

Council leader promises no more B&Bs for homeless families in 2019

Cllr Adam McVey the leader of the city council has pledged to bring to an end families staying in B&Bs, as the Capital gears up for a busy 2019.

Next year may also include the go-ahead for the tram extension to Newhaven transforming how people move around the Capital.



Council Leader Adam McVey

Council leader Cllr Adam McVey has also hit out at tram opponents for spreading “lies” over the funding of the project. But Conservatives have blasted the vision for 2019, labelling it “nauseating, when they struggle with the day job”.



Cllr Gavin Barrie

In January 2018, then Economy and Housing convener Cllr Gavin Barrie pledged to end families being sheltered in temporary accommodation within six months – although this failed to happen. But Cllr McVey has promised that the policy will finally be brought to an end in 2019.

He said: “We hope we will be in a position in the next 12 months to be able to put at least a marker down and say we have ended the use of B&Bs for families.

“Our aim is to end the use of B&Bs in the city as temporary accommodation – but the first step in that is to end families in B&Bs. I don’t think any of us are going to rest while there’s one family in the city that has to be placed there. I’m quite confident we will deliver that in this year.”



Tram extension may go down Constitution Street towards Newhaven

The SNP leader has lambasted some opponents of the tram extension, which is set to be given the green light in March, after a decision due to be taken in December, was delayed.

He said: "I'm quite confident and optimistic that when all the facts are put in front of councillors in terms of how we want to take it forward and the strength of our business case, we will hopefully go down the road of extension.

"The way we have put together our business case is to deliver trams but to protect council budgets. We have heard some of the tram opponents say we shouldn't spend it on trams, we should spend it on schools and roads – which is just a lie. We are not spending core council budgets on extending the tram. What we are spending is borrowing that will be paid down by the tickets."

Cllr McVey also hopes key legislation will be brought through the Scottish Parliament next year that will give the council more powers – including a potential workplace parking levy and tourist tax, which he said is "on the radar" of Ministers.

The council is also expecting to make more dramatic progress towards its 20,000 new homes target – while plans will be tabled for an international strategy and to overhaul the city's transport network.

But opponents have hit out at the bright vision for 2019 after it was revealed the council will received £11m less than expected from the Scottish Government – and will have to cut £39m from next year's budget.



Councillor Jason Rust

Conservative group chairman, Cllr Jason Rust, said: “It’s nauseating hearing the minority administration spouting forth about visions and grand plans when they struggle with the day job of basic service provision and delivery which capital residents expect.

“We need to see a step change in performance in a raft of areas. It is clear from the draft Scottish Government settlement that there are going to be enormous pressures this coming year and any representations by the council leadership have clearly been ignored.

“This coming year we will again seek to demonstrate to Edinburgh residents that there is a better alternative to this lame duck SNP administration propped up Labour councillors.”