

Council Leader Adam McVey marks 100 days in the job

Cllr McVey is leader of the SNP Group which scraped into a coalition deal with the Labour Group one month after the Council Elections. This turned the arrangement from the last council administration on its head, as the Capital Coalition as it was known, was led by the Labour group from 2012 to 2017.

Now there are 19 SNP councillors and 12 Labour councillors elected to run the council and a deal was struck between these two groups to form a minority coalition from the 63 elected members.

Cllr McVey is the youngest ever leader of the city council, not something he likes to be reminded of, and he has railed against those who question whether he can lead despite his apparent youth.

But he has been a councillor since 2012 and rose quickly to Vice Convener of Transport and Environment in the last administration, so he is not completely without experience or battle scars.

Here he tells us what his first 100 days have been like.



“On 4 May, I was fortunate enough to be chosen by the people of Leith Ward to be their voice in the City Chambers for a further five years.

“Then, on 22 June, I was elected by my fellow councillors as the youngest ever leader of the City of Edinburgh Council. As at the end of September that was 100 days ago.

“The first 100 days of any new government, whether of a city or nation, sets the tone for the full term of office. It demonstrates the level of ambition that politicians will look to reach and gives an indication of how effective the administration will be at effecting change.

“We are still dealing with after-effects of a decade of economic turmoil – and will be for many years to come. However, our challenges shouldn’t prevent us from building the future we deserve. Our progressive coalition with Labour have now secured Council approval for our ambitious plans to deliver improved services for the Capital’s residents and communities.



Councillors McVey and Day sign the new coalition agreement a month after the Council elections.

“Our ‘Programme for the Capital’ is built around 52 commitments, such as the construction of 20,000 affordable new homes, investment in transport infrastructure, improving waste services and roads maintenance and the delivery of a City Region Deal. We also set out to improve educational attainment, building two new secondary schools and 10 new primaries by 2021.

“Already in our first 100 days, we were able to tick one of the key projects off our list by securing the £1.1bn [City Region Deal](#).



“The deal will create up to 21,000 new jobs, much needed housing, critical infrastructure, a new skills programme, and a world class concert hall. The significant investment in innovation and culture is also to be welcomed as they are both hugely important to the region’s economy.

“The development of our tram network has also taken a step forward with councillors recently agreeing the outline business case for completing the line to Newhaven. As the fastest growing city in Scotland, and with our existing system nearing capacity, we must look at ways of building the public transport system for Edinburgh’s future.

“Another major achievement was securing an £15m investment fund to help our festivals thrive over the next five years. Entirely fitting in the EIF’s 70th anniversary year.

“Not only do the festivals support our jobs market and economy to the tune of £313m every year, they are at the heart of Edinburgh’s cultural offering and make us unique.

“While there is little doubt about the positive impact our festivals have, the influx of visitors, tourists and performers also significantly increases pressure on our services, particularly waste management.

“We’ve been implementing detailed plans to improve these core services and these are having a big impact with complaints over issues like litter, dog fouling, overflowing communal bins and fly-tipping dropping by a third year-on-year – and more than halving in the city centre.

“A perfect illustration of the benefits of listening carefully to the views of local people – exactly as we’ve done in the case of the swimming pool at the new Queensferry High School.

“The initial proposal was for four lanes but, after strong feedback from the public, the plans (just recently submitted) now include six. The school – and wider community – are also set to benefit from a larger games hall, new fitness centre, dance studio and floodlit 3G and 4G pitches.

“We are also working hard to increase our early years’ provision for three and four year-olds to 1,140 hours by 2020 and are consulting parents on how best to meet their needs. We

are already making good progress and, in the last month alone, have opened four nurseries and one early years' centre, each providing state of the art facilities.

“Our biggest challenge will be delivering our commitment to build 20,000 new affordable homes over the next decade. This speaks to our ambition for Edinburgh but also recognition that we need to deal with the housing issues facing the city. With already over 2,000 homes under construction in 33 sites across the city, we're well on our way.

“Homelessness is an urgent priority and we're working with partners to deliver a better system to support people facing the threat of losing their home. This will take an enormous effort and we're engaging with key partners to make progress now. As well as our own work, I'm delighted the Council is supporting events like Social Bite's sleepout in December to make this a citywide effort.

“We're working hard for the Capital to make sure the next hundred days are as productive as the first.”

You can contact Adam McVey. His contact details are [here on the council website.](#)