

SNP and Greens coalesce around budget proposals in Edinburgh

In a move which SNP and Green councillors were not able to make just after the election last May, there is a new coalition arrangement on the council.

The two groups have collaborated on one single budget proposal which will be put to the full council meeting on Thursday.

The papers for the meeting are [here](#) but the opposition budget proposals will be lodged later today in the form of an amendment or addendum. The SNP and Green proposals are embedded below.

The two opposition parties – 18 SNP councillors and 10 Green councillors – may need some support from other politicians at the City Chambers to get their proposals approved. (there are 62 votes to be cast on Thursday). But since no party holds a majority – including the Labour minority administration – there will have to be compromises made all over the chamber tomorrow.

The SNP and Greens say their joint budget will:

- prevent cuts to education and travel schemes such as Taxicard
- make more money from parking
- reduce funding for the Lord Provost's office
- spend £1 million on climate and nature emergencies
- Allocate £4.5 million on the fund to save the King's Theatre
- spend more on funding for services taking action on violence against women
- spend £500,000 on more, and more accessible, public toilets
- Allocate a further £200,000 through participatory budgeting like Feith Chooses
- Take action on damp and mould in housing with a £1 million fund
- Lease out Waverley Court the "under-used city centre office" mostly lying vacant after the pandemic

SNP Finance spokesperson Lesley Macinnes said: "The budget setting process is about priorities – political parties putting forward what they believe is important. There's no denying that these are very difficult times for finances right across the public sector and for the people we serve. Working closely with our Green partners, we formulated innovative and radical measures that go a long way to making Council Tax much fairer. We believe that those able to pay a little bit more are asked to do so, to protect crucial frontline services for all of us.

"In the middle of the worst cost-of-living-crisis in a generation, this makes perfect sense. The alternative would be to go along with the swingeing cuts that officers have

proposed, which would hammer education budgets, leaving the children and young people most in need of support being hit the hardest. Either that, or abdicate responsibility altogether, like Labour in Glasgow, and not even bother to do the hard thinking needed.

“Instead, we’ve worked hard, produced ideas that no one else has thought of, and produced a budget that is the progressive alternative to what Labour and their Conservative allies are bringing forward. We are disappointed that we have been advised that our Council Tax proposals, while valid, cannot be brought forward at this stage but we will continue to work with officers to see how we can make Council Tax fairer for residents. Voters will judge parties on what they prioritise and we in the SNP group are proud to put forward this budget with the Greens.”

Green Finance spokesperson Alys Mumford added: “The Edinburgh Greens are pleased to join with SNP colleagues to present an alternative joint budget which is innovative, ambitious, and which prioritises spending targeted at tackling the joint crises of the cost of living and the climate emergency.

“Together we are proposing spending of over one million pounds to tackle climate change by reducing emissions, whilst also protecting the city from its most harmful effects in terms of flooding and other extreme measure. We are reversing the most egregious of the proposed cuts to education, to active travel, and to supporting disabled residents, and spending money on things to improve the lives of Edinburgh’s residents. More public toilets and lighting in our parks to make public space work for everyone, increases in participatory budgeting to put power in the hands of communities, and better funding for third sector organisations working for equality.

“This budget proposal also recognises the fundamental challenge at the heart of local government finance – that is, chronic underfunding from governments at Holyrood and

Westminster. That's why we continue to call on our colleagues in Holyrood to increase funding and speed up the devolution of revenue raising powers to councils. But whilst this work is ongoing, we must think creatively about how we can use existing powers to their fullest extent, redistributing wealth from rich to poor and ensuring that we are supporting the most vulnerable in society.

"We need bold leadership to bring about climate justice, an end to poverty, and an Edinburgh which works for everyone, and we are simply not seeing this leadership. While there will always remain policy differences between our parties, this joint SNP/Green budget shows that – if the shared priorities of social and climate justice remain at its heart – the people of Edinburgh can benefit from a radical and progressive budget for the city."




Loading...



Taking too long?



Reload document

|  [Open in new tab](#)

