

Leith Walk byelection 2019 – SNP win against strong Green opposition

Tonight SNP candidate Rob Munn was named new councillor for the Leith Walk Ward. This is the third time he has been elected as councillor but he said it felt very different this time round.

He said : “It is quite an incredible feeling to come back so long after my first victory in 1996. It is quite a different process for the election. Back in 1996 it was a manual count that took place in the ward where the by election was and it was all over by quarter to ten.”



It took until 20 past midnight until the results were

announced tonight.

This ward is already represented by Lewis Ritchie Independent, Susan Rae Green and Amy McNeese-Mechan SNP.

Out of the 24,197 people in the ward, 7,334 voted which is a 30.3% turnout. After spoiled ballot papers the votes were 7,267. Cllr Munn was elected at Stage 11. The full results are [here](#) on the council website.

The atmosphere in Waverley Court was hardly electric, but there was a lot of tension among the candidates who were there for the count with their election agents and supporters. This only increased as it got nearer to the announcement of the result by Returning Officer Andrew Kerr.



Candidate John Scott appeared to choose to stay at home.

Wake me up if I win.

– John Scott For Leith Walk (@Room435rules) [April 11, 2019](#)



All evening most people I spoke to thought that the former councillor Rob Munn standing for the SNP would win although there was a feeling that the Greens would be a worthy second.

Scottish Greens candidate Lorna Slater made a strong showing in the Leith Walk ward by-election, overtaking Labour to take second place in the ward with 25.5% of first preference votes.

Lorna Slater said: "I can't think of a more turbulent backdrop to this election – with Brexit chaos and parties gearing up for a European election campaign. So that is why I am so delighted to have beaten Labour in the ward. Of course, I would love to have gone that bit further but the result shows just how strong Green support is here in Leith Walk and that will be important for taking forward priorities like housing, planning, public transport and cycling and walking. I'd like to thank everyone who supported the campaign and who voted Green at this by-election."

Green councillor for Leith Walk Susan Rae added: "Congratulations to Councillor Rob Munn on a hard-fought campaign and I look forward to working constructively with him for the benefit of the communities here in Leith Walk ward."

Under the Single Transferable Vote System it is necessary to

count all the votes for all eleven candidates and then if at some point one candidate has 50% of the total votes cast plus 1 vote, then they are declared the new councillor.

Otherwise the person with the lowest number of votes is discounted and their second preference votes are added to the count. Then it is all counted again and so on. Sometimes this goes to the eighth count or so and can seem quite complicated.

Returning Officer, Andrew Kerr, said: “Thanks to everyone who took part in the Leith Walk By-election, helping to elect a new councillor to represent their views on matters affecting the ward and the entire city. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Rob Munn and I look forward to working with him.

“I also want to thank our elections team who have worked hard over recent months to make sure this by-election ran so smoothly.”

Mr Kerr explained the STV voting system to us earlier in the evening:

