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Queensferry & District Community Council – February 2020 report

Edinburgh Council budget

The Council met on Thursday 20 February to set a new budget for 2020/21. There is no disguising our view that the budget agreed and passed by SNP and Labour councillors will be deeply damaging for our constituents in Queensferry and Dalmeny. This budget;

- Ends all Council funding for community policing in Queensferry and Dalmeny.
- Removes all 130 qualified teachers from a Council run nurseries.
- Cuts the devolved budgets provided to headteachers at Echline PS, Queensferry PS, Dalmeny PS and Queensferry High and sets a savings target likely to result in the end of free musical tuition.
- Protects opening hours at Queensferry Library but leaves open the option of cutting librarians in future years.
- Significantly reduces the funding for Edinburgh Leisure with practical consequences still to be confirmed.

The decision of the Scottish Government to cut the Council's funding by £35 million this year required councillors to find savings. However, we worked with our councillor colleagues to present a fully costed alternative budget which avoided the damaging decisions listed above and also found money for additional investment in road and pavement repairs (an issue which continues to dominate our postbags/email inboxes). We also pushed successfully in our own budget to find new additional money for new play equipment at Inchcolm and Dundas playparks.

Whilst the agreed Council budget does not reflect our own spending priorities, we will continue to find ways to avoid these cuts to front line services if opportunities arise over the coming months.

63 bus service

The next transport committee (of which Kevin is a member) will consider the award of contracts for Council supported bus services. This includes the 63. The paper is confidential as it contains commercially sensitive information and therefore we cannot share the content. Once agreed by the transport committee, the paper will then go forward to the finance committee for final decision in March. Publicly available information should be available shortly after that.

Binks park

We were pleased to see that, after much pressure, Bellway finally fulfilled its promise from last autumn to re-turf the area next to the Binks car park.

Braehead Quarry recycling centre

Council officers have announced they will look into the feasibility of re-opening the Braehead recycling centre on Craigs Road. It comes after major congestion and queuing at the Sighthill Centre over recent months.

The reduction in the recycle centre opening hours agreed last year, coupled with changes to the centre road layout, caused big problems with access and waiting times. Officers will look at the option of re-opening the recycling centre off Craigs Road in 2021/22. A report for a final decision is expected in the next 12 months.

Burnshot Bridge

The project team has confirmed that the new Burnshot Bridge should open in April.

Scotstoun Avenue

We are frustrated by yet another delay to the promised traffic calming in Scotstoun Avenue. The latest timetable will see the new changes being put in place in the autumn.

Bo'ness Road speed limit

The statutory consultation on a traffic regulation order to reduce the speed limit on Bo'ness Road to 20mph is now expected in May.