

# Schools report – Chief Executive ‘believes all schools safe’



Today at the City Chambers they had a lot to discuss. First there was the budget meeting and then there was the publication of the Independent Inquiry into the PPP1 schools, commissioned last year by the CEO of the council, Andrew Kerr.

We spoke to Mr Kerr afterwards, but sadly The Edinburgh Reporter did not get the opportunity of speaking with Professor Cole as only a selected few media outlets were allowed to speak with him before the council meeting. He left soon after his presentation was over.

You can see what Professor Cole had to say about the report on the council's [website](#).

When we caught up with the Chief Executive of The City of Edinburgh Council (AK) after the meeting he told us about some of the recommendations to the council contained within the 250 page report : “A number of surveys done as a result of come of the ongoing work that John Cole was doing at the back end of last year.

“On the basis of that Edinburgh Schools Partnership undertook surveys in all the schools, and undertook the remedial work.

“They have assured us that it has all been done. We have gone back to them because we are trying to ensure that the quality assurance of every survey we do from now on, in all our buildings, is of a very high quality. We are therefore working with them to redo those surveys to make sure that we’ve got everything covered.

“Right now, today, I believe that the schools are safe.

TER: What about the rest of the report? Clearly it was a shock last spring when the wall at Oxbgangs Primary School came down, a shock for everyone in Edinburgh. But this report now seems to go a little bit further. It seems to flag up concerns across the whole of the UK building industry.

AK : “What Professor Cole found was that very similar incidents have happened in schools in Scotland and some of those are outlined in the report.

TER : So there might be defects which are as yet not discovered?

AK : “Yes that may be the case. And Professor Cole was very clear in saying that visual inspection is not enough on those buildings.

TER : So what is the council doing to prevent any further accidents like the one at Oxbgangs Primary School?

AK : “In our schools estate we have already done intrusive surveys. In other words we have looked inside the walls to make sure they are completely safe.

“And in our other buildings we’re starting a programme, a risk-based programme, of looking at those buildings where we believe there’s a risk, and we’re undertaking intrusive surveys. to make sure that all our buildings are safe.”

***The council has paid up to £200,000 towards the cost of the report, but the Chief Executive was clear about the other costs incurred. He told us: “The cost of all of this incident is being discussed with Edinburgh Schools Partnership (ESP). We are absolutely adamant that none of the***

***cost of this incident will be born by the Edinburgh taxpayer, and we are trying to ensure that through our contractual arrangements and discussions with ESP.”***

You can read the whole report here:



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