



QUEENSFERRY and DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

SEEKING A FAIRER SHARE OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL'S BUDGET 2010-11

**Meeting of the Council
28 September 2009**

1. Purpose of report

To bid for a fairer share of City of Edinburgh Council's capital and revenue budget in 2010-11 to improve and expand public service provision in South Queensferry and Dalmeny.

2. Background

South Queensferry and Dalmeny has been a part of the City of Edinburgh Council area since 1975. There is a broad consensus that the citizens of Queensferry and Dalmeny are **treated unfairly** because they don't have access to the same level of services as citizens in other parts of the city. There is a general consensus that service provision in Queensferry and Dalmeny fails to meet the needs of a resident population which has tripled in size over the past 30 years. For example, they don't have access to either a public or privately run swimming pool within a five mile radius, a full time library service, or a full time Leisure Club facility.

The purpose of this document is to bid for a fairer share of the City of Edinburgh Council's capital and revenue budget for 2010-11 and beyond which is raised from the citizens of Queensferry and Dalmeny to be returned to improve the lives of people who live, work and visit Queensferry and Dalmeny.

3. Main Report

Based upon the Vision for Queensferry and “When I’m 64” reports, QDCC has identified six key priorities in 2010-11. These are:

- Better Leisure Facilities
- Parity of Bus Fares across CEC area
- Better Library Services
- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour, Vandalism and Graffiti
- Car Parking
- Wheelchair Access to Queensferry Burgh Chambers and Queensferry Museum.

The case for seeking extra budgetary provision for each of the six key priorities we have identified is set out below. These priorities are intended to protect and enhance the quality of life of the people who live, work and visit South Queensferry.

The Key Priorities for Queensferry 2010-11

Better Leisure Facilities

Queensferry’s leisure facilities are largely provided through Queensferry High School and Queensferry Recreation Centre. The High School facilities are currently restricted to out of school hours which results in access being denied to the community during daytime hours for 38 weeks of the year. The High School facility provides the only swimming pool and gymnasium facility in the area (there are no private leisure club facilities in either South Queensferry or Dalmeny at present).

During the Festive period, Queensferry High School was closed entirely for two weeks depriving the community of an important amenity. In comparison, residents in other parts of the CEC area had access to recreation centres adjacent to their area because these centres remained open during the same period (with the exception of public holidays). The lack of availability of recreation and leisure facilities is a contributory factor towards increased vandalism and anti-social behaviour, as well as having detrimental affects on the community’s health and wellbeing. The Community

Council proposes that extra budgetary provision should be made available in 2010-11 to ensure that Queensferry High School can open out with school hours all year round.

QDCC also proposes that resources are allocated towards refurbishment of the changing room facility (especially the wet changing room area) which is in urgent need of improvement.

For future years, we invite CEC to consider seeking a private sector partner to provide a new swimming pool/gymnasium facility to serve the communities of South Queensferry, Dalmeny and Kirkliston. The costs of such a facility could be partially offset by ceasing the use of the High School as a community leisure centre.

Proposed Action: (i) Opening Hours of Queensferry High School to be extended to full time hour's out with school hours all year round (2010-11 onwards) and (ii) CEC to seek a private sector partner to build and maintain a brand new swimming pool/gymnasium facility for Queensferry/Dalmeny/Kirkliston.

Parity of Bus Fares Across the whole of CEC area

Queensferry and Dalmeny are not served by Lothian Buses and are unique to anywhere else in the CEC area in having a different operator for each service. While CEC residents living within the city boundary need only buy one operator's ticket to reach most destinations, Queensferry residents must either buy a separate ticket for each operator, or purchase the SEStran 'One-Ticket'.

In early 2009, One-Ticket Ltd introduced a new 'zone 1a' bounded by Kirkliston, Newbridge, Gogar and Cramond to remove the area of rural west Edinburgh from the city zone 1 (of which it had been part of since the launch of the scheme in September 2002) and introduced different prices. This means that Queensferry & Dalmeny residents must now pay an extra £60 for an annual ticket to travel the four or so miles beyond Cramond Bridge, while residents of Penicuik, Gorebridge, Tranent and Musselburgh travelling a similar distance beyond the city edge still enjoy the city zone price.

While QDCC accepts that bus fares and services are not provided based on local authority boundaries, it is considered highly unfair that the residents of Queensferry & Dalmeny are being charged a premium on their journeys which are no greater distance than those undertaken within the city zone.

Proposed Action: City of Edinburgh Council as the main shareholder in One-Ticket Ltd to seek the reinstatement of rural west Edinburgh to Zone 1.

Better Library Services

Queensferry library is currently open on a part-time basis. The lending service within the library (books, materials, audio etc), has not been expanded during the past 34 years despite the tripling of the town's population during the same period. The library is also a useful source of information for local residents and the part-time service deprives the community of information about community events and services. The library is also the only source of PC access and some members of the community are effectively digitally excluded when the library is closed. There is no full time library service available to Queensferry within a five mile radius.

Proposed Action: (i) Opening Hours of Queensferry Library to be extended to full time opening in 2010-11 and (ii) Urgent consideration to be given to ways of expanding lending and reference material (including audio CDs) to meet the needs of a growing population.

Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour, Vandalism and Graffiti

While the Lothian & Borders Police presence in Queensferry has been strengthened in recent years, there are some parts of Queensferry which continue to be adversely affected by anti-social behaviour, particularly in the evenings and at weekends. Our consultations with the local community indicate these sorts of incidents adversely impact upon the quality of life of our citizens. It is time to act now to reduce anti-social behaviour, vandalism and graffiti.

QDCC propose that the most cost effective way of reducing anti-social behaviour in Queensferry would be to provide for at least two Community Safety Officers to be on duty in South Queensferry in the evenings and on weekends. These 2 CSOs would provide back up and support to the police presence in South Queensferry and

Dalmeny during this period.

Proposed Action: CEC to provide budgetary provision to support at least two Community Safety Officers in South Queensferry and Dalmeny in 2010-11 and beyond.

Car Parking

In common with most communities, Queensferry sees high levels of car use, but these are especially high because of the town's proximity to a rural area and its appeal as a resort that attracts visitors. The local business community rely very heavily upon the local community and tourism to survive. The number of car parking spaces has decreased in recent years with the reconstruction of the Hawes Promenade. There is also a great deal of congestion around the Health Centre which has limited parking. The QDCC proposes that funding be allocated by CEC in 2010-11 for an extension to the car park at The Binks (between the Priory Church and the Shore) to provide additional parking. Whilst we welcome the development of parking restrictions and charges, there needs to be more enforcement of the parking restrictions on double yellow lines along the High Street and in the vicinity of the Hawes Promenade particularly in the evenings and at weekends.

Proposed Action: CEC to provide budgetary provision for additional parking facilities to be provided in South Queensferry during 2010-11. Enforcement of parking restrictions on double yellow lines to be carried out regularly particularly in the evenings and at weekends.

Wheelchair Access to Queensferry Burgh Chambers and Queensferry Museum

Queensferry Burgh Chambers is used for local registration purposes, payment of council tax or rent and also as a meeting place for Queensferry & District Community Council. Queensferry Museum is located adjacent to the Burgh Chambers. At present, these buildings have no disabled access. The lack of wheelchair access excludes some members of our community from being able to register a birth or death, get married, attend community council meetings or visit Queensferry Museum. This is unacceptable in 2009 and contravenes DDA requirements. Disabled access requires to be provided as a matter of urgency.

Proposed Action: CEC to agree to provide sufficient funds to ensure that the Burgh Chambers and Queensferry Museum can be upgraded to allow for disabled access in 2010-11.

**Queensferry & District Community Council
Budget Focus Group**

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