

A NEW CONTRACT WITH THE CAPITAL

CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

COALITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EDINBURGH LABOUR PARTY AND THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

PREAMBLE

Edinburgh is known the world over as an historic city and capital of the nation. Over recent decades it has become successful and prosperous and a great place to live and work.

Yet, major challenges face our city and the Council needs strong leadership and a stable political environment to ensure that the services, amenities and reputation of the capital are improved over the coming five years. The Council will continue to be unambiguously elected member led.

We also need to acknowledge that there has been a breakdown in trust between the residents of Edinburgh and their elected representatives on the Council. That relationship needs to be repaired. It will not be accomplished quickly, or easily, but it needs to be addressed.

With the Local Government elections of 3 May 2012 over, this new Contract with the Capital marks a fresh start, with a Council willing to listen to local people and work together with local communities, business and the third sector. A Council where co-operation, fairness, accountability and responsibility will really matter.

A Council that supports existing business and provides opportunities for economic growth and local and international inward investment.

Below is a list of commitments that the signatories to this contract will deliver during the 2012-2017 term of this Council. The City will be able to judge the Council against this promise.

We now agree to move Edinburgh forward for the benefit of the city and its people, based on stability and confidence, with greater consensus-based decision-making which better reflects public opinion.

WHEREAS:

(A) WE, THE EDINBURGH LABOUR PARTY and THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY groups of councillors of the City of Edinburgh Council (respectively the “**Partners**” and each a “**Partner**”) entered into heads of terms dated 7 May 2012; and

(B) The Partners now wish to set out in this coalition agreement (“**Agreement**”) the terms on which we agree to form a partnership administration for the City of Edinburgh Council (“**Council**”).

THEREFORE WE AGREE as follows:

1 **PARTNERSHIP ADMINISTRATION**

- 1.1 The Partners agree to form a partnership administration (“**Partnership**”) for the City of Edinburgh Council on the terms set out in this Agreement.

2 **PARTNERSHIP VISION**

- 2.1 The Partnership will act in the best interests of Edinburgh and its people in a co-operative, open and participatory manner, involving citizens, business and the third sector, keeping them informed, and listening to and reflecting their views in developing and delivering effective and efficient services and amenities.
- 2.2 The Partnership’s central priority is to build a co-operative, more prosperous, Edinburgh in which every resident and community benefits.

3 **PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS**

- 3.1 The Partnership’s key commitments (“**Commitments**”) are:-
- 3.1.1 ensuring every child in Edinburgh has the best start in life;
 - 3.1.2 reducing poverty, inequality and deprivation;
 - 3.1.3 providing for Edinburgh’s prosperity;
 - 3.1.4 strengthening and supporting our communities and keeping them safe;
 - 3.1.5 ensuring Edinburgh, and its residents, are well cared-for; and
 - 3.1.6 maintaining and improving the quality of life in Edinburgh.
- 3.2 Further details of the Commitments are set out in Part 1 of the Schedule.
- 3.3 The Partnership will set up a cross-party working group with regular meetings to review progress of delivery of the Commitments.
- 3.4 The Partnership will present an annual review of progress on delivery of the Commitments to Council. The residents of Edinburgh will be involved in that review.
- 3.5 Where further priorities emerge or circumstances change, revisions to the Commitments will be agreed between the Partners in a manner consistent with the principles of this Agreement and reported to Council at least annually.

4 **GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 The Partnership will operate in an open and inclusive manner with cross-party representation on committees.
- 4.2 The Partnership will examine ways to strengthen the existing scrutiny arrangements for the committee system of governance.
- 4.3 The Partnership will further improve the quality, accountability, openness and fairness of the Council’s operations.

- 4.4 The Partnership will continue to ensure that the City of Edinburgh Council is unambiguously elected member led.
- 4.5 The Partnership will establish a Co-Operative Development Unit to help facilitate many of the Commitments.
- 4.6 The Partnership will examine the possibilities of establishing a Petitions Committee where Edinburgh's citizens can call for specific action to be taken by the Council.
- 4.7 The Partnership will establish a cross-party Budget Committee.
- 4.8 The Partnership will also explore the innovation of parental representation on the Education, Children and Families Committee.
- 4.9 The Leader of the Council ("**Leader**") will be the convener of the Policy & Strategy Committee and the Deputy Leader will be the vice-convener of the Policy & Strategy Committee.
- 4.10 The executive committees of the Council will be: Culture, Sport and Leisure; Economic Development; Education, Children and Families; Finance and Resources; Health, Social Care and Housing; and Transport and Environment, or such other committees as the Partners may agree.

5 **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

- 5.1 The Partnership is founded on the democratic principles of trust, equity, openness and fairness and is committed to delivering the highest quality of services to all the people and communities of Edinburgh.
- 5.2 The Partnership will operate in a consensual manner in developing policy and determining service investment.
- 5.3 The Partnership will hold regular meetings and will promote and facilitate the continuous exchange of ideas and information between the Partners. Joint meetings of the Partners will be held when necessary and parties will remain in regular contact through the offices of the respective group leaders.
- 5.4 Members of either Partner group will be able to ask questions of the Partnership, providing that there has been prior discussion and that neither Partner will seek to embarrass the other in conducting Council business.
- 5.5 This Agreement does not restrict elected members from campaigning during local elections.
- 5.6 The Partners shall ensure that all individual members of their respective party groups fulfil their roles and responsibilities, in particular in attending and voting at all key committees in order to secure the Partnership's decisions.

6 RESOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP DIFFERENCES

- 6.1 Where an agreed Partnership position cannot be reached through the regular working arrangements set out in clause 5, a panel will be formed comprising three senior party members of each of the Partners (including their respective spokespeople for the relevant subject) to work together in good faith to resolve the matter.
- 6.2 If the matter cannot be resolved by the panel referred to in clause 6.1 within a reasonable period of time, the matter shall be escalated to an extraordinary joint group meeting of the Partners which shall take place as soon as is practicable and shall work in good faith to reach an agreed position.

7 PUBLICITY

- 7.1 The Partners consent to the issue of a press release, substantially in the agreed form attached at Part 2 of the Schedule, immediately following the execution of this Agreement.
- 7.2 Any statements or press releases, issued by any member of a party group on behalf of the Partnership, will reflect the Partnership position as mutually agreed between the Partners.
- 7.3 The Leader and committee conveners will be the Partnership's nominated spokespeople in relation to their respective portfolios.

8 TERMINATION

- 8.1 If resolution is not agreed as described in clauses 6.1 and 6.2, this Agreement may be terminated by service of written notice by the group leader of a Partner upon the group leader of the other Partner.

9 VARIATION AND ENTIRE AGREEMENT

- 9.1 No variation of this agreement shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by the group leader or other authorised representative of each Partner.

9.2 This Agreement constitutes the whole agreement between the parties and supersedes all previous agreements between the parties relating to its subject matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Agreement is signed at Edinburgh on 10 May two thousand and twelve by



.....
Councillor Andrew Burns
for and on behalf of
**THE EDINBURGH LABOUR
GROUP**



.....
Councillor Steve Cardownie
for and on behalf of
**THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL
PARTY GROUP**

before this witness



.....
SUSAN MARGARET BRUCE
CITY CHAMBERS
EDINBURGH

before this witness



.....
SUSAN MARGARET BRUCE
CITY CHAMBERS
EDINBURGH

THIS IS THE SCHEDULE REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING COALITION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EDINBURGH LABOUR PARTY AND THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY DATED 10 MAY 2012

SCHEDULE

PART 1 – COMMITMENTS

- 1 To ensure that every child in Edinburgh gets the best start in life, we will:
 - 1.1 increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care;
 - 1.2 hold the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seek to reduce class sizes in line with Scottish Government recommendations;
 - 1.3 rebuild Portobello High School and continue progress on all other planned school developments, while providing adequate investment in the fabric of all schools;
 - 1.4 draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both over-crowding and under use in schools;
 - 1.5 seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum;
 - 1.6 establish city-wide childcare co-operatives for affordable childcare for working parents.

- 2 To reduce poverty, inequality and deprivation, we will:
 - 2.1 further develop the Edinburgh Guarantee to improve work prospects for school leavers;
 - 2.2 make sure the city's people are well-housed, including encouraging developers to build residential communities, starting with brownfield sites;
 - 2.3 work in partnership with the Scottish Government to release more funds for council homes for rent;
 - 2.4 set up a task force to investigate ways to bring empty homes into use;
 - 2.5 encourage the development of cooperative housing arrangements;
 - 2.6 work with health, police and third sector agencies to expand existing and effective drug and alcohol treatment programmes;
 - 2.7 enforce tenancy agreements (council and private landlord) with a view to ensuring tenants and landlords fulfil their good conduct responsibilities;
 - 2.8 strengthen Council housing allocation policy to give recognition to good tenants and to encourage responsible tenant behaviour and responsibilities.

- 3 To provide for Edinburgh's economic growth and prosperity, we will:
- 3.1 work with public organisations, the private sector and social enterprise to promote Edinburgh to investors;
 - 3.2 examine ways to source new funding to support small businesses;
 - 3.3 continue efforts to develop the city's gap sites and encourage regeneration;
 - 3.4 complete the tram project in accordance with current plans;
 - 3.5 keep Lothian Buses in public hands and encourage the improvement of routes and times;
 - 3.6 work with the Scottish Government to deliver a larger return of business rate receipts as part of the business rate incentivisation scheme;
 - 3.7 consult further on the viability and legality of a transient visitor levy;
 - 3.8 set up an independent forum to promote locally-owned retail businesses;
 - 3.9 identify unused council premises to offer on short low-cost lets to small businesses, community groups and other interested parties;
 - 3.10 maintain and enhance support for our world-famous festivals and events;
 - 3.11 introduce a "living wage" (currently set at £7.20) for Council employees, encourage its adoption by Council subsidiaries and contractors and its wider development;
 - 3.12 establish a policy of no compulsory redundancies;
 - 3.13 seek to work in full partnership with council staff and their representatives;
 - 3.14 further strengthen our links with the business community by developing and implementing strategies to promote and protect the economic well being of the City;
 - 3.15 ensure the Council continues to take on apprentices and steps up efforts to prepare young people for work;
 - 3.16 continue to maintain a sound financial position including long term financial planning;
 - 3.17 maintain our city's reputation as the cultural capital of the world by continuing to support and invest in our cultural infrastructure.
- 4 To strengthen and support our communities and keep them safe, we will:
- 4.1 develop and strengthen local community links with the police;
 - 4.2 strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used;
 - 4.3 work with police on an anti-social behaviour unit to target persistent offenders;

- 4.4 continue to develop the diversity of services provided by our libraries.

- 5 To ensure that Edinburgh is well-cared for and promote the wellbeing of our residents we will:
 - 5.1 develop improved partnership working across the Capital and with the voluntary sector to build on the “Total Craigroyston” model;
 - 5.2 examine ways to bring the Council, care home staff and users together into co-operatives to provide the means to make life better for care home users and care providers;
 - 5.3 promote direct payments in health and social care;
 - 5.4 establish a Care Champion to represent carers;
 - 5.5 work with Edinburgh World Heritage Trust and other stakeholders to conserve the city’s built heritage;
 - 5.6 take firm action to resolve issues surrounding the Council’s property services;
 - 5.7 continue to support and invest in our sporting infrastructure;
 - 5.8 invest in healthy living and fitness advice for those in most need.

- 6 To maintain and enhance the quality of life in Edinburgh we will:
 - 6.1 prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive;
 - 6.2 spend 5% of the transport budget on provision for cyclists;
 - 6.3 consult with a view to extending the current 20mph traffic zones;
 - 6.4 set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to consider our modern transport needs;
 - 6.5 use Green Flag and other strategies to preserve our green spaces;
 - 6.6 continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill;
 - 6.7 meet greenhouse gas targets, including the national target of 42% by 2020;
 - 6.8 investigate the possible introduction of low emission zones;
 - 6.9 oppose industrial biomass incineration in Edinburgh;
 - 6.10 encourage the development of Community Energy Cooperatives.