

October 2017

Challenges and changes in adult care

Establishing the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board and Health and Social Care Partnership (in April 2016) has required a period of significant transition to bring the relevant council and NHS Lothian workforces together.

Managing adult services under a single system will allow more effective investment of precious resources, which will in turn improve our capacity to meet rising demand in ways that allow people more choice and control over their care and support.

Such a shift has inevitably posed many challenges, not least because of the absolute imperative to continue to provide services for those 'at risk'. We currently have 169 residents waiting to be discharged from hospital, 1,044 awaiting assessment and 701 waiting for care following assessment.

As I wrote in a [piece for the Evening News](#) earlier this month, I don't for one minute underestimate the challenge that this represents but I can assure you that we are working tirelessly to ensure these residents get the customised support they need as quickly as possible.

Safer cycling

We want Edinburgh's streets to be people-friendly and a major part of that means ensuring they're safe and easy to use, however you choose to travel.

For those on bikes, a raft of new measures is being rolled out at key points along the existing tram route. Red-screeded lanes to guide cyclists across the tracks at the recommended angle of no less than 45 degrees are being laid at various locations highlighted to us by cycling groups. These include the junction with York Place and Elder Street, Princes Street on to Frederick Street and Princes Street on to Waverley Bridge.

A lot of work has also been done to improve the layout of the Shandwick Place and Queensferry Street junction at the West End.

Alongside these, we've also *blazed a trail* by introducing the first two-stage right turn in Scotland. This new layout will go live at the junction of McDonald Road and Leith Walk at the end of this month. Check out this [short animation](#) to find out more about the design and how to use it.

Picardy Place plans

Very much with the above in mind, we have decided to defer the decision on Picardy Place designs until early in the New Year. This will allow more opportunity for public engagement – both on the road layout but, further, on how we might use the site where the roundabout

currently sits.

We have already heard a wide variety of views on the proposals but want to widen the discussion to include as many of the travelling public as possible. The challenge for us is to find the right, and most practical, balance between the needs of all road users, whether they travel by bike, bus, car, tram or on foot.

In the coming weeks, there will be an opportunity to have your say, either online or in person at one of our public drop-in events. Please keep your eye on the council website and/or local media for further details.

This is an important and well-used gateway to the city centre – and the plans form a crucial part of regenerating the east end – so it is important we gather as many views as we can.

Edinburgh St James... one year on

Hand-in-hand with the Picardy plans is the ongoing development of Edinburgh St James, a major transformation of the area and one that, on completion, will create 3,000 full time permanent jobs and deliver a tremendous boost to the city's economy.

The developer continues to make good progress and, this week, they shared some interesting (and welcome) numbers to mark a year on site: over 96% of demolition waste has been kept from landfill, with some 19,700 tonnes of material recycled and reused onsite; while 200 days of work experience have been provided, with 260 students from 27 different schools, colleges and universities taking part.

I'm pleased to see the planned diversions have maintained the flow of traffic since the Leith Street closure began and I want to thank the public for their ongoing patience. We will continue to work closely with the developer to monitor the impact of the works and to ensure they keep us all properly informed throughout.

Fix the roof while the sun is shining

Storm Ophelia has left plenty of damage in her wake this week, albeit we undoubtedly escaped the worst of her advances. But it does beg the question as to how well we are all prepared for the winter months that lie ahead.

Timely, then, that we remind residents about our new [Shared Repairs Service](#), launched earlier this year to help home owners in shared properties work together to keep them in good repair. Ultimately, it is their responsibility to do so but the Council can offer help and guidance and, in some cases, cover the 'missing share' to enable much-needed works to go ahead if an owner is unable or unwilling to get involved.

Our new step-by-step [toolkit](#) will help take owners through the process to work with neighbours to get their properties fixed more easily.

Building blocks in place for the next generation

Ensuring the best start in life for our young children is a key commitment for the Council and we are determined to meet the Scottish Government's aim of increasing the number of funded early learning and childcare hours from 600 to 1140 hours by 2020.

Two of the biggest challenges we face are staffing and providing the physical infrastructure for the extra places. A national recruitment drive starts this month to attract more people to a career in early years and our own Early Learning and Childcare Academy is helping grow and develop our workforce by delivering training and upskilling staff.

Having opened four nurseries since the summer recess, plans are already well underway to deliver a further 12 new facilities that create fun, nurturing environments over the next three

to four years.

Campaign success

Congratulations are due to our Communications team, who were awarded 'Best Public Sector Campaign' at this year's CIPR PRide Awards for *Our Edinburgh*, a well-conceived campaign to encourage the public to take responsibility for their local environment, raising awareness of the negative impacts of littering, fly-tipping, dog fouling and misuse of residential bins.

We're already beginning to see the success the campaign, alongside the hard work of our waste and cleansing staff, has had in areas like Leith Walk and Gorgie and Dalry, where complaints about dog fouling and litter have dropped, and I look forward to seeing similar results elsewhere in the city.

Smooth operator

Staying on the subject of success, Edinburgh Trams has scooped another hugely prestigious accolade, being crowned 'Operator of the Year' at the Global Light Rail Awards, held in London earlier this month.

They were also 'Highly Commended' in the Most Improved System category and shortlisted for the Best Customer Initiative, Team of the Year and Project of the Year under £50m awards.

I want to congratulate everyone at Edinburgh Trams for this impressive achievement; it's richly deserved.

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