

# Greens call for Council budget delays ignored

Green Councillors today proposed to make Edinburgh Council's budget process 'less wasteful and more meaningful' by calling for a decision on the Administration budget, published this morning, to be delayed for two weeks.

The Greens said a two week 'cooling-off' period would allow all parties and stakeholders to come together to discuss the Administration proposals and suggest changes to improve it for the good of the whole City.

The Greens' proposal was given added weight by last night's decision of The Scottish Parliament to increase funding to local authorities, funding that was not included in the Administration budget today.

The current budget process, whereby all parties can produce a budget, but only the Administration budget is ever passed, is estimated to cost around £1m. Since 2009 the Greens have chosen not to take part in this process.

Councillor Chapman, Greens Finance Spokesperson said:-

*"Only with a properly transparent and inclusive budget process can we ensure we negotiate the best possible outcome for our City's workers and residents. At a time where job losses and service cuts seem inevitable, we should be doing our utmost to gather the best proposals for the City, to ensure we protect our workers pay and conditions and continue to deliver the services on which our citizens rely."*

Greens' Co-ordinator, Councillor Steve Burgess, said:-

*"Every year opposition parties are pressurised into spending Council time and money drafting their own budgets that will never see the light of day. Council tax payers would be horrified that up to £1m of their money is wasted on this. Greens want to see all parties to get round the table to agree the budget and an end to this ridiculous waste. No one has given*

*us a reason why this can't happen.*

*"It would be difficult to argue with much of the pre election give-away that the Administration have pushed through today but these handouts take place against a background of draconian cuts to jobs and services made in last year's budget many of which will only come into effect after the election."*