

Head of Planning in Edinburgh to retire

by Joseph Anderson Local Democracy Reporter

The Head of Planning at City of Edinburgh Council, David Leslie OBE, is to retire after working in city planning for more than three decades.

During his tenure in the planning department, huge developments have taken place in the capital, such as the acceptance of the development framework for Leith Docks, which is currently the largest planning application ever granted in the city.

His career of almost 30 years has helped safeguard some of Edinburgh's architectural treasures, particularly in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

There have also been controversies, however, such as the St James Quarter hotel building, and the ongoing issues with the former [Royal High School](#) building.

A former George Heriot's pupil, Mr Leslie graduated with a first class degree in town planning from Heriot-Watt University in 1984 before starting his career at the then Cumbernauld Development Corporation.

In 2004 he was awarded an OBE for services to planning, and in

2017 he was made chief planning officer of The City of Edinburgh Council.



David Leslie OBE who has just retired
Cllr Neil Gardiner, Planning Convener said: "David Leslie has had a long and hugely influential career in planning spanning

over 30 years and his dedication to making improvements across the service as our chief planning officer will be greatly missed.

“He played a key role in taking the service through the recent and previous Scottish planning reforms and he led the way in the council with the use of digital planning tools such as the planning portal.

“I have very much enjoyed working with David and wish him well in his retirement.”

Maureen Child, vice convener of the planning committee and Labour councillor for Portobello and Craigmillar, said: “David championed engagement across the spectrum for us helping many more residents and groups such as community councils, the Civic Forum and the Edinburgh Development Forum have their say.

“A talented man, he has an OBE for services to planning, and I believe he’s a keen curler which I’m sure he’s looking forward to finding more time for when he retires.

“I echo Neil’s sentiments and have very much enjoyed working with David and wish him well.”