

# Edinburgh Economy Strategy

## Stronger, Greener, Fairer

November 2021

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## Executive Summary

Edinburgh's economy is again in the process of navigating a way through changing and uncertain times. The aim of this strategy is to provide a clear direction for Council work to support the economy through this period of change and set clear priorities for actions on which we will collaborate with partners.

### Scotland's economic capital city

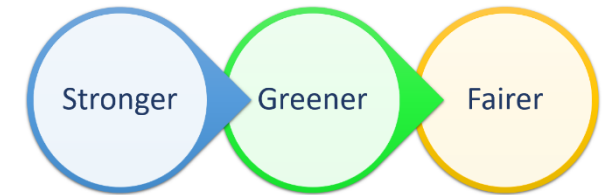
Edinburgh is Scotland's economic capital and, outside London, the strongest major city economy in the UK. The analysis and engagement with businesses, stakeholders, and city residents carried out for this strategy shows a picture of an Edinburgh economy in 2021 which:

- **Holds the core assets and strengths needed for a thriving future economy** - Edinburgh is the highest skilled major city in the UK, while only London is home to more FTSE100 businesses
- **Is attractive to investors, with a strong forward pipeline of capital projects to transform the city's infrastructure** - Edinburgh completed £1bn of city centre investment in 2021, with more than £2bn of investment in the pipeline city-wide for 2022-24.
- **Is showing early signs of recovery from the worst economic effects of the Covid pandemic** - Monthly job vacancy levels in Edinburgh and Lothians were up over 50% on pre-pandemic levels by Autumn 2021
- **But in which many businesses are still struggling to survive, where unemployment remains stubbornly high, even as firms experience labour market shortages** - Edinburgh businesses took on £0.5bn of additional debt during the pandemic
- **Where too many workers do not earn enough to live on** - around 37,000 Edinburgh workers are paid less than the real living wage
- **And, where workers and businesses feel much uncertainty over the long-term effects of pandemic on shifts in consumer and employer behaviour in the city** - 21% of all Scottish businesses intend to use home working as a permanent feature of their business model in future.

## A Stronger, Greener, Fairer Economy

In response to these changes, this strategy sets out the Council's vision and approach to ensuring a **stronger, greener, and fairer** Edinburgh economy.

## Edinburgh Economy Strategy



Our vision is for a city economy which is:

- **Stronger** – Edinburgh businesses **recover from pandemic** and thrive in an economy that is more resilient, flourishing, and innovative than ever before. The city is **open for business and a powerhouse for sustainable investment**, where critical strategic projects deliver the infrastructure and places we need to meet our net zero ambitions. Edinburgh is **the data capital of Europe**, where innovation through data drives economic prosperity, social change, and improvements in public services.
- **Greener** - Edinburgh's **just transition to net zero** brings local jobs and high skilled opportunities which people from all backgrounds can access through education and retraining. Edinburgh is a **hub for net zero innovation** with a new breed of sustainable local businesses leading new green industries. Businesses in Edinburgh can access the support, advice, incentives, and workers they need to embrace the **circular economy**, reduce waste and improve resource efficiency.
- **Fairer** - Everyone in Edinburgh has the opportunity to access **fair work that provides dignity and security** of income. Edinburgh is city whose prosperity is built on **well skilled people in good jobs** and does not rely on low paid workers with no security. People of all ages and backgrounds in Edinburgh get the help and support they need to find, and **thrive in employment**, with particular dedicated support provided for people with barriers to employment

## The role of the Council

The Council has a critical role in the Edinburgh economy and holds significant tools, levers and powers needed to meet this vision. During 2020-21 alone, the Council has:

- **Employed over 18,000 staff** as one of the largest employers in the city, and consolidated the Real Living Wage fully into Council pay structures, ensuring a pay rise for 4,400 Council employees
- **Purchased £280m of goods and services** from businesses in the Edinburgh economy, as one of the largest single buyers in the city
- Administered over **£190m of support to more than 19,000 businesses** through Scottish Government funded schemes to help businesses through the worst periods of the Covid pandemic
- Helped **3,700 people into work and learning** through Council funded employability programmes, and
- Agreed a total of **£4.5bn of Council capital investment** over the next ten years in Edinburgh housing, schools, transport, communities, culture and sports facilities.

This strategy sets out the actions the Council will take to use these levers over the next few years to maximise their impact and deliver a stronger, greener, fairer Edinburgh economy. The strategy provides a full detailed plan of 30 actions to be implemented during 2022-25 and beyond.

### Key highlights for delivery by the Council during the first year of implementation of this strategy in 2022 include:

- Increasing the number of people we help into work, learning or training through **Edinburgh Guarantee For All** and our funded employability programmes
- Delivering progress on key strategic development sites, including the meeting of key milestones for development of **Edinburgh BioQuarter** and **Granton Waterfront**
- Continuing to **support 3,000 businesses** each year through our Business Gateway service, and enhance our business support

offering to make sure all Edinburgh businesses can access the advice and expertise they need to sustain and thrive

- Encouraging 100 businesses to become accredited Real Living Wage employers, through our work with the **Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Group**
- Supporting the **recovery of the visitor economy and cultural sector** in Edinburgh
- Supporting the launch of new programmes to help businesses make the transition to a net zero economy, including delivering proposals for a new **Green Innovation Challenge Fund**.
- Establishing a business led **Just Transition Economic Forum** to convene the city's business community to provide leadership on the just economic transition to a net zero city
- Launching a new **Edinburgh Means Business** annual conference programme to celebrate progress, and strengthen the networks and relationships needed for a Stronger, Greener, Fairer Edinburgh economy.

### Further to these actions, key highlights for delivery during the period 2023-25 include:

- Supporting the delivery of over £2bn of investment projects in Edinburgh infrastructure, with transformative new communities, commercial and cultural spaces across the city
- Developing and securing investment for Edinburgh's pipeline of future green investment projects in net zero heat and energy solutions, buildings retrofitting, green transport initiatives and others
- More than doubling the number of Real Living Wage Accredited businesses committed to Fair Work in Edinburgh
- Developing the city's skills system to meet employers' skills shortages, and help people progress into good jobs in emerging sectors
- Delivering a five-year plan to maintain a vibrant and sustainable City Centre economy in Edinburgh, and
- Supporting the development of Edinburgh's data and innovation ecosystem to make Edinburgh the Data Capital of Europe

# 1. Introduction

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## *Edinburgh Economy Strategy*

In June 2018, the City of Edinburgh Council approved the Edinburgh Economic Strategy and a programme of work to enable good growth for Edinburgh's economy<sup>i</sup>.

In December 2020 a review and refresh of this strategy was proposed in response to new significant challenges facing the city, and developments to the policy context in which the city operates<sup>ii</sup>.

This refreshed strategy represents the results of a period of analysis, engagement and consultation with partners, stakeholders, and Edinburgh citizens over the past six months. The document builds on a draft strategic approach published for consultation in June 2021<sup>iii</sup>, and on parallel consultation activities taken place in support of other city-wide plans and strategies under development during the same period – including the 2030 Climate Strategy, and 2030 City Plan. Details and results of consultation activities are provided in Appendix 1.

## *The purpose of this strategy*

Edinburgh's economy is again in the process of navigating a way through changing and uncertain times. The aim of this strategy is to provide a clear direction for Council work to support the economy through this period of change and set clear priorities for actions on which we will collaborate with partners.

This doing so, the strategy aims to ensure that the city's economic priorities continue to meet the needs of citizens and businesses and drive a strong and fair recovery from the economic effects of the Covid 19 pandemic, adapt to the changes driven by the UK's withdrawal from EU, and ensure a just

transition to a net zero economy, alongside other economic changes anticipated in the coming few years.

In particular, the strategy aims to:

- Set out the Council's priorities for ensuring Edinburgh makes a strong recovery from the economic effects of the Covid pandemic, and a just transition to a net zero future economy
- Describe the actions the Council will take to ensure that Edinburgh's economic development meets the long-term needs of the city and its residents, and
- Describe the Council's economic development priorities for working with partners, businesses, investors, and communities.

## *The structure of this document*

This document is structured as follows:

- **Policy Context:** Section 2 describes the policy context within which this strategy will operate, and the wider national and city priorities to which this work contributes
- **Economic Context:** Section 3 sets out the economic context within which Edinburgh will operate over the coming years, including the challenges and opportunities to which a clear strategic response is required.
- **Strategic Approach:** Section 4 describes the Council's aims and strategic approach for supporting the city economy, including the tools and levers available for use by the Council
- **Calls for action by Scottish and UK Governments:** Section 5 sets out key actions needed by Governments to support this strategy
- **Governance and Partnerships:** Section 6 provides an overview of Governance and delivery partnerships
- **Actions for delivery:** Appendix 4 to the report describes the detailed actions the Council will take to enable a stronger, greener, fairer economy in Edinburgh.

## 2. Policy Context

### *Developing city wide priorities*

The past three years have seen major developments in the policy context within which Edinburgh operates.

In 2020 the city published the results of the 2050 Edinburgh City Vision project, building on two years of engagement with over 40,000 city residents to identify their ambitions for the future. Those findings identified an aspiration for Edinburgh to be a **Welcoming, Fair, Thriving, and Inspiring City**<sup>iv</sup>.



This economy strategy has a critical role to play in supporting the city's development towards these aspirations. In doing so, it aligns to and takes on priorities for action set out by keynote city-wide strategies such as the [Council Business Plan](#), and the [Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan](#).

### **Stronger**

The **Council Business Plan** commits to ensuring that Edinburgh's economy recovers from recession and businesses are supported to thrive<sup>v</sup>. During consultation on this strategy business leaders and organisations across the city described the challenges that many firms are facing in as a result of the pandemic. Many businesses remain vulnerable. The pressures of lockdown and continued changes in work, shopping, and leisure habits have led to more firms borrowing in order to survive, and repaying these debts will be a major challenge in the coming years.

At the same time as responding to these immediate needs of business, plans are also needed to secure a stronger future economy. In 2021 Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal partners agreed a new [Regional Prosperity Framework](#). Building on the platform



provided by city region deal investment, the framework sets a direction for regional economic collaboration aiming to support an economy that is more resilient, flourishing, and innovative than ever before.

The new [2030 City Plan](#) sets out the spatial policies needed for this goal, including delivery of key land use needs, such as local centres, retail and leisure, sites for businesses, and new and expanded community infrastructure. The **2030 Climate Strategy** outlines actions needed to make sure that transition to net zero results in a stronger city-wide economy, built on new green industries and new investment.

A key priority for this strategy, is to respond to all these challenges and build on existing commitments – supporting businesses to survive through the challenges of a continuing pandemic, while providing the long term enabling environment needed for a strong economy that provides sustainable opportunities for businesses and people to thrive.

*“Edinburgh, like the rest of the country, is at a crucial point in the recovery from the unprecedented business disruption of 2020-21. Our businesses need a clear message that they are valued, and they need to play a participative role in shaping the future of the city that they call home and of which they form part of the very fabric.”*

**Federation of Small Business Scotland**

### **Greener**

In 2018 the City of Edinburgh Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming a net zero climate emissions city by 2030. In 2021 this commitment was established as one of three core priorities for a new **Council Business Plan**, with detailed actions needed to meet this target developed in a **2030 Climate Strategy**.

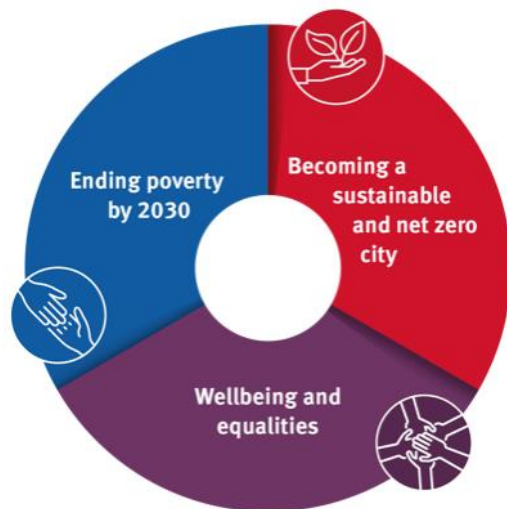


Our consultation and engagement activities showed that the majority of citizens, and all business organisations agreed that leading the city in a just transition toward net zero should be a major priority for this refreshed economy strategy.

*"[We should] Ensure inclusion and Net Zero Carbon are at the heart of the future economic strategy for the City, and that we collectively work to tackle these critical issues"*

**Edinburgh Business Resilience Group, Prospectus For Growth**

This strategy aims to respond to this shared priority by putting in place the actions needed to support businesses in transforming their own operations towards net zero, to ensure Edinburgh businesses can take advantage of new low carbon industries and opportunities, to help develop the skilled workforce needed for new green industries, and to attract the investment needed to support major low carbon developments across the city.



The City of Edinburgh Council, Business Plan: Our Future City, Our Future Council

**Fairer**

In 2020, the **City of Edinburgh Council** and **Edinburgh Partnership** both made commitments to set a target to end poverty in Edinburgh by 2030. These commitments came in response to the work of the **Edinburgh Poverty Commission**



and the findings from its two year inquiry into the causes of and solutions to poverty across the city<sup>vii</sup>. Plans to meet the commitment also inform the city’s response to its responsibilities under the Child Poverty Act

In meeting this priority, The **Council Business Plan** and **End Poverty in Edinburgh Delivery Plan** includes commitments to promote fair work practices, to expand and enhance support needed to help people into employment, and to ensure Edinburgh’s young people can achieve their potential in a way that makes them great employees for the future of the city<sup>viii</sup>. The **2030 Climate Strategy** sets out commitments to ensure a just transition to net zero, one that is built around good quality jobs which people from all backgrounds can access. The **2030 Tourism Strategy** commits to ensuring “that Edinburgh’s tourism sector is delivering fair, inclusive and rewarding jobs”<sup>ix</sup>. At the same time, the **Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan** makes commitments to ensure that people across the city have access to the work and learning opportunities they need in order to progress.





Our consultation for this strategy told us that the majority of citizens agree with these propositions and that promoting access to fair work and opportunities for people to progress should be a major priority for the Council. Business too support the need to ensure that Edinburgh’s economy is fair and just. “*Edinburgh’s economic goals,*” the Federation of Small Business told us, “*must of course be compatible with a strong commitment to the principles of fair work.*”<sup>x</sup>

This economy strategy aims to build on existing commitments, and sets out actions to support and collaborate with businesses to radically increase the number of workers who can rely on fair work and real living wages. It includes actions to enhance and reform skills development and employability support available to people of all ages in the city, and to ensure the benefits and opportunities of a net zero economy are accessible by everyone.

*“The Covid crisis has exposed a need to rethink employment practices and progress a Fair Work agenda. We need all the city’s employers, public sector organisations, and trades unions to work together and make a collective commitment to delivering fair, rewarding, secure jobs for everyone.”*

**Edinburgh Poverty Commission**

### Global and National policy priorities

Edinburgh is Scotland’s capital city, and an international meeting place attracting workers, investors, visitors and students from all parts of the world. As such, the city has a key role to play in delivering Scotland’s priorities, and contributing to meeting international agreements shared with global partners.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been adopted by all UN member states. They set out an interlinked set of priorities and actions to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth, as well as tackle climate change and working to preserve oceans and forests. Within Scotland, the national performance framework

(NPF) sets out how the 17 SDGs have been incorporated into 11 cross-cutting outcomes for Scotland which drive and guide implementation of national policies.

This Edinburgh Economy Strategy has been developed to deliver actions which ensure Edinburgh’s strong contribution to meeting Scotland’s NPF and UN SDG targets.

In doing so, the strategy is designed in response to a developing suite of Scottish Government policies and strategies setting out the nationwide approach to economic recovery and transformation over the next few years. These include policies set out in:

- The Programme for Government,
- The (forthcoming) National Strategy for Economic Transformation,
- The Covid Recovery Plan,
- The Fair Work Action Plan and others.

As with the local policy context, all these national frameworks will adapt and change through the years this Economy Strategy is being delivered. A key aspect of implementation will involve maintaining alignment with national policies through annual review of the strategy and its priorities.



### 3. Economic Context

This section sets out the changing context to which a refreshed Edinburgh Economy strategy needs to respond. In particular, the analysis considers:



Taken together, the evidence in this section shows Edinburgh in 2021 to be:

- A city that has the core assets and strengths it needs for a thriving future economy
- A city that is open to business and investment, with a strong forward pipeline of capital projects to regenerate brownfield sites and transform the city's infrastructure
- A city that is showing early signs of recovery from the worst economic effects of the Covid pandemic...
- ...but in which many businesses are still struggling to survive, where unemployment remains stubbornly high, even as firms experience labour market shortages
- A city where much uncertainty remains over the long-term effects of pandemic on shifts in consumer and employer behaviour in the city.
- And a city where the economic opportunities of fair work and transition to net zero are significant and represent a core plank on

which to respond to these challenges and build a resilient economy from which everyone in the city can benefit.

#### *Core Strengths and Opportunities*

##### **Edinburgh is Scotland's Economic Capital...**

Edinburgh is Scotland's economic capital and, outside London, the strongest major city economy in the UK. Economic output per capita is higher than any major UK city outside London. Unemployment rates are lower than UK and Scottish averages, and jobs growth over the past five years (including 2021) has been faster than all but one UK city.

An analysis of key facts about Edinburgh's economy shows us that:

- **Skills** - 62.7% of the city workforce is degree qualified. More than any other UK city<sup>xi</sup>.
- **Investment** - Edinburgh attracted more FDI projects in 2020 than any UK city outside London<sup>xii</sup>
- **Innovation** – Edinburgh is host to 13 internationally recognised innovation centres of excellence - covering sectors including data science, life sciences, food innovation, fintech, and astronomy<sup>xiii</sup>
- **Research** - 33% of all R&D spend in Scotland takes place in Edinburgh. Over £400m per annum<sup>xiv</sup>.
- **Business** - Only London plays host to more FTSE100 businesses in the UK than Edinburgh<sup>xv</sup>.
- **Study** – With three world-leading Universities, in 2021 Edinburgh was ranked as the second-best city for students in the UK, and the 12th best in the world<sup>xvi</sup>.
- **Prosperous** - Edinburgh is home to 621 'high growth' businesses, in the UK only London has more<sup>xvii</sup>.
- **International** - 23% of Edinburgh's 530,000 residents were born outside the UK. International students make up almost 20% of all students at our three Universities<sup>xviii</sup>
- **Growing** – Edinburgh's population is forecast to grow by almost 56,000 people over the next two decades. The city is the UK's fastest



growing major city and is projected to grow more quickly than European cities such as Zurich, Copenhagen, Munich, Lyon, Helsinki, and Amsterdam<sup>xix</sup>.

Alongside the city's unique natural environment, historic buildings, and quality of life, these are the fundamental economic strengths that make Edinburgh a successful place to invest, to create jobs, and to make a fulfilling career. [These core assets have helped the city navigate and respond to previous economic crises, and it is these assets on which this strategy will build actions to ensure the city's future prosperity.](#)

### **...with a strong investment pipeline on which to build.**

Even during the 2020/21 Covid pandemic, Edinburgh continued to attract and complete major new investment projects across the city.

During summer of 2021 alone, the city welcomed the culmination of £1bn of investments in two major retail and hospitality developments at either end of Princes Street. The new £850m St James Quarter features around 80 shops and 30 restaurants, along with a cinema and 152 homes. At the same time, the opening of the Johnnie Walker Experience in the city's West End represented a £150m investment by Diageo in redeveloping a historic former B-listed department store into a flagship visitor attraction.

Other major developments due for completion during 2022 to 2023 are highlighted in Box 1. These represent over £2bn of investment in projects at Edinburgh BioQuarter, Edinburgh Futures Institute, Meadowbank, North Bridge, Picardy Place, Granton, Haymarket, and in Edinburgh Trams to Newhaven.

[Taken together these represent one of the most ambitious and extensive programmes of urban development and investment currently underway in any city across the UK.](#)

[The role of this strategy is to ensure that these opportunities are developed in ways that meet the aspirations and priorities of the city and can act as a catalyst for further investment in development and infrastructure to drive the city's economy.](#)

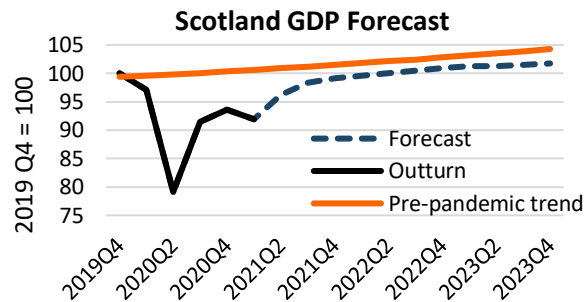
#### **Box 1: Edinburgh's Investment Pipeline – examples of flagship developments completing in 2022-24**

- A new 13,500 m<sup>2</sup> development at the expanding **BioQuarter** district in Edinburgh will be completed in 2022. It will host the **Usher Institute for Population Health** sciences, one of **four data driven innovation hubs** in the city. Over the next decade, the £1.4 bn Edinburgh BioQuarter investment programme has the potential to deliver 400 new homes, 850,000 sq. ft of innovation space, and 200,000 sq. ft of hotel, retail, and food and drink space, all powered by net zero energy.
- Restoration of the Old Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh into a work hub for the **Edinburgh Futures Institute**. The £120m renovation of a Category-A Listed building will provide 21,300 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space and provide new teaching, event spaces, and meeting rooms.
- A mixed use programme consisting of sites at **Fountainbridge**, **Meadowbank** and **Powderhall**, represents an investment of £500m bringing approximately 1,000 new homes to the city along with new much needed workspace intended for the tech and social enterprise sectors.
- **National Galleries of Scotland** refurbishment is a £22m project to enhance the entrance and gallery and re-landscape East Princes Street Gardens. The project is due for completion in 2022.
- A £60 million repair of the 1890's built **North Bridge** that connects the two halves of Edinburgh's original World Heritage site
- In Edinburgh's **Haymarket** a £350m development is transforming a brownfield site in the West of the city adjacent to the rail station.
- A £200 million expansion of the **Edinburgh tram network** from the city centre to Newhaven will open in 2023, significantly enhancing the city's sustainable public transport network and helping to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- First phases of the **Granton Waterfront development** will be delivered in 2022-23. Overall, this £1.3bn development will provide around 3,500 net zero homes, a primary school, a health centre, commercial and cultural space and a new coastal park.

## The economic effects of the Covid pandemic

### Steady but uneven recovery from the worst of recession...

Scotland's economy contracted by 9.5% during 2020, with much of this decline driven by sectors - such as tourism and retail - upon which Edinburgh has historically had a strong reliance.



Latest estimates from the Scottish Fiscal Commission now expect GDP growth of 6.7% in 2021, followed by 4.0% in 2022, before more normal levels of growth return in 2023 at 1.2%<sup>xx</sup>. If this path is sustained the size of the Scottish

economy will return to pre-pandemic levels by April 2022. In line with UK forecasts, however, the full value of output growth lost due to the pandemic may not be recovered until 2026 or later.

Data for the year to date, however, show that this recovery has not been evenly experienced across all sectors. While industries such as financial services and manufacturing have recorded growth in output relative to onset of pandemic, those industries most affected by Covid remain far behind their pre-Covid levels.

Evidence provided by Scottish Enterprise, for instance, shows that many tourism and hospitality businesses - which together account for more than 10% of all employment in Edinburgh - remain in survival mode and not yet in recovery. Almost half of Scottish businesses in this sector report that turnover levels in Autumn 2021 were lower than expected, well above the all industry average<sup>xxi</sup>.

### ...Rising costs and increasing debt...

*"We need our political leaders to be cognisant of the level of debt burden, the changing business landscape and the new ways of innovative working being grappled with by our local businesses."*

**Edinburgh Business Resilience Group, Prospectus For Growth**

Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts show that UK CPI inflation rates are expected to peak at 4.4% in Q2 2022, not returning to the 2% target rate until mid-2024<sup>xxii</sup>. While these increases pose clear challenges for the cost of living, and the real value of wages, reports also show that

- Businesses across Scotland are experiencing the highest rise in cost burden experienced since 2008, while two-thirds of firms report an increase in running costs compared with Autumn last year<sup>xxiii</sup>.
- Reported drivers of increased costs include increased raw material prices, freight and logistics costs (due to both Brexit and Covid related supply chain disruptions), increases in wage costs, logistic prices, and energy costs<sup>xxiv</sup>.

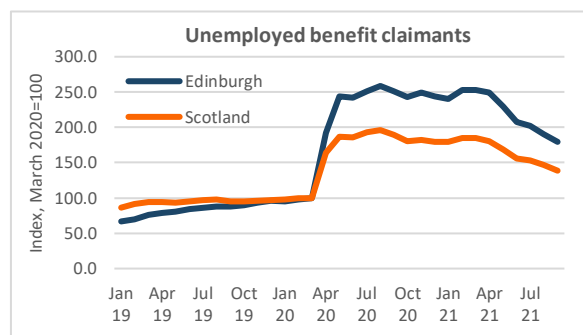
In addition to rising costs, Edinburgh businesses also report rising reliance on debt in order to survive. FSB estimates show that Edinburgh firms took on an additional £0.5bn in debt as a result of the pandemic<sup>xxv</sup>. While support such as VAT deferrals have been welcome, many businesses now face difficulty in making payments that will be required to service debt and deferrals during the next year. Confidence on businesses ability to manage debts varies considerably between sectors – less than half of hospitality firms are highly confident they can meet their debts, compared to an all industry average of 68%<sup>xxvi</sup>.

### ...Continuing unemployment and labour market uncertainty...

Latest projections by the Scottish Fiscal Commission show that unemployment in Scotland is expected to continue to rise over coming months, peaking at 5.4% in Q2 2022 – two thirds higher than its pre-

pandemic level and not forecast to return to those levels within the next five years.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Within Edinburgh, the number of unemployed benefits claimants in the city has fallen slowly in the period to Autumn 2021 but remains at more than double the pre-pandemic level.<sup>xxviii</sup>



One major uncertainty over unemployment trends in the city relates to the impact of the end of the UK Government's furlough scheme. Towards the closing of the scheme in August 2021, data show that more than 10,000 jobs in Edinburgh were supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme<sup>xxix</sup>. While it is hoped that all furloughed workers will return fully to their previous roles, uncertainty remains over long term sustainability of posts in supported firms, with a small proportion of such businesses planning redundancies during Winter 2021/22.

### ...Labour market shortages and skills challenges...

Alongside high unemployment, Edinburgh businesses are also experiencing significant challenges in recruiting to key roles and filling much needed vacancies in some sectors.

- Monthly vacancy levels in Edinburgh and Lothians were up over 50% on pre-pandemic levels by Autumn 2021, compared to a 30% increase across Scotland<sup>xxx</sup>.
- 25% of businesses across Scotland were recruiting for roles in Autumn 2021, with 40% reporting that vacancies were more difficult to fill than normal for the time of year, putting upward pressure on wage costs.
- Recruitment challenges are highest in key sectors for Edinburgh such as hospitality, arts and culture, and transport.

- Reasons for difficulties include a lack of suitable applicants, increased demand from competing sectors, applicants wage expectations, and loss of EU national workers.

Insights from Skills Development Scotland note that investment in skills and employability support will be critical over the coming years to ensure a sustainable recovery from the labour market effects of the pandemic.

### ...Continuing challenges of low pay and low security jobs...

On average, Edinburgh remains a high employment, high wage economy, but there are deep inequalities, concerns around low pay, insecurity, exploitative contracts and limited opportunities for job progression for too many people:

- Pre Covid the majority (65%) of people in poverty in Edinburgh were in working households<sup>xxxi</sup>
- Around one in ten (9%) of all jobs were casual, temporary or non-contract.
- In a survey of citizens 'work does not pay enough' was the single factor most commonly raised as a cause of poverty in Edinburgh – cited by 83% of all respondents.
- 27% of Edinburgh jobs do not provide workers with 'satisfactory' pay, contracts, or hours, and
- Approximately 37,000 Edinburgh workers are paid less than £9.50 ph, the current threshold set by the Living Wage Foundation.

Recent analysis by CIPD also indicates that across Scotland<sup>xxxii</sup>:

- 26% of employees felt their work impacted negatively on their mental health
- less than a third (31%) of employees believed their job offered good prospects for career advancement
- one-fifth (19%) said they had no effective channel to raise concerns at work.

These findings highlight that unfair work can have a negative effect on workers' personal lives and their relationships with their employers, which consequently can be disadvantageous for business development.

### ...City centre challenges and a changing economic geography...

At the peak of pandemic lockdowns over the past 18 months, footfall levels in Edinburgh's city centre fell to less than 50% of normal levels. By Autumn 2021, the Centre for Cities High Street Tracker showed that<sup>xxxiii</sup>:

- Edinburgh city centre had recovered to 80% of its pre-pandemic level for footfall and spend
- Weekday visitors were at 70% of pre-pandemic levels, with weekend and night-time economy trends close to normal levels

This represents a significant improvement on patterns recorded earlier in 2021, but still indicates a wide gap still to be recovered before pre-pandemic levels are regained.

Within this dataset, weekday visitors are seen as a proxy for the return of workers to city centre offices and workplaces. In the three months to September 2021 this rate rose sharply from less than 50% to 70%.

Despite this increase, significant uncertainty remains over future work patterns in Edinburgh's city centre<sup>xxxiv</sup>.

- 21% of all Scottish businesses intend to use home working as a permanent feature of their business model, citing increased staff wellbeing, increased productivity, and an ability to recruit from a wider geographic pool as major benefits.
- Only 47% of all Scottish businesses have already returned to their normal workplace as at September 2021, with 12% not planning or uncertain as to when they will return to normal work locations.

Continuing patterns of remote working and increasing use of 'hybrid' working patterns is likely to have a significant impact on weekday footfall in the centre of the city, with long term impacts still uncertain. These changes indicate a potentially significant alteration to the geography of where and how economic activity in the city takes places among some key sectors.

### Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal<sup>xxxv</sup>

This Edinburgh Economy Strategy is underpinned by and fully aligned to the partnership work being undertaken by the Edinburgh and South Scotland City Region Deal. This ambitious city region deal identifies new collaborative ways for local partners to work with UK Government and Scottish Governments to deliver transformational change to the city regional economy.

It represents a £1.3billion investment in the region over the next 15 years, focusing on:

- Research, Development and Innovation - including investment needed to make Edinburgh the Data Capital of Europe
- Regional Skills and Employability investment, opening up new jobs for people, new talent for businesses, and ensuring that people from all parts of the city can access the skills they need to progress through their working lives
- Investment in Transport and Housing, to build more affordable homes and connect people to opportunities, and
- Investment in Culture, including development of the Dunard Centre - Edinburgh's first purpose-built music venue in 100 years

Since its agreement, the City Region Deal has already delivered:

- £168m of Government investment
- 45,000 enrolments for university accredited Data Driven Innovation qualifications
- 442 enrolments in data science online learning programmes
- Construction of the £22.4m purpose built National Robatarium Centre, due for completion in 2022
- Help for 1,600 employers to advertise over 3,800 jobs on the Covid-19 jobs portal for the region
- Help for more than 250 people to move into affordable homes in Edinburgh

## ***The opportunities offered by a just transition to a net zero economy***

During development of this strategy the majority of citizens and all business organisations agreed that Edinburgh’s economy strategy over the next decade needed to focus on fair work, and transition to net zero as key priorities for the city as well as for the long-term resilience and competitiveness of the economy.

While businesses are clear on the challenges these priorities represent and the support needed to make these transitions, evidence also indicates that a greener and fairer economy is not just the right to do from a social or climate perspective, it is also the right thing from a business point of view.

### **Business benefits of fair work in Edinburgh**

*“It remains critical that Edinburgh is seen as a fair wage economy where true levelling up has the opportunity to occur.”*

**University of Edinburgh**

xxxvi

There is a growing body of evidence to suggest a strong business case for employers to offer fair work to employees. Interviews and analysis carried out by Strathclyde Business School show that competitive pay helps reduce staff turnover, resulting in better performance, productivity, and service quality<sup>xxxvii</sup>. Businesses also noted that retaining high performing staff, through fair work, allowed them to innovate, and invest more in product development and customer service skills.

Such findings are consistent with other research carried out by the Living Wage Foundation<sup>xxxviii</sup>. Their research shows that paying a living wage can be good for business with:

- 83% of businesses saying it improved the reputation of their business

- 75% saying it increased motivation and retention rates for employees
- 64% saying it helped differentiate themselves from others in their industry, and
- 58% saying it helped improve relations between managers and their staff.

As at Autumn 2021 there are over 450 Living Wage Employers accredited employers in Edinburgh. The city’s newly established **Living Wage City Action Group** has set an aim to more than double this total over the next five years<sup>xxxix</sup>. Such progress could have a significant impact on the city’s wider economy. Recent research shows that:<sup>xl</sup>



- If just a quarter of Scotland’s low earners saw their pay raised to the real Living Wage, the subsequent increase in wages, productivity and spending could deliver an £89m economic boost to Scotland’s economy
- In Edinburgh such an improvement would bring a £7m benefit to the city economy.

### **Economic opportunities arising from a net zero economy**

*“The city must support and encourage existing businesses to build competitiveness and resilience by being active participants in a green recovery...There are huge opportunities to improve staff wellbeing and productivity, find operational efficiencies and savings, and create new products and markets.”*

**Edinburgh Climate Commission**

xli

A just transition to a net zero economy represents one of the biggest opportunities Edinburgh has to recover from recession and remain Scotland’s most vibrant and prosperous economy.



For an individual business, becoming net zero can mean improved resilience, new markets, lower costs, increased productivity, more engaged staff, as well as an opportunity to meet growing consumer demands for zero carbon, zero waste options. For the city as a whole, the potential opportunities are even greater.

The value of output from UK low carbon industries is expected to grow to 8 percent of GDP by 2030, up from 2 percent in 2015<sup>xlii</sup>. A net zero economy also offers an opportunity to meet growing consumer demands for zero carbon/zero waste options, and to ensure that Edinburgh businesses retain their share of the growing green pound. Ethical consumer spending and finance in the UK was estimated at £98bn in 2019, more than double the level recorded in 2010<sup>xliii</sup>. At the same time, adoption of circular economy approaches has been associated with the potential creation of over 200,000 new jobs across the UK<sup>xliv</sup>.

Alongside these benefits, the city's commitment to net zero also represents a commitment to significant levels of investment in infrastructure needed to meet climate emission targets. These investments include:

- A commitment to invest £2.8bn of Council capital funds over ten years to deliver 10,000 new sustainable and affordable homes by 2027, and to modernise existing Council-owned homes to be energy efficient.
- Investment in Passivhaus/EnerPHit standard public buildings shaping the economy of new build and supporting the emergence of new low carbon construction methods
- Investment of £172m in the development of new city-wide active travel infrastructure across the city, transforming the ability of people to move around the city in a way that protects local environments.
- Investment in key low carbon developments across the city, including Granton Waterfront, West Edinburgh, and Edinburgh BioQuarter
- Multi-billion-pound investments in Edinburgh's energy networks and supporting infrastructure; in retrofitting homes, offices, and public buildings across the city; and in net zero transport infrastructure

such as local mobility hubs, bus decarbonisation solutions, and electric vehicle charging points.

These investments together represent a unique opportunity for the city to build the infrastructure needed for a strong, a fair, and a green recovery from the economic challenges of the past two years. [They represent opportunities for Edinburgh businesses to play their part in leading these investments by bringing their innovations and their knowledge to bear on these projects. They also represent an opportunity to benefit from supply chain expenditure, to create new jobs in new industries, and for people of all parts of Edinburgh to build new, rewarding careers.](#)

### **What is a 'Just Transition to Net Zero'**

A 'just transition' to a net zero economy is where governments plan, invest and implement a transition to environmentally and socially sustainable jobs, sectors and economies.

This vision for a just transition is to create opportunities to develop resource efficient and sustainable economic approaches which help address inequality and poverty.

It means making all possible efforts to create decent, fair and high value work, in a way which does not negatively affect the current workforce and overall economy.

*Source: Scottish Government: Just Transition Commission*



## 4. Strategic Approach – Stronger, Greener, Fairer

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### *Our vision for Edinburgh's economy*

This strategy sets out the Council's vision and approach to ensuring a **stronger, greener, and fairer** Edinburgh economy.

It defines the priorities for Council delivery over the next few years, and the principles and priorities that will guide the way we work with partners, investors, businesses, and communities towards our shared goals.

By implementing the approaches in this strategy, our vision is for an economy in which:

- Everyone has the opportunity to access **fair work that provides dignity and security** of income
- Edinburgh businesses **recover from pandemic** and thrive in an economy that is more resilient, flourishing, and innovative than ever before
- Edinburgh is the **highest skilled city in the UK**. A city whose prosperity is built on well skilled people in good jobs and does not rely on low paid workers with no security.
- Edinburgh is **the data capital of Europe**, where innovation through data drives economic prosperity, social change, and improvements in public services
- Edinburgh is **open for business and a powerhouse for investment**, where UK-leading strategic projects deliver the infrastructure and places we need to meet our net zero ambitions
- Edinburgh is a **hub for net zero innovation** with a new breed of sustainable local businesses leading new green industries
- Edinburgh is a **unique global capital of culture** as well as investment, where our world leading heritage, tourism, and creative sector assets help the city recover and thrive

- Edinburgh's just transition to net zero brings **local jobs and high skilled opportunities** which people from all backgrounds can access through education and retraining
- Edinburgh is **Scotland's most open and welcoming city**, continuing to attract the international investors and talent we need to meet our aspirations for the city and our citizens
- The city's transformation is built on **strong relationships, and collaboration** between the Council, businesses, public sector partners and communities.

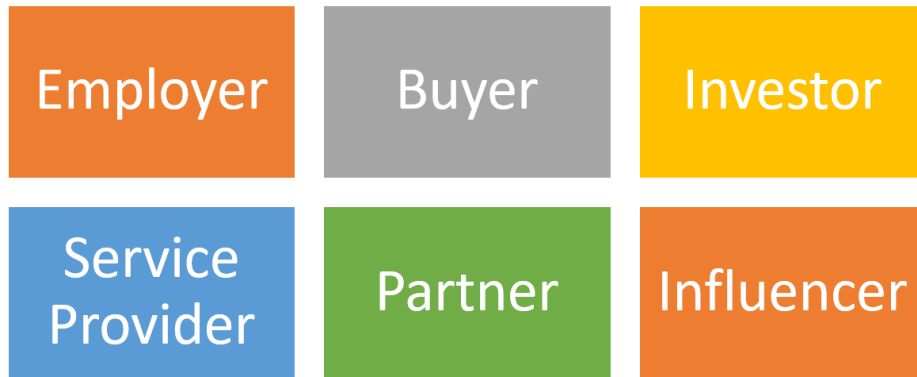
### *Levers for change*

The Council has a critical role in the Edinburgh economy, and holds significant tools, lever, and powers needed to meet this vision. During 2020-21 alone, the Council has:

- Employed over 18,000 staff as one of the largest employers in the city, and consolidated the Real Living Wage fully into Council pay structures, ensuring a pay rise for 4,400 Council employees
- Purchased £280m of goods and services from businesses in the Edinburgh economy, as one of the largest single buyers in the city<sup>xiv</sup>
- Administered over £190m of support to more than 19,000 businesses through Scottish Government funded schemes to help businesses through the worst periods of the Covid pandemic<sup>xv</sup>
- Supported 3,000 businesses through our Business Gateway service
- Helped 3,700 people into work and learning through Council funded employability programmes
- Agreed a total of £4.5bn of Council capital investment over the next ten years in Edinburgh housing, schools, transport, communities, culture and sports facilities<sup>xlvii</sup>, and
- Worked with partners to programme manage the investment of £1.3 billion through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

Over the next few years the work of the Council will focus on maximising the use of these levers, focusing on high quality interventions which are aligned to the policy priorities set out in this document.

In doing so, the Council will seek to maximise the impact of the role it can play in the economy as an employer, as a buyer of goods and services, as an investor, as a service provider, as a partner, and as an influencer of change.



- **As a partner** the Council will build strategic relationships and collaborations for change across the city. A key part of this work will be strengthening the ways the Council hears and responds to the challenges businesses face across the city. The Council will listen and work with businesses to help shape the changes described in this strategy. On the international stage, the Council will also collaborate with partners to promote the city in support of our key sectors and priorities and seek opportunities for international collaborations.
- **As an employer** the Council will ensure that its 18,000+ staff are treated fairly by earning at least the Scottish Local Government Living Wage in their base pay; will engage Trade Unions and workforce to develop proposals on wider reform to pay and terms; and, will ensure the Council has a workforce where all people feel valued, included and able to be their best at work.
- **As a buyer of goods and services**, the Council will, subject to its regulatory responsibilities, ensure that its procurement and tendering practices prioritise and incentivise fair work and net zero

business practices throughout its supply chains, creating community benefits, opportunities for local SME's, apprenticeships and other fair work opportunities for citizens

- **As an investor** the Council will lead or influence key strategic investment programmes (including investment in public transport and active travel infrastructure, housebuilding and retrofitting operational estate) to create new supply chains and green economy opportunities for the city. In doing so, the Council will seek to ensure the city has a strong portfolio of investible propositions to continue to attract private capital to support delivery
- **As a service provider** the Council will implement its whole-Council approach to economic development. This means ensuring our schools and lifelong learning services help people build the skills they need to prosper in work and in education. It means improving the way our employability services integrate with schools, homelessness, money advice, housing and other Council teams to help people get the support they need to find and progress in good jobs. And it means ensuring that all our business-facing services – including planning, licensing, regulation, as well as Business Gateway - understand and respond to help businesses and investors to recover and thrive.
- **As an influencer** within the city the Council will use its convening and leadership powers to engage with and support city businesses to transition to fair work and net zero practices. In addition, as the capital city of Scotland the Council has significant lobbying power and will work with all levels of government to influence policy and legislation. This includes opportunities to advocate for greater investment in tackling climate change and strengthened powers for local government to support businesses and workers across the city.

### *Edinburgh Learns for Life*

Edinburgh's schools have a critical role to play in the city economy. Our vision is for a fairer, healthier, greener future for everyone, where learning for life happens at home, in school, in the wider community, and in the workplace. Over the next three years, we will:

- Support schools to develop skills-based curricula that improve pathways into work and learning and provide the skilled and competent workforce needed for Edinburgh's changing economy.
- Work in collaboration with Skills Development Scotland and Developing Young Workforce Coordinators to provide high quality information, advice and guidance to improve pathway progression for students.
- Help business to be more involved in informing, inspiring and hiring young talent, and encourage business leaders to work with schools as mentors and champions for our most disadvantaged children
- Continue to develop flexible pathways for all learners, including access to appropriate vocational learning, and,
- Ensure our Youth Employment Partnership and Edinburgh Guarantee For All programmes improve integration between the Council's education and economic development structures to provide more effective gateways to training and employability opportunities.

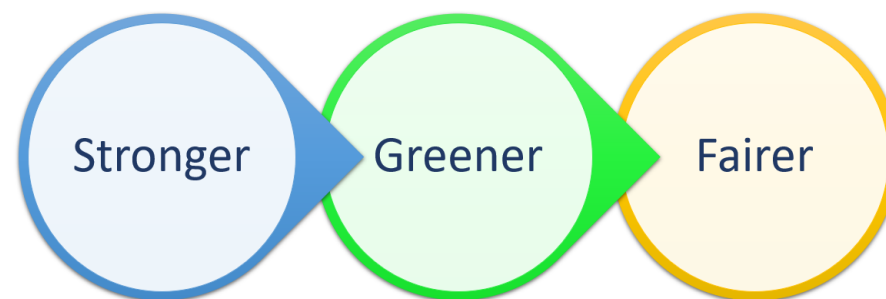
### *Actions for implementation*

To meet our vision, and address the challenges the city faces, this strategy sets out three priority work programmes the Council needs to implement over the next few years, and the priorities for our joint working with partners.

Each of these action areas describe one discrete package of work, but the dependencies and inter-relationships between them all are clear. Only by delivering these actions together, as part of single, integrated programme of work will we be able to meet our vision for the city, so that **a stronger Edinburgh economy is a greener and a fairer economy.**

### *Three priority work programmes for a Stronger, Greener, Fairer Economy*

## Edinburgh Economy Strategy



Appendix 3 to this paper provides a detailed action plan for each of these three work programmes. This section provides a high-level summary of goals and priorities.

## Work Programme 1: Stronger

Edinburgh businesses and workers are facing the continuing effects of the most significant single economic disruption ever faced by the city.

The city's strong recovery from the Covid pandemic will be dependent on the ability of city businesses to adapt and thrive, and on the ability of key sectors and key areas of the city to renew themselves and remain strong. Through this period Edinburgh will need to make full use of its fundamental assets in order to remain a resilient, adaptable economy. The city will need to remain an outward looking international city with a resilient and diverse economy, a city be open to attracting new talent and new connections.

Through this programme of work the Council will work to ensure that:

- Businesses in Edinburgh can access the support and advice they need to thrive, including advice on how to manage the pressures of increasing debt
- Key Edinburgh sectors such as tourism, arts and culture recover from pandemic and create good job opportunities in the city
- Edinburgh's city centre continues to make a strong recovery from the effects of pandemic and remains the heart of a vibrant, thriving international capital
- Key strategic development sites across Edinburgh receive the investment they need to progress
- We support the development of modern, well-designed, energy-efficient industrial estates in strategic locations throughout Edinburgh, including West Edinburgh and Port of Leith.
- Edinburgh meets its potential as the innovation and data capital of Europe, creating new skilled jobs and careers for people from all backgrounds

Throughout this work, our aim is to ensure that the next few years represent a period of renewal and adaptation, where the city's businesses and workers recover from the worst effects of the Covid pandemic; a period in which Edinburgh builds a stronger, more resilient economy in which everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

## Actions for a stronger Edinburgh economy

### The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>a</b> | Deliver a <b>Business Gateway</b> service providing the access to the advice, support, and guidance needed by new and existing businesses across Edinburgh  |
| <b>b</b> | Deliver <b>planning, regulatory, and licensing</b> services that are responsive and create spaces for local businesses to thrive in ways that are safe and sustainable                                  |
| <b>c</b> | Make <b>Council purchasing from third parties</b> more accessible to local small businesses and the third sector  |
| <b>d</b> | Support the development of <b>Edinburgh's data and innovation ecosystem</b> to be on par with the best in Europe, developing new infrastructure, skilled workers, and businesses for a thriving sector. |
| <b>e</b> | Deliver actions for City Centre recovery and develop a 5-year <b>City Centre Action Plan</b> with Scottish Government and other city partners   |
| <b>f</b> | Ensure key strategic development sites– including <b>Granton Waterfront, Edinburgh BioQuarter, and West Edinburgh</b> – deliver transformative new communities, commercial and cultural spaces          |
| <b>g</b> | Work with partners to support the <b>recovery of a sustainable visitor economy</b> and continue to support the <b>city's world class arts and cultural sector</b>                                       |
| <b>h</b> | Work with <b>Edinburgh International Group</b> partners to build on our global relationships and promote Edinburgh on the international stage   |
| <b>i</b> | Convene an annual ' <b>Edinburgh Means Business</b> ' conference, bringing together all of the city's business networks to join up and collaborate on common challenges                                 |
| <b>j</b> | Collaborate with city partners to <b>influence Scottish and UK Governments</b> on issues of importance to Edinburgh businesses  |

## Work Programme 2: Greener

Edinburgh is committed to becoming a net zero emissions city by 2030.

The next decade represents an opportunity for Edinburgh to grasp and realise the economic opportunities that commitment represents. The city has an opportunity to establish a clear advantage over competitors and cementing the future of the key sectors **in green infrastructure, green tourism; green finance and green festivals**. Many jobs will be created from emerging low carbon sectors over the next decade, not least from the £8.2bn of investment needed to drive our city's transition to net zero. The transition to a net zero economy can also be a key factor in attracting skilled workers, students, researchers, and new investors into the city.

Through this programme of work the Council will collaborate with partners to make sure that:

- Businesses can access the **support, advice, incentives, and workers** they need to make a net zero transition to their own operations, to adopt **circular economy** principles, reduce waste and improve resource efficiency
- People from all ages and all backgrounds in Edinburgh can access the **education, skills, training and support** they need to reach and thrive in good quality jobs created by new green industries in this city
- Edinburgh secures the investment it needs to meet net zero and maximise the economic benefits of growth in new green economy sectors – including securing **investment in key infrastructure projects** for net zero heat and energy solutions, buildings retrofitting, green transport initiatives, as well as low carbon place developments in Granton Waterfront, West Edinburgh, Edinburgh BioQuarter, and others.

Throughout this work, our aim is to ensure that as part of recovery from the economic effects of the Covid pandemic, the next few years are ones of establishing a greener economy, built on good, green jobs, driven by key sectors which are sustainable and resilient to future crises, such as those related to climate change.

## Actions for a greener Edinburgh economy

### The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>a</b> | Develop, promote, and secure investment in Edinburgh's strong pipeline of <b>green infrastructure investment</b> projects   |
| <b>b</b> | Establish a business led <b>Just Transition Economic Forum</b> to convene the city's business community to provide leadership on the just economic transition to a net zero city    |
| <b>c</b> | Support and encourage city businesses to sign up to the <b>Edinburgh Climate Compact</b> and commit to reduce their emissions   |
| <b>d</b> | Develop proposals for a new <b>Green Innovation Challenge Fund</b> providing financial support to enterprising businesses who meet sustainability and net zero eligibility criteria |
| <b>e</b> | Deliver <b>business mentoring and support</b> programmes to help employers take practical steps to realign their operations towards becoming net zero                               |
| <b>f</b> | Support the launch of a new <b>Business for Good</b> programme to provide practical support and training for city businesses to transition to net zero                              |
| <b>g</b> | Support a more <b>circular economy</b> with programmes that supports businesses to reduce, re-use and recycle - minimising waste and improving resource efficiency                  |
| <b>h</b> | Scope out the skill requirements for future green industries, and align <b>city wide workforce development</b> programmes to meet the developing needs of net zero businesses       |
| <b>i</b> | Support people from all backgrounds to access <b>good quality jobs in a net zero economy</b> , and ensure that new job opportunities are accessible to those at risk of poverty     |
| <b>j</b> | Call on the <b>Scottish Government</b> to build coherent and flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks that empower city-led responses to the climate emergency                |

### Work Programme 3: Fairer

Edinburgh is one of the UK’s most successful city economies, but even here some 40,000 people work for wages that are not enough to live on, and 61% of adults experience in-work poverty<sup>xlviii</sup>.

The experience of the pandemic has highlighted the importance of fair work, fair wages, and income security for workers in all sectors across the UK. It is important that Edinburgh’s recovery supports a continued improvement in working conditions for people employed here and provides support into pathways for progression that help people from all backgrounds access good quality jobs.

Through this programme of work the Council will work to ensure that:

- People in Edinburgh can access fair work that provides dignity and security of income
- Businesses in Edinburgh are supported, encouraged, and incentivised to adopt fair work practices in line with the recommendations of the Fair Work Convention
- People of all ages and backgrounds in Edinburgh get the help and support they need to find, and thrive in employment, with particular dedicated support provided for people with barriers to employment
- Our city and neighbourhood development plans recognise the importance of local businesses that support their communities and provide local job opportunities
- Council led procurement and investment activities are directed towards encouraging fair work and community benefits for Edinburgh.

Throughout this work, our aim is to ensure that over the next few years Edinburgh’s recovery from pandemic and transition to net zero helps build an economy of well supported, well skilled people in good jobs. An economy whose prosperity does not rely on low paid workers with no security.

| Actions for a fairer Edinburgh economy<br>The City of Edinburgh Council will... |   |
|---|---|
| a   | Lead and deliver the <b>Edinburgh Living Wage City</b> Action Plan to promote adoption of real living wage and fair work practices among Edinburgh businesses                     |
| b   | Support and advise Edinburgh businesses on how to adopt and implement fair work practices   |
| c   | Provide <b>city leadership as a fair work employer</b> in Edinburgh, through our post pandemic return to workplace plans and beyond.  |
| d   | Apply <b>Fair Work First</b> practices in all regulated Council procurement activities wherever relevant and proportionate  |
| e   | Maximise delivery of <b>community benefit</b> opportunities from Council purchasing, and promote <b>Community Wealth Building</b> practices across the city                       |
| f   | Helps people of all ages and backgrounds to easily access and progress in fair work, training or further education through the <b>Edinburgh Guarantee</b> programme               |
| g   | Deliver a new <b>blended employability programme</b> with dedicated support for people with complex needs or from target groups   |
| h   | Work with city partners to <b>develop the city’s skills system</b> to maximise progression into employment in emerging sectors and technologies (data, digital, green industries) |
| i   | Deliver a 20-minute Neighbourhood strategy that supports <b>local economies and businesses</b> to provide the daily needs of their communities and create local jobs              |
| j   | Work with city businesses and partners to influence <b>Scottish Government</b> for the local powers and responsibilities we need to ensure a fairer Edinburgh economy             |



## 5. Calls to action for Scottish and UK Governments

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These three work programmes set out the actions that City of Edinburgh Council will take over the next few years, and the priorities on which we will work with partner organisations. In order to maximise the impact of our interventions, however, each work programme also includes the asks and calls to action we will make to the Scottish and UK Governments, setting out the support and changes needed to help us meet our shared goals.

Edinburgh is Scotland's strongest and most significant economy, and the city has a uniquely pivotal role in ensuring both UK and Scottish Governments can meet their own commitments. Acting on this role will need support in terms of investment, policy development, and in powers. Key issues on which we will seek support from Governments include:

- **Policy alignment:** Edinburgh accounts for 16% of Scotland's economy by value. It is important that the Scottish Government's forthcoming National Strategy for Economic Transformation demonstrates and puts in place actions to reinforce a strong alignment between the economic needs and agendas of the city and of Scotland as a whole. Scotland cannot meet its economic goals without a stronger, greener, and fairer Edinburgh economy.
- **Resources for Net Zero:** Cities account for over half Scotland's carbon emissions and Edinburgh is at the forefront of supporting the Scottish Government to deliver a net zero country. Having developed a detailed city climate strategy, Edinburgh now needs support from Scottish Government to resource that plan at the scale required - particularly in respect of energy, buildings and transport infrastructure.
- **Policy and powers for Net Zero:** Alongside investment, Edinburgh will also seek dialogue with Scottish Government on the policy and regulatory changes needed to speed transition to net zero. This will include drawing on lessons from the Covid-19 response which enabled the public sector to make fast decisions, and removal of regulatory barriers that limit the effectiveness of local responses.
- **Sustainable infrastructure development:** The investment required to resource infrastructure development in the city, both for net zero ambitions and to manage a growing population, are significant. One means by which this could be addressed in part is through retention of some or all of the Land and Buildings Transaction Tax generated by the initial sale of new housing in the city. Retention of this revenue could lay the foundations for further investment and employment, thereby generating significant additional tax revenues, both in Edinburgh across Scotland.
- **Transient Visitor Levy:** In response to the pandemic, the Scottish Government agreed in Spring 2020 that it would pause work on bringing the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament. It is our position that TVL remains a potentially important tool to help support management of a sustainable visitor economy in Edinburgh and will continue to work with stakeholders to shape appropriate plans for implementation. We look forward to restarting discussions with the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders about the appropriate time to progress with developing the enabling legislation.
- **Business Rates:** Reform of business rates was one of the most common issues raised by Edinburgh businesses during consultation for this strategy. We will call on Scottish Government to work with the Council and city businesses to develop a business rates system which meets the needs of a changing 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.
- **Levelling Up:** Over the next year the UK Government will continue to develop its plans for EU structural fund replacements, including distribution of the UK Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other programmes. We will continue to seek access to these funds for high quality Edinburgh projects and will seek dialogue with UK ministers to ensure that Edinburgh's needs and issues are recognised in development of new schemes.

## 6. Governance and Partnerships

The City of Edinburgh Council will provide political leadership for delivery of this strategy, working with city partners through shared governance structures including the Edinburgh Partnership Board and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

Within the Council, delivery of this strategy will be monitored and governed by the Policy and Sustainability Committee. This process will ensure that the three work programmes outlined in this strategy are fully aligned to other key Council strategies and that resources for their delivery are provided through the Council’s budget setting procedures.

The Committee will receive an annual report against progress in delivery of the strategy, with detailed operational reports on individual programmes reviewed by Policy and Sustainability and other Executive Committees as appropriate.

### *Edinburgh Means Business*

Although the Council will play a leading role in the delivery of actions in this strategy, the full vision the strategy sets out can only be achieved through strong partnership working. Towards this, a clear goal of this strategy is to set the priorities on which the Council will work with partners to facilitate and unlock the collaborations and collective action needed to deliver a greener, stronger, and fairer city economy.

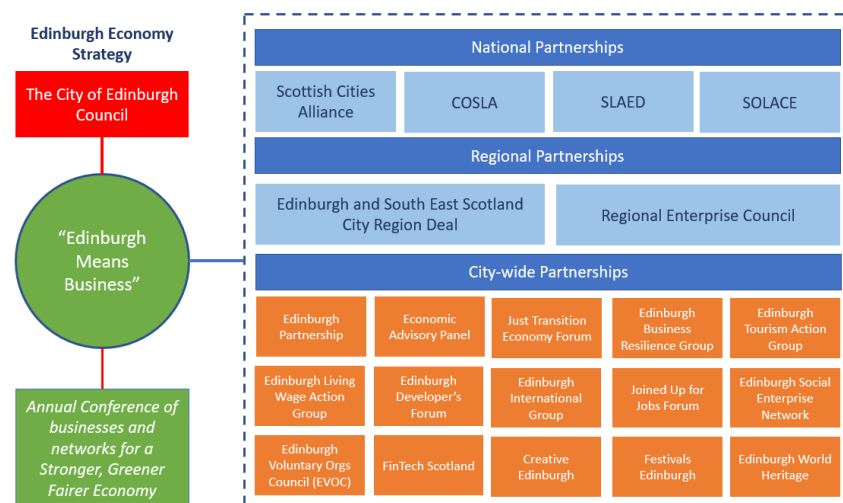
At present the Council engages and works with partners, including businesses, public sector agencies, business representative organisations, trades unions, and stakeholder groups in a wide range of networks and working groups (see Appendix 2 for a summary of these groups and their remits). Each of these groups has been developed over time to meet the needs of partners to collaborate on issues of shared interest and to drive forward the economic development of the city.

The consultation activity undertaken for this strategy has identified a need for an improved approach to the Council’s engagement and communication

with business. Consultations also highlighted the need for the city to do more to project a ‘Team Edinburgh’ approach to promoting the city’s aspirations, assets, and opportunities.

To address these needs, the Council will establish a new ‘**Edinburgh Means Business**’ annual conference programme. Convened by the Council Leader in partnership with organisations such as Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, this conference will provide a space to bring together all existing business networks and everyone with a stake in the development of Edinburgh’s economy to:

- Share the latest evidence and learning on the progress of the city economy
- Celebrate successes and share best practice on work underway to deliver the aims of this strategy
- Identify challenges and collaborate on solutions for delivery by the Council and its partners
- Highlight opportunities and key messages for city promotion
- Build networks and relationships across the city towards the goal of a Stronger, Greener, Fairer economy



## Appendix 1 – Consultation activity

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This refresh of the Edinburgh Economy Strategy was taken forward across two phases of work during 2021.

The first phase of the work was an initial scoping which ran from **January to June 2021** and involved analysis of the city's economic context, data gathering, and initial consultations with key city partners. This provided the background for the start of consultation activity.

The starting point of this phase of work was a report prepared for the December 2020 meeting of the Policy and Sustainability Committee. This reported summarised the actions delivered since May 2020 to support a sustainable economic recovery throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The report also outlined the proposal to refresh and renew the Edinburgh Economy Strategy in response to emerging challenges and to ensure continued alignment with core Council priorities to tackle poverty, promote sustainability and wellbeing paper.

Between January and June, the Council engaged with businesses and stakeholders in scoping issues and options for the refreshed strategy including:

- More than 7 one to one interviews with business leaders and members of the Edinburgh Economy Advisory Panel
- 16 workshop and information gathering sessions with groups including the Edinburgh Economy Advisory Panel, Scottish Cities Alliance and the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce.

This phase concluded with a report prepared for the Policy and Sustainability Committee meeting in June 2021, providing a summary of key challenges to be addressed and a framework for formal consultation.

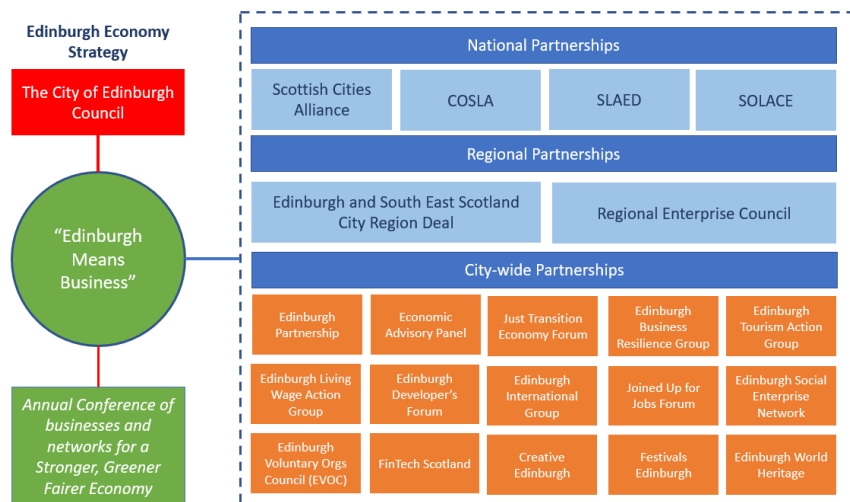
The second phase of the work built on these findings and ran **from June to October 2021**. Consultation and engagement activities carried out during this period included:

- Online consultation open to all citizens, community groups, businesses and other stakeholders through the Edinburgh Consultation Hub receiving 80 full responses.
- Cross party workshops with City of Edinburgh Council elected members
- 12 workshops with city business on key aspects of the consultation framework.
- 7 engagement and discussion events on key aspects of the challenges facing the city.

Work carried out in consultation for this strategy was also be informed by other consultation, engagement and policy development activity carried out by the Council and partners during this same period. Key projects whose findings and publication were used to inform the development of this strategy include:

- Development of the **Edinburgh 2030 Climate Strategy**, which included input from 920 residents and other stakeholders who took part in the Council's online survey, submitted a letter, or participated in one of the virtual focus groups held over the summer on the draft Climate Strategy
- Development of the **Regional Prosperity Framework**, for which 71 responses were received both in email format and through the Consultation Hub hosted by City of Edinburgh Council. In addition to the formal consultation, two additional online engagement sessions were organised. These informal events engaged around 47 individuals from around the region.
- Development of the **Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan**, and **Council Fair Work Action Plan**, informed by engagement work with employers and partner organisations
- Development of other key city strategies progressed or delivered during 2021, including the Council's **20-minute Neighbourhood Strategy**, **City Plan 2030**, and the **End Poverty Edinburgh Delivery Plan**.

## Appendix 2 – Edinburgh economy partnerships and networks



### National Partnerships

**Scottish Cities Alliance** - The Scottish Cities Alliance is the collaboration of Scotland’s seven cities – Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Perth and Stirling – and the Scottish Government, working together to promote the country’s great economic potential.

Part of the Alliance work includes the Smart Cities Scotland project – Scotland’s 8th City – The Smart City, which take forward co-designed technology and data opportunities that will help achieve the cities’ ambitions to be global hi-tech hubs. The Alliance also aims to drive the agenda for a low carbon future to help lessen the impact of climate change and ensure the future economic prosperity of Scotland.

**COSLA** - The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) was formed in 1975 to act as an interface between local authorities and central government. It also acts as the employers' association for local authorities,

negotiating on conditions of services with trade unions, on behalf of local authority employees. All of Scotland's 32 councils are members of COSLA.

The Environment and Economy Board cover two COSLA priorities related to the economy: Local Economies and Inclusive Growth and UK Exit from the European Union. COSLA also covers the wide range of policy and council services which are important to developing Scotland’s economy in an inclusive way, helping to ensure Scotland meets its low carbon ambitions or ensuring effective infrastructure is in place.

**SLAED** - The Scottish Local Authorities’ Economic Development (SLAED) Group is the professional network for economic development officers from across Scotland’s 32 local authorities.

The group exists to provide an effective forum the role played by local authorities in contributing to the development of Scotland’s economy. It does this by reflecting the work of the 32 councils through the [SLAED Indicators Framework](#) and providing a national voice for local economic development. The SLAED Indicators Framework report helps assist Local Authorities to:

- evidence and publicise the contribution that they make to Scotland’s economy through their economic development activities; and
- provide a basis for collating consistent data which can be used to better understand impact and identify potential areas for improvement.

**SOLACE** - the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), is a membership organisation that represents local government Chief Executives and senior managers. Its members in Scottish local authorities belong to its Scottish branch.

### Regional Partnerships

**Edinburgh South East Scotland City Region Deal** – is a collaboration of partners from six Scottish Local Authorities that partners with UK Government and Scottish Governments to deliver transformational change to the city regional economy.

The overall value of the deal over the 15-year term is worth £1.3 billion. The City Region Deal aims to accelerate growth, create new economic opportunities, and meaningful new jobs that will help to reduce inequalities.

**Regional Enterprise Council (REC)** -comprises of representatives from private, public and third sectors with the ambition of achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth throughout the city region.

The REC has played an integral role in shaping the Regional Prosperity Framework and will continue to inform this work as it moves into implementation and action planning phases.

### *City-wide Partnerships*

**Economic Advisory Panel** – is a forum between the Council and business representatives for Edinburgh. It is chaired by the Convener of the Housing, Homelessness, and Fair Work Committee, with the Vice Convener as deputy chair.

The Panel aims to work with the Council to advise and collaborate on actions to make sure that Edinburgh’s economic growth is sustainable and benefits all our citizens. It also builds on existing joint working with key economic partners, such as supporting business engagement in the delivery of the Edinburgh Economy Strategy.

**Just Transition Economic Forum** - is a new group to be established as a business-led Economic Forum to support delivery of the 2030 Climate Strategy. It will meet to provide leadership on the just economic transition to a net zero city.

**Edinburgh Business Resilience Group** - is a group convened by the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce. It was set up in November 2020 to help shape the economic and business priorities for the city following the Coronavirus pandemic. It has around 60 members from a variety of sectors across the city.

The aim of the Group is to proactively pursue a stronger relationship between businesses and policymakers, and positively contribute to the rebuild and redesign of the city region economy.

**Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG)** – is the umbrella organisation for the tourism sector in Edinburgh. It is made up of representatives from the major stakeholders, agencies and industry groups from across Edinburgh’s tourism sector.

The group’s activities focus on keeping businesses up to date with market intelligence; delivering events and training for business development and networking to share best practice and develop collaborative ideas.

**Edinburgh Development Forum** – consists of City Planners and representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council and the development industry. The aims of the forum are to help create a planning environment that is coherent, efficient and transparent and in which high quality new developments can progress whilst ensuring that the heritage of the city is not compromised.

**Edinburgh International Group** – is comprised of a number of key agencies involved in promoting Edinburgh as an open, welcoming city to the international community. The Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council and, alongside Council members such as the Lord Provost, includes representation from national and local strategic partners covering key aspects of Edinburgh's international outreach.

The aim of the group is to facilitate sharing of information on international activities and approaches across partners who face many of the same issues and opportunities.

**Joined Up for Jobs Forum** – is an independent network of employability service providers in Edinburgh. It is run by and for providers through a steering group. It consists of organisations and individuals who support people to progress into sustainable employment. The network strengthens the links between employability and tackling poverty, both locally and nationally.

**Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network** - supports, promotes and develops social enterprise in Edinburgh and serves as a hub creating social and economic growth. Its main services are to offer Peer support, information and signposting, business support, representation and promoting social enterprises and opportunities to trade.

**Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group** – is a new group established in 2021 to lead the work of the city in becoming an accredited 'living wage city'. The group is chaired by the Convener of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of the Council, and includes 12 members including private sector employers, third sector organisations, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, and anchor institutions such as University of Edinburgh.

**EVOC** - EVOC is the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) for the City of Edinburgh and a partner in the Edinburgh Third Sector Interface (TSI), which is part of a national network of Third Sector Interfaces. EVOC helps to support, develop and promote the interests and work of voluntary and community organisations in Edinburgh.

**FinTech Scotland** – Based in Edinburgh, Fintech Scotland was established to secure Scotland's place as a top five global fintech centre. They work to bring together entrepreneurs, the established financial sector, the public sector, accelerators, investors, consumer groups, technology and service firms, universities and skills agencies.

**Creative Edinburgh** - Creative Edinburgh is the city's largest network of multi-disciplinary creative industries. Members span every creative sector, from art & design, illustration and animation, to publishing, marketing and creative tech.

**Festivals Edinburgh** – The directors of Edinburgh's leading Festivals came together in 2007 to formally establish Festivals Edinburgh. The organisation has a mission to maintain and develop the value of the Festivals' and the Festival City's position locally and globally, through development and delivery of collaborative projects and initiatives which support programme development, leadership and audiences; and, acting on behalf of and representing the collective strengths of the Edinburgh Festivals.

**Edinburgh World Heritage** - Edinburgh World Heritage is an independent charity with the aim of ensuring the city's World Heritage status is a dynamic force that benefits everyone. Our mission is to connect people to their heritage in everything we do – whether through the conservation of historic buildings, delivering improvements to the public realm, or engaging people directly with the rich heritage of their city.



## Appendix 3 – Regional Prosperity Framework

This Edinburgh Economy Strategy aligns to and builds on the [Regional Prosperity Framework](#) (RPF) agreed by Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal partners in Autumn 2021



The Framework aims to build on the successful regional partnership that is delivering the £1.3bn Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal and set out a broader, ambitious approach for the regional economy.

It was developed with input from public, private and third sector organisations, and aims to address the region’s challenges and opportunities to make Edinburgh and South East Scotland a better place to live, work, study, visit and invest for current and future generations.

The RPF will be used as a basis to guide and integrate public, private and third sector decisions, actions, collaborations, strategies, policies and investments across areas such as sustainability, climate change, energy, transport, planning, housing, infrastructure, education, digital, services, equalities, well-being, economic development, procurement and delivery.

The framework sets an ambitious 20-year vision for the region:

### *Our Vision*

*Our aim is to become the data capital of Europe. We will ensure the social and economic benefits of this capability extend to all. All sections of the community will have the opportunity to develop the key skills that will help to end inequalities in our society. We will protect our environment and make best use of our extraordinary built and natural assets, ensuring that the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region delivers a just transition to a net zero economy. Our institutions, ancient and modern, will deliver positive outcomes that enhance our local, national and international reputation.*

At the heart of the Framework are three key components aimed at delivering a future society that is resilient, flourishing and innovative.

- **Resilient:** The challenges of Covid-19 have highlighted the need for resilience to ensure that our citizens have the support they need to respond quickly to the key issues in our communities.

- **Flourishing** because we need to design a society and economy that works for everyone. The inequalities across our region must be tackled head-on by this work
- **Innovative:** The ESES region was home to the Scottish Enlightenment and now has a unique opportunity to build on the investment from the Data Driven Innovation programme. We must embrace the spirit of innovation found across our communities and businesses and direct this to solving a wider range of challenges

To take forward this vision, the framework identifies 9 major opportunities for delivery across the region. These include:

- Data capital of Europe
- Rethinking our place
- Sustainable Transport
- Regenerating the Forth
- Sustainable Tourism and Culture
- Supporting Enterprise
- Aligning Skills
- Reinventing Healthcare, and
- Anchor institutions

Key partners in the delivery of the Regional Prosperity Framework will include the Edinburgh City Region Deal signatories (the six local authorities, together with regional universities, colleges and the Regional Enterprise Council, UK and Scottish Governments), as well as a range of other organisations with a key national and regional roles such as Transport Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and SEStran.

The regional partners are committed to working together to deliver the RPF and provide future direction for major projects and investment that support inclusive growth and the transition to a net zero economy over the next 20 years.

## Appendix 4 – Implementation plan

| <b>Actions for a Stronger Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...</b> |   |  |                             |                                      |                  |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Action</b>  | <b>Detail</b>   | <b>Timescale for output</b>  | <b>Lead Service/Partner</b> | <b>Council Lever</b>                 |                  |
| <b>a</b>   | Deliver a Business Gateway service providing the access to the advice, support, and guidance needed by new and existing businesses across Edinburgh             | Ensure that national and local business support is aligned to enable the start-up and scale up process to be much more effective   | 2022                        | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
|  |   | Deliver specialised support to Businesses such as through the Gateway to Investment, an expert help programme and Women in Business.   | 2022                        | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
|  |   | Ensure business support services encourage businesses to be accessible for all.  | 2022                        | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
|  |   | Ensure access to Scottish Government funded business support - including Employer Recruitment Incentive Schemes, Business Rates Relief and others  | 2022                        | Place Directorate/Corporate Services | Service Provider |
| <b>b</b>   | Deliver planning, regulatory, and licensing services that are responsive and create spaces for local businesses to thrive in ways that are safe and sustainable | Ensure licensing and regulatory policies are kept up to date so they continue to meet the needs of supporting our business communities and residents   | 2022-24                     | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
|  |   | Ensure licensing services continue to support the provision of outdoor space for businesses in ways that are safe and sustainable.   | 2022-24                     | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
|  |   | Deliver a City Plan 2030 that supports development of key land use needs, including local centres, retail and leisure, sites for businesses, new and expanded community infrastructure that ensure everyone in Edinburgh can enjoy the city's economic success | 2022-24                     | Place Directorate                    | Service Provider |
| <b>c</b>   | Make Council procurement spending more accessible to local small businesses and the third sector  | Increase engagement, including working with potential suppliers from the private and third sector to support “meet the buyer” events, bidder events and awareness of contract opportunities  | 2022                        | Commercial and Procurement Services  | Buyer            |
|  |   | Explore alternative advertising routes to reach those not registered on Public Contracts Scotland  | 2022                        | Commercial and Procurement Services  | Buyer            |

## Actions for a Stronger Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail   | Timescale for output   | Lead Service/Partner                | Council Level                 |                          |
|--------|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
|        | Apply appropriate lotting strategies that support small businesses and support facilitation of sub-contracting opportunities by suppliers  | 2022   | Commercial and Procurement Services | Buyer                         |                          |
| d      | Support the development of Edinburgh's data and innovation ecosystem to make Edinburgh the Data Capital of Europe, developing new infrastructure, skilled workers, and businesses for a thriving sector. | Support delivery of the ESES City Region Deal Data Driven Innovation programme, and embed the programme in key sectors such as tourism, and advanced manufacturing   | 2022                                | Place Directorate/ESES CRD    | Partner                  |
|        |  | Finalise the business case and procure a commercial partner for the new Bio Quarter health innovation district and where public, private and third sectors can collaborate to enable data-driven advances in the delivery of health and social care. | 2023-24                             | Place Directorate             | Partner/Investor         |
|        |  | Work with regional partners to support Fintech networks to diversify and future proof the city's financial services assets   | 2022                                | Place Directorate/ESES CRD    | Partner                  |
|        |  | Work with partners to develop our high functioning innovation ecosystems are high functioning – involving business, HEIs, business growth agencies   | 2022                                | Place Directorate/ESES CRD    | Partner                  |
|        |  | Deliver the Digital and Smart Cities Implementation Plan to deliver our vision for a smart city where the application of data and technology increases efficiency, minimises costs and enhances convenience.   | 2022-24                             | Customer and Digital Services | Service Provider/Partner |
| e      | Deliver actions for City Centre recovery and develop a 5-year City Centre Action Plan with Scottish Government and other city partners   | Continue to deliver immediate support to help city centre businesses and sectors adapt and thrive  | 2022                                | Place Directorate             | Service Provider         |
|        |  | Work with partners to continue and develop marketing and promotional activities to support long term renewal of city centre businesses.  | 2022                                | Place Directorate             | Service Provider/Partner |
|        |  | Enhance and repurpose Edinburgh city centre, through delivery of City Centre Transformation Plan, Waverley Valley Masterplan, an updated vision for Princes Street and the George Street and First New Town improvement scheme                       | 2023-24                             | Place Directorate             | Service Provider/Partner |

## Actions for a Stronger Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail   | Timescale for output   | Lead Service/Partner                       | Council Level            |                  |
|--------|--|--|--|--------------------------|------------------|
|        | Develop a five-year city centre action plan with the City Centre Task Force in partnership with the Scottish Government and the Scottish Cities Alliance   | 2022   | Place Directorate/Scottish Cities Alliance | Service Provider/Partner |                  |
| f      | Ensure key strategic development sites—including Granton Waterfront, Bioquarter, and West Edinburgh – deliver their potential for transformative new communities, commercial and cultural spaces | Progress preparation of business cases for investment in Granton Waterfront, Edinburgh BioQuarter, West Edinburgh and other key strategic development sites  | 2022                                       | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Support the development of modern, well-designed, energy-efficient industrial estates in strategic locations throughout Edinburgh, including spaces for micro/small businesses.  | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Support development of the Port of Leith as a modern working port, well positioned to capitalise upon opportunities such as offshore renewables, decommissioning, and with potential for new industrial development on adjacent brownfield land. | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Manage the Council's City Strategic Investment Fund to unlock new development opportunities, support business innovation, deliver jobs and promote economic growth in Edinburgh  | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Allocate Place Based Investment Programme funding to deliver projects in line with core Council Business Plan priorities   | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Seek out funding opportunities for capital investment projects in the city - including maximising potential opportunities from Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and other UK and Scottish Government programmes.                    | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  |  |  |                          |                  |
| g      | Work with partners to support the recovery of a sustainable visitor economy and continue to support the city's world class arts and cultural sector  | Support partnership programmes (such as Forever Edinburgh) for the recovery of Edinburgh's visitor economy   | 2022                                       | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Support delivery of the 2030 Edinburgh Tourism Strategy for a sustainable and thriving tourism sector that works for the city  | 2022                                       | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |
|        |  | Work with partners to implement the recommendations from the review of visitor economy support in Edinburgh  | 2022-24                                    | Place Directorate        | Investor/Partner |

## Actions for a Stronger Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action   | Detail  | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                                      | Council Level            |
|----------|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
|          | Work with ESES City Region Deal partners to design and deliver a city regional tourism support network to optimise the role of Edinburgh as a gateway for the region and the country.                   | 2022-24              | Place Directorate/ESES CRD                                | Investor/Partner         |
|          | Deliver the 5-year PLACE programme to support strategic development activity across Edinburgh's festivals   | 2022-24              | Place Directorate/Scottish Government/Edinburgh Festivals | Investor/Partner         |
|          | Support Edinburgh Festivals and events programmes through strategic funding, partnership development projects and services supporting event planning and delivery                                       | 2022                 | Place Directorate   | Investor/Partner         |
|          | Deliver new and improved cultural spaces in Edinburgh, including working with partners on delivery of the Dunard Centre, as well as key venues such as Leith Theatre, Assembly Rooms and other projects | 2022                 | Place Directorate/ESES CRD                                | Investor/Partner         |
|          | Work with partners to develop and implement the actions emerging from the review of the citywide Culture and Events plan  | 2022                 | Place Directorate   | Investor/Partner         |
| <b>h</b> | Work with Edinburgh International Group partners to build on our global relationships and promote Edinburgh on the international stage  |                      |   |                          |
|          | Lead and use the Council's civic role to engage with international partners towards priorities set out in this strategy   | 2022                 | Corporate Services/Edinburgh International Group          | Partner                  |
|          | Support international activity organised by city partners where senior presence and leadership support from the council will enhance the visits by partners and support the Council's priorities        | 2022                 | Corporate Services/Edinburgh International Group          | Partner                  |
|          | Promote Edinburgh investment propositions via channels such as the Invest in Edinburgh website, social media, and attendance at select virtual and in-person conferences and forums                     | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Scottish Cities Alliance                | Partner                  |
|          | Use Council managed business support services and networks to help Edinburgh businesses to trade internationally  | 2022                 | Place Directorate   | Service Provider/Partner |

## Actions for a Stronger Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail   | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                 | Council Lever      |
|--------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
|        | Ensure that Council international activity is carried out in accordance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, is aligned to the Council policy on travel, and follows best practice guidance on equality and human rights. | 2022                 | Corporate Services/Place Directorate | Partner            |
| i      | Convene an annual 'Edinburgh Means Business' conference, bringing together all of the city's business networks to join up and collaborate on common challenges   | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Place Directorate   | Influencer/Partner |
| j      | Collaborate with city partners to influence Scottish and UK Governments on issues of importance to Edinburgh businesses  | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Place Directorate   | Influencer/Partner |



## Actions for a greener Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|   | Action  | Detail  | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                             | Council Lever      |
|---|---|---|----------------------|--|--------------------|
| a | Develop, promote, and secure investment in Edinburgh's strong pipeline of green infrastructure investment projects  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring investment propositions to market through promotion platforms such as the Invest in Edinburgh website.</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Scottish Cities Alliance       | Investor/Partner   |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise Edinburgh's international connections and consular corps to promote NetZero Investment ambitions</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Edinburgh International Group  | Investor/Partner   |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise Scottish Development International's capital investment plan and international office network to raise awareness and seek investment in Edinburgh's net zero project pipeline</li> </ul>                     | 2022                 | Place Directorate/SDI                            | Investor/Partner   |
| b | Establish a business led Just Transition Economic Forum to convene the city's business community to provide leadership on the just economic transition to a net zero city | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify private sector lead, and launch new forum to support the city's economic transition to net zero</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Policy and Insight/JTEF                          | Partner/Influencer |
| c | Support and encourage city businesses to sign up to the Edinburgh Climate Compact and commit to reduce their emissions  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver high-profile Climate Compact promotion through the continued leadership by Edinburgh Climate Commission</li> </ul>   | 2022                 | Policy and Insight/Edinburgh Climate Commission  | Partner/Influencer |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver COP26 communications and legacy activity through the Chamber of Commerce to support businesses in recognising the benefits to the city and their business of them taking action on climate change</li> </ul> | 2022                 | Policy and Insight/Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce | Partner/Influencer |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand climate compact signatories through continued promotion and engagement activity</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Policy and Insight/Edinburgh Climate Commission  | Partner/Influencer |

## Actions for a greener Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|   | Action   | Detail  | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                  | Council Lever            |
|---|--|---|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| d | Develop proposals for a new Green Innovation Challenge Fund providing financial support to enterprising businesses who meet sustainability and net zero eligibility criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a proposal for a fund providing financial support to enterprising businesses who meet sustainability and net zero eligibility criteria</li> </ul>            | 2022                 | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider/Partner |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement sustainable model for fund delivery and operation with appropriate partners</li> </ul>  | 2023-24              | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider/Partner |
| e | Deliver business mentoring and support programmes to help employers take practical steps to realign their operations towards becoming net zero                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a post within Business Growth &amp; Inclusion team to lead on sustainability and ensure access to specialist knowledge and support is available</li> </ul> | 2022                 | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider         |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a mapping exercise to identify existing and upcoming support</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider         |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor need/demand from businesses on an ongoing basis and review/tailor support to ensure appropriate and adequate focus on sustainability priorities.</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider         |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed sustainability training across Council business advisers</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider         |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop mechanisms to inform businesses of support available, e.g. communications, workshops.</li> </ul>   | 2023-24              | Place Directorate                     | Service Provider         |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the short life working group on to identify how tourism sustainability and fair work can be built into the visitor economy of Edinburgh.</li> </ul>        | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Scottish Enterprise | Partner                  |
| f | Support the launch of a new Business for Good programme to provide practical support and training for city businesses to transition to net zero                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the launch of a Business for Good online portal providing new toolkits and access to net zero support for businesses,</li> </ul>                             | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Edinburgh CANB       | Partner                  |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support delivery of business support signposting to partners and identification of advice and support available to businesses.</li> </ul>                            | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Edinburgh CANB       | Partner                  |

## Actions for a greener Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|   | Action   | Detail   | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                                      | Council Lever            |
|---|--|--|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| g | Support a more circular economy with programmes that supports businesses to reduce, re-use and recycle - minimising waste and improving resource efficiency            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage participation in the Circular Edinburgh programme, and promote the benefits of a circular economy to businesses.</li> </ul>   | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce           | Partner/Service Provider |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight circular economy needs and benefits as an embedded process through business support referral to businesses</li> </ul>   | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce           | Partner/Service Provider |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore inclusion of circular economy principles in Council purchasing activities</li> </ul>  | 2022-24              | Commercial and Procurement Services                       | Buyer                    |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to ensure that all public sector procurement spend actively supports this strategy so that by 2030 all new investment and purchase decisions are net zero.</li> </ul>        | 2022-24              | Commercial and Procurement Services                       | Buyer                    |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the proportion of the City's food and drink sourced from sustainable local and regional supplies</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Edible Edinburgh                         | Partner                  |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local food growing in Edinburgh through delivery of the City's Food Growing Strategy</li> </ul>   | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Edible Edinburgh                         | Partner                  |
| h | Scope out the skill requirements for future green industries, and align city wide workforce development programmes to meet the developing needs of net zero businesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with city stakeholders and identify the skills needed to deliver a just transition to net zero and carry out gap analysis</li> </ul>   | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Further and Higher Education Institutes | Partner                  |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop city skills provision where intervention is most needed to support Edinburgh's future net zero skills requirements, targeted towards communities at greatest risk of poverty</li> </ul> | 2023-24              | Place Directorate/Further and Higher Education Institutes | Partner                  |
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align technical skills programs delivered by higher education providers with new and net zero markets to ensure sustainable, net zero jobs</li> </ul>   | 2023-24              | Place Directorate/Further                                 | Partner                  |

## Actions for a greener Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

|   | Action  | Detail   | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner  | Council Lever            |
|---|---|--|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
|   |   |  |                      | and Higher Education Institutes                             |                          |
| i | Support people from all backgrounds to access good quality jobs in a net zero economy, and ensure that new job opportunities are accessible to those at risk of poverty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver an employability support program targeted to meet market needs (external led)</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Edinburgh Local Employability Partnership | Service Provider/Partner |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage businesses to raise awareness of the benefits of sustainability skilled employees and embedding fair work practices.</li> </ul>  | 2023-24              | Place Directorate/Edinburgh Local Employability Partnership | Service Provider/Partner |
|   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a vocational training program to help people with barriers to employment access fair work</li> </ul>  | 2022                 | Place Directorate/Edinburgh Local Employability Partnership | Service Provider/Partner |
| j | Call on the Scottish Government to build coherent and flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks that empower city-led responses to the climate emergency           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write to Scottish Ministers setting out the need to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw on lessons from the Covid-19 response which enabled the public sector to make fast decisions</li> <li>- Remove regulatory barriers that limit the effectiveness of local responses</li> <li>- Deliver new funding programmes to help businesses become net zero quickly</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Place Directorate                          | Influencer               |

## Actions for a Fairer Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail   | Timescale for output  | Lead Service/Partner | Council Lever                             |                    |
|--------|--|---|----------------------|---|--------------------|
| a      | Lead and deliver the Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan and Council Fair Work Action Plan to promote adoption of real living wage and fair work practices among Edinburgh businesses | Work with partners to secure an additional 100 living wage accredited employers in Edinburgh each year  | 2022-26              | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Hold target sector focused events with businesses to understand barriers to take up and what incentives or support would be most effective in encouraging employers to pursue living wage accreditation and fair work practices | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Hold workshops with trade unions and workers to understand and promote the impact of fair work on workers lives.  | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Establish a short-term Gig Economy Forum to understand the real experiences of, and to explore actions that could improve working conditions, rights and quality of employment for workers in the gig economy                   | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Place Directorate        | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Deliver events and communications campaigns to promote and maximise awareness of the Real Living Wage and the business benefits of accreditation  | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Explore the potential for use or development of existing schemes (including Fair Fringe Charter, Construction Charter, Living Hours campaign and others) to promote living wage take up and wider fair work goals               | 2022-24              | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
|        |  | Celebrate new living wage accreditations and hold annual events to mark Living Wage week, and to celebrate all Edinburgh's Fair Work Employers  | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Ed Living Wage Action Gp | Partner/Influencer |
| b      | Support and advise Edinburgh businesses on how to adopt and implement fair work practices  | Promote the ethical and sustainable values and benefits of fair work to companies looking to invest in the city.  | 2022                 | Place Directorate                         | Service Provider   |
|        |  | Embed advice and toolkits for fair work and living wage accreditation into Council operated business support services   | 2022                 | Place Directorate                         | Service Provider   |
|        |  | Work with employers to enhance knowledge, understanding and provision of adjustments that can be made to recruit and retain candidates from underrepresented groups (e.g. care  | 2022                 | Place Directorate                         | Service Provider   |

## Actions for a Fairer Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail  | Timescale for output   | Lead Service/Partner | Council Lever                       |          |
|--------|---|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
|        | experienced, disabled, homelessness, young people, ex-offenders, refugees).   |  |                      |                                     |          |
| c      | Provide city leadership as a fair work employer in Edinburgh, through our post pandemic return to workplace plans and beyond. | Ensure all Council employees have access to fair work and maintain Council accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer.   | 2022-24              | Human Resources                     | Employer |
|        |   | Ensure staff have an effective voice and support in the workplace through Trade Union representation, best practice employment policies and the colleague networks who support workers that share a common protected characteristic  | 2022                 | Human Resources                     | Employer |
|        |   | Implement our Equality and Diversity Framework and deliver on the commitments in our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Plan to ensure the Council has a workforce where all people feel value, included and able to be their best at work   | 2022                 | Human Resources                     | Employer |
|        |   | Develop and establish a workers' association to provide representation and a forum for workers on casual contracts to inform Council policy in the delivery of a fair work experience.   | 2022-24              | Human Resources                     | Employer |
| d      | Apply Fair Work First practices in all regulated Council purchasing activities where appropriate and proportionate            | Increase training and awareness of fair work for Council staff and bidding organisations. Demonstrate the benefits of fair work to supply chains contractors including promoting the Real Living Wage and opportunities for training and development.  | 2022                 | Commercial and Procurement Services | Buyer    |
|        |   | Undertake a review of the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy, to build on and complement work already undertaken to promote fair work and the Real Living Wage and include an objective of increasing the number of Council suppliers who pay the Real Living Wage and are accredited. | 2022                 | Commercial and Procurement Services | Buyer    |
|        |   | Apply Fair Work First guidance to every new regulated tender, seeking to ensure that businesses bidding for Council contracts are committed to the Fair Work First criteria, including providing fair pay.   | 2022                 | Commercial and Procurement Services | Buyer    |



## Actions for a Fairer Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action | Detail   | Timescale for output  | Lead Service/Partner                | Council Lever                                |                          |
|--------|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
|        | Gather and interrogate available data from the last two financial years on tenderers to regulated Council contracts who are not currently Real Living Wage accredited employers to better understand the Living Wage landscape by sector and use this information to target future increases in accreditation. | 2022-24   | Commercial and Procurement Services | Buyer  |                          |
| e      | Maximise the community benefit opportunities from Council procurement, and promote Community Wealth Building practices across the city   | Increase community benefits delivered by suppliers, including employment and training opportunities to support people into fair work.   | 2022                                | Commercial and Procurement Services/ESES CRD | Buyer                    |
|        |  | Increase awareness and education of community benefits through working with current and potential suppliers   | 2022                                | Commercial and Procurement Services          | Buyer                    |
|        |  | Work with partners in delivery of Community Wealth Building projects, and seek opportunities to strengthen Edinburgh's approach to People centred approaches/Community Wealth building  | 2022                                | Place Directorate                            | Partner                  |
| f      | Help people of all ages and backgrounds to easily access and progress in fair work, training or further education through the Edinburgh Guarantee for All programme  | Deliver the Edinburgh Guarantee for All programme and promote jobs and opportunities boards, to help people of all ages find jobs, training and skills sessions.  | 2022                                | Place Directorate                            | Service Provider         |
|        |  | Work with employers to create new opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their age or background, with particular focus on supporting those who face additional barriers.  | 2022                                | Place Directorate                            | Service Provider/Partner |
| g      | Deliver an integrated network of employability support and training across Edinburgh, with dedicated support for people with complex needs or from target groups   | Deliver a new blended employability service to provide person centred supported employment for people with a disability or long term health condition; intensive employability support for those with complex needs or additional barriers to employment; support for income maximisation; support for those facing in work poverty; and, support with digital literacy for employability | 2022                                | Place Directorate                            | Service Provider/Partner |
|        |  | Manage delivery of Scottish Government funded programmes including Young Person's Guarantee, Parental Employability   | 2022                                | Place Directorate                            | Service Provider/Partner |

## Actions for a Fairer Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action   | Detail  | Timescale for output | Lead Service/Partner                    | Council Lever            |
|----------|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
|          | Support, Partnership Action for Continuing Employment, and No-one Left Behind.  |                      |   |                          |
|          | Deliver Edinburgh Project SEARCH to provide employment and learning opportunities for young people with a disability.   | 2022                 | Place Directorate                       | Service Provider/Partner |
|          | Deliver the Council's Education Improvement Plan to improve attainment for all, and to close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children   | 2022-24              | Education and Children's Services       | Service Provider/Partner |
|          | Work with partners in delivery of the Developing Young Workforce programme to better prepare young people for the world of work and help business to be more involved in informing, inspiring and hiring youth talent                           | 2022                 | Education and Children's Services       | Service Provider/Partner |
|          | Support delivery of the ESES City Region Deal Integrated Regional Employability and Skills programme, including management of the Intensive Families Support Service, Integrated Employer Engagement, and Integrated Knowledge Systems projects | 2022                 | Place Directorate/ESES City Region Deal | Service Provider/Partner |
| <b>h</b> | Work with city partners to develop the city's skills system to maximise progression into employment in key current, and emerging sectors and technologies (data, digital, green industries)   |                      |   |                          |
|          | Deliver the Edinburgh Learns For Life plan to ensure improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people   | 2022-24              | Education and Children's Services       | Service Provider         |
|          | Work with partners including Skills Development Scotland, Higher and Further Education Institutes to ensure key sectors in the region can shape skills needs and programmes   | 2022-24              | Place Directorate/ESES City Region Deal | Partner/Influencer       |
|          | Support delivery of the ESES City Region Deal Data Driven Innovation Skills Gateway Programme, bringing together industry, universities, colleges, and schools to provide routes into data or digital careers.                                  | 2022-24              | Place Directorate/ESES City Region Deal | Partner                  |
|          | Support delivery of the ESES City Region Deal Housing, Construction, and Infrastructure Skills Gateway Programme,   | 2022-24              | Place Directorate/ESES City Region Deal | Partner                  |

## Actions for a Fairer Edinburgh economy. The City of Edinburgh Council will...

| Action   | Detail   | Timescale for output  | Lead Service/Partner | Council Lever                      |                    |
|----------|--|---|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
|          | helping people across the region to gain new and emerging construction industry skills.  |   |                      |                                    |                    |
|          | Support delivery of the FUSE programme to support people into good jobs in retail, and support delivery of a new Hotel School to offer skills, training, and access to employment in the hospitality sector. | 2022-24   | Place Directorate    | Partner                            |                    |
| <b>i</b> | Deliver a 20-minute Neighbourhood strategy that supports local economies and businesses to provide the daily needs of their communities and create local jobs  | Deliver the 20-minute Neighbourhood Strategy  | 2022-24              | Place Directorate                  | Service Provider   |
| <b>j</b> | Work with city businesses and partners to influence Scottish Government for the local powers and responsibilities we need to ensure a fairer Edinburgh economy   | Write to Scottish Ministers and UK Governments setting out the support, collaboration, and powers needed to deliver the aims of this strategy | 2022                 | Policy & Insight/Place Directorate | Influencer/Partner |

## Appendix 5 – Monitoring Progress

In June 2021 the Council published a new Planning and Performance Framework to guide monitoring of the delivery of the Council Business Plan<sup>xlix</sup>. That framework is fully aligned to this Edinburgh Economy Strategy and includes 13 core key performance indicators covering progress in areas outlined in this document.

Progress against these measures will be reported to the Council’s Policy and Sustainability Committee as part of annual monitoring of this strategy, alongside regular reporting to this and other Executive committees on key projects as required.

These KPIs and Milestones identified in the table above will be further supplemented by the ongoing publication of the Edinburgh [Economy Watch](#) and the annual [Edinburgh By Numbers](#) publications.

These publications provide elected members and citizens with regular updates on progress of the city economy, including Edinburgh level analysis of:

- Latest economic forecasts
- Business trends and data
- Labour market analysis
- Analysis of earnings, productivity, wellbeing, skills and employability issues
- As well as discrete analysis of other key issues of importance to the economy.

| KPI / Milestones  | Type            | Baseline | Target                 |
|---|-----------------|----------|------------------------|
| Positive destinations for school leavers  | Council metric  | 92.5%    |                        |
| Number of new Council apprenticeships   | Council metric  |          | Increase by 1% Year 1  |
| % council suppliers of new regulated tendered contracts that are committed to paying the real living wage | Council metric  | 70%      | +2% in year 1          |
| City of Edinburgh retains its accreditation as a living city  | Council metric  |          | To retain              |
| Number of living wage employers   | Citywide metric | 520      | 620 in year 1          |
| New business births per 10,000 residents  | Citywide metric | 54.96    | Monitor only no target |
| Employed residents as a percentage of all residents aged 16-64  | Citywide metric | 77.2%    |                        |
| Total number of engagements through business gateway  | Council metric  | 3,082    | To be developed        |
| Total number of individuals supported by Council funded employability programmes                          | Council metric  | 3,719    | 3,800 (year 1)         |
| Percentage of procurement spend via SMEs  | Council metric  | 52%      | 52% (year 1)           |
| Percentage of procurement spend in EH postcode  | Council metric  | 47.57%   | 50% (year 1)           |
| Investment in supporting the arts and culture sector in the city  | Council metric  |          | £5.6M (year 1)         |
| Total City’s emissions (in MtCO2e)  | Citywide metric | 2,428    | 6% reduction           |

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