

Council in coalition – about spending millions on roads and pavements

It is a year since the minority coalition of SNP and Labour began running the council.

They have chatted with us about some of their commitments where they feel they have already done more in twelve months than they expected to.



Depute Council Leader Cammy Day and Council Leader Adam McVey reflect on their year in office

In their coalition agreement the two parties SNP and Labour agreed to: invest £100m in roads and pavements over the next 5 years. This will include road and pavement maintenance, installing more pedestrian crossings, increasing the number of dropped kerbs and dedicate safer foot and cycle paths as well as introducing more pedestrian zones.

The Edinburgh Reporter challenged them by saying what many do each day – this city's streets are full of potholes and in a complete state of disrepair.

Councillor McVey said : “We committed to the £100m road investment programme over five years, and in the past twelve months we have already spent £24 million. You only need to do some quick maths to see that we might exceed our target, but we can address that.”

Asked where that money had been spent he countered : “We have spent it a bit here and a bit there. What we have done to make life easier is put in more money and look at how we can spread that money as far as we can.

“We changed the way we do road repairs in the last administration and now we do much more early intervention work. You can do that kind of work more cheaply and quickly, which means less roadworks in the city.

“But it also means a better quality of road because you are sustaining the quality at a higher level. This means you don’t have to spend weeks and weeks digging up any particular area.

“So I would expect people to notice less work on our roads here in Edinburgh, but things won’t change overnight – and we had a dreadful winter. I am particularly concerned about the impact of that. That is a huge challenge.

“I think we are throwing the right investment and approach into it, but ultimately I think by the end of the five years we will see a lot more progress and the road condition will be a lot more what people would expect.

“But this is a problem that has run on for decades that we are trying to solve. I think it will not change in the space of a year.”