</b>	<b>C: % of all JSA claimants</b>
Midlothian	625	8.9%	31.9%
Renfrewshire	1,360	8.9%	27.2%
Glasgow City	6,045	8.6%	24.5%
West Lothian	1,225	8.2%	28.8%
Dumfries & Galloway	865	8.1%	31.3%
Angus	650	7.9%	28.9%
Fife	2,805	7.8%	27.5%
Scottish Borders	625	7.8%	31.3%
Dundee City	1,395	7.5%	28.1%
East Lothian	595	7.5%	31.4%
Inverclyde	530	7.2%	26.8%
Argyll & Bute	480	6.9%	26.8%
Highland	1,080	6.8%	24.8%
Moray	420	5.8%	30.4%
East Dunbartonshire	500	5.6%	28.3%
Eilean Siar	90	5.3%	16.5%
East Renfrewshire	400	5.3%	29.7%
Stirling	530	5.2%	27.1%
Perth & Kinross	600	4.7%	26.8%
Orkney Islands	65	4.6%	33.3%
<b>Edinburgh, City of</b>	<b>2,555</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>
Aberdeenshire	705	3.8%	31.1%
Shetland Islands	60	3.8%	29.8%
Aberdeen City	850	3.4%	26.0%

Column A shows the number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged 18-24 in each Scottish local authority in December 2010.

Column B shows this figure as a proportion of the total population aged 18 to 24.

Column C shows the number of 18-24 year old Jobseeker's Allowance claimants as a proportion of the total number of claimants in the local authority.