

Liberal Democrats set out their council budget proposals

The Lib Dem budget focuses on schools, roads and the climate.

On Thursday councillors will vote for the Council's 2024/25 budget. Our proposals are based on what residents tell us and that's why we have focused on schools, roads and greening our city.

For us, it's not enough to just stop cuts to education, we want to increase school budgets by £2 million so that every school in the city has more money to spend on their priorities. After a series of cuts to school budgets during the last council term, we recognise the extra pressures on teachers and want to support them in the classroom to deliver the education our children need.

We would also invest an additional £12.5 million on repairs to paths, pavements and roads, to build on the record amount spent thanks to last year's Lib Dem budget. After years of underfunding, the Council needs to continue to improve the desperate state of some of our potholed roads, broken pavements and damaged paths. We also want to accelerate the implementation of long-awaited road safety projects, like pedestrian crossings, and fund extra police resources to enforce speed limits. All these measures will improve travel safety.

Liberal Democrats also propose a suite of measures to tackle the climate and nature emergencies with an extra £200,000 to fund more staff and resources to deliver clean heat and energy

efficiency projects across the city and £300,000 to encourage bus travel.

We want the Council to plant more trees, so there's £500,000 for tree planting and another £500,000 to recruit more staff for the Forestry team plus £500,000 to expand allotments and support community gardens. We also want to achieve best value from the Council's energy efficiency projects and investigate the potential to fund an ambitious programme of energy efficiency measures across the Council's schools, libraries and offices to reduce energy costs and the associated carbon emissions.

Our budget would also fund additional support for families to maximise their income from benefits to reduce child poverty and plug the funding gap at Edinburgh Leisure to keep swimming pools and sports facilities open. Liberal Democrats believe the Council should be supporting people to improve their financial, mental and physical health and we believe, with council services, it's important to get the basics right.

Hopefully other parties will agree on Thursday!



Cllr Neil Ross is the Finance spokesperson for the Liberal Democrat Group on The City of Edinburgh Council