

# **Council elections 2022 – Labour confirm they are trying to form a minority administration**

**With no single party having an overall majority the administration which will run the council in Edinburgh is still being formed. There are discussions among parties of all colours, trying to find ways of shaping up into the groups which will run the city.**

The Edinburgh Labour group has 13 councillors making it the second largest group behind the SNP with 19. In the usual case these two parties would continue their formal arrangements of the last decade with a new deal. But the Scottish Labour leader has denied his Labour colleagues that opportunity, calling for politics to be done differently.

In response while the Edinburgh Labour group leader Cllr Cammy Day had initial discussions with Cllr Adam McVey of the SNP, those have not continued due to the Labour party's ruling.

While the SNP and the Green Groups are moving towards a deal Cllr Adam McVey SNP group leader said on Monday that the "door is open" to other progressive parties, such as Labour to form an administration with them.



Cllr Cammy Day represents Forth Ward for Edinburgh Labour PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Cllr Cammy Day said: "Labour is keen to lead a minority administration to deliver on our progressive manifesto and we would invite other parties to support us and our proposals this coming Thursday.

"We will bring forward our proposal that allows us to hopefully call on the other parties to support us with a new approach to governing the city, having Labour's manifesto at the heart of that. We will work across the council, with all parties to deliver the best we can for our city and our citizens.

"We built our manifesto through strong relationships with the trade unions, and we will continue to foster the good relationships. We have trade unions and affiliates."

It is quite possible if the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives support the Labour party's minority coalition proposal that this minority administration could be approved

with a 34 to 29 majority. But it is far from a certainty that without a formal piece of paper among the three parties every Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative councillor would vote together. And the “deal” or arrangement is still to be approved by the Labour Party’s Scottish Executive Committee led by Anas Sarwar and Jackie Baillie before the council meets on Thursday.

Cllr Day said: “We hope that come Thursday we have the support to deliver a Labour minority administration.”

## CONSERVATIVES

We approached the Edinburgh Conservative Group for comment as they could, even with only nine councillors, be a key part of this alternative deal or proposal along with the Labour group and the Liberal Democrats.



Cllr Joanna Mowat Conservative councillor for the City Centre  
PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter  
Conservative Cllr Jo Mowat said: The reality of the situation

is that the Greens and the SNP are formally discussing things. They will have 29 members if that comes off, but the other 34 councillors may or may not vote for an alternative proposal on the day. But with that alternative the council has to change the way it works, because there are no written agreements or coalitions. I think no-one has quite worked out how the council would work and do things afterwards. 'The council really needs to ensure that its processes are well-focussed.'

But SNP/Green or the other three parties working together certainly appear to be the two possibilities on the table.

Cllr Mowat explained about the last council administration run by SNP and Labour. She said: "There were some groups in the last administration who did not want to talk to other parties. It is certainly not a choice I have ever made. We get given a hand of cards to play by the electorate and it is up to us to choose how to play them. When you rule out not speaking to certain people you limit the options."

Both the SNP and the Greens have said they would not wish to discuss a deal with the Conservatives after the recent election.

Cllr Mowat confirmed: "We are open to having discussions, but in view of the SNP and Green positions it is difficult for us to have discussions with them, as they have ruled that out. We recognise the mathematics of the situation and we would hope that any discussions would not be limited to two weeks before the transformation of the council, and that there would be a continued commitment to discussions across the council. That would be preferable to trying to shut people out which happened last time as it does not make for good policymaking.

"If you talk about diversity as one of your things you may not like people, you may not agree with people who've been elected, but they have been elected too."

The Conservatives put forward a solution last time of a

Cabinet style council as an all party coalition of talents with scrutiny panels sitting underneath it to iron out issues. Cllr Mowat said she still supported that proposal.

She said: "Fundamentally we need to look at how our decision making is done because the coalition can be an uncomfortable place to be. Given the electoral system that we have and the multiplicity of parties with a similar number of votes it can prove quite difficult."

One other nutty problem is that having had 18 Conservative councillors last time the Tories had the largest room – which they will now have to give up and move elsewhere in the City Chambers. But everything will hinge on the decision made this Thursday.