

Council in the running for five awards



Five City of Edinburgh Council projects which the council claim have transformed the way public services are delivered in the city are going for gold in the finals of the [Association of Public Service Excellence \(APSE\)](#) Service Awards 2013. The APSE Awards recognise excellence in public sector service delivery in local authorities across the United Kingdom.

The council's foster care recruitment campaign, a project targeting nursery children's transition into Primary 1 and an internet based training portal for staff that saved the Council an estimated £3m, are among the projects shortlisted. In total the five projects are estimated to have saved over £3.86 million.

They will go on to compete against councils and other public sector organisations from across the UK in these annual awards, and the results will be announced in Liverpool on Thursday 5 September 2013.



Council Leader –
Andrew Burns

City of Edinburgh Council Leader Andrew Burns said: “These key projects have not only helped the Council achieve its objectives in critical service areas, they have also delivered important cost savings. Despite increasing pressure on budgets and resources, our frontline services continue to ensure that the people of Edinburgh are well cared for and looked after.

“Our employees deserve this national recognition for the work

they continue to put in to improve Council services and deliver improved outcomes for Edinburgh residents.”

Announcing the finalists, Councillor John Kerr Brown, APSE National Chair, said “These awards recognise those frontline services are leading the way in UK public services, and deserve national recognition for their contribution to local neighbourhoods.”

The five projects shortlisted are:

▪ **Best Efficiency Initiative – ‘Foster Me Foster Us’**

‘Foster Me Foster Us’ recruits foster carers to care for Edinburgh’s most vulnerable children. The team used an engaging recruitment campaign with a recognisable brand to increase the number of approved foster carers in the city. In 2012/13 there was a 55% increase in new carers registering and saved the Council £800,000.

▪ **Best Public/ Voluntary Partnership Working Initiative – *The Lighthouse Keeper Joint Transition Project***

To help raise attainment and engage parents in their child’s learning, the multi-agency team developed a high quality, interactive learning experience, developed around the stories by Ronda and David Armitage. 122 families took part who were supported through their child’s transition from nursery, through summer and into P1.

▪ **Best Service Team Sports, Leisure & Cultural – *Libraries***

– Unafraid of the future

Edinburgh's Library and Information Service is delivering a new model for libraries across the city, based on an approach which is inspired by successful practise within the retail sector. The service has forged a coveted international reputation for its innovative, visionary approach with key strengths being a partnership approach, delivery of a range of services for hard to reach readers, cutting edge website and Library App, and engaging social media activity.

▪ Best Employee & Equality Initiative – *Workstyle*

Home working was introduced as an effective way to reduce costs, reduce sickness absence, increase productivity and promote a healthy work-life balance. This has resulted in a forecasted annual saving of £61,000 and on average a 20% increase in productivity.

▪ Best Information & Communication Technology Initiative – *CECiL*

CECiL is a 24hr learning and communications that has transformed the way in which the Council approaches and delivers key messages, initiatives and campaigns. This has resulted in greater cross council working and sharing, more highly skilled staff and delivered approximately £3m of savings.

