

Campaigners plan protest at City Chambers today

The campaigners who made so much noise at the council meeting in May by singing outside the chamber are planning on coming back today.



Two groups All About Me and Power to the People will join in a deputation to demand housing for homeless families. They already staged a protest and attempted a sit in when the council met to elect the Lord Provost in May.

They spoke to the Lord Provost the Rt Hon Frank Ross after the meeting who offered at the time to meet them to discuss their plight. As far as we can ascertain no meeting has taken place.

They claim that some of the tenants are being offered hostel accommodation in Motherwell or Fife.

A spokesman for the group said : “We are campaigning for the Westminster Government to scrap the Benefits Cap completely. But right now the Council has a duty to act to stop families and children suffering the trauma of homelessness and totally unsuitable homeless hostels – the Council must act now to stop the evictions. Our actions will continue till we achieve justice.”

*In their letter to the Councillors the deputations said:
“All About Me group involves or is working with at least 13 families, including 35 children, who either face eviction from their privately rented homes in North Edinburgh due to the Benefits Cap, or who have already been evicted. Some are at this moment in appalling homeless hostels, others are sleeping on relatives’ sofas. Some face losing their homes imminently. Many families throughout the city are in this situation too, and unless something is done more families will be made homeless as they are unable to pay their rent due to drastic reductions in their Housing*

Benefit. More families are getting in touch every week – this is a crisis.”

While they are calling for the Westminster Government to scrap the Benefits Cap the campaigners make several demands of the council :

- they ask the council to stop the evictions and ask them to use Discretionary Housing Payments so that the tenants are able to settle their rent.
- they want the council to find local temporary flats for those evicted.
- they call for more social housing and claim that the Pennywell/Muirhouse developments will mean a 70 per cent reduction in social housing.
- they want private sector rents regulated, empty homes repaired and improvements in the standard of temporary accommodation