

Five things you need to know today



Today at the City Chambers – Radio Forth Awards – MASSScot – National Adoption Week – Barnardo’s Scotland

All of the council committees have new names, so today the newly named Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee and the Governance Risk and Best Value committees meet. The second of these is perhaps interesting only because it has an update about trams. When asked about the tram arithmetic during last month’s full council, Transport convenor Lesley Hinds had to do some quick calculations but affirmed they were correct. However, Conservative group leader, Cameron Rose explained what he had been asking about to The Reporter following the meeting:-

“Page 4 of the tram report [to the 25 October meeting] has a table. I focussed on the line ‘Infraco – on street’ in the table ,though there are other areas of it which are not right.

We know this figure is wrong (£39m) because the previous work on Princes Street (part of the on street section) has been carried out pre the settlement agreement. Therefore, including the work done on the on street section over the last year (Haymarket to York Place) the amount spent on street is clearly not £19m as the report reports. We know it is more than that.

Now I have been told that the on street costs have been put in the off street line in the table and that the total numbers are correct. Perhaps they have. But it doesn’t fill me with confidence about the figures we are being presented with. There are other discrepancies in the table which require further scrutiny. This is the one which I used to demonstrate

the problem.”

This is the first real information on the finances of the tram project which has been provided since January 2012, although the all party group which oversees the work has been briefed monthly, and it also, as promised to the Conservatives provides more information on the work done.

The papers for today’s meetings are available in all their new blue finery [on the council website here.](#)

Tonight the Radio Forth Awards are taking place at the Usher Hall. This is what the venue says about the evening’s events:-

Now in their ninth year, the ceremony recognises those living in our community as well as some of the biggest names in music and entertainment today.

The Radio Forth Awards categories range from Best Teacher, Local Hero to Best Artists and Music Recognition. The Awards day itself is high profile event attended by some of the regions top names from music, business, politics and media. Guests in previous years have included The Wanted, Olly Murrs, James Blunt, The Stereophonics, Pixie Lott, Paulo Nutini, Deacon Blue, Sharleen Spiteri, Lulu, Sir Tom Farmer, Girls Aloud, McFly, David Gray, Gabrielle, and many more famous names from the world of sport and comedy.

The line-up for this year’s event will be closely guarded secret until later today!

It should be noted that proceeds from awards ceremony benefit the Radio Forth Cash for Kids Appeal which helps disadvantaged children living in Edinburgh the Lothian’s and Fife. For further information log on to www.forthone.com.

✘ MASScot (Melanoma Action & Support Scotland) recently exhibited in the Scottish Parliament, highlighting the high incidence of malignant melanoma – the most common cancer in 15 to 34 year olds in Scotland.

MASScot asked the MSPs to consider a public education campaign to prevent skin cancers by avoiding sunburn and to make people aware of the early signs of skin cancer and the dangers of sunbed use. Early diagnosis with removal by minor surgery will cure thin melanomas, but all too often the early signs of cancer are missed. MSPs were asked to sign that they agreed that Sun Protection is Vital and add a comment of their own. Alex Salmond wrote “Pale is Cool” and many particularly noted the need for protection of young people. It’s hoped the exercise will result in questions being asked about sun awareness and result in a debate on this issue in the Scottish Parliament.

Gordon MacDonald MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands stated: *“As a sufferer of vitiligo I understand the importance of using sunscreen. We need to ensure that youngsters understand the dangers and that the problems relating to prolonged exposure to UV rays from some sunbeds or from the sun may not manifest itself until they are older.”*

During National Adoption Week which started yesterday, The City of Edinburgh Council is launching a new drive to encourage those who are considering becoming adoptive parents to take the next step.

[A new brochure](#) launched this week outlines the steps involved in the adoption and permanent fostering process. The step-by-step guide aims to clearly explain the adoption process and answers many of the key questions that people often ask.

Councillor David Key, Education Vice-Convener, said: "I'm sure there will be many people who may have considered adopting a child at some point but have been put off by what can seem an overwhelming application process. This new drive hopes to show that adopting a child need not be a daunting prospect – instead you could be making a huge difference to a young life."

Barnardo's Works Edinburgh is set to help another group of disadvantaged young people off benefits and into sustained employment. The Granton based service runs a 25 week programme that trains 16 to 24 year-olds in employability skills and works with local employers to provide waged work placements as a gateway to permanent jobs.

Eleven young people – the 22nd such group to be helped in the last three years – have already been through initial meetings with project workers and are due to begin their four week induction this week. The induction covers essential skills such as communication; money management and budgeting as well as putting the group through mock job interviews and helping them to write CVs.

Following the induction programme the group will start an eight week placement with a partner employer – during which the young person can continue to claim benefits – and thirteen weeks paid employment. The placements are matched to the young person's preferred sector or industry which includes construction, care, administration, hospitality, retail and warehousing. During the placement staff from Barnardo's Works remain in regular contact with the young person and the

business offering support and regular reviews to both.

During their time with the charity young people are also able to access funding for accredited training courses such as first aid and food hygiene certificates, forklift licenses and CSCS cards which are required to work on construction sites.

Simon Warr, Children's Service Manager at Barnardo's Works Edinburgh, said: "16 to 24 year-olds have been particularly hard hit by the recession with a lack of experience often cited as a major difficulty for young people trying to compete in the job market.

"The Barnardo's Works programme is, however, not just designed to provide work experience: the ultimate aim is to move young people into sustainable jobs. The young people we work with have often overcome multiple barriers to employment, the team at Barnardo's Works Edinburgh work with the young people to break down such barriers and allow young people to enter and remain in employment."

Barnardo's Works Edinburgh – formerly known as NETworks – has helped over 185 young people with 60 entering independent employment and a further nine starting college courses. The service now delivers programmes in Fife, East Lothian and West Lothian as well as Edinburgh.

If you are a young person who would benefit from joining Barnardo's Works, or a business who would consider offering a placement then please phone 0131 559 3940 or email

bwe@barnardos.org.uk