

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 20 September 2018

Elected Member Champions

Item number	8.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

Executive Summary

This report reviews the current position with elected member champions and answers the question raised at the Council meeting in August 2018.

Elected Member Champions

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the work carried out by Champions contained in the report.
- 1.2 To amend the cycling champion role to an expanded remit of Active Travel Champion.
- 1.3 To agree that the next Group Leaders' meeting should consider any further changes to the roles and remits of champions, with a report being brought to Council on the proposed changes.
- 1.4 To provide a monitoring report on work carried out in one year's time.

2. Background

- 2.1 In August 2017 the Council considered a report on elected member champions and agreed to review these positions in one year.
- 2.2 In August 2018, Councillor Rust asked a Council question on champions at the Council meeting, where it was indicated the answer would be provided in the September report.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The Council has elected member champions for the following roles canal, carers, child poverty, cycling, equalities, festivals, Gaelic, homelessness, small business, sustainability, veterans, volunteering and young people.
- 3.2 The 2017 report detailed the roles and responsibilities of champions as follows:
 - 3.2.1 Act as an ambassador for their specified area, which includes taking responsibility for maintaining and raising the profile of their area;
 - 3.2.2 Support the work of the committee convenors through working in a collaborative role and feeding into the decision-making role of the relevant convenors;
 - 3.2.3 Contribute to the development of policy in Edinburgh of their area and providing leadership and guidance when required;

- 3.2.4 Act as a local expert and advocate working with and engaging with communities across the city; and
- 3.2.5 Ensure focus is maintained on achieving the desired objectives and outcomes of their area.
- 3.3 A survey of current champions was carried out to provide an answer to the Council question, ascertain whether the champions themselves saw value in the role they were undertaking, if their role was meeting the objectives set out in 2017 and identify if improvements could be made.
- 3.4 A key objective identified in the August 2017 report was to act as an ambassador, raising the profile of the area and, working and engaging with the community. The outcomes in the appendix to the report highlight that awareness raising and generally raising the profile of the area were key objectives of each champion. The range of initiatives utilised to do this included events, tv and press coverage and promotion on social media.
- 3.5 All champions have established links with a significant number of external organisations including public sector, voluntary, business, higher education and community groups. The survey results show clear evidence of this with some champions meeting between 25 and 50 organisations.
- 3.6 There also appears to be clear linkages with Council committees, conveners and working groups. This was another key objective identified in August 2017 and feedback suggested that although there were clear linkages these were stronger for some champions than others and improvements could be identified to ensure that each champion had a clear path to achieve better outcomes. Having said that overall there did appear to be good linkages with conveners of committees.
- 3.7 In regard to contributing to policy within the city, the impact has been more varied. Some champion roles have a clear focus on strategic or policy change such as Canal, Homelessness and Gaelic. This is often the case when there is a strong link with a Council group or committee. Many other roles though concentrate on awareness building and discussions within the community. What is the appropriate focus for each champion will be determined by the champion themselves and their objectives.
- 3.8 Champions were also asked how their role could be improved. Feedback highlighted the need for strong links to a group or committee, a need to increase corporate awareness of the issue and for increased support by Council officials. One champion also highlighted the value of champions meeting to discuss common approaches and best practice.
- 3.9 All champions have outlined their outcomes in the appendix to the report. These vary in the level of detail highlighted but all but one express benefits. The child poverty champion explained that their role was better served as co-chair of the Poverty Commission and the champion role was no longer necessary.

- 3.10 The champion role can provide value for the Council but to do so it needs to be a focussed, supported role with clear objectives and links within the Council. These roles can also bring additional capacity and flexibility in approach and to highlight key policy areas of importance and important constituencies within Edinburgh. As a result, it is proposed that each champion role is considered whether it is the most appropriate way to meet the Council's objectives in that area.
- 3.11 Following input from the current Cycling Champion and the Convener and Vice-Convener of Transport and Environment Committee it is proposed that the role and remit of the cycling champion is extended to cover active travel.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 That the champion role is providing value to the Council and the City's citizens.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The financial impact of the champions is minimal and contained within budget.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 Elected member champions should align to complement current committee and convener structures.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 Selection and appointment of elected member champions supports delivery of equalities outcomes and the protected characteristics.
- 7.2 The Equalities Champion is the lead for this area and ensuring equalities is embedded across communities and within the organisation.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Selection and appointment of elected member champions supports delivery of sustainability outcomes. The range and breadth of remits of champions brings advantages for delivery of the three pillars of sustainability.
- 8.2 The Sustainability Champion is the lead for this area and ensuring sustainability is embedded across communities and within the organisation.

9. Consultation and engagement

9.1 Champions were consulted with to form this report.

10. Background reading/external references

10.1 The City of Edinburgh Council 24 August 2017 – [Appointment of Elected Member Champions](#)

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11. Appendices

Appendix – Number of meetings, expenses and outcomes of all champions

Role	Number of meetings attended	Expenses incurred by Council
Canal	38	None
Carers	4	None
Child Poverty	0	£330.81 – Travel costs for visit to London
Cycling	20	None
Equalities	9	None
Festivals	150	None (use bus pass provided as councillor)
Gaelic	Over 10	None
Homelessness	76	£125 – Homelessness Task Force visits (via minibus) to B&Bs
Small Business	8	None

Sustainability	10	None
Veterans	25	Contained within Lord Provost's budget
Volunteering	16	Contained within Lord Provost's budget
Young People	48	None

Role	Outcomes achieved
Canal	<p>1. Awareness raising</p> <p>a) Full page features in local press on canal festival and district heating.</p> <p>b) TV coverage of canal swans</p> <p>c) Very frequent social media promotion: twitter, facebook, blog.</p> <p>2. Outcomes</p> <p>a) Carried out stocktake of 2011 canal strategy and currently refocusing action plan ahead of refresh in 2021 and bicentenary in 2022</p> <p>b) Secured additional funding for successful canal festival in June 2017.</p> <p>c) Kick-started canal clean up programme, leading one canal business to describe it as looking cleaner than ever before.</p> <p>d) Launched Canal Shed and Union Canal Unlocked app (both projects by partners)</p> <p>3. Partnership</p> <p>a) Increased frequency of liaison with Scottish Canals</p> <p>b) Revamped canal meetings structure vis a vis roles of Canal Delivery Board and Canal Community Action Group</p> <p>4. Funding</p> <p>a) Additional funding for canal festival secured from commercial partners for first time: £3k</p> <p>b) Additional funding drawn in from Sustrans for canal towpath options study.</p> <p>5. Costs/efficiencies/resources</p> <p>a) Kick-started a programme of canal clean-ups drawing in local businesses, community groups and residents.</p> <p>b) As above, carried out stocktake of 2011 action plan, currently reprioritising focus with Delivery Board; planning ahead for strategy refresh and for bi-centenary legacy in 2022.</p> <p>c) Zero direct cost to council: all trips made by foot, bike and kayak.</p>

	<p>6. Policy change</p> <p>a) The main focus is on delivery of an agreed strategy and action plan; however, I anticipate that the growing issue of asset condition will require policy change on the part of Scottish Government, Scottish Canals and the council.</p> <p>7. Risk</p> <p>a) A key issue emerging in the course of the year has been core asset condition as set in in May's asset strategy 2018-30. It is very stark as to the shortfall and I have met with the senior officer in Scottish Canals to discuss implications for the Union Canal and a detailed inventory for the canal. This will be THE key issue for the strategy and the new SC chief executive in 2019.</p> <p>b) A second area of risk is the canal towpath and how to better manage its increasingly popularity. Following the Sustrans-funded study there is an evolving follow up plan to implement some of the findings on design and communications.</p>
Carers	Carers Rights Day 2017 awareness raising of carers issues with staff in Waverley Court and NHS Waverley, contributing to consultation in developing new Carers Strategy -Carers Act.
Child Poverty	Limited value. Has been predominately replaced by role as co-chair of the poverty commission
Cycling	<p>A single point of contact for cycling organisations, groups and individuals.</p> <p>Raising awareness.</p> <p>Partnership working.</p>
Equalities	<p>A board policy enforcement and campaign</p> <p>bins on pavements issues/cyclists on pavements</p> <p>St Brides access issues</p> <p>Edinburgh University Gym and disabled facilities review</p>
Festivals	Key role in awareness raising not only of economic benefits of festivals and council's key role in contributing to their success, but also improved wellbeing for both individuals and communities.

	<p>Helped develop links, contacts and networks between festivals and local community groups and social enterprises, delivering greater inclusion, funding and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Forged international links with delegates wishing to learn from the city's success and challenges.</p> <p>Raised city's profile through broadcasts and interviews on Chinese and Latin American television speaking about the importance of our festivals in showcasing Edinburgh as a global city with an outward-facing international outlook.</p>
Gaelic	<p>Raising awareness and promoting Gaelic language; outcomes of Gaelic Language Plan; action plan; long term strategic plan for infrastructure and GME development in October; discussions underway on additional playgroup; additional nursery places; survey undertaken to identify skills; new posts for JGHS; working now to secure additional funding for Services Manager post; work underway to build links with Gaelic students universities to grow Gaelic workforce; working with SG re additional funding for posts and capital for new schools; building city wide links with Gaelic community and partners to support; co-production of the Gaelic Language Plan with Gaelic community etc</p>
Homelessness	<p>Awareness raising activity</p> <p>A lot of communications activity and press coverage of the Homelessness Task Force. Articles in EEN, quotes etc. Alongside this there has been a lot of awareness of the task force and the work it has been carrying out within our partner organisations, especially third sector and Scottish Government.</p> <p>Contribution to outcomes</p> <p>Mainly recommendations through the Homelessness Task Force Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on commissioning alternative accommodation for young people • Training for council officers who might come across people rough sleeping in day to day role on how best to support them to access services. • Implementing Housing First • Rapid Access Accommodation being mainstreamed • Service users in B&Bs to have access to food storage, cooking facilities and washing machines • Review of allocations policy

- Review of support on access private rented sector
- ICT review to provide better service and reporting
- Improved information packs
- Proportion of mid-market properties to be prioritised for people experiencing homelessness
- Engagement with service users to continue to shape services
- Extension of the Private Sector Leasing contract with Link Housing Association to increase provision of alternative temporary accommodation

Benefits to partnership working

Strong relationships with third sector organisations. A good understanding of the needs and aims of our partners, but also good relationship building and third sector organisations feeling that they are being listened to and have access to CEC politicians. Particularly through relationship with SHAPE which is key. Also developing good relationships with members of the Scottish Government's independent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and developing policy alongside, and aligned to the aims of, the action group.

Additional funding secured

Additional £1.972m allocated to homelessness budget which allowed investment in B&B contract transitioning to shared housing with access to food storage, cooking facilities and washing machines. Extension of PSL contract.

Costs or inefficiencies reduced

PSL contract extension meant that loss of PSL flats went from around 45 a month to 5. These losses would have resulted in B&B spaces being used to replace them which would have had additional costs for CEC alongside far worse outcomes for service users.

Re-prioritisation of resources

This work is ongoing as B&B provides 650 bed spaces a night in Edinburgh. We are continuing to look at alternatives but with acknowledgement that there isn't going to be one solution and that this work will take time. Work already started with PSL extension. Edindex agreed to allocate an additional 275 homes to people experiencing homelessness, this is alongside the Social Bite provision of support packages for Housing First. Additional £1.972m allocated to homelessness budgets.

Partner, Council or Government policy changed as a result of champions activity

	<p>As documented at point 'b' through recommendations of the homelessness task force. Ongoing work looking at a change from temporary accommodation to Housing First and Rapid Rehousing. This will take time and will have to be picked up through the Housing and Economy Committee. The Task Force has been helpful as a way of engaging with partners and for councillors to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges we face and the practices and approaches that the sector is taking to address them. This will help enormously when it comes to decision making.</p> <p>Identification and reduction of risk</p> <p>The biggest risks to CEC around homelessness are the escalating costs of temporary accommodation, particularly B&B, and the length of time that people are staying in temporary accommodation that is unsuitable.</p> <p>The PSL extension is a big step to addressing that but we have to acknowledge that although we have stemmed the tide of people leaving the scheme, we haven't increased the numbers. This will have to be looked at again.</p> <p>Other alternatives to current temporary accommodation are being looked at, but we also need a change of mindset so that we are focussing on permanent, settled accommodation as the main aim. This is partly about prevention, where a lot of work is being done, but with affordability of housing emerging as a key driver for homelessness, and the current landscape around benefits and rollout of universal credit, prevention won't work in every case.</p> <p>The change to a proportion of MMR being prioritised for people experiencing homelessness is important. There will need to be more thinking along these lines.</p>
Small Business	<p>Mainly awareness raising so far, however if I were to continue in the role I would be looking to further develop the work that I have started on how the Council can better support small businesses without incurring costs through policy changes.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Awareness raising activity</p> <p>Contribution to outcomes</p> <p>Benefits to partnership working</p>
Veterans	<p>Awareness raising activity</p> <p>Contribution to outcomes</p> <p>Benefits to partnership working</p>

	<p>Raising profile of support for veterans and related causes</p> <p>Promotion of the City and local, Scotland and international levels</p>
Volunteering	<p>Awareness raising activity</p> <p>Contribution to outcomes</p> <p>Benefits to partnership working</p> <p>International promotion of the City</p> <p>Promoting active citizenship</p> <p>Civic recognition of the impact of veterans and their families</p>
Young People	<p>Benefits of partnership working</p> <p>I contacted Children’s Services regarding TalkTime, an organisation I had met with that offers free counselling for young people with disabilities and had capacity. This was then promoted to all eligible families through the social work department. The benefits to partnership working are endless and I have gained a lot of value from meeting and speaking to people in the council, the third sector and other organisations about the work that’s already underway and how best I can support and build on that, in the YOYP and beyond.</p> <p>Awareness raising</p> <p>Following my motion on World Suicide Prevention Day, a report will be brought back outlining the potential for mental health first aid training in schools. A wellbeing working group has also been established to discuss how we can improve the wellbeing of council staff and I am keen to better understand the specific support we can give young people in the organisation.</p> <p>Contributed to outcomes</p> <p>As a Project Champion for What Kind of Edinburgh, I will help to deliver Edinburgh’s truly Child and Young Person friendly city through support and promotion of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child across all aspects of our city.</p>