

# Five things you need to know today



## **Council meeting – Missing Woman – Ceilidh – Volunteers for the Save the Children Shop – Lightbulbs**

The new council will meet for the first time today to discuss real business. Part of what they will do is to approve formally who will do what on the council. We have already told you who they will be. The Labour Group's [nominations are here](#) and the [SNP nominations are listed here](#).

Today the salaries will also be approved. In total the salaries for all councillors are estimated to be £1,235,442 per annum except for expenses which will be calculated in addition. If a councillor buys dinner while out on council business, then they are entitled to a payment of £25 for that meal, or £110 for B & B outside London.

The Council Leader will be paid £48,704.

The Lord Provost will get a salary of £36,528 which is 75% of the Leader's salary and we understand this is unchanged from the last administration.

The amount available for paying Senior Councillors totals £633,144 and could be split between as many as 24 of them, but in any case the maximum amount that can be paid to elected members at this level is 75% of the council leader's salary i.e £36,528. Apart from the Deputy Leader and Deputy Provost, who have already been appointed, the other senior councillor posts have to be agreed at the meeting. Conveners of certain boards are also entitled to the same 75% rate and the vice convenor is entitled to 75% of that, i.e. £27,396. Otherwise a councillor without any special responsibilities will receive

£16,234 in line with all other Scottish councillors. Salaries are paid from 3 May 2012, the date of the council election.

Councillors may also claim expenses and the procedure is set out quite clearly in guidance notes given to councillors. The basic rule is that only expenses for which receipts are produced will be paid, except mileage expenses calculated at 45p per mile for a car, and any road and bridge tolls. Councillors may only use the council taxi contract if no public transport is available, and for the purposes of transparency, a Register of Expenses claimed is made publicly available on a quarterly basis.

There has already been one group who have claimed the glory for fulfilling one of their manifesto promises without a decision even having been made at the City Chambers. The Greens have said that they told us they would campaign for council meetings to be live streamed from the city chambers, so that anyone watching at home or in their office can see them. [This is now set to be piloted.](#)

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Police in Edinburgh are appealing for information to help trace a 30-year-old woman who has gone missing from her home in the Capital.

Laura Gorrie was last seen around 10am on Tuesday, when she left her home in the High Street. It is thought that her intention may have been to visit the Cameron Toll shopping centre.

She is described as 5ft 8ins tall, heavy build, long brown hair, and wearing glasses.

When last seen she was wearing blue jeans, a red jacket, and black trainers. She was carrying a Tesco 'Bag for Life'.

A Lothian and Borders Police spokesman said: "Laura has

learning difficulties, and while there are no immediate concerns surrounding her safety, she has not been seen or heard from since yesterday, and her family want to reassure themselves that she is ok.

"She has been known to travel widely, and it could be the case that she has travelled outwith Edinburgh.

"Anyone who has seen or heard from Laura since yesterday is urged to contact police as soon as possible. Likewise, we would appeal to Laura to contact either her family or the police so that we can satisfy ourselves that she is safe."

Anyone with information should contact Lothian and Borders Police on 0131 311 3131.

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Save the Children are looking for a team of volunteers to help run their new shop opening in Morningside, Edinburgh.

The charity shop is due to open on the bustling Morningside Road on Saturday 9 June 2012 and will be Save the Children's fourth charity shop in the capital.

All volunteer applicants are welcome and there are a number of exciting different roles to fill.

**Alison Byers, Save the Children Retail Regional Manager, said:**

"Volunteers are a crucial part of Save the Children's work and without them we wouldn't be able to run our charity shops. We're really excited to be opening a new shop in Morningside. All of our shops are run entirely by volunteers so we'll need a team of about 15 to help us run it.

"Volunteers from all walks of life are encouraged to get in

touch and we're always hugely grateful for whatever time they can give, even if it's just an hour a week. Our shifts are flexible to suit volunteers and the work is varied from pricing stock to creating eye-catching window displays to finding treasures amongst the donations and even promoting our wider campaigns to customers.

"This is also a great opportunity to gain or build on retail experience and develop team leading skills, meet new people, and all the while help make a difference to the lives of children around the world."

Anyone interested in volunteering at the new Save the Children shop can come along to the open day at 390 Morningside Road on Monday 28 May 2012 between 11am and 3pm or contact Alison Byers on 07826 859 127 or [a.byers@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:a.byers@savethechildren.org.uk)

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Two Edinburgh MPs, Mark Lazarowicz and Sheila Gilmore have been talking in a Westminster Hall Debate this week about.....lightbulbs.. Yes you read that right. The debate is too lengthy to be reproduced here but you [can read it at your leisure here.](#)

Following the debate Sheila Gilmore summarised the issue:

'EU legislation means old-fashioned incandescent bulbs are to be phased out entirely by September this year. However alternative low energy light bulbs such as CFLs and LEDs can aggravate conditions such as lupus and migraines. Estimates of the number of people in the UK affected vary between 30,000 and anything up to 2 million.'

Sheila Gilmore then set out her request for an exemption:- 'In the debate I asked Ministers to obtain an exemption for people who suffer ill health as a result of low energy lighting to continue to purchase incandescent bulbs.'

'The Minister said that the Government takes this issue seriously and he would see if there was any wriggle room to allow such an exemption to be put in place.'

'While I welcome the Minister's response, the Government will have to act fast – if nothing is done before September people who suffer ill health from low energy lighting will be forced to live the rest of their lives in the dark.'

Edinburgh North and Leith MP Mark Lazarowicz also attended the debate, as the issue had been raised with him by constituents also. He said:

'We don't want to discourage people from using low energy light bulbs, as climate change is one of the most significant threats the country faces and reducing our energy consumption is key to tackling it. Equally, however, it is important to realise that for some people there are real health issues arising from the use of low energy light bulbs.'