

From: [Gary Gilruth](#)
To: [REDACTED] [@gov.scot](#); [David Givan](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request for Information - Fire at Prince Street, Edinburgh
Date: 09 July 2026 20:35:57

Good Evening [REDACTED]

Apologies for the lateness of my reply but I was on site at the incident most of today.

This is a quickly developing incident with SFRS still in control of the site. Until such times as they pass the site over to us, I do not have many details I can share. The cause of the fire is still unknown at this stage and I believe both police and the fire service have an ongoing active investigation underway.

I am back on site tomorrow at 7am for a meeting with SFRS, our structural engineers and contractor. Princess Street is likely to remain closed for some time and there is potential for the wider exclusion zone to be similar. However, I will not know more until the site is handed over to us.

I will provide a more comprehensive briefing when I can.

Kind Regards,

Gary Gilruth MCIOB / Building Standards Operations Manager / Planning and Building Standards / Sustainable Development / Place Directorate / The City of Edinburgh Council / Waverley Court, Level 2:3, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG / Tel [REDACTED] / gary.gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk / www.edinburgh.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED] [@gov.scot](#)
Sent: 09 July 2026 17:31
To: Gary Gilruth ; David Givan
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Request for Information - Fire at Prince Street, Edinburgh
Importance: High

Good Afternoon Gary/David

We are aware of the fire on Princes Street which appears to have caused substantial damage to several buildings.

I am wondering if it would be possible to get some more details from you on the incident and the Council's response, allowing us to brief the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary

for Social Justice and Housing.

We note from the BBC news article that the fire appears to have occurred in a traditional building and has impacted key city infrastructure with the suspension of the trams.

We would be grateful for a short summary/briefing on the incident, including the cause of the fire (if known), to allow us to pass on any intelligence available.

[Historic building wrecked in major blaze on Edinburgh's Princes Street - BBC News](#)

Kind Regards

 | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile:  | Email: @gov.scot

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
To: Gary Gilruth; David Givan
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Request for Information - Fire at Prince Street, Edinburgh
Date: 09 July 2026 17:31:11
Importance: High

Good Afternoon Gary/David

We are aware of the fire on Princes Street which appears to have caused substantial damage to several buildings.

I am wondering if it would be possible to get some more details from you on the incident and the Council's response, allowing us to brief the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and Housing.

We note from the BBC news article that the fire appears to have occurred in a traditional building and has impacted key city infrastructure with the suspension of the trams.

We would be grateful for a short summary/briefing on the incident, including the cause of the fire (if known), to allow us to pass on any intelligence available.

[Historic building wrecked in major blaze on Edinburgh's Princes Street - BBC News](#)

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [Jane Meagher](#)
To: ["firstminister@gov.scot"](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)
Subject: Letter from Cllr Meagher, Leader of City of Edinburgh Council
Date: 17 July 2026 10:39:44
Attachments: [First Minister - Princes Street Fire - 170726.pdf](#)

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter from Cllr Jane Meagher, the Leader of City of Edinburgh Council.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | **Business Manager to the Council Leader** | Chief Executive's Office | The City of Edinburgh Council | email: [REDACTED] [@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk)

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
To: Gary Gilruth
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates
Date: 29 July 2026 17:04:15

Gary

Thank you for the update – this information has been promptly passed to Ministers.

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

From: Gary Gilruth
Sent: 29 July 2026 16:53

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Hi [REDACTED]

I wanted to flag a further update on timescales and the cordon. Please see the following link for our most recent update:

[Update on works as historic features survive the Princes Street fire – The City of Edinburgh Council](#)

Kind Regards,

Gary Gilruth MCIQB / Building Standards Operations Manager / Planning and Building Standards / Sustainable Development / Place Directorate / The City of Edinburgh Council / Waverley Court, Level 2:3, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG / Tel [REDACTED] / gary.gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk / www.edinburgh.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 27 July 2026 14:28

To: Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Gary

Thank you for your comprehensive update.

On your final note – we would be grateful for any update regarding the planned review/assessment by the structural engineers and any impact on the current exclusion zone to the public.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

From: Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 July 2026 17:05

To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see below for a quick update.

Our original plan to reduce all 3 walls (two gables and 1 dividing wall) has been revised to now only reduce in height the east gable to facilitate the removal of warped roof beams. Additional structure has been installed to compensate. The plan now is to complete work to the gables and to secure the front façade of the building with a retention structure. This structure will involve steelwork being secured to the façade of the building with additional reinforcement inside. Debris and dangerous material are being removed from inside the building and once this is done there may be some further works required to strengthen the remaining internal structure. As this remains an active crime scene, the process of debris removal is, and will, remain a slow process as both SFRS and police want to photograph evidence at each stage. Due to the unstable nature of the building much of the initial work is being done by hand from above, using a crane with operatives in a basket. This work also requires pieces of stonework to be removed individually which adds to the timescale. Unfortunately, the wind is restricting the speed we can carry out these works safely.

All those working on the building are focussed on reducing the danger arising from the unstable structure so that Princes Street can be fully reopened. With so many variables, I am unable to give an accurate timescale today, it therefore remains 'into August' but weather permitting, hopefully sooner rather than later. We will need to see how the weekend goes and then will review with the structural engineers on Monday. The hope is once the gable is suitable consolidated, we may be able to reduce the cordon slightly to allow Boots to re-open but again, cannot make any promises on that.

Trust this is helpful.

Kind Regards,

Gary Gilruth MCIQB / Building Standards Operations Manager / Planning and Building Standards / Sustainable Development / Place Directorate / The City of Edinburgh Council / Waverley Court, Level 2:3, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG / Tel [REDACTED] / gary.gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk / www.edinburgh.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 22 July 2026 14:49

To: Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Gary

Thank you for the comprehensive update, which is most useful and helpful.

We would be grateful if you could possibly provide another short update at the end of this week if possible – notably in relation to any Council updates on the existing cordon and any updates with the tram service (i.e. Any progress on moving trams safely through to service Newhaven/Leith etc).

Whilst I acknowledge that the primary focus of building standards is the management of the dangerous building, we'd be grateful to understand the Council's wider response to this incident with relevant stakeholders including transportation bodies.

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED] [@gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@gov.scot)

From: Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Sent: 18 July 2026 13:51

To: [REDACTED] [@gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@gov.scot)>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Hi [REDACTED]

Please accept my apologies for delayed response. There have been lots of matters that required my urgent attention this week.

By way of update, please see below:

Our priority since last Friday has been to make the site safe and protect the public, while establishing the extent of the damage, and ensuring we keep the city moving as efficiently as possible. A key part of this is to preserve as much of the heritage value of the building as possible. This is a complex process that will take time.

Our initial structural investigations concluded that three gable walls within the building require to be reduced in height and that some steelwork associated with these needs to be removed.

Work is underway to do that now. Loose stonework and other dangerous material are also being removed. SFRS and police have concluded their initial investigations but will require to return when the immediate make safe works are further on. Police are likely to stand down on Monday and we have security arrangements in place with the contractor from then onwards.

We are optimistic that the façade on to Princes Street can be retained and an additional supporting structure for this is being developed. All works are being reviewed on a daily basis.

Given the complexity of these works, we are now planning on the assumption that the cordon will remain into August. This will require diversions to remain in place, which unfortunately will inevitably lead to ongoing disruption in the city centre – both to travel and to some festival events, particularly on and around George Street. We are working closely with our transport and

festival partners to limit (and communicate) this as far as possible.

Trams are currently only able to operate between the Airport and Shandwick Place, which is causing considerable inconvenience to residents and businesses on the eastern section of the route. We are looking at all options to re-establish operations on this section as soon as possible.

We have agreed for all business on Rose Street, which were open and trading before the fire and those who have engaged with us, can re-open. The only shop on Princes St which remains within the exclusion zone and therefore shut, is Boots.

We are working with partners and event organisers to raise awareness and share messaging, urging people to plan ahead before travelling. We have created a dedicated page on the council website that includes up-to-date information and guidance, with relevant links to partner sites, and FAQs. This will be updated regularly as and when new information becomes available.

I trust this update is useful.

Kind Regards,

Gary Gilruth MCIQB / Building Standards Operations Manager / Planning and Building Standards / Sustainable Development / Place Directorate / The City of Edinburgh Council / Waverley Court, Level 2:3, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG / Tel [REDACTED] / gary.gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk / www.edinburgh.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 14 July 2026 16:03

To: Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Fire at Princes Street - Updates

Good Afternoon Gary

I'm wondering if you or a member of your team could provide us with a short update on the status of the fire damaged building on Princes Street following last week's fire.

I've sent a message yesterday and left a voicemail earlier on but appreciate you will be very busy dealing with the operational response.

Thanks

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: David Givan; Gary Gilruth; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Urgent Meeting Request - Princes Street
Date: 30 July 2026 14:39:30

Thanks [REDACTED] – will issue in a few minutes.

Do you want me to extend this meeting invite to you too?

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 July 2026 14:37
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: David Givan ; Gary Gilruth ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Urgent Meeting Request - Princes Street

Thanks Daniel – will you issue a teams invite to

Paul.lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk

Gareth.barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk

Thanks

[REDACTED] | Executive Assistant | Chief Executive's Office | Customer and Digital Services | Corporate Services | The City of Edinburgh Council | Level 2.7 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Internal: [REDACTED] / External 0131 469 [REDACTED] |

From: D [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Sent: 30 July 2026 14:27
To: [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Urgent Meeting Request - Princes Street

Thank you for your response – could we go ahead and schedule a quick call?

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@gov.scot

From: [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Sent: 30 July 2026 14:08
To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Cc: David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Urgent Meeting Request - Princes Street

Hi [REDACTED]

Gareth and Paul are available at 4:15pm today if that is suitable?

Thanks

[REDACTED] | Executive Assistant | Chief Executive's Office | Customer and Digital Services | Corporate Services | The City of Edinburgh Council | Level 2.7 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Internal: [REDACTED] / External 0131 469 [REDACTED] |

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 30 July 2026 09:51

To: David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Gary Gilruth <Gary.Gilruth@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Urgent Meeting Request - Princes Street

Good Morning David/Gary

I have been asked by the Deputy First Ministers office and the office for the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport to request a meeting with the City of Edinburgh Council in relation to the Princes Street fire.

The request for this meeting relates to the timescales for the proposed work to install the façade retention and the position on public transport and infrastructure. Feedback on these matters will inform the Scottish Government's position on business support by understanding how they are impacting businesses.

There should also have been contact with your Chief Executive from Transport Scotland on the same matter and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with your Chief Executive and/or Corporate Director of Place.

We would be grateful if a meeting could be facilitated via Microsoft Teams today if possible.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | **Head of Technical Unit**

Building Standards Division | Building Safety and Standards Directorate | Scottish Government

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of DFMCSFLG@gov.scot
To: [Jane Meagher](#)
Cc: DFMCSFLG@gov.scot; [Paul Lawrence](#)
Subject: FAO Cllr Jane Meagher - Letter from the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government
Date: 31 July 2026 12:09:20
Attachments: [Deputy First Minister - Letter to Cllr Jane Meagher - July 2026.pdf](#)

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached letter from Jenny Gilruth MSP, Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government.

You will see within the letter, the DFM would like to meet with you on-site at Princes Street and aware you have been in dialogue with our officials on this. The DFM could visit on **Wednesday 5 August at 16:00** if this works on your side? Let me know if this suits, and if not we can look at other options if not.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government – Jenny Gilruth MSP

Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG | Email:

DFMCSFLG@gov.scot | [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] behalf of [Jane Meagher](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Letter from Edinburgh Council Leader - Princes Street Fire
Date: 31 August 2026 12:12:34
Attachments: [DFM - Princes Street Fire - 310826.pdf](#)

From: Alan Irvine
Sent: 31 August 2026 12:09
To: DFMCSFLG@gov.scot
Subject: Letter from Edinburgh Council Leader - Princes Street Fire

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter from Councillor Jane Meagher, Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council for the attention of the Deputy First Minister.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]
Senior Executive Officer | Labour Group
City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
To: Paul Lawrence; [REDACTED]@gov.scot
Cc: Gareth Barwell
Subject: RE: Taking trams to Newhaven by road
Date: 31 July 2026 13:57:23

Thanks Paul

Hopefully by now you've picked up the letter from DFM and the proposal from her office for a meeting/site visit on Wednesday.

[REDACTED] | **Acting Director for Local Government and Communities | Scottish Government | Tel:** [REDACTED]

From: Paul Lawrence
Sent: 31 July 2026 12:45
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Gareth Barwell
Subject: FW: Taking trams to Newhaven by road

[REDACTED] as promised, here is the spreadsheet from ET on cost and time of moving trams by road. Please treat as P&C but happy for it to be used in ministerial briefings

P

Paul Lawrence | Chief Executive | City of Edinburgh Council | m [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@edinburghtrams.com>
Sent: 30 July 2026 15:24
To: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]@edinburghtrams.com; [REDACTED]@LothianBuses.co.uk>; [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Taking trams to Newhaven by road

Hi Paul,

As discussed, please find a copy of the spreadsheet I pulled together for the potential to move trams by road to Newhaven.

In summary, its not viable if the façade retention is planned to take 3-4 weeks, as it would take 14 weeks to get the tram moved (and that doesn't consider the costs involved). Via Ruth, our insurers agreed.

If you need anything else, please don't hesitate to get back in touch.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Head of Engineering

T [REDACTED]

M [REDACTED]

A 1 Myreton Drive, Edinburgh, EH12 9GF

E [REDACTED]@edinburghtrams.com

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 July 2026 15:04
To: Gavin Brown <gavin.brown@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@edinburghtrams.com>
Subject: Taking trams to Newhaven by road

Hi Gavin,

As discussed, here's the info we pulled together regarding the potential for stabling trams at Newhaven for discussion with the insurers.

It's likely that due to the costs, and the likely duration of the closure of Princes Street, that this option is not viable. I've copied in Ruth, so she is aware that we've spoken.

I'm on leave today, but if you need more info, let me know and I can look at that on Monday.

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Head of Engineering

T [Redacted]

M [Redacted]

A 1 Myreton Drive, Edinburgh, EH12 9GF

E [Redacted] [\[Redacted\]@edinburghtrams.com](mailto:[Redacted]@edinburghtrams.com)

From: [redacted]@gov.scot
To: David Givan
Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]@transport.gov.scot; [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]
Gary Gilruth; Gareth Barwell; Paul Lawrence
Subject: RE: Update and QQ re trams
Date: 31 July 2026 12:30:33

Morning David

Thank you very much for sending this over and the explanation below which is clear.

[redacted]
[redacted] | **Acting Director for Local Government and Communities | Scottish Government | Tel:** [redacted]

From: David Givan
Sent: 31 July 2026 12:11
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] Gary Gilruth
; Gareth Barwell ; Paul Lawrence
Subject: RE: Update and QQ re trams
Dear [redacted]

Further to your email with Paul, attached is our draft programme for works. The programme is subject to an evolving understanding of the building and some operations may take longer or shorter depending on complexity of operations. There is no account taken for wind in this programme. There have been some days lost to wind over the last 3 weeks as cranes cannot operate safely above certain wind speeds.

In relation to the First Minister's question:

We have been looking very closely. This is not possible at this stage. There is 8 to 12 metres in height of unrestrained masonry of the front façade of the building. There is a portion of significantly compromised and unstable stonework above a third-floor window on the east side and several lintels which have failed on the internal face. Since the fire, some internal facing stonework in this area has fallen. Until all this is secured there is a risk that further masonry could fall. Even at a walking pace, using the southern tram tracks and with very low winds, the engineers, who have been looking at this very carefully, have concluded that the risk of further structural failure of this remains too great for trams to be taken in front of the building.

Kind regards

David

David Givan

Chief Planning Officer and Head of Building Standards | Planning and Building Standards | Sustainable Development | Place Directorate | The City of Edinburgh Council | Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Mobile [redacted] | david.givan@edinburgh.gov.uk | www.edinburgh.gov.uk

From: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Sent: 31 July 2026 11:15
To: [redacted]@gov.scot; Gareth Barwell <Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]@transport.gov.scot; [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]
[redacted]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [redacted]
[redacted]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Update and QQ re trams

Thanks [REDACTED] – Gareth’s on leave today.

Happy to chat next week on support package ideas prior to the politicians meeting. I’ve asked Gareth to set those out and get a draft over to you asap. Could we pencil something in for Tues rather than Monday just to give him the time? [REDACTED] in copy for us to see the art of the possible with calendars.

On the FM’s question, David, also cc’d is the expert – but as we said yesterday, we have clear advice from Will Rudd’s stating that any movement to the south of the façade (buses, trams) is too high risk at present and we need to stabilise the building first. I promised to send their detailed programme to you and will get over to you asap, along with the info from Edinburgh Tram showing the challenge of moving trams by road.

Hope that helps

Paul

Paul Lawrence | Chief Executive | City of Edinburgh Council | m [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 31 July 2026 10:11

To: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Gareth Barwell <Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Subject: Update and QQ re trams

Morning Paul, Gareth

Thanks so much for a really helpful dialogue yesterday afternoon, the FM was grateful for the comprehensive update on state of play and has asked the DFM to make contact today about setting up a visit/meeting next week. I am working with her PO on getting a letter in response to Cllr Meagher to take that forward.

In the meantime he did have a question about tram reopening, and while I think I know the answer will be both about advice from structural engineers about vibrations and safety zones if there were a collapse, I thought best to simply ask you directly for the right way to answer.... He has asked whether it would not be feasible to reopen the tramway with trams only operating one way on the furthest away tracks from the building?

I should underline he is keen that we explore options which might support easing the congestion and increase flows – including any in kind support we could facilitate with Police or other partners.

It would be worth us having a call on Monday perhaps once we have timing of a visit and you’ve had an initial think about what a support package might look like – let me know what timing might work and we can get that set up.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

Acting Director for Local Government and Communities
Scottish Government

From: [redacted]@gov.scot
To: Paul Lawrence; Gareth Barwell; [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]@gov.scot; [redacted]@gov.scot;
Subject: In confidence - financial support package
Date: 04 August 2026 17:43:02

Paul, Gareth, [redacted]

In confidence with enormous thanks for all the discussion so far, we have agreement from the DFM to being in a position to confirm tomorrow a support package with up to £5 million of funding for recovery and renewal. We similarly cited an up to figure in the case of Glasgow, and other incidents elsewhere, and would want to work with you on an ongoing basis as we have done there to confirm what spend is delivered on what etc.

Comms are working on an overnight trail about the visit itself without confirming any details on funding support but saying this will be a point of discussion; then we'd look to confirm funding and announce support alongside the visit itself.

The pitch we are going with is along the lines of support for recovery and renewal – we will likely highlight an expectation that it will include communications and other support to incentivise and assist with travel around the city, acknowledging concerns of businesses facing reduced footfall. We'll also note that it will help with the costs of securing the site and facilitating reopening. Otherwise we'll frame it flexibly so that there can be scope around what the funding is used for.

We'll be emphasising the difference with Glasgow in terms of businesses not being forced to be closed, but the DFM is mindful that businesses in Leith will have an expectation of something being done to support them to recover from the impact of reduced footfall and would be keen for that to be a key part of the use of the funding.

Copying in our comms colleagues [redacted] too.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Tel: [redacted]

Acting Director for Local Government and Communities
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> on behalf of <DFMCSFLG@gov.scot>
To: Jane Meagher; <DFMCSFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Alison Coburn; Paul Lawrence
Subject: RE: FAO Cllr Jane Meagher - Letter from the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government
Date: 04 August 2026 13:17:55

Thanks for this, [REDACTED] – this is helpful.

[REDACTED]
Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government – Jenny Gilruth MSP
Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG | Email: <DFMCSFLG@gov.scot> | [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Jane Meagher
Sent: 04 August 2026 10:02
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government <DFMCSFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Alison Coburn <Alison.Coburn@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: FAO Cllr Jane Meagher - Letter from the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government

Good morning,

I understand that the time of the meeting tomorrow has been changed to 10.45am. I can confirm that this is suitable for Councillor Meagher and that she will meet the Deputy First Minister on Princes Street at that time.

Please let me know if you need anything further from the Leader's Office in advance of the meeting.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | **Business Manager to the Council Leader** | Chief Executive's Office | The City of Edinburgh Council | email: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Jane Meagher
Sent: 03 August 2026 17:25
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; <DFMCSFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Alison Coburn <Alison.Coburn@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: FAO Cllr Jane Meagher - Letter from the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your email, I understand the meeting between Cllr Meagher and the DFM has been confirmed for Wednesday 5 August at 16:00 at the site of the fire on Princes Street.

We have arranged a meeting space at the Gardener's Cottage in Princes Street Gardens where Cllr Meagher and the DFM can go after the site visit to continue their discussion.

Please let me know if you need us to arrange access to the Gardens for vehicular access.

Kind regards,

Senior Executive Officer | Labour Group
City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ

edinburgh.gov.uk

From: gov.scot gov.scot > On Behalf Of DFMCSFLG@gov.scot
Sent: 31 July 2026 12:09
To: Jane Meagher <Cllr.Jane.Meagher@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Cc: DFMCSFLG@gov.scot; Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Subject: FAO Cllr Jane Meagher - Letter from the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached letter from Jenny Gilruth MSP, Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government.

You will see within the letter, the DFM would like to meet with you on-site at Princes Street and aware you have been in dialogue with our officials on this. The DFM could visit on **Wednesday 5 August at 16:00** if this works on your side? Let me know if this suits, and if not we can look at other options if not.

Thanks,

Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister for Finance and Local Government – Jenny Gilruth MSP
Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG | Email: DFMCSFLG@gov.scot |

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
To: Gareth Barwell; Paul Lawrence
Cc: Peter Watton; David Givan; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot
Subject: Re: Updated Funding Request
Date: 05 August 2026 10:28:07

Hi all

I've just seen your draft news release, I've asked comms colleagues my end to engage about removing reference to VQ as we've not confirmed the feasibility of this and it creates an expectation it will happen with risk people start turning up at the gate!

It is ultimately your call but I would be more cautious about being so specific about how the funding will be deployed esp given risk of comparison about who is getting what - including the ref to financial support to festival operators compared with businesses not getting direct support.

Take or leave that but it reduces your flexibility and carries risks I think.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 05 August 2026 08:03:56
To: Gareth Barwell ; Paul Lawrence
Cc: Peter Watton ; David Givan ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Updated Funding Request

Thanks Gareth.

[REDACTED] | Acting Director for Local Government and Communities | Scottish Government | Tel: [REDACTED]

From: Gareth Barwell
Sent: 04 August 2026 20:13
To: [REDACTED] ; Paul Lawrence
Cc: Peter Watton ; David Givan ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Updated Funding Request

Hi [REDACTED]

As you say, the key issue is that the bus doors do not open on the same side as the tram stops are. We could not ask passengers to board and alight the bus on to a live carriageway.

I have had a brief conversation with the COO of Lothian Buses this evening on this matter. We both agree that the current plan of monitoring circumstances where passengers are turned away from full buses and identifying times and routes where additional bus capacity is required, alongside continuing to have a staff presence at the tram stop locations to signpost residents and visitors to the nearest bus top for their journey is the most practical solution.

I hope this helps.

Gareth

Gareth Barwell | Corporate Director of Place | Place | Waverley Court, Level 2.6, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Tel: 0131 529 [REDACTED] (internal [REDACTED]) | email:

Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk |

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 04 August 2026 19:43

To: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Gareth Barwell
<Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: Peter Watton <Peter.Watton@edinburgh.gov.uk>; David Givan
<David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Subject: Re: Updated Funding Request

Hi all

I'm conveying a specific question from the DFM this evening which she would welcome a view on if not in advance of the engagement then at it.

The DFM has asked what the possibility is of running buses on the tram route only stopping at the tram stops from Newhaven to Ocean Terminal to St Andrews Square - to give extra capacity and when tourists are getting to the tram stop at St Andrews square they give up as it says no trams.

I appreciate the issue of the side of the bus door and step height are at least part of the answer - and that the funding to support comms and redirection would help with this too. But I'd be grateful to get an official view from yourselves if possible.

From: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, 04 August 2026 17:53:37

To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Gareth Barwell
<Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: Peter Watton <Peter.Watton@edinburgh.gov.uk>; David Givan
<David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: Re: Updated Funding Request

Thanks [REDACTED], Gareth is briefing Cllr Meagher on this tomorrow and walking to site with her so can cover then,

Paul

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, 04 August 2026 17:46:06

To: Gareth Barwell <Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Cc: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Peter Watton
<Peter.Watton@edinburgh.gov.uk>; David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot
[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Updated Funding Request

Hi Gareth

Our emails crossed a bit there, but this looks really helpful and the business package really good – it would be excellent for the Leader to be able to talk to some of this in the meeting tomorrow and if your comms which follow as a response to the DFM's confirmed package can begin to illustrate uses of the funding in this way I think that would be positive. And would allow you as the Council to be leading out what the funding will be used for.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] | Acting Director for Local Government and Communities | Scottish
Government | Tel: [REDACTED]

From: Gareth Barwell <Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Sent: 04 August 2026 17:38

To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@gov.scot)>

Cc: Paul Lawrence <Paul.Lawrence@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Peter Watton
<Peter.Watton@edinburgh.gov.uk>; David Givan <David.Givan@edinburgh.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@edinburgh.gov.uk)>

Subject: Updated Funding Request

Hi [REDACTED]

Many thanks for your time earlier today.

Further to our meeting, I attach an update note setting out the funding support which CEC requests from Ministers.

There is additional clarity around support for local businesses, an increased focus on getting patronage back up on public transport and we have removed any funding request relating to Lothian Buses recognising Fiona's feedback on behalf of Transport Scotland based on the approach taken in response to the Union Corner fire.

I hope this provides the clarity required for yourself and ministers and will also help inform any media/comms lines which SG may wish to put out on awarding any funding.

I look forward to seeing you on site tomorrow.

Kind regards

Gareth

Gareth Barwell | Corporate Director of Place | Place | Waverley Court, Level 2.6, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Tel: 0131 529 [REDACTED] (internal [REDACTED]) | email: Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk |

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot on behalf of DFMCSFLG@gov.scot
To: [Jane Meagher](mailto:Jane.Meagher@gov.scot)
Cc: DFMCSFLG@gov.scot; [Paul Lawrence](#); [Richard Lloyd-Bithell](#); [Gareth Barwell](#); [David Givan](#)
Subject: Letter from the Deputy First Minister to Edinburgh City Council Leader - Princes St Fire Financial support
Date: 14 August 2026 13:47:12
Attachments: [Princes St Fire Financial Support - City of Edinburgh Council - Letter from DFM CSFLG to Council Leader - 14 August 2026.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Dear Cllr Meagher,

Please find attached letter from Jenny Gilruth MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government in relation to Princes Street fire financial support.

Kind regards

Sarah

[REDACTED] | Deputy Private Secretary | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government – Jenny Gilruth MSP | Scottish Government | 5th floor | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | M: [REDACTED] | E: dfmcsflg@gov.scot

From: [REDACTED]
To: [David Givan](#)
Subject: FW: Princes Street Reopening
Date: 28 August 2026 10:21:50
Importance: High

David for info. for our comms contact if they haven't already been in touch

[REDACTED] - Senior Policy Adviser - Local Government Finance - Area 3G North, Victoria Quay

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 August 2026 09:23
To: Gareth Barwell
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Princes Street Reopening
Importance: High

Gareth just to drop you a note with our comms contact [REDACTED] [@gov.scot](#) they are ready to work on any joint comms for the reopening on Saturday, so grateful if your comms team can contact him directly.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - Senior Policy Adviser - Local Government Finance - Area 3G North, Victoria Quay

From: Gareth Barwell <Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk>
Sent: 27 August 2026 11:08
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@gov.scot](#)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@gov.scot](#)>
Subject: Princes Street Reopening

Good morning, [REDACTED]

Just to update you that our Council Leader has just this moment announced the reopening of Princes Street to trams and buses this Saturday. We were only able to provide surety on this date late yesterday.

We are clarifying start times on Saturday for buses just now, but I thought it best to let you know so that you can inform Ministers and update your own comms colleagues.

Thanks for all of your assistance to date. It has been much appreciated. Whilst this is a hugely positive step forward, work still continues on the building and our business support work.

I look forward to meeting you again soon. For information, I am at a special committee meeting tomorrow, but other senior colleagues will be attending our scheduled meeting.

Kind regards

Gareth

Gareth Barwell | Corporate Director of Place | Place | Waverley Court, Level 2.6, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG | Tel: 0131 529 [REDACTED] (internal [REDACTED]) | email: Gareth.Barwell@edinburgh.gov.uk |