

John Swinney MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Date 17 July 2026

Dear First Minister

Princes Street Fire

As you will no doubt be aware, the fire in the former Debenhams store on Princes Street last week has caused significant disruption in the city centre.

The 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.

Given the complexity of making the site safe, we are planning on the assumption that the cordon will remain into August. This will inevitably lead to ongoing disruption in the city centre.

I am acutely aware of the negative effect this is having on businesses in the city centre and in Leith where trams are not currently able to operate. Council officers are offering one-to-one support and advice, as well as Non-Domestic Rates relief for those who have had to close. That being said, our powers to support are limited and I would be grateful if you would agree to meet with me to discuss any additional support the Scottish Government is able to offer.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Jane Meagher
Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council

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