

Five things you need to know today



Council may not achieve target on Health and Social Care savings – Green councillors demand action on traffic – MP questions energy bills – Digital Sentinel – Warrender Baths

The council's Health and Social Care committee has a budget of £195.8m and had projected that they could save £3.3m this year. It is now believed that the saving which can be made will only be 90% of that total. The area where there is the biggest problem is in the area of homecare services provided by the council to residents who need care at home. The level of homecare services offered is expected to increase next year.

The committee will hear about this financial position when it meets next Tuesday 12 November 2012.

Green councillors have called for an end to hand-wringing over news that Edinburgh has the worst congestion problems of anywhere in Scotland.

Green transport spokesperson Cllr Nigel Bagshaw said:-“It will come as no surprise to residents in Edinburgh that congestion is worse here than in London. Congestion is bad news, for the economy, for emergency services, for disabled people who need a car, and for those communities blighted by air pollution

“It is clear that this is not a problem that can be built out

of, without wrecking the city's historic streets and green spaces which are so much a part of what defines the city. At the moment there are just too many cars competing for too little space. The only way forward is through reduced transport demand and managing that demand better.

“As a planning authority we need to start getting tough on developments which we know are going to make traffic pressures worse. We need to stop absurd projects like “Alive after Five” which, at the cost of £47,000 is actually encouraging more people to drive into the city centre. And we need to start investing in public transport, better facilities for cycling and walking and really upping the city's game on car-sharing and pooling.

“The time for hand-wringing is long gone.”

Edinburgh MP questioned the new Secretary of State for Scotland yesterday on energy bills and then spoke later in the day in a major debate on Labour's proposal for an energy price freeze.

Mark Lazarowicz MP has strongly attacked the Government for its abject failure to tackle rocketing fuel bills with each of its solutions – competition, switching and simplification – leaving most customers no better off and some even paying more.

Mark said:-“I am angry at the Government’s complacency as ordinary families and especially the elderly are faced with the worry of how they will afford to heat their homes this winter. Its solutions so far – competition, switching and simplification – just haven’t worked and I know that some of my constituents have even ended up paying more.

“The Government’s next trick is for green levies to be taken into general taxation – which the Scottish Government has also proposed – but without saying where the money would come from. I want to see a price freeze and a complete overhaul of the way the industry operates so that its priority is the customer not ever increasing profits.”



In Wester Hailes there is a new community news website called The Digital Sentinel. The group held a launch event on 7 October and the photos and videos have now been uploaded to the site. The name for the project came from the old newspaper which used to be produced in the area, which was latterly known as The West Edinburgh Times.

The project has been given £10,000 of funding from Carnegie UK

Trust's Neighbourhood News initiative in an effort to enable the Digital Sentinel to deliver a local news project in a clearly defined geographic area. There are five projects across the UK and the funding allows them to cover a new area of content, work with new news gathering partners, or to develop new platforms to deliver news.

You can read the first stories on The Digital Sentinel [here](#).

Warrender Baths is amazingly 125 years old this year. You can go along and join in the birthday celebrations on 7 December 2013 and watch swimming legend David Wilkie in action.

[Read more here.](#)

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