

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

MEETING 4

23 AUGUST 2012

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO 1

**By Councillor Rust for answer by the
Leader of the Council at a meeting of
the Council on 23 August 2012**

Question (1) Has the “brief review” of “Outlook” referred to by the Council Leader in local media on 11 June commenced?

Answer (1) Yes.

Officers in the Communications Service, supported by Business Intelligence, under Tom Little, Head of Policy & Public Affairs are looking at a range of ways to improve the way we provide information to, and hold dialogue with, stakeholders and the community.

Outlook is part of this review which started in early June 2012 and will be reported to October Full Council.

Question (2) Who is undertaking the “brief review” and what is their remit?

Answer (2) As above.

Question (3) Has any funding been committed to this “brief review”?

Answer (3) There is no specific funding for the review, which is being carried out by officers under current budgets and working hours.

Question (4) When will the “brief review” be reported to Council?

Answer (4) As above.

QUESTION NO 2

**By Councillor Rust for answer by the
Convener of the Economic
Development Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 23 August 2012**

From 2009 to date:

Question (1) In what sectors of City of Edinburgh Council are apprenticeship opportunities available?

Answer (1) We are planning to recruit an additional 50 apprentices in the financial year 2012/13. The areas already identified, and recruitment plans in place for, are as follows:

- Cooking (Hospitality)
- Social Care (Elderly Care)
- Social Care (Disability)
- HGV Mechanic
- Business Administration
- Childcare
- Arborist (Forestry)
- Storeperson
- Roadworkers

This is not a complete list, we are awaiting confirmation from a number of services on final occupational areas and numbers. (25 places have been confirmed)

We also have apprentices currently in year 1, 2, 3 or 4 for their respective apprenticeship and these are in the following areas:

- Business Admin
- Social Care (Elderly Care)
- Social Care (Disability)
- Mechanical Engineering
- Joinery
- Electrical Engineering
- Gas Engineering
- Plumbing
- Horticultural Engineering
- Amenity Horticulture
- Youth Work
- Creative Industries
- Childcare

- Sports Development
- Outdoor Learning
- Arborist (Forestry)

Question (2) How many apprenticeships are offered (a) directly by the Council and (b) by any Council arms-length companies?

Answer (2) (a) We currently have 70 apprentices in the 1st 2nd, 3rd or 4th year of their apprenticeship programme. The majority are in 1st year. We intend to recruit an additional 50 in 2012/13

(b) We do not keep details of arms length companies apprentice numbers.

Question (3) How many apprentices have gone on to take up full-time employment with the Council?

Answer (3) All of the 54 people who completed their apprenticeship over the 4 year period have secured full-time posts with the Council.

2009 – 17 Apprentices

2010 – 10 Apprentices

2011 – 15 Apprentices

2012 – 12 Apprentices

Question (4) How many apprentices have not completed an apprenticeship started with City of Edinburgh Council?

Answer

- (4)** 5 apprentices did not complete an apprenticeship in the period stated.

These apprentices were employed as follows and the reasons for leaving are given.

- City Development Administration – resigned, no reason given but possibly linked to forthcoming disciplinary.
- Parks and Greenspaces Horticulture Engineer – Resigned, apprenticeship offered by another company
- Edinburgh Building Services Construction – Disciplinary resulting in termination of apprenticeship
- Health and Social Care Cook – resigned within 2 weeks of starting for personal reasons
- Edinburgh Building Services – Construction, resigned no reason given but may be connected with an impending skills test.

Question

- (5)** What steps does the Council take to promote apprenticeship opportunities?

Answer

- (5)** The Council works closely with Skills Development Scotland (the Careers Service) and advertises on myjobscotland.gov.uk/edinburgh. We also raise awareness of vacancies by e-mailing Edinburgh Schools and informing the Joined up for Jobs Community who provide employment and employability support to school leavers in Edinburgh. We also provide additional support to school leavers who may require adaptations to the recruitment process e.g. because they have a disability. School leavers, their parents or others who enquire are advised to register for myjobscotland and set up an “alert” which then e-mails them when an apprentice vacancy is posted.

QUESTION NO 3

**By Councillor Rust for answer by the
Convener of the Transport,
Infrastructure and Environment
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 23 August 2012**

Question (1) Approximately how much green open space is maintained overall in each Neighbourhood area of the city, including defined parks, play parks, amenity areas and land maintained on the Housing Revenue Account?

Answer (1) City Centre/Leith - 960,550m²
East - 3,000,697m²
North - 1,616,617m²
South - 2,692,370m²
South-West - 3,124,644m²
West - 3,985,522m²

Question (2) To what extent is the Land Asset Register currently held by the Council up-to-date in recording management data on the volume of such items as shrub beds, linear metres of hedges, square metres of hard standing areas requiring weed control etc?

Answer (2) This information is held by the Parks & Greenspace Division within Services for Communities, which has a map detailing the location and form of maintenance of the 27 landscape types that make up the Council's greenspace estate. This is very up-to-date following a digital re-mapping of the estate over the last 18 months as part of the *imProve it* programme.

This level of detail is not recorded in the Council's Land Asset Register.

Question (3) How many (a) permanent staff and (b) seasonal staff are employed in each Neighbourhood area in relation to grounds maintenance/grass-cutting?

Answer (3) See appendix to this answer.

In addition to staff in Neighbourhoods there are approximately 25 staff from Specialist Grounds Maintenance who carry out grass cutting on tractor runs across the city on the larger areas of standard amenity grass and in the 9 premier parks.

As part of the *imProve it* Programme we are carrying out a zero based resourcing exercise for open space maintenance. This involves assessing all the landscape types in the Council's green space estate using the digital asset map, determining the maintenance schedules required to deliver the Landscape Quality Standards and quantifying the resources (staff and equipment) needed in each Neighbourhood.

This exercise should be completed by October 2012 and may lead to a re-distribution of ground maintenance resources across the six neighbourhoods.

Question (4) How many complaints/concerns regarding grounds maintenance/grass-cutting have been reported this year in connection with the South West Neighbourhood area?

Answer (4) 570

Question (5) How are service standards regarding grounds maintenance compared with other local authorities?

Answer (5) Information on how we compare to other local authorities in terms of the quality of our ground maintenance is not available as most other Councils don't have any standards - just frequency specifications for grass cutting etc.

However, Edinburgh has established a set of Landscape Quality Standards (LQS) that enable us to undertake a monthly random-assessment of the 15,880 landscape features that combine to make up our Greenspace Estate. These standards were established due to a lack of rigorous methodology existing elsewhere.

Appendix

Neighbourhood	City Centre /Leith	West	S/West	North	South	East	Total
Staff	7	17	25	18	20	20	107
Temp/Agency	2	4	0	5	2	0	13
Total	9	21	25	23	22	20	120

QUESTION NO 4

**By Councillor Booth for answer by
the Convener of the Transport,
Infrastructure and Environment
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 23 August 2012**

Question (1) To ask how many advance stop lines (ASLs) have been installed, both as a number and as a proportion of road junctions.

Answer (1) There are currently approximately 490 ASLs installed in the City of Edinburgh Council area. This equates to ASLs on around 65% of the city's signal controlled junction arms. Approximately 82% of signal controlled junctions in the city have an ASL on at least one junction arm (it is not permitted to install ASLs at non-traffic signal controlled junctions).

Question (2) To ask how many ASLs have double yellow lines, both as a number and as a proportion of all ASLs.

Answer (2) This level of detail is not available in relation to every junction in the city. However, double yellow line restrictions are in place at the vast majority of the city's traffic signal controlled junctions and in most cases these extend to protect the ASLs on each of the junction arms.

Question (3) To ask what steps are being taken, either by the Council or in conjunction with Lothian and Borders Police, to enforce ASLs.

Answer (3) The Council, Lothian and Borders Police and other partners, under the "Streets Ahead - Drive Safe, Cycle Safe" campaign undertook a series of roadshows across the city in May 2012, to educate cyclists and motorists on the appropriate behaviours required by law at traffic lights and advanced stop lines.

Many motorists assume that the advanced stop line for cyclists is purely advisory; the Drive Safe, Cycle Safe campaign seeks to get the message out that drivers risk both a £60 fine and three points on their licence if they do not obey the first stop line. Equally cyclists will also be fined £30 for jumping the red light.

Complementing an advertising campaign, the Police operated along 'The Bridges' corridor to educate road users prior to enforcement. In one week the police stopped and spoke to 106 motorists and 32 cyclists.

The second phase of the campaign concerns ASL enforcement, which commenced four weeks after the start of the educational campaign in June 2012, and involves at least 6 road policing officers operating one day each week until November 2012.

The Council parking attendants can enforce ASLs if vehicles park on double yellow lines at signalised junctions, where ASLs are present. The result would be a £60 fine with the vehicle being authorised for removal.

QUESTION NO 5

**By Councillor Main for answer by the
Convener of the Transport,
Infrastructure and Environment
Committee at a meeting of the
Council on 23 August 2012**

Question

To ask the Convener of the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, what measures are being taken to deal with the expected increase in demand on local recycling centres, as a result of the move to alternate weekly collections of green bins due to start in September.

Answer

The introduction of managed weekly collections will be accompanied by

- expanding kerbside recycling capacity by providing householders with additional red and blue boxes where demand exists
- identifying potential sites for additional communal recycling points in areas that require additional local recycling capacity.

In addition, the city's Community Recycling Centres have spare capacity to deal with any increased demand. Staff at the centres have been briefed on the changes to enable them to advise and support members of the public with recycling.

We are also looking at the best way to ensure that future recycling services for residents are as simple as possible and also at ways of possibly reducing the number of bins/containers which each household requires.

Question submitted in terms of Standing Order 25(2)

QUESTION NO 6

**By Councillor Edie for answer by the
Leader of the Council at a meeting of
the Council on 23 August 2012**

Question

In relation to report 8.1 a on the Capital Coalition Pledges to ask the Leader of the Council how many of these pledges come from the Labour Manifesto and how many from the SNP manifesto?

Answer

The Capital Coalition agreement was constructed as a result of a thorough process of discussion and negotiation. In the best interests of the City of Edinburgh, the final Contract with the Capital draws together commitments from both SNP and Labour but also includes policy initiatives from other parties.'

Question submitted in terms of Standing Order 25(2)

QUESTION NO 7

**By Councillor Edie for answer by the
Convener of the Health, Social Care
and Housing Committee at a meeting
of the Council on 23 August 2012**

Question

Noting report 8.1 (a) on the Capital Coalition Pledges regarding turning council Care Homes into cooperatives and noting that those care homes are vulnerable people's places of residence and noting that there is no description whatsoever of the proposals under pledge 37 of these potentially sweeping changes when will you explain to the residents what you mean?

Answer

May I refer Councillor Edie to my answer provided at Council on 28 June 2012 (copy attached as an appendix) when I advised him that in respect of care services, including care homes, we will open discussions with service users, staff and providers about the feasibility of developing co-operative models. I also advised that initial discussions are at an early stage.

Appendix

QUESTION NO 1

By Councillor Edie answered by the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee at a meeting of the Council on 28 June 2012

Question (1) The new Administration's coalition deal states that the council will "examine ways to bring the Council, care home staff and users together into cooperatives to provide the means to make life better for care home users and care providers".

Question (2) Can the Convener of Health, Social Care and Housing elaborate on what this means in practice?

Answer The Capital Coalition has made a commitment to listen to people and to work with local communities, business and the third sector. Our vision of a co-operative Council is one where people who deliver and use our services work with us to make improvements and make decisions about how resources are used.

In respect of care services, including care homes, we will open discussions with service users, staff and providers about the feasibility of developing co-operative models.

Supplementary Question Can I thank the Convener for, well, what I can only describe is his non answer that certainly would not have happened under the previous Administration. The Labour manifesto and the coalition agreement you have come up with have very clear differences of emphasis on this issue particularly relating to care. Now, there is not a huge amount in it, the coalition deal relating to care, but there are differences between those and I have asked senior officers in Health and Social Care to clarify exactly what your commitments mean in practice and they cannot tell me because they do not understand and, judging by this answer today, neither does the Convener. Can he tell me is he proposing to turn our residential care homes into companies owned by their workers which is what I understand co-ops to be?

**Supplementary
Answer**

What I can advise him today is that initial discussions on this are at an early stage and once we are in a position to report back to Committee then we will share all that full information with Councillor Edie and his colleagues

Question submitted in terms of Standing Order 25(2)

QUESTION NO 8

By Councillor Aldridge for answer by the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting of the Council on 23 August 2012

Question

Noting report 8.1 (a) on the Capital Coalition Pledges how much does the Convener estimate it will cost to implement the living wage as envisaged by the Coalitions contract pledge including protecting pay differentials?

Answer

Cost of implementing a 'living wage' for Council employees including pay differentials:

Source	Number or FTE	Form of increase	Estimated costs
Council employees	1985 in various services	Fix increase to level of Living Wage I.e. Increase to £7.20	£868,748 pa

Encouraging its adoption by Council subsidiaries and contractors and its wider development is ongoing.