

Business leaders plead with politicians to unite the city under new blueprint

The Edinburgh Business Resilience Group has issued a plea to the politicians in charge of the post pandemic recovery in Scotland's capital to work with them in a genuine partnership.

Under the Chairmanship of veteran businessman, Ian Marchant, the body of more than 60 businesses and organisations was brought together by the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce.

The group aims to find ways of the business community working with policy makers to shape the recovery.

A "Prospectus for Growth" has been published with practical suggestions to place the economy at the heart of the city's recovery.



ian Marchant

Chairman Ian Marchant, previously Chief Executive of SSE, said: “Edinburgh’s efforts at recovery cannot become a Tale of Two Cities – our own divided narrative between long-term political aspirations and the present day needs of businesses and organisations who will be expected to create the jobs and opportunities of the future. Do we work together, or do we labour apart? Do we simply talk, or are we prepared to listen? Is it to be the best of times, or the worst of times? Do we want the spring of hope, or the winter of despair?”

“As we continue to emerge from the pandemic through the success of the vaccination rollout, the economy must now be the top priority for our policy leaders. We need businesses to succeed and grow if we are to create jobs and opportunities for our citizens, if we are to encourage the move to net zero carbon, and if we are to tackle poverty through greater social inclusion.

“To achieve these aims we need businesses that are successful. To have successful businesses we need policies that encourage growth. We believe that by making the views of business known and by harnessing the expertise and energy our businesses have

to offer, we can work with local and national government to deliver a better, stronger recovery. But we need them to listen and we need them to engage.”

Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, said: “Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce is well-placed to convene this group. We were delighted at the stellar quality of those who took part in all of the meetings and conversations that fed into the production of the Prospectus for Growth.

“We are now seeking engagement with the Scottish Government, the UK Government and City of Edinburgh Council to see how we might work most productively together to deliver what is best for the city.”

The ideas being put forward by the Group are included in the prospectus (published below) under three themes of Recovery, Growth, and Edinburgh as a Global City and include:

Recovery

- Accelerate return-to-work plans and revise social distancing when safe
- Support for businesses in tackling debt levels that will stifle investment
- Adopt a more enlightened, transactional approach to business taxation
- Increase investment in skills and R&D

Growth

- Create “Edinburgh Means Business” – joint venture

involving key stakeholders to help promote and sell the city and, vitally, help to develop and land inward investment

- Appoint a “Business Champion” for the City to work with the city council and Government
- Create more diverse business ownership through shared strategy to develop entrepreneurial talent from under-represented groups and areas
- Simplify and streamline robust planning and licensing processes to encourage more people to do business in Edinburgh
- Encourage businesses to support our festivals and culture

Global City

- Do more to promote the city’s ambition to be Data Capital of Europe and enhance our reputation for innovation
- Better recognise the contribution of our tourism, culture, festivals and events sector to the city’s economy, quality of life and global reputation
- Develop a comprehensive aviation strategy – Edinburgh needs to remain a global city, and our airport remains a pillar of international trade and the gateway to the rest of Scotland
- Develop a world-class digital infrastructure
- Create a shared and coherent branding strategy for the city

[Read the prospectus in full here or click the image below.](#)

