

ONE CITY OUR CITY

A European City to be proud of



EDINBURGH
Labour



ELECTION 2017



ONE CITY OUR CITY

Introduction	3
Our Children	4
Our Caring City	5
Our Homes	6
Our Economy and Jobs	7
Getting Around Our City	8
A Green and Living City	9
Conclusion	10

Building on Success - Making Our City Truly One City

Edinburgh prides itself on being a fantastic place to live in, to work in and to visit. Labour-led councils in our city have used their powers to help create a dynamic economy that generates jobs, encourages innovation and fosters new business. Twenty years ago, a Labour Council was farsighted enough to nurture what is now Edinburgh Park. Over the coming decade we need to work closely with our three universities and new technology firms to create similar opportunities for our children and grandchildren.

However with success come challenges.

The Challenge of Growth

Edinburgh's population is already over 500,000 and is growing rapidly. Edinburgh is predicted to become Scotland's largest city by the mid 2030s. We need to plan for:

- More homes and schools
- Better transport links
- more skills training and more jobs
- Increased levels of services for all age groups

And we must always ensure that all the things which make Edinburgh attractive are not lost - its historic beauty, its green spaces and a vibrant city centre which is not a museum but a year-round home for so many people.



The Funding Challenge

The funding the Scottish Government receives from the UK Treasury has increased over the last few years, but during that time the SNP Scottish Government has cut the grants it gives to Councils.

Edinburgh suffers more than most councils. It gets the lowest grant of all Scottish councils - £1,928 per head against a Scottish average of £2,232.

This year, Edinburgh faces another cut of £27.1 million from its allocation. Council Tax raises less than a quarter of what the council spends each year. In the coming year, the Council Tax increase has been restricted to 3%. The Scottish Government has imposed increases over and above that on those in Bands E to H. But the money raised by that will not even make up for the overall cut in the city's grant.

Edinburgh Labour will campaign vigorously for funding to meet the city's needs because, without additional funding, our city will struggle to meet the challenges ahead.



The Challenge of Increasing Centralisation

The SNP Government keeps trying to get more and more control by centralising services. Police Scotland, which has neither saved money nor improved services, shows this does not work. In contrast Edinburgh Labour has consistently devolved power and decision making to local people, working in partnership with local communities and the voluntary sector.

For example:

- A Petitions Committee set up through which the public can raise local issues.
- The draft annual budget published months ahead for public comment.
- "Participatory Budgeting" enables local residents to decide their own priorities.



The Challenge of Poverty and Inequality

We need to ensure that all our citizens can share in the city's success. Just under a sixth of the population (**79,550**) live in households whose income falls below the poverty threshold. More than half of these (**42,100**) are in work. Many are in jobs which are minimum wage, short term or have zero hour contracts. High house prices and rents make living in the city very hard for many. There are significant health inequalities across the city.

To move forward, Edinburgh has to become truly One City.

Our Children - Our City's Future

Labour's Record – putting education at the heart of our services

- Two new high school buildings have opened – Portobello & James Gillespie's with the new Boroughmuir nearing completion.
- In total, well over £120 million has been invested in our school buildings over the last 5 years.
- Support has been given to provide a breakfast club in every school that wants one.
- Early Years provision has been extended through 11 new or replacement nurseries across the city.
- The council has worked closely with parents to support and expand after school and holiday club provision.
- Improvement in pupils' attainment is significantly above the Scottish average.

HOWEVER

More needs to be done to raise attainment in our schools, to minimise the effects poverty and inequality have on learning, and to ensure all young people leaving education find employment or training.

Raising Standards while providing support when needed

We will:

- Build new primary schools at St John's Portobello, Morningside, St Crispin's, Broomhills, Gilmerton Station Road, Leith Waterfront, Granton Waterfront, Maybury, Brunstane & Queensferry, and new High Schools for Castlebrae and in West Edinburgh.
- Ensure safe standards are met through rigorous inspection of new and existing school buildings.
- Increase the number of classroom assistants and support staff for children with additional needs to improve attainment and well-being.
- Further expand training and apprenticeships for school leavers, working with local employers to cover all young people not in further education.
- Make Early Years provision more flexible to fit parents' needs, and provide additional resources to families in difficulty so that no children are already falling behind classmates when starting school.
- Widen community access to school buildings and sports facilities, using Edinburgh Leisure to manage this as has already been done in James Gillespies' and Portobello High Schools.



Our Caring City

Labour has worked with NHS and communities to improve services

- We have brought the Council's Social Care services and NHS Lothian together in a joint organisation to enable more people to remain safely in their own homes and cut down the time people stay in hospital when they no longer need medical treatment.
- We have provided support for independent living for disabled and older people and allowed people more choice in how care is delivered.
- We have worked alongside local communities and voluntary organisations to develop initiatives such as 'Dementia Friendly Communities' and more social and befriending activities.

HOWEVER

We face big challenges. More young people with long term disabilities are now able to live into adulthood, and many people are living into their 80s and 90s, needing good support to maintain their quality of life. **But the biggest challenge is that existing resources are insufficient.**

To make care & compassion more than words

We will:

- Constantly highlight the shortfall in resources and demand that the SNP Government uses the powers it now has to fully meet its responsibilities and provide the increased resources people need.
- Take steps to increase the length and flexibility of care visits and increase the availability of care, to help people live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Increase budgets for adaptations in homes, such as showers and ramps, to aid independent living.
- Expand respite time and facilities for family and friend carers to safeguard their own health and wellbeing.
- Insist that voluntary and private organisations which work with us pay the living wage and provide staff with proper training and conditions to ensure good quality care.
- Make significant progress towards making our city 'barrier free' by improving accessibility to buildings, and making streets and pavements suitable for people with disabilities.
- Improve access to health and care services by creating eight local centres where people can work on solutions to their needs with health and care professionals and voluntary groups.



Our City - Our Homes

Labour's Record of Housing Delivery

- More than 5000 households have been helped into new homes that they can afford, all built on brownfield sites across every neighbourhood.
- Housing investment of £600m, generating over 7000 jobs and providing apprenticeships and work placements.
- Homelessness funding protected. The number of people coming to the council for emergency help has fallen due to work to prevent homelessness.
- Steps have been taken to tackle noisy behaviour from short term 'party lets'.
- 6500 council tenants have had new kitchens and bathrooms in the last five years and to reduce fuel bills, half of council homes have had new windows, heating and insulation installed.

HOWEVER

Demand for housing that people can afford is at an all-time high. Nearly one third of Edinburgh households now live in expensive and insecure tenancies in the private rented sector.

Affordable Homes in Attractive Neighbourhoods

We will:

- **Deliver** a minimum of 16, 000 low cost homes for rent and sale over the next 10 years, through the Council and our partner housing associations and cooperatives. To meet need at least two thirds should be let at 'social rent' levels. We will campaign vigorously for increased grant from the Scottish Government to speed up this process.
- **Help more** disabled and elderly tenants and owners to adapt their existing homes, and assist older and disabled home owners move to more suitable housing, should they wish to do so.
- **Purchase** existing homes to help us meet the need for affordable housing, where this would not be more expensive than a new build home of the same size.
- **Work with** other public sector and private landowners to develop land for affordable housing, giving priority to brownfield sites, and always consider possible use for affordable housing use when selling council owned land.
- **Strengthen** the Registration System for private landlords to ensure that they maintain their own properties, participate fully in common repairs, and treat tenants fairly. We will set up an inspection team to back this up.
- **Take steps** to manage the rapid spread of holiday lets which are affecting supply and rent levels in the private rented sector.
- **Continue** the programme of modernising kitchens and bathrooms in the homes of council tenants and continue to invest in measures to improve energy efficiency..



Our City - Our Economy and Jobs

In 2016 Edinburgh's vibrant and fast growing economy was acclaimed the "British Entrepreneurial City of the Year", beating places like London, Manchester and Cambridge.

In the past five years, Labour has:

- Worked with 500 local businesses of all sizes to guarantee jobs and apprenticeships to over 2000 young people.
- Created 7000 jobs by investing in affordable housing.
- Introduced the Living Wage for all Council staff, benefiting 2500 individuals, and settling outstanding equal pay claims. We aim to lead the way for other business in the city to follow.
- Created a Cooperative Development Unit providing support to create and sustain cooperative projects and social enterprises.
- Worked with businesses and neighbouring councils to win a 'City Region Deal' from the Government which will allow us to invest in our city's future.

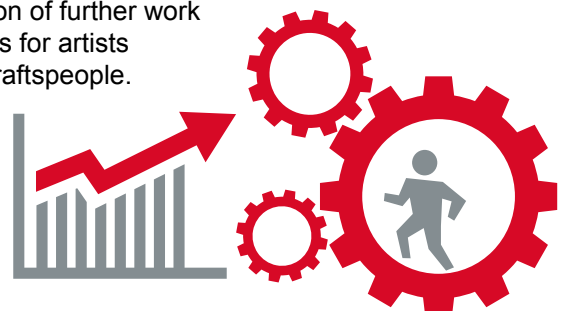
HOWEVER

Rapid growth brings a risk of poor quality development. Some of our highly successful sectors, such as financial services, tourism and further education, face uncertainties following the 'Brexit' vote and the prospect of a Scottish Referendum. In Edinburgh too many people work in low paid, short hour and short term jobs.

An Economy Fair for All

We will:

- Expand support for new business, especially in new technologies, in partnership with our universities and the financial sector.
- Increase practical and financial start-up support for social enterprises and develop 3 more cooperatives across the city.
- Expand and fund training opportunities for adults and young people, working with colleges, to help them raise their skills and earnings.
- Ensure that companies contracting with the council pay the living wage and offer their employees permanent contracts.
- Support the introduction of 'growth corridors' as the best way to accommodate the extra housing needed for Edinburgh's growth, while allowing the council to manage and protect the Green Belt.
- Sign Edinburgh up to the 'Pay Fair Tax' initiative promoted by the cooperative movement.
- Set up a dedicated Planning Enforcement Team to ensure that all developments – large or small – conform to our policies and developers' promises.
- Continue to support the city's major festivals which generate jobs and boost local business but, side by side with this increase the funding for local festivals and events. We will also support the creation of further work spaces for artists and craftspeople.



Getting Around Our City

In the past five years, Labour has:

- Significantly increased investment in public transport. Award winning Lothian Buses has upgraded its fleet with more accessible and less polluting vehicles. Passenger numbers on both bus and tram are rising each year.
- Increased the number of people who cycle and walk by investing in cycling and walking routes.
- Increased spending on cycling to 10% of the transport budget, using the money to make routes safer.
- Installed electric plug-in points across the city to encourage use of electric vehicles to reduce air pollution.
- Extended the number of 20 mph zones across our city to increase safety, especially for our children.
- Introduced a new system for road and pavement resurfacing allowing us to do more projects each year.

HOWEVER

Poor air quality presents a significant challenge to young and old, and broken surfaces on pavements and roads affect us all, whether walking, driving or cycling.

Getting around safely and reliably

We will:

- Keep Lothian Buses and Edinburgh Trams in public ownership. We will add electric buses to reduce pollution and increase bus and tram frequencies.
- Aim to complete the tram line to Newhaven, to support the development of new businesses and home building along the Granton and Leith Waterfronts. We will develop a business case for the loop from Roseburn.
- Increase spending on roads and pavements to a minimum of £20m per year, and give local communities more say on where work is done.
- Maintain spending on cycling at 10% of our transport budget, enabling projects such as the completion of the west to east link across the city centre, and the building of segregated cycle lanes.
- Introduce a cycle hire scheme.
- Create a dedicated 'Budget for Walking' to be used, for example to install more pedestrian crossings, more drop kerbs and increase the number of paths and pedestrian zones.
- Introduce a 'Low Emission Zone' in the city and monitor this to ensure there is no shift of pollution to other areas.



Our City - A Green and Living City

In the past five years, Labour has:

- Increased recycling from both individual homes and on street facilities, with 45% of waste being recycled. We send less waste to landfill creating savings for the city as well as helping the environment. We have kept the cleansing service inside the Council, and also cut costs.
- Improved our parks and green spaces across the city, including Saughton Park, King George Vth Park and Figgate Park. Thirty of our parks have achieved the 'Green Flag' quality standard.
- Set up the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative, which saves energy and puts money back into the community.
- Increased the number of allotments, raised bed plots and encouraged community gardening.
- Installed energy efficient LED street lighting.
- Put in place a plan to reduce Edinburgh's 'carbon footprint' by 42% by 2020.

HOWEVER

Our city is a place where people make their homes, work and play, as well as a place many want to visit. As population numbers grow, and visitor numbers rise, we face a challenge in ensuring that Edinburgh does not lose green space and the qualities that make it attractive.

Protecting and greening our city

We will:

- Ensure that Council policies on planning, licensing and sale of council land give substantial weight to the needs of residents while still encouraging business and tourism. We will regularly check to make sure these policies are put into practice.
- Seek from the Scottish Government more power to protect Edinburgh's green spaces, to decide the extent of our Green Belt and to implement planning policies that have been locally developed.
- Campaign for an overhaul of the planning appeal system to make it shorter, more independent and give communities the right of appeal.
- Expand the network of community gardens and food growing initiatives, and create at least two new allotment sites each year.
- Keep our cleansing service in-house, increase recycling to 60%, encourage schemes to reduce waste such as bottle deposits, and expand schemes producing energy from waste, all with the aim of having no waste going to landfill. We will scrap the bulky waste charge to stop fly tipping.
- Continue to upgrade our existing public parks, adding play areas, and ensure new parks form part of new developments.
- Protect major recreational areas such as the Meadows, Leith Links and Princes Street Gardens from excessive commercial use.
- Build the new Meadowbank Sports Centre.
- Maintain and improve our libraries and community centres.



Our city cannot tackle all of its challenges alone.

Edinburgh Labour calls for action from the Scottish Government to:

Pass new laws to protect tenants and communities

- Nearly one third of Edinburgh households rent their home from a private landlord. Tenancy Law needs further reform to provide tenants with longer term tenancies and to tackle high rents.
- Many Community groups find that, even when they win campaigns locally to prevent excessive or inappropriate development, their efforts are overturned at appeal. The planning appeal system must be reformed to give communities rights of appeal.

Give power back to the local council level

- We oppose centralisation of services. With Police Scotland we have seen community policing in decline, a successful team that tackled housebreaking in the city disbanded, without the promised savings.
- Our city's views on when and where new housing was needed were overridden by the Scottish Government, putting the Green Belt at risk.

Give councils powers to choose to raise additional revenue if needed.

- A 'hotel bed levy' could be used to provide skills training for Edinburgh residents in the hospitality and tourist business, and help fund the Festivals, which generates £313m for Scotland of which £280m is in Edinburgh.
- A levy on workplace parking spaces in the city centre, could be used to speed up measures to reduce air pollution.

Provide Proper Funding for our local services

The Scottish Government has extensive new powers to raise the money which would protect and improve the services so many people rely on. When Scottish Labour proposed a 50p income tax rate for the highest earners, the SNP opposed it.

Councils are expected to do more and more with less funding. Too often they are 'fire-fighting' crises rather than being able to provide services that avoid crisis happening. The Labour led Council in Edinburgh has consistently opposed compulsory redundancies, and will continue to do so. However in some services staffing levels have had to be reduced to the point where there is not enough staff to deliver the service. Edinburgh Labour has tried to protect vital services like care and education as far as possible, but this has meant other services have been cut back.

Here are just some of the things Labour would do with proper funding:

- Speed up the delivery of affordable homes, enabling more people to move to homes they can afford. Lower rents reduce pressure on household incomes and reduce government spend on housing benefits, releasing more money to invest in housing.
- Substantially increase the home care budget to enable longer visits, meet complex needs, provide care to more people, and fund services which provide practical help (eg shopping) and companionship.
- Bring all primary and high school buildings up to a fully satisfactory standard. Many of our school buildings do not currently meet that standard.

Labour believes that the mark of a civilised society is how it looks after its young and vulnerable citizens.

We call on the Scottish Government to give our city the powers and resources we need to become truly One City.



This manifesto is the result of a consultation process which has seen submissions from citizens, community groups, business, trade unions and events such as the Side by Side Conference in North Edinburgh.

Thank you for contributions and hopefully you will see that this has substantially revised the draft document which sought views last year.

