

Edinburgh to be a Living Wage city

The City of Edinburgh Council and Heart of Midlothian Football Club are holding a Business Breakfast this morning at Tynecastle Stadium. Edinburgh is being promoted as a Living Wage city at the event by the council and Hearts.

This work is also a particular focus of the Edinburgh Partnership, which has helped to shape this event.

The aim is to make the case for payment of the living wage by local employers. Speakers this morning will highlight issues such as the volume of in work poverty, changes in legislation related to the Procurement Reform Act 2014 and best practice across a range of sectors. Around 100 delegates are expected to attend to find out the benefits and challenges of becoming a living wage employer.

Keynote speakers include Ann Budge, Chair of Heart of Midlothian Football Club, and Cllr Frank Ross, Convener of the Economy Committee. Cllr Norma Austin-Hart, who brought a motion to Council about the Living wage, will open the event.

Cllr Gordon Munro, Vice Convener of the Economy Committee, will chair a panel discussion with Ann Budge and local businesses Standard Life, Bluebird Care and Rabbie's.

The Council has been paying employees the living wage since 1 January 2013. In addition to this, councillors agreed yesterday to pilot an approach that encourages the living wage and other favourable workforce related conditions through the Council's tender process. Heart of Midlothian Football Club began paying the living wage in November 2014.



Convenor of

Economy Committee

Cllr Frank Ross, Convener of the Economy Committee, said: "I am delighted that Hearts has joined a growing list of well established employers in the city offering the living wage. Today's event will spell out to businesses the many benefits that they could achieve if they take the leap and join up as a living wage employer. Research on the living wage has indicated that it leads to improved staff attendance, greater efficiency from workers, better staff loyalty and retention.

"The challenges some businesses might face paying the living wage, particularly small to medium businesses and those with many lower waged employees such as the hospitality, care and retail sectors, must also be acknowledged. Highlighting and discussing these difficulties is one of the reasons for hosting this event."

"I would encourage anyone not attending the event to contact Julie McGahan, Living Wage Programme Manager for Scotland to find out more about how their business could benefit from become a living wage employer."

Ann Budge, Chair of the Heart of Midlothian Football Club, said: "I'm delighted to be able to lend my support to the 'Making Work Pay' business breakfast.

"Since revealing our intention to implement the Living Wage, Heart of Midlothian Football Club has received widespread backing from both our supporters and sponsors.

"I hope this event will help to raise awareness of the Living Wage campaign."

The current UK Living Wage is £7.85 an hour (minimum wage for 21 years and over is £6.50).