

**Cllr Richard Lewis**

**Convener of Culture & Sport, Festival & Events Champion**

**Colinton Community Council – April 2016**

**Remit**

**Edge Conference**

I was honoured to open the 2016 Edge Conference – organised by the Council's Library Service. We had delegates from across the UK and further afield attending and presentations from a range of speakers. Martyn Evans, Chief Executive of Carnegie UK Trust, spoke about the work of the trust, their contribution to national strategies and the legacy of the buildings and infrastructure purchased through grants from the Carnegie Trust Fund over 100 years ago.

**Meadowbank Sports Centre**

The Council at its meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March has agreed to proceed with further detailed design work for a [new Meadowbank Sports Centre](#). The project will proceed to the tender stage and subject to funds being in place construction could start around autumn 2017.

**Meggetland Hockey Pitch**

The new water based hockey pitch is now complete and operational. The new pitch is a fantastic compliment to the Meggetland Sports Complex and the first water based hockey pitch in a Council owned venue.

**Culture and Sport Committee**

The first [committee](#) meeting of 2016 saw discussion on Culture & Sport grants for 2016/17, the Thundering Hooves action plan and the Museums and Galleries Volunteering Programme. We also had a short presentation on a new event strategy for Edinburgh which is currently being developed and will be presented to the committee later in the year.

**Edinburgh International Science Festival**

The first festival of the year in Edinburgh has taken place and I was thrilled to both speak at the launch in the National Museum and attend some of the events with my family. Covering a wide range of fields and subjects, the festival is fantastic way to broaden your views and knowledge of science, engineering and technology.

**Raise Your Glass – Celebrating Scotland's Brewing Heritage**

I was delighted to open the Raise Your Glass exhibition at the Museum of Edinburgh. The exhibition runs for four months and celebrates Scotland's brewing heritage with displays of artefacts along with promoting the history of the industry.

**Edinburgh International Festival**

The launch of this year's programme took place at the Festival Theatre last week which will see 2442 artists from 36 nations performing in Scotland's capital city from 5 to 29 August 2016. A world-class ensemble of artists will be complimented by a superb showcase of Scottish based talent. The opening night of the Festival will, as last year, include a free outdoor event. Deep Time is an epic, outdoor, public artwork bringing together animation, lighting and music to delve deep into 350 million years of Edinburgh's history.

## **Edinburgh Primary Schools Swimming Gala**

Over 500 pupils from 50 schools took part in the Edinburgh Primary Schools Swimming Gala at the Royal Commonwealth Pool just before Easter. It was great to see all the children taking part and having fun and I was delighted to hand out medals to some of the winners.

## **Constituency**

### **Waste**

Complaints at end of Feb half level of Jan. Aim is to half again during March to reach satisfactory levels. Change to shift patterns being rolled out which is reducing missed collections.

### **Roads**

A small team of staff, resourced from within the existing Neighbourhoods Roads Teams, have been formed to manage road and pavement pothole repairs.

Permanent repairs will be undertaken by way of "right first time" principles using hot bituminous materials. Work will concentrate on, but not limited to the main arterial routes, especially in the City Centre, South and South West Neighbourhoods.

### **PPP1 School Closures**

The City of Edinburgh Council has taken the precautionary decision to close all of their PPP1 schools from Monday (11 April 2016).

This follows advice from the Edinburgh Schools Partnership (ESP), the body responsible for building, managing and operating the estate on behalf of the local authority.

Remedial works taking place earlier today (Friday 8 April) at Oxbgangs Primary School uncovered new issues relating to the school's construction and ESP's technical experts were unable to give council officers sufficient guarantees that Oxbgangs and other PPP1 schools are safe to open on Monday.

This was despite previous assurances from ESP that all schools would reopen as normal following the Easter Holidays. They have written this afternoon to the Council's Chief executive to apologise.

Council Leader Cllr Andrew Burns said: "Edinburgh Schools Partnership have today been unable to give the Council sufficient guarantee that the schools and other premises are safe to open on Monday.

"Clearly we have every right to expect these schools to have been built to a good standard and in accordance with industry practice. We now know this isn't the case. ESP have let the Council down but more importantly they have let children, parents and staff of this city down.

"We have today alerted the Scottish Government to our concerns.

"The safety of children and our staff is our top priority and we're simply not willing to take any risks. As such we have no option but to close these schools and Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre.

"We fully recognise the significant inconvenience to parents caused by these closures. However I am sure everyone will understand why we have taken these steps.

"We will keep parents and carers updated over the coming week as more information becomes available."

The premises will be closed on Monday and parents will be given regular updates over the coming week regarding latest developments. Some premises may open earlier as the results of detailed structural surveys come back.

Contingency arrangements are being actively considered by Council staff and developments will be updated to parents on Monday.

Parents should consider childcare arrangements for next week.

The premises that will be initially closed from Monday are as follows:

**Schools:** Braidburn, Broomhouse Primary, Castleview Primary, Craigour Park Primary, Craigmount High, Craigroyston Primary, Drummond Community High, Firrhill High, Forthview Primary, Gracemount High, Oxgangs Primary School, Pirniehill Primary, Rowanfield, Royal High, St David's Primary, St Joseph's Primary and St Peters RC Primary.

**Other:** Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre.

Priority will be given to continue the preparations for S4, S5 and S6 students who are preparing for exams over the coming weeks.

Further details regarding the school closures are on the [Council website](#).

The Council website will be updated on a daily basis to provide information about the ESP situation.

**CLlr Richard Lewis**

**Convener of Culture & Sport**

**SNP Councillor for the Colinton/Fairmilehead Ward**

**12<sup>th</sup> April 2016**