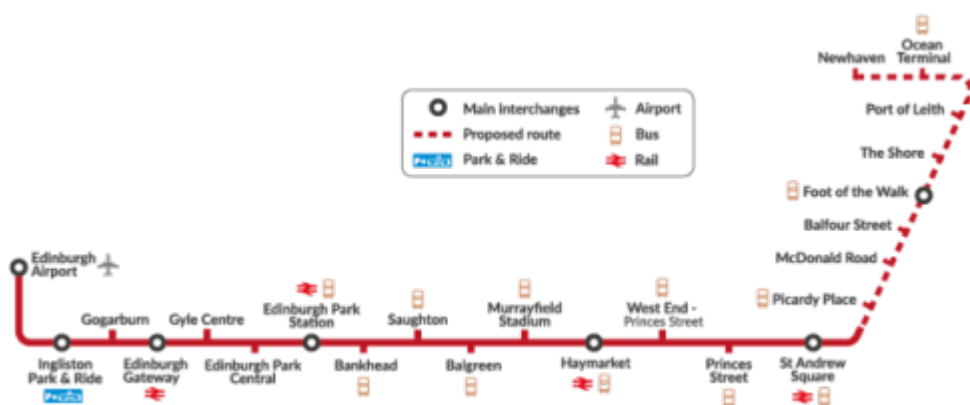


Today the council will decide on extending the tram to Newhaven

Today all 62 councillors who make up The City of Edinburgh Council will decide on whether to extend the tram for 4.69 kilometres/2.91 miles from York Place to Newhaven or not.

The odds look favourable for the coalition who want to do this, spending just less than a third of what it cost to lay down the previous line from the airport. It is estimated that the extension which will not be operable until 2023 will cost about £207m.



The Conservative Group is led by Cllr Iain Whyte who represents the Inverleith Ward and is made up of 17 councillors. They remain opposed to the tram extension, as they were opposed to the tram in the first place.

There are four Independent councillors, three of whom were elected as SNP councillors and are likely to vote with the administration. Cllr Graczyk was previously a member of the Conservative group, but we are not sure of her intentions.

The 11-strong Labour Group is led by Councillor Cammy Day and as part of the coalition will vote for the tram extension.

There are six Liberal Democrats who have already announced why they will not support the extension:

Lord Hardie has not delivered his report on the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry yet.

The coalition has not shown how the tram would be linked to wider public transport improvements especially in West Edinburgh.

There is insufficient information about the impact of the £20m special dividend on Lothian the city's bus company.

They don't know the impact that the project could have on council reserves and they point out that the impact of Brexit could affect the assumptions on which the business case has been based.

The SNP group has 16 members and is very much in favour of the tram extension.

The Green group has 8 members and will vote for the tram extension as it is a mass mover of people and will help reduce emissions in the city.

Transport Convener SNP Councillor Lesley Macinnes said: "Today is a momentous day for Edinburgh. We're poised to make a pivotal decision for the city – one which will have an impact not just on current residents but for generations to come.

"As custodians of this great and growing capital, we have a duty to help everyone share in Edinburgh's success. And with the city growing at a faster pace than anywhere else in Scotland, we need to make some long-term, strategic decisions to put us in the best place to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. I firmly believe the case stacks up for taking trams to Newhaven and that my fellow councillors will

arrive at the same conclusion having now had time to scrutinise it in detail.”

Councillors were allowed time to consider all the documents, including those which are deemed commercially sensitive, in a data room since 9 February. There are no public documents to evidence which of the councillors actually accessed the data, or for how long. There is an assertion that some of the councillors have not gone into the data room at all, but we have no way of evidencing that.



Tram extension may go down Constitution Street towards Newhaven