

Five things you need to know today



Provost Fundraising for Charity – Bus Lanes – Culture & Leisure Committee – Community council meeting – Council candidates and child poverty

The Lord Provost, George Grubb, will be handing over cheques amounting to £13,392 this afternoon at The City Chambers to Mr David Tolley, President of The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and to Mr Geoff Leask, Director of The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust. The money was raised at the Lord Provost's Charity Banquet held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre last month which was attended by 340 guests, including HRH The Princess Royal who was the guest of honour.

The Banquet managed to raise a total of £28,514 for two nominated charities, The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh's Hamlin Fistula Appeal and The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust. A £1,730 share of this sum has already been sent directly to the charities by donors.

We all know it is wrong to drive in the bus lanes at certain times of the day, unless of course you are driving a bus, but now it will be even more important to comply with the rules of the road as fines of £60 will be imposed by the council. There are now cameras installed on 10 bus routes in the city and anyone who infringes the bus lane restrictions will be notified by post. You have been warned.

Councillor Gordon Mackenzie, Transport Convener, said:- “Bus lanes allow public transport to flow more easily around the city and get to their destination as quickly as possible, but this only happens if they are kept clear of other vehicles.

“Fining drivers who use these lanes in order to beat traffic queues, unless there is an ongoing emergency, will send out a clear message that these rules are there for good reasons, to cut congestion and pollution.”

A report will be laid before the council’s Culture and Leisure Committee when they meet this morning, which will tell the council that the renovation works at the Assembly Rooms are on budget and will be delivered on time this summer. The council-owned facility will feature a Jamie’s Italian restaurant among its new eateries.

But the other part of the business before the committee this morning is to discuss arrangements for the Olympic & Paralympic Torch relay when it passes through the capital in June. We already knew that the stands are being put up at the Castle earlier than usual this summer to allow for an evening event to mark the occasion, but here are the full details to be approved by the committee:-

[Item No 11 – Olympic and Paralympic Torch Relays](#)

Sighthill, Broomhouse & Parkhead CC meet tonight at 6.45pm at Murrayburn Primary School.

Ahead of next week’s local elections in Edinburgh, [Save the Children](#) is urging all candidates to make the issue a priority, revealing that 19% of the city’s children live in poverty.

The charity has launched its own manifesto, 'No Child Born without a Chance' calling for local government to give every child in poverty in Edinburgh a chance to fulfil their potential, whatever their circumstances.

There are three council wards in Edinburgh where more than 30% of children are growing up in poverty.

Save the Children is calling for all candidates to put tackling child poverty at the heart of their campaigns by doing whatever they can to maximise incomes for the poorest families and improve children's life chances. The charity has outlined four key calls and is encouraging all local governments to:

- Pay the Scottish living wage of £7.20 per hour, a rate which allows working families to live above the breadline. Currently, 14.7% of workers in Edinburgh earn less than £7 per hour.
- Make life easier for parents who work by providing out-of-school care for five to fourteen year olds for children in low income households.
- Provide parents in deprived areas with programmes to involve them in their children's education – a key factor to a child's success at school.
- Deliver 15 hours per week of free pre-school education for three and four year olds and 15 hours of free early learning for the poorest two year olds.

We have a comprehensive list of all of the council candidates arranged by Ward, [on our Council Elections 2012 page](#) with a link to individual profiles for all of them.