

# **Council to approve plans for residents first for culture events**

**A 'residents first' scheme giving Edinburgh locals a first look at new exhibitions and events could be launched by the council if funding is secured from the UK Government.**

Councillors will meet today to approve the plan.

The proposed initiative to allow the city's natives to 'skip the queue' and visit cultural attractions ahead of tourists is one of 32 bids to the UK Prosperity Fund by The City of Edinburgh Council.

The local authority, organisations and charities are set to receive a share of £12.4 million from the Fund, which forms part of the Government's 'Levelling Up' programme and replaces EU financing.

Distributed over three years, the cash is intended to be used to "build pride in place and increase life chances".

New public toilets, a community café, greenspace for council estates and help for those struggling amidst the cost of living crisis are amongst the proposed uses in Edinburgh.

In response to a call for bids throughout July, 81 were received by the council and 32 will be taken forward in the final submission for funding which is due by Friday, August 12.

Forever Edinburgh, the council's marketing brand for promoting the city's offerings, has been put forward as a beneficiary so it can launch 'Resident First', inviting residents to 'enjoy new exhibitions / visitor attractions first' which it's hoped could 'engage residents in Edinburgh's cultural offer'.

The marketing team is also bidding for funding to build a replacement website for 'The Official Guide to Edinburgh', extend its 'Story Never Ends' visitor campaign which promotes the capital's history, and develop a 'new city marketing campaign' for 2023-25.

In addition, new public toilets could be built at South Queensferry's Hawes Pier if the investment plan is given the green light.

Other groups set to get a share of the sum include the Edinburgh-based charity Edible Estates, which wants to create four new community gardens and support 34 existing community gardens in council estates across the city.

Funds are being sought to establish a new not-for-profit community café at Corstorphine's Craigsbank Parish Church to 'provide volunteers with work experience and enhance social capital in an area with pockets of social deprivation whilst combating social isolation'.

Empty Kitchens Full Hearts (EKFH), which turns surplus food into meals that are then delivered to those in need all over Edinburgh, is also looking to create new roles and voluntary posts to build on its core service delivery.

A number of groups have made the shortlist of bids in an effort to help the city's most vulnerable residents through the cost of living crisis.

Cyrenians plans to launch its own set of levelling up initiatives that 'take a public health approach to reducing homelessness and increasing wellbeing and prosperity across

Edinburgh' which it's hoped will benefit 'over 10,000 people per year'.

Furthermore, 100 people identified through the Edinburgh Trust could be supported by Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC) as the price of energy and food continues to rise.

And support for those struggling to make ends meet is expected to get a cash boost as a bid by Community Help and Advice Initiative (CHAI) to increase welfare rights and debt advice within local community mental health and locality recovery hubs has made the final list of projects going before councillors for approval.

The Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee meets at 10am on Thursday. Agenda and details of how to watch the webcast either live or archived are [here](#).

## **by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter**

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