

Heated debate at council over EU appointment fees

TORIES VOTE TO FORCE EU NATIONALS TO PAY FOR HELP TO STAY

EDINBURGH COUNCIL VOTES TO PAY EU NATIONALS APPLICATION APPOINTMENT FEE – DESPITE TORY OPPOSITION

Council Leader Adam McVey lodged a motion at this week's full council meeting to make application appointments for EU nationals in the capital free.

The city's application services will now sign up to help EU nationals apply quickly and freely for those finding the online application process challenging.

The Council will also allocate £25,000 to help the Council's application service keep appointments free.

Council Leader Adam McVey said: "The UK Government's EU National application programme is a shameful way to treat our citizens, many of whom have been part of our city and community for decades.

"It's somewhat ironic that the Tories, who complained about a charge for people's bin registrations, voted against removing the charge for EU nationals applying to register their lives in the Capital. When Tories believe registering a bin is a more important than applying to register your family to protect your rights, something has gone badly wrong with their moral compass."

Pointing out that by making it easier and free for EU nationals to get help to apply through the Council's application services everything is being done to help people

through the process while reminding them that Edinburgh is their home and that we stand with them as fellow residents, SNP MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands, Gordon MacDonald, said: "The SNP has been clear across the board that we will support EU nationals in every way we can. Yet again, the Tories in Edinburgh have shown themselves as no better than the xenophobic party in Westminster that sent disgusting "go home" vans into our communities.

"I hope that despite the Tories' treatment of EU nationals, they feel kindness and respect from the rest of us who are proud that they have done us the honour of making Scotland their home."

City of Edinburgh Council – Full Council Meeting – 14 March 2019

Motion By Councillor McVey – EU Registration

"That Council:

- Notes the UK Government's appalling decision to force EU nationals to "register" to sustain their rights.
- Notes that Edinburgh's registration services took part in the Home Office settlement pilot which ended in late autumn 2018 which included an application assistance scheme to help "read" chipped EU passports to smooth the process.
- Notes that the Home Office settlement has now gone live and residents can register for free from March 30th 2019 and fees paid before this time can now be reclaimed.
- Agrees that Edinburgh City Council will use existing resources to publicise the free UK Government based service and existing support services available through citizen's advice to citizens across the City
- Agrees that to help further support EU nationals remaining

in Edinburgh, Council authorises use of up to £25,000 from the Council's priorities fund to support Edinburgh's registration services and avoid any administration fees being applied to any EU nationals registering with the Home Office settlement scheme through Edinburgh's registration services.

- Agrees that this expenditure will be monitored on a monthly basis and reported through the business bulletin of the Finance and Resources committee and delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to limit free registrations to citizens who live in Edinburgh, subject to service demand.

Watch the coverage from the council webcast [here](#).