

Ella Simpson of EVOC retires this month

The Rt Hon Lord Provost tabled a motion asking the council on Thursday to recognise the retirement of Ella Simpson, Director of Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC).

Cllr Ross explained that Ella Simpson has been a leading contributor to the city's community fabric, with 45 years of volunteering, and 30 years of employment with several leading charities. Ms Simpson's career began with Edinvar in 1991, demonstrating a commitment to truly person-centred care, and in 2002 she became Director of Edinburgh Young Carers' Project working to integrate carers into mainstream services.



Ella Simpson

In 2003, Ella became Chief Executive Officer at The Rock Trust, and focussed upon embedding a culture of improvement

and consistent advocacy for young people across Edinburgh.

In September 2009, Ella became Director of EVOC, working to: (i) steer the organisation through a period of substantial change, (ii) grow involvement of the City's third sector in partnership, cross-sector and strategic working, (iii) advocating the benefits of working with city charities, (iv) achieving tangible change for our most vulnerable citizens, and (v) celebrating 150 years of EVOC and its extraordinary impact across our communities of interest and place.

The Lord Provost said that Ms Simpson leaves her Director's post with EVOC and her place on our strategic partnerships with a strong legacy of a vibrant third sector, cooperative working, and the continuing need to focus upon addressing inequalities in our city. Key partnerships and initiatives that have benefitted from Ella's input, include; Edinburgh Partnership, Compact Partnership, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, Edinburgh Thrive and Edinburgh 2050 City Vision.

Throughout her volunteering and career, and in particular 12 years with EVOC, Ella has been a robust and honest and independent voice for the social and economic importance of the third sector in Edinburgh, helping to raise the profile of the sector in the City and beyond, and in working to help communities-in-need at local, national and international settings.

The Lord Provost also expressed the hope that Ella will enjoy her well-deserved retirement with her family and the wider community in East Lothian.

Bridie Ashrowan will be stepping into the role of Chief Executive Officer at the end of March. Bridie has over 30 years' experience in the community sector, having worked in start-ups, social enterprise and business, including her most recent position as Chief Executive at Space & Broomhouse Hub.

She successfully headed the £3.2 million capital investment programme to open the Hub – a local community development trust in an area that has some of the highest child and in-work poverty in Scotland – towards the end of 2019.