

# Five things you need to know today

## Funding worries remain

The third sector organisations which assist the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) to deliver health and social care in the capital remain worried about their financial stability.

At the beginning of the month the EIJB proposed to cut £4.5 million from the core funding for 60+ third sector organisations. The organisations mobilised themselves and protested loudly at the board meeting on 1 November. [Read more about that here.](#)



The decision taken by the EIJB was simply to take a deeper look at what could be done. The EIJB has a funding shortfall

of somewhere around £50 million, but the in year funding which was to be cut was around £750,000. The council may look at assisting with that funding from their reserves. The EIJB is the body which is charged with providing care packages for the elderly and vulnerable in the city, and even their core statutory services which they have to provide are under pressure.

Strategic Planning officer, Andrew Hall, offered his view of the financial situation. He said that “everything has been scrutinised. The knowledge that is generated from this level of analysis puts responsibility on us as officers and the board as decision makers.”

He suggested that “huge progress” had been made in terms of delivering savings and yet the EIJB remains hugely over committed financially. He said: “We will not break even this year, and we are looking at a substantial deficit of £50 million next year.”

The EIJB has a £900 million a year budget, and the proposed cuts represent 3% of that total. But, the funding helps dozens of organisations in the city, and the promise is that other options will be discussed at the next EIJB meeting on 17 December.

Pat Togher, the now former Chief Officer of the EIJB, said before the last meeting: “Projects were awarded funding for three years in 2019 which was subsequently extended in 2022 due to continued disruption from Covid and are due to end in March 2025.

“The EIJB were required to close a £60m financial gap this year and are currently preparing for similar savings 25/26.

“We must make the necessary decisions to protect our core legal duties and protect our most vulnerable – such as providing care homes, applying adult protection/ mental health legislation and preventing further drug related deaths

in the city. It is in this context that we must decide on how we now prioritise spend when faced with the gravity of the savings imposed and ensure longer term sustainability.

“We have a duty to spend public money carefully and we will therefore bring forward proposals to achieve the best for the citizens of Edinburgh through working with our third sector partners to ensure clear, measurable outcomes which improves health and social care in Edinburgh.”

After the 1 November meeting Katharina Kasper, chair of the joint board, said: “The EIJB has listened to voices across Edinburgh and has voted not to proceed with in-year savings to third sector grants at this time.

“We have also agreed that the long-term underfunding of the EIJB cannot continue.

“We have committed to working with third sector partners and our partners in the City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian to find a way forward which supports charities across the city.

“The EIJB’s budget deficit which was inherited from its partners in 2016 remains, with £60m savings required this year and £50m next year. The EIJB has a legal duty to protect core services such as care homes and drug death prevention services. If a solution cannot be found we will have to come back with a recovery plan to make these savings.”

The Edinburgh Reporter visited one of the groups which remains under threat – The Health Agency in Wester Hailes. The Healthy Living Centre – the building in which The Health Agency sits – is held up as a beacon of the best way to deliver healthcare with all the benefits of co-location. People visit from abroad to see for themselves how The Healthy Living Centre, which houses dentists, doctors and third sector bodies, operates. The vital work which The Health Agency delivers is (just like the dozens of other third sector bodies in the city) in danger

of being stopped if the EIJB cannot find a way forward without cutting this relatively small part of their spending.

[Read more about the vital work of The Health Agency here.](#)



The Walking Group at The Health Agency

## **Art exhibition raising funds for Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity**

Artist Damian Callan's newest exhibition, *SMALL WORKS*, opens to the public on Tuesday for a two day only run until Wednesday at Whitespace Gallery East Crosscauseway, EH8 9HQ. The artworks are on sale to raise funds for Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity.

Damian is undergoing chemotherapy treatment at the Western General Hospital and is donating half of the proceeds of the sale to the charity. ECHC provides art and music therapy and

other activities for children at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Little France.

He said: ""I am so grateful for the amazing treatment that I have been receiving at The Western General, and have been fortunate also in having my own artistic practice to help get me through the illness. I wanted young people struggling with health issues to have the opportunity to benefit from creative experiences in the way that I have."

SMALL WORKS comprises 70 drawings and paintings and runs from 11 – 13 November at The Whitespace Gallery, East Crosscauseway, EH8 9HQ.

Late openings on Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 until 8pm.

[The exhibition is also available to view and buy on Damian Callan's website here](#)



## Grange Association

This month's Grange Association talk, **on Tuesday 19 November**, is by Andrew Redmond Barr, a local writer and artist. Andrew will share his passion for map-making, illustration and the art of making Scottish history more accessible to all. Those who have attended previous talks will know how good they are, and we look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to this event and to the subsequent talks in the season.

As ever, the talk will take place at St Catherine's Argyle Church, Grange Road, commencing at 7.30 pm. Doors open at 7.00 pm and tea, coffee and biscuits will be available from then.

This event is free for members, and £5 for non-members. (For anyone who wishes to join the Association, it will be possible to do so at the event).

[Talks 2024-25](#)

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# 2024

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★ Cat Gordon

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# Festive feast awaits at Mowgli

A festive feast with Indian soul is how Kerry regards the Christmas menu now on offer at Mowgli Edinburgh which is on Hanover Street.

She writes that it is “a vibrant alternative to traditional festive fare. At £35 per person (available until 5 January), it’s ideal for those seeking something different for their Christmas celebrations and offers vegan and vegetarian options too. The food remains true to its home-cooking roots, and the atmospheric setting makes every meal feel special”.

[Read the full review here.](#)



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