

**THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING 5**

**21 August 2014**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

## Item no 5.1

### QUESTION NO 1

**By Councillor Heslop for answer by the Convener of the Regulatory Committee at a meeting of the Council on 21 August 2014**

- Question** (1) To ask the Convener what established short notice procedures were followed in relation to the granting of a parades and processions licence for the demonstration which took place on Princes Street on 9 August 2014.
- Answer** (1) There is a right to assemble/march and organisers of a march do not require a specific licence or permission.
- However organisers must give the Council and Police written notice of a march and the route not less than 28 days before the march. When the Council receives such notice it can after consultation attach conditions to a march or even prohibit the march.
- If the organiser fails to give written notice then the march is unlawful.
- For the protest march on 9 August 2014 no notification was received. In those circumstances the Council have no powers and the management of the march is an operational police matter using powers available to the police.
- At no time did the Council agree or consent to this march.
- Question** (2) To ask the Convener who decides what is a 'controversial' march which may cause public disruption.
- Answer** (2) If the march had been properly notified, Council officers will consider the extent of any likely disruption.
- Council officers will consult the Convenor of the Licensing Sub- Committee as appropriate.
- If a planned march is likely to cause significant disruption or is considered to be controversial, this will be referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee for decision
- Any march which seeks to use Princes Street would normally be referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee for decision due the likelihood of disruption.

**Question** (3) To ask the Convener whether it is appropriate to allow marches, out with the 28 day notification period, to take place, particularly during August and having regard to the impact such marches have on transport, pedestrian access and local businesses affected by these demonstrations.

**Answer** (3) Where a march is notified less than 28 days from the date it is due to take place the Council has discretion as to whether it will 'waive' the notice period.

The Council did not waive the notice period as it had not been given notice as required by the relevant act.

The march which took place was therefore out with the relevant statutory consent.

**Question** (4) To ask the Convener how many police officers were assigned to the march on 9 August on Princes Street and whether officers were diverted from the Grand Black Chapter March to police this event.

**Answer** (4) I understand that Police Scotland responded to the unplanned need to control the march on Princes Street. This response was from the resources available on the day and this illustrates why any organiser of a march should properly notify the Council and Police in advance.

## Item no 5.2

### QUESTION NO 2

By Councillor Rust for answer by the  
Convener of the Finance and  
Resources Committee at a meeting  
of the Council on 21 August 2014

**Question** (1) Please advise (a) the square footage occupied by each political group in the City Chambers, and (b) the notional cost charged per group

**Answer** (1) The square footage occupied by each political group (alphabetical order) in the City Chambers is as follows. The office of the Lord Provost has also been included for reference:

Group	area sq ft	cost p.a.
Conservative	908	£10,442
Green	640	£7,375
Independent	97	£1,116
Labour	4078	£46,996
Lib Dem	361	£4,151
SNP	3098	£35,712
Lord Provost	947	£10,912
Total	10,129	£116,704

**Question** (2) What discussions have taken place between Council officers and representatives of EDI regarding use of office space in the City Chambers by EDI?

**Answer**

- (2) EDI and the Council's accommodation planning team have met 5 times and exchanged numerous emails.

EDI were offered accommodation at Lothian Chambers, 329 High Street and Waverley Court all of which were discounted by EDI as being unsuitable.

Their requirements are active on the Council's accommodation request log.

## Item no 5.3

### QUESTION NO 3

**By Councillor Rust for answer by the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting of the Council on 21 August 2014**

Wellington School

#### Question

- (1) Why was confidential information inside the school not properly secured prior to the end of term?

#### Answer

- (1) During the clearing of the school Council officers noticed that personal information was inside the building. This was reported on by the media. The background to this matter is currently being investigated under the Council staff disciplinary procedure. As the investigation is live it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time.

The school building was fully secured at the end of term. All personal information within the school has now been securely removed.

#### Question

- (2) What is the status of the investigation?

#### Answer

- (2) See above response to question 1. As the investigation is live it would not be appropriate to comment further.

#### Question

- (3) When was the Care Inspectorate advised of the facts?

#### Answer

- (3) The Care Inspectorate was contacted on 21 July 2014. Council officers requested a meeting with the Care Inspectorate to discuss the matter and this meeting is due to take place on 22 August.