

Looking after the books leads to £26m investment in Edinburgh

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Frontline services in Edinburgh will receive a massive boost as the Council agreed a £26m investment in priority areas such as children and the most vulnerable at its budget meeting today.

Supporting Edinburgh's economic competitiveness to build prosperity and quality of life for all residents and creating a safer, cleaner, greener and more sustainable city are also priorities. The fifth successive freeze in Council Tax maintains Edinburgh's band D rate as the lowest of Scotland's four major cities.

Cllr Jenny Dawe, Council Leader said:

"[This budget](#) offers extra investment in services for the young, vulnerable and elderly. Against a backdrop of global recession and cuts in public spending this has only been possible due to the Administration's prudent financial management bringing every department in or under budget in the last two years. At the same time we have saved money and built on our essential reserves.

"This year the Scottish Government's grant allocation for Edinburgh was also significantly increased, now better reflecting our population level.

"We listened when people told us where their priorities lie and I am pleased we are able to invest £26m in services residents have told us matter."

Investing in children and schools remains a central priority. Extra investment of £4.1m will help reduce the repairs backlog for schools by almost half. A further £250,000 will also help to fund additional schools books and other services.

The huge pressures associated with the demand for vulnerable children and the very young are also being addressed with additional funding of £1.87m to support increasing numbers of vulnerable children. There will also be an additional £2.8m for people with learning and physical disabilities and £2.1m for older people, over the next year.

Cllr Phil Wheeler, Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee, said:

"The extra funding in this year's budget is strategically targeted with early intervention and service transformation in mind. An example of this is repairing school buildings which will save us money in the long run.

"Next year's capital programme will change the lives of many tenants as we upgrade thousands of council homes with new kitchens and bathrooms, double glazing, rewiring as well as many other common repairs."

Council tax band levels. The council tax band levels for Edinburgh in 2012/13 will be:

A: £779.33
B: £909.22
C: £1,039.11
D: £1,169.00
E: £1,428.78
F: £1,688.56
G: £1,948.33
H: £2,338.00

Total budget

The total revenue budget is £1,047m for 2012/13. Council Tax makes up £229m of this with £819 million coming from Government grants. The total capital budget (excluding trams and the housing revenue account) is £214.268m.

Key budget provisions

Investing in our children and schools

- £4.1m to improve the fabric of the Children & Families estate
- £250k for school text books and other supplies
- £147k to support the increasing number of children in early years

Protecting our most vulnerable children

- £1.87m to support increasing numbers of vulnerable children
- £1.63m for early years and early intervention services

Supporting Edinburgh's economic competitiveness

- £1m to help young people find positive destinations under the Edinburgh Guarantee
- £1m to support third party organisations to help people into work

Improving care for our elderly and vulnerable

- £2.1m for the elderly
- £2.8m to adults with physical and learning disabilities
- £1.7m for the older peoples' Change Fund
- £400k to provide improved support for carers and expanded respite services
- £500k to refurbish care homes
- £226k to help the elderly and vulnerable live more independent lives in their homes
- £190k to give the elderly and vulnerable more say over their care
- £350k for specialist equipment in care homes
- £54k to reduce the waiting time for bathing assessments
- £20k to support additional social activities in care homes

Supporting Edinburgh's Cultural, Sporting and Leisure Activities

- £50k for Edinburgh's world-leading Christmas and Hogmanay festivals
- £890k for Edinburgh Leisure for targeted programmes for vulnerable children and adults and to keep Portobello Golf Course and Kirkliston Leisure Centre open
- £725k to improve pitches and pavilions
- £300k to align library open times with local need

Providing safe, warm and affordable homes

- £14m for 1,500 new kitchens and bathrooms
- £1.6m to rewire 780 homes
- £1.5m for 400 homes to receive new energy efficient heating systems
- £700k for 300 homes to be fitted with double glazing
- £1.2m for 1,550 new doors to be fitted -
- £2.4m on a range of common repairs
- £2.4m to take 212 households out of poverty

A safe, green, clean, attractive and environmentally sustainable city

- £4m for service improvements to increase recycling
- £500k for severe winter weather
- £2.5m to improve the Property Conservation Service
- £300k for public toilets
- £250k for a micro-hydro scheme to provide renewable, low carbon energy for Council facilities
- £250k for sustainable transport
- £85k to replace trees damaged in the recent storms

Providing a modern, effective, integrated transport network

- £3m for road repairs including potholes
- £90k for Taxicard users who have a severe, permanent disability
- £70k to improve bus services including improving services in the Craighentiny area
- £100k to improve traffic management