

Five things you need to know today



Portobello consultation begins – Today at Holyrood – Council budget – Police concert – Christmas Fair today on Castle Street

The council has begun a process to move the proposal for a new Portobello High School forward.

The city-wide consultation will seek views on the proposal to take a Private Bill to the Scottish Parliament in early 2013. The proposed legislation will address the legal issue that currently prevents the Council from immediately using Portobello Park as the site for the new Portobello High School.

Households in the Portobello area will receive [a leaflet](#) outlining the proposals. In addition road shows will be run at a range of venues mainly in the Portobello area throughout December and January, and exhibitions will be displayed in both Piershill and Portobello Libraries with information about the proposals.

Two public meetings will also be held on 9 January 2013 at Portobello Town Hall and on 17 January 2013 at Meadowbank Sports Centre.

The consultation will run until 31 January 2013 and people can give feedback either online, at the road shows, at the library exhibitions or they can write in with their views.

Councillor Paul Godzik, the city's Education, Children & Families Convener, said:- "We've always been clear that Portobello Park remains by far the best option for a new

school and in November the Council unanimously endorsed the option to pursue a Private Bill through the Scottish Parliament. We now want to hear what the community thinks of our proposals and it's crucial that we get as much feedback as possible from residents in both Portobello and the wider Edinburgh area. I'd encourage everyone to take some time to give us their views."

Today at Holyrood there will be an open debate in the aftermath of the Leveson Report. It is billed as a Scottish Government Debate: The Leveson Report, The Way Forward for Scotland. You can [watch the proceedings online here](#).

The council want you [to read their draft budget and make comments on it](#). The spending regime for 2013/14 is the first budget which the new administration will set, as at present they are working under the final budget of the previous council. So this is their chance to put their own stamp on spending and income.

The City of Edinburgh Council has a budget of £1bn and over the five years of their administration they have to introduce savings of around £100m just to balance the books. This equates to 2% of the total budget and Council Leader Andrew Burns is confident that the savings can be achieved. In fact the council's aim is to make more savings than that, of around 4 to 5% which would then allow for new investment in other areas.

[You have until 7 January 2013 to read the facts and figures](#) and make any comments to help the council finalise their figures. The draft budget will then be brought to the full council meeting on 7 February 2013 when the budget will be debated and agreed by all 58 councillors.

Councillor Burns said he really wants changes to be made to the draft document in light of much comment from members of the public, and of course from the other political groups. Burns encourages everyone to look at it now, and said to The Reporter that he is pleased this will be the first time the new process of publishing a draft budget ahead of the budget setting meeting has been undertaken.

The new spending regime will then start from 5 April 2013.

The police choir will be singing in the city centre this Sunday at The Assembly Hall on The Mound. Anyone wishing to purchase tickets can do so by visiting <http://lothianandborderspolicechoir.bpt.me> or by calling 0800 411 8881



Today on Castle Street there is a Christmas Fair. Not just any old fair but The Real Scottish Christmas Fair! See all the details on the poster below.

