

# Notice of meeting and agenda

## Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

**10.00am, Tuesday, 26 February 2013**

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

This is a public meeting and members of the public are welcome to attend

### Contact

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## **1. Order of business**

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- 1.1 Including any notices of motion and any other items of business submitted as urgent for consideration at the meeting.

## **2. Declaration of interests**

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- 2.1 Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

## **3. Deputations**

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- 3.1 If any

## **4. Minutes**

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- 4.1 Minute of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 22 January 2013 (circulated) – submitted for approval as a correct record.

## **5. Key Decisions forward plan**

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- 5.1 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan February to May 2013 (circulated)

## **6. Business Bulletin**

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- 6.1 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Business Bulletin 26 February 2013 (circulated)

## **7. Executive decisions**

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- 7.1 Council Grants to Third Parties 2013/14 – Proposals for Expenditure – report by the Director of Corporate Governance (circulated)
- 7.2 Edinburgh People Survey 2012 Headline Results– report by the Director of Corporate Governance (circulated)
- 7.3 Social Justice Fund – report by the Director of Health and Social Care (circulated)
- 7.4 Consultation on the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill – report by the Director of Services for Communities (circulated)
- 7.5 Lay Diversity Advisers Scheme – Arrangements Post April 2013 – referral from Committee – report by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance (circulated)

## 8. Routine decisions

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- 8.1 Tram – Practical Experience of Operation Visits – report by the Director of Services for Communities (circulated)

## 9. Motions

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- 9.1 By Councillor Burgess – ‘No Eviction for ‘Bedroom Tax’ – submitted in terms of Standing Order 16.1:

“Committee;

- 1) Notes that from 1 April 2013 new restrictions will be introduced by the UK Government affecting working-age households occupying social housing such that reductions will be applied to housing benefit payments where tenants are deemed to be under-occupying their homes. This has been called the "bedroom tax".
- 2) Notes that the restrictions are estimated to affect 6,500 council and housing association tenants in Edinburgh.
- 3) Notes that, on 22 January 2013, Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee noted officers' intention to explore options to provide matched funding for the Discretionary Housing Payments fund which would bring the fund up to an additional £2.021 million and that this is aimed at, among other measures, reducing the detrimental impact of the under-occupancy restrictions.
- 4) Notes that a range of actions to mitigate the under-occupancy restrictions are being looked at, including providing offers of reasonable alternative accommodation but that the supply and turnover of smaller accommodation comes nowhere close to meeting the demand.
- 5) Therefore resolves that, in determining when and whether to initiate and pursue proceedings to recover a tenancy as a consequence of rent arrears, the council will:
  - Calculate the sum by which the household's housing benefit payment has been reduced by under-occupancy restrictions
  - Disregard that sum in relation to action for recovery of the tenancy (eviction).”

9.2 By Councillor Chapman - Management and Communications within the Council  
– submitted in terms of Standing Order 16.1:

“Committee:

- 1) Notes that it is nearly 6 months since the publication of the results of the 2012 Ipsos MORI Employee Survey, which Councillors first saw in a report to the former Policy and Strategy Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2012, this report indicating that various actions would be taken, including further analysis of the results, consultation with employees about possible improvements, developing departmental action plans, etc.
- 2) Notes some specific results from this survey:
  - only 50% of staff feel involved in decisions that affect their work
  - low levels of staff satisfaction in particular areas
  - 41% do not think they are valued, and only half feel motivated to their full potential
  - 33% think his/her immediate line manager is not open nor honest
  - 61% do not have confidence in management decisions
  - 72% think change is poorly managed, and only 22% think the survey will change anything
- 3) Notes that, at tonight’s UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch AGM, several motions relating to treatment of Council staff will be discussed: *New Council Code of Conduct*, *Free expression of concern*, *Dignity at Work*, for example.
- 4) Notes the levels of staff sickness absence for stress, depression and other mental health issues recorded over the past few years (8.43% of the workforce from September 2009 to June 2011) as compared with other public sector bodies (1.38% of the Scottish Government workforce).
- 5) Notes the increase in legal costs to the Council as a result of Employment Tribunals dealing with cases of unfair dismissal, harassment and discrimination (£6,840 per year from 2004 to 2009, and then £98,278 in 2010), and the ongoing costs of staff suspensions (Edinburgh having the highest number of suspensions in Scotland).
- 6) Believes that, when taken together, these facts indicate a level of disquiet with management and communications within the Council and anxiety within the workforce, and that these might lead to low staff morale, low productivity and poor working relationships; and further believes that Councillors should be concerned about this.

- 7) Agrees that reports should go to each Executive Committee over the next cycle and should include:
- a detailed description of relevant departmental and sub-departmental unit (where appropriate) data derived from the staff survey
  - the steps taken by management to address these issues raised and improve staff morale (including but going beyond the actions already identified in the “Managing Attendance Procedure” policy approved 12 months ago)
  - how such changes are being implemented and how their success or otherwise will be monitored over the coming months
- 8) Further agrees that future staff surveys should include questions that seek to better understand the causes of any staff dissatisfaction and anxiety (such as lack of trust, caution around raising particular concerns, restrictions on activities undertaken in personal capacities, etc.), and asks the Chief Executive to report on how best these concerns can be incorporated.”

## **Carol Campbell**

Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance

## **Committee Members**

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Councillors Burns (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Burgess, Chapman, Child, Nick Cook, Edie, Godzik, Ricky Henderson, Hinds, Lewis, Mowat, Rankin, Rose and Ross.

## **Information about the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee**

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The Corporate Policy and Strategy consists of 15 Councillors and is appointed by the City of Edinburgh Council. The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee usually meets every four weeks.

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee usually meets in the Dean of Guild Court Room in the City Chambers on the High Street in Edinburgh. There is a seated public gallery and the meeting is open to all members of the public.

## Further information

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If you have any questions about the agenda or meeting arrangements, please contact Louise Williamson, Committee Services, City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ, Tel 0131 529 4830, e-mail [louise.p.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:louise.p.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk) .

A copy of the agenda and papers for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the main reception office, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.

The agenda, minutes and public reports for this meeting and all the main Council committees can be viewed online by going to [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cpol](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cpol).