

**Minister for Local Government and Housing**  
**Meeting with Leader and Chief Executive of Edinburgh City Council**  
**Tuesday 22 August 2017 | Waverley Court**

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**Attendees:**

Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister of Local Government and Housing  
Cllr Adam McVey, Leader of Edinburgh City Council  
Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive of Edinburgh City Council  
John McNairney, Chief Planner, Scottish Government  
Cameron Stewart, Local Government Division, Scottish Government  
Marissa Gallagher, Minister's Private Office

**Housing:**

- The top priority for Edinburgh City Council is housing and building homes for the future. As the biggest challenge facing the Council is the expected growth of Edinburgh which could see a population of 750k by 2050.
- This is something that is being considered by the Edinburgh 2050 consultation that ECC recently published which has received thousands of responses from citizens.
- The alignment of capital plans between different organisation was identified as being key and the Council are meeting regularly with partners to discuss this. This process has been helped by the work being undertaken on the Edinburgh City Deal.
- There was brief discussion around potential development in West and North Edinburgh
- The forthcoming introduction of the Planning Bill was discussed.
- There was discussion about whether more use could be made of Compulsory Purchase Orders.
- Difficulties in the ability to plan due to the lack of multi-year funding was highlighted as an issue.

**Homelessness:**

- Edinburgh's plans to deal with the homelessness issue especially in light of the challenges faced by reforms to welfare system were discussed.
- A Homelessness Task Force was being established that would be led by a member of Edinburgh Council.

**Funding:**

- Edinburgh City Council expects that £140m worth of savings would need to be identified over the next 5 years.
- As such they were looking at ways in which they could do things differently and learn from good practice in other areas of Scotland and from England.

**Building Standards:**

- There was discussion of concerns on building standards, particularly in relation to the Cole report. Edinburgh City Council confirmed that they had implemented all of the recommendations from Cole however, the one main issue they were having is in the recruitment of building surveyors. It was agreed that sharing resources with other Councils may assist with this issue and indeed the Council confirmed they had already used some surveyors from Aberdeen and the Highlands.
- It was also confirmed that intrusive surveys have been carried out in 90% of all public buildings built at similar time as the school that triggered the Cole report. In the vast majority of cases there have been no issues identified. They confirmed that all schools are "safe" including any fire stop issues.
- The Minister did offer that Building Standards officials would be available to provide assistance on any issues should it be required.