

Council leader criticises MSP for misleading staff

The Council Leader Adam McVey has accused a Conservative Lothians MSP of making “misleading” comments that caused “distress” to the authority’s staff.

Writing for this and other local newspapers, Conservative MSP for the Lothians, Jeremy Balfour, said the city council was attempting to save £100,00 by gritting pavements from 8am instead of 5am and added “it is also estimated that up to 80 jobs could disappear from roads and environment crews.”

The city council has now set the record straight and claims that no jobs are at risk in the Capital.

Cllr McVey accused Mr Balfour of “confusing the city of

Edinburgh with West Lothian Council in trying to secure political points”.

He added: “I know that caused a great deal of concern amongst people in the city in terms of our winter weather preparedness. I know it caused concern amongst the staff who knew nothing about those proposals – and they wouldn’t because they didn’t relate to our council.”

Cllr McVey called on Conservative group leader, Cllr Iain Whyte, to apologise on Mr Balfour’s behalf.



Cllr Iain Whyte
Conservative Group
leader

Cllr Whyte said: “If former councillor and now MSP Jeremy Balfour has made comments then I’m sure he will respond to any questions put to him about those comments.”

The council is gearing up for extreme weather that could hit the Capital this winter, but has had to hire in 12 additional vehicles to ease pressure on its ageing fleet.



Councillor Lesley Macinnes Transport and Environment Convener

Transport and Environment Convener, Cllr Lesley Macinnes, said: "Contrary to misguided speculation by some we are very well prepared for whatever the winter has in store. We haven't cut our budgets. Instead we have maintained spending on our service. We've planned for every eventuality, building on years of experience in keeping our city moving.

"We have all the equipment in place – from the tens of thousands of tonnes of salt stocked in our Bankhead depot to the 22 gritters and snow ploughs patrolling the city. We're also expanding our use of technology, relying on new thermal mapping and tracking devices to help us to direct resources effectively."

Mr Balfour could not be reached for comment.