

Edinburgh businesses 'crippled' by restrictions

**by Joseph Anderson Local Democracy
Reporter**

**The Depute Leader of The City of
Edinburgh Council has warned that
capital businesses are being
'crippled' by coronavirus
restrictions, as he called for
further government funding.**

Forth councillor Cammy Day, who leads the council's Labour group, part of the council's SNP/Labour coalition, has also called on the government and health chiefs to reconsider Edinburgh's Level three coronavirus restrictions.



Cllr Cammy Day, Deputy Council Leader. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com

He said: "Obviously the director of Public Health and the Deputy First Minister meet with the council leaders, so I've not been privy to that, but what I think is, given Edinburgh's coronavirus rates have been in a downward trend for some time now, the level needs looked at again, which should happen in the next few weeks.

"So my line is that we should be looking to reconsider the level as soon as possible.

"I accept that level three is what Public Health may be

advising but we've got businesses which are being crippled by this.

"The outlook for businesses operating in the city is dire – there's got to be a balance between public health and the impact on business.

"They have already been damaged, and the longer we extend these limited business operating arrangements the more likely business owners are to put their staff on furlough.

"Yes, furlough does save jobs, but it's an artificially inflated job market, and some of them may not be there after Christmas."

The Labour councillor, whose party entered a coalition with leader Adam McVey's majority SNP group after the 2017 election, is calling on the Scottish government to pour more money into the capital, as he says Edinburgh faces a unique set of problems: "There are Barnett Consequentials of £7.2bn which has been given to the Scottish government, but just £6bn has been allocated – where is the remaining £1.2bn?

"The government appears to have £1.2bn in consequentials, and a further £700m in reserves, which isn't being used.

"Edinburgh has a different problem to other cities and towns – its problem is not the costs it has incurred due to coronavirus, which are the same as any other council.

"Unlike many other councils, we own the leisure centres, the libraries, et cetera., and now we have none of the income we would usually get from them, or the trams, or the buses that we own stakes in.

"We get a huge income from car parking. If we were making £10m a year from parking, then that opens a gap that needs filled to fund our services like schools and libraries. We need that gap plugged to keep our services going."