

# **Opinion – on the elections and the new council**

**The following article is submitted by former councillor Ashley Graczyk.**

**Ms Graczyk was first elected in 2017 in Sighthill/Gorgie as a Conservative councillor, but resigned from the party and continued until the recent elections as an independent. While she stood at the elections her bid to become an independent councillor was not successful – there are indeed no independent councillors in Edinburgh.**

Here she offers her views on the election and the new council administration:

“Edinburgh Labour now has control of the City of Edinburgh Council following its election as a minority administration, thanks to support from Tories and Liberal Democrats. This minority takeover is the worst example of self-interested, power-hungry local politics, spiting the intentions of voters

across Edinburgh.

“The people of Edinburgh voted collectively for a progressive left alliance of SNP, Labour and the Greens. The previous Council administration in 2017-2022 was SNP/Labour. In the recent May 2022 local elections, the people of Edinburgh once again gave the SNP the biggest mandate. The Conservative Party, by contrast, received their worst ever result and halved their number of elected councillors. They were roundly rejected by the electors, while the Lib Dems proportionately increased their number of votes.

“Edinburgh Labour is seeking to run The City of Edinburgh Council with a group of just 13 out of 63 Councillors (two of whom abstained on the associated vote, and half of whom have zero experience). This is unfair on the electorate and utterly unrepresentative of the electoral outcome.

“Many people voted Labour to secure a progressive left alliance to keep the Tories out of power. It is an insult to these voters that Labour representatives have offered Conservative Councillors key positions in the administration. Labour choosing to align with the Tories to keep a progressive centre-left alliance out of power is party politics at its worst and most cynical.

“The Labour councillors involved have sold their soul to the Tories for a minority power share that Edinburgh did not vote for. They will now have to rely on right wing Tories for Every. Single. Vote. They have also disfranchised most of their own rank and file party members and affiliated trade unionists, who all understandably voted against any deals with the Tories.

“Only two recently-elected Labour Councillors continue to honour traditional socialist Labour values: Cllr Ross McKenzie and Cllr Katrina Faccenda. Both abstained from voting in the administration arrangement vote at the relevant Council

meeting, choosing to put their own members, unions, Labour values and their ward first, before a power-hungry Labour clique who only care about their own self-interest at the expense of the people they claim to represent.

“Just as Labour MSP Mercedes Villalba rightly said, “No Labour worth the name would ever put the Tories in power.” Edinburgh Labour members are seeking power without principles; sacrificing a progressive left alliance to align with the Tories; conceding key decision-making positions to the Tories and Lib Dems.

“There is nothing progressive or socialist about putting the Tories into power. Edinburgh Labour will pay the price, both with disenchanted Edinburgh voters and with every single compromised Council vote.”