

# **Council elections 2022 – Sturgeon hints at Green deal for Edinburgh Council**

**Nicola Sturgeon has suggested a deal with the Greens could be the way forward in Edinburgh if the SNP are returned as the largest party following this week's council election.**

The First Minister said her party and Labour have “worked well” together to run The City of Edinburgh Council over the last term and called Scottish Labour Leader Anas Sarwar’s move to reject a future coalition “almost inexplicable” whilst on a campaign visit to Portobello Beach on Sunday.

**by Donald Turvill Local Democracy  
Reporter**

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First Minister Nicola Sturgeon with women SNP candidates at Portobello on Sunday 1 May PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter  
Joined by the capital's SNP candidates including group leader Adam McVey, Ms Sturgeon took a walk along the promenade, stopping to chat and take selfies with locals in a final push for votes before the polls open on Thursday.

She even briefly joined a hen party celebrating on the beach, rushing over to congratulate the bride-to-be and donning a "see you Jimmy" hat before visiting a seafront coffee shop.





PHOTO Local Democracy Reporting Service  
Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service afterwards, Ms Sturgeon said she hopes her party “might not need a coalition partner” after the election – despite the SNP not

standing enough candidates for an outright majority in Edinburgh.

She added: "It's for Adam [McVey] and his colleagues to decide what would work best after the election, we only rule out coalitions with the Tories."

The SNP leader, who struck a co-operation deal with the Greens at Holyrood last year, said she's "not averse" to similar agreements in local councils, adding: "Adam and Labour have worked well in Edinburgh over the last few years so we're not ruling anything out."

The possibility of such a partnership being taken forward in the next term has started to look increasingly likely in recent weeks, after the Scottish Labour Leader called for an end to council coalitions with the SNP.

Ms Sturgeon said: "I find Anas Sarwar's position on this almost inexplicable given the system we're facing and it seems to sort of reveal an oppositionist mindset that he wants to lock himself out of actually exercising power and influence at local level, so we'll continue to come to arrangements locally that we deem to be in the best interests of those we serve and obviously our local teams will be in the driving seat of that after Thursday."

Asked what she thought the most important pledge made in the Edinburgh SNP manifesto is, she replied: "I think the Edinburgh manifesto, like all of our manifestos, are full of really good ideas, I think in the immediate term what we will do with councils around the cost of living, some of the proposals there."

And asked if she had read the manifesto, she said: "Of course, I've read all of the manifestos."

However, the First Minister refused to name favourite local policy, saying: "All of it excites me, I'm not going to pull

out one policy.”

Ms Sturgeon was quizzed on if she thought Spaces for People measures had been a success in Edinburgh.

She said: “I’ll let Adam speak for how it’s gone down in Edinburgh, I think initiatives like that are good and important. I’ll let people who live in Edinburgh speak about that.”

Reminded that her official residence is in Charlotte Square in the New Town, she responded: “I only live in Edinburgh part of the time – my main home is in the City of Glasgow. But I spend quite a bit of time here.”

*On the campaign trail with Nicola Sturgeon in Portobello asking about active travel and local government funding*  
[pic.twitter.com/XsYRblQL9x](https://pic.twitter.com/XsYRblQL9x)

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [May 1, 2022](#)

The leader’s stop in the target Portobello/Craigmillar ward on her campaign tour comes as part of a bid to get the SNP over the line for a second seat in the area, having been within 200 votes of the Greens in the final round of counting in 2017.

Kate Campbell, SNP, has represented Portobello/Craigmillar on the council since the last election and is the only incumbent ward councillor standing again.

She said: “You can never second guess an election but on the whole we’ve been telling [Nicola Sturgeon] about the response that we’ve had and I think that’s what she’s been hearing across Scotland. So I think we are feeling quietly optimistic and confident but you’ll never know what will happen until the day.”

Fellow SNP ward candidate Simon Clark Shedden added: “Having



the First Minister here is excellent and you can see just the enthusiasm that people have for her, we're just hoping we can garner that enthusiasm and that people get out on Thursday and vote for us. If we could have two SNP councillors for Portobello/Craigmillar I think it'd be really good."



The First Minister with Council Leader, Adam McVey and other candidates on Portobello Beach on 1 May PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Edinburgh SNP group leader Adam McVey said: "The First Minister always gets an amazing response from people as was seen right across the Party Prom so it's been fantastic to boost one of our key target wards, we're aiming to return two councillors here, that's a big ask for us in this part of the city but I think we can do it."

Asked what his plans are over the final few days of campaigning before Thursday's vote, Mr McVey said: "We've got a lot to do, we've literally put out hundreds of thousands of leaflets already, we've spoken to thousands upon thousands of voters at the doorstep, we've had a really good response."

“We’ll be spending the next couple of days reinforcing our message, our positive vision of this European capital for the future so people can vote for that vision and we can deliver it.”

**All candidates standing in Portobello/Craigmillar:**

Kate Campbell, Scottish National Party (SNP)

Tim Jones, Scottish Conservative and Unionist

Andrew McDonald, Independent

Jane Elizabeth Meagher, Labour and Co-operative Party

Alys Mumford, Scottish Green Party

Heather Pugh, Labour and Co-operative Party

Jill Reilly, Scottish Liberal Democrats

Simon Clark Shedden, Scottish National Party (SNP)

Anne Todd, Alba Party for independence