



Councillors report September 2018

Policy Work

On Environment committee, Steve Burgess got the issue of only 39% recycling in council buildings referred to a working group and also won agreement from council leaders to look into more radical action to provide allotments and growing spaces for over 2,700 residents on the waiting list.

Melanie Main joined the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and got agreement to include tobacco in its remit, with a working group set up to deliver a Tobacco Free Edinburgh.

As finance lead for the Greens Gavin Corbett secured all-party support for a change to the council's budget process to ensure transparency on all proposals. Read more here:

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/opinion/gavin-corbett-budget-big-picture-must-not-blind-us-to-here-and-now-issues-1-4806925>

Claire Miller gained full cross party agreement at the Finance & Resources committee to continue reporting to councillors on carbon reduction, following the end of the statutory reporting regime with no requirement from central government to continue to report. This means that the council will have to report its progress on initiatives such as low carbon new buildings, retrofitting older buildings, lower carbon lighting installation, and building energy management systems.

On Transport, Chas Booth has been pushing to speed up the roll-out of on-street secure cycle lockers, and to ensure they are affordable for local residents.

At full council, Mary Campbell pressed the administration to reconsider cuts to public toilets in their upcoming budget. At a local level, she is also working with officers to see if alternative models can be used to fund public toilet provision.

On Planning Committee, Alex Staniforth has been pushing for a widening of the planning rules regarding when the committee can ask for City Car Club spaces. At present, the committee can only ask for them if parking spaces are extremely limited; but Greens believe that they allow people the choice to live without owning a car more easily and are therefore important for the environment and social equality.

Ward Work

In Fountainbridge-Craiglockhart, Gavin Corbett has been busy in Harrison Park, introducing two bat walks attended by almost 300 people, a community event at a herb garden, and a locality active travel event.

In Morningside, Melanie Main took the Head of Transport on a road trip to see for himself local roads projects that have not been delivered in the past 5 years and to meet with local residents. She also reinstated a dropped petition on safety for residents and Boroughmuir school pupils, and won agreement to take forward steps to pedestrianise the bridge.

In Southside-Newington ward, Steve Burgess won in-principle support from the South East locality committee for closure of the road outside Sciennes primary to extend their overcrowded playground.

In Craighentinny and Duddingston, Alex Staniforth has been working on resident complaints, both new and long-term. He successfully got a constituent a new boiler in time for the winter and arranged a meeting between waste management and a resident to resolve a long-standing problem with bin collection.

Claire Miller got agreement at the South East Locality Committee to form a cross-agency group who will work to create buffer zones or other solutions to protect patients and staff accessing sexual and reproductive health clinics from anti-abortion protesters, including the Chalmers clinic on Lauriston Place. This has received positive press coverage, particularly in light of a proposal from two Conservative councillors to include “pro-life” groups in the team. Read media coverage here: <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/health/tory-councillors-wanted-pro-life-group-involved-in-birth-advice-discussions-1-4805866>

In Leith, Chas Booth has been listening to local residents’ views on how the tram extension could best serve the interests of Leith and Newhaven.

In Portobello/Craigmillar, Mary Campbell completed the Kilt Walk to raise over £800 to help local charity the Thistle Foundation, who help people with long term health conditions. She has also been working with community groups to help organise a community Christmas event.

Susan Rae worked with the #saveleithwalk campaign with objectathons, stalls & the final public meeting, held at Out of the Blue where Greens were well represented on the panel by Andy Wightman MSP, who discussed the planning aspect of the campaign and also the forthcoming Planning Bill, whilst Susan covered the campaign, and why it’s non-hierarchical structure played such a vital role in its success. Susan is also the new Convener of Leith Neighbourhood Partnership, and has been chairing the weekly LeithChooses planning meetings.