

Council elections 2022 – will Labour councillors retain positions of power in Edinburgh?

This is the question we put to both the Scottish Labour leader, Anas Sarwar and also the current Depute Council Leader, Cllr Cammy Day who is standing for re-election in Forth Ward.

We are not sure that we got the same answer from each of them but it could be anything from a rainbow coalition to agreement on individual matters in a “change to the way we do local democracy”.

Last time round Day won 15.2% of the vote in the ward where turnout was 45.5%. He became part of the leadership of the council in a coalition with the SNP which took three weeks to thrash out.

Anas Sarwar wants to change the way Scotland does local democracy [#Elections2022 pic.twitter.com/e04S0ZQJEG](https://pic.twitter.com/e04S0ZQJEG)

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [May 4, 2022](#)



On the eve of the 2022 Local Elections Cllr Cammy Day met with Anas Sarwar and other Labour politicians near Holyrood PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Cllr Day said: "I think what is important for us now is that every one of our 19 candidates is working tirelessly across the city. Even today – and also tomorrow they will be out on the doors encouraging voters to go out and vote. Then we will have any discussions about working with other parties.

"I think people have seen our progressive manifesto for the city and we will listen to other parties who will help us deliver that."

When we asked if Edinburgh Labour would back a congestion charge as proposed by the SNP and the Greens Cllr Day admitted it was not in their manifesto, but that they have included a commitment to work with neighbouring authorities to do everything they can to reduce emissions and traffic coming to the city – whether that is by building more park and rides or other options.

He said: "I would not entirely rule it out but I think the potential for that to be a tax on working people at a time when we have a huge cost of living problem across the country – it's maybe not the time to look at that as a measure for reducing congestion."

As for the prospect of a rainbow coalition, Cllr Day said he thought that his group has worked well with SNP and Green colleagues, but also Conservatives and Liberal Democrats on some arrangements in the last five years. But he said: "We are open to discussion to get the best deal for the people of Edinburgh and stop playing small party politics, and see if we can get a much wider arrangement to get the best for the citizens of Edinburgh."

As to the future Cllr Day hopes that council meetings will be in person, perhaps with hybrid arrangements. It has helped some people who perhaps have child care to organise, but I think bringing people back into the chamber for main meetings would be the right thing to do. It has impacted on people's ability to negotiate and talk in the chambers. I think the quicker we get back to meetings after the election the better it will be for all parties."

The Scottish Labour leader has repeatedly said that he does not want any of the Labour councillors to enter into formal coalitions in city chambers. Here in Edinburgh there has been a coalition arrangement with both Labour and SNP Conveners depending on who was the senior partner.

than formal coalitions, let's change the way we do local democracy and run administrations and on individual issues get individual agreement."



On the eve of the 2022 Local Elections political representatives, elected and hopefuls posed near Holyrood. The Edinburgh Labour group are fielding 19 candidates in Edinburgh:

Almond	Fred Hessler
City Centre	Margaret Graham
Colinton/Fairmilehead	Scott Arthur
Corstorphine/Murrayfield	Richard Parker
Craigentinny/Duddingston	Joan Griffiths
Drum Brae/Gyle	Nkechi Okoro
Forth	Cammy Day
Inverleith	Mhairi Munro-Brian
Leith	Katrina Faccenda

Leith Walk	James Dalgleish
Liberton/Gilmerton	Ishrat Measom
Liberton/Gilmerton	Lezley Marion Cameron
Morningside	Mandy Watt
Pentland Hills	Stephen Jenkinson
Portobello/Craigmillar	Heather Pugh
Portobello/Craigmillar	Jane Meagher
Sighthill/Gorgie	Ross McKenzie
Southside/Newington	Tim Pogson
Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	Val Walker




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