

Five things you need to know today



Liveblog with Chief Superintendent Mark Williams – Independence would save £50m on cost of MPs and peers – Trams to Hot food – The Stockbridge Photography Club – Lord Provost's rapid action fund –

Join us tomorrow when we will be chatting live with Chief Superintendent Mark Williams who is in charge of policing in the city. Want to know how they prepare for this busy time of year? Would you like some advice about looking after yourself and your property this Festive period?

What is happening about police counters and proposed closures in Edinburgh?

We'll join us and ask the questions! You can either watch the liveblog [here](#) or send us your questions by email...theedinburghreporter@gmail.com or join in on Twitter by using the hashtag #askthecommander.

According to the SNP £50m could be saved post-independence if Scottish MPs and peers are no longer required.

The Scottish National Party has slammed Westminster for failing on its priorities as it is revealed in a Huffington Post UK interview with Lib Dem peer Lord Wallace that plans have been made to keep unelected Scottish peers in the House of Lords post- independence.

Commenting, the SNP MP who uncovered the 'cash for honours' scandal, Angus MacNeil MP said:

“This is ridiculous and speaks volumes about Westminster priorities. The UK government failed to take the opportunity to give their plans for Scotland after a Yes or No vote as set out by Electoral Commission. The MOD won't even look at alternative plans for Trident- yet there are plans to keep Scottish peers in the House of Lords!

“Under the Westminster system, we have the ludicrous situation that there are far more legislators who are appointed than elected – and people in Scotland elect only 4 per cent of the Westminster parliamentarians who hold powers over the economy, welfare, defence, our place in Europe, and many other crucial areas of policy.

“The UK parties nominating their own donors to the House of Lords is part and parcel of Westminster's crony culture – and the Lords is now the second biggest chamber in the world after the Chinese National People's Congress, which governs a country of 1.3 billion!

“The SNP's long-standing position is that we believe those making laws should be elected by the people, and therefore we do not nominate members to the House of Lords.

“If the rest of the UK want to keep funding the unelected House of Lords, that is a matter for them. A Yes vote means that people in Scotland can get rid of the expensive and unrepresentative Westminster tier – saving around £50 million a year in not sending MPs and Peers to London- which means more cost effective and fairer government.



The tram office in Shandwick Place is no longer to be used for that purpose it seems. There is an [application](#) to the planning department to change it to a hot food takeaway in this week's planning list.

We really like the nice people at the Stockbridge Photography Club.... They share their lovely photos with us each week, and today we are using Mark Brown's photo again to show you their work.

And now they have put up a whole page on their website to show off [The Edinburgh Reporter Gallery](#). We feel very honoured!

The Lord Provost's 'Rapid Action Fund' has been established within the framework of the [OneCity Trust](#).

The purpose is to provide resources for swift action on social exclusion and locally identified needs.

This will be done through the **award of small grants to charities or constituted groups within Edinburgh**. In terms of

criteria:

- . Grants should be allocated across the city, and should not be concentrated in one geographical area
- . Grants should be made on a variety of themes, rather than concentrated on one topic
- . Grants will only be made to a charity or constituted group with a bank account in their name
- . Grants will normally be in the region of £1,000 to £2,000
- . The total fund available over the year is £10,000 (with provision for further donations to the Fund).

The first grant has already been awarded for the Leith Conference which addressed issues facing the area and developed a future action plan.

Given the modest amount of funding available, it would be most helpful if you could help to identify groups and projects in your local area that would benefit from this kind of support.

You are invited to refer any questions you may have on this to Norma Cuthbertson at norma.cuthbertson@edinburgh.gov.uk

<http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Lord-Provost-Rapid-Action-Fund.pdf>

