

New SNP leader will be announced today

As the leadership election brought out some of the well-hidden divisions in the SNP over recent weeks, the leaders of the other political parties in Scotland have been observing with some degree of interest.

Whether any of the opposition parties will be able to capitalise on the change at the top of the SNP in terms of winning elections is yet to be seen, but some of them certainly all have something to say on the subject.



Scottish Labour leader, Anas Sarwar. Photo: © 2021 Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

Scottish Labour

Scottish Labour set out its top priorities for the incoming First Minister, warning that “mediocrity, continuity and incompetence” won’t cut it. The party points out that 15 years of SNP failure has left the incoming First Minister with “an overflowing in-tray” and calls on the next leader of The Scottish Government to drop the SNP’s focus on division and prioritise the following:

- Tackling the chaos in the NHS, which has 1 in 7 Scots stuck on a waiting list
- Helping people through the cost of living crisis and reviving Scotland’s economy
- Delivering on Nicola Sturgeon’s “defining mission” to close the attainment gap
- Reducing poverty, which rose to persistently high levels

on the SNP's watch with 1 in 4 children still in poverty.

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar said: "Nicola Sturgeon has left her successor to pick up the pieces of her woeful record. From our flagging economy to the crisis in our NHS, 15 years of SNP failure has left the next First Minister with an overflowing in-tray.

"Poverty is stuck at shamefully high levels and the attainment gap is growing. Everyone agrees that the same old mediocrity, continuity and incompetence won't cut it – but no-one in this dire race has shown they're up to the job. Scotland is crying out for change, but a new SNP First Minister isn't going to be enough.

"Only Labour are offering a real alternative to yet more decline under the SNP and Tories. Labour – the change Scotland needs."

SCOTTISH GREENS



Patrick Harvie MSP and Lorna Slater MSP

The Greens say they want progressive politics and climate justice to be retained at the heart of Scotland's future.

The Party Council, which is composed of representatives from across different branches and representative bodies in the Scottish Greens, will meet on Monday afternoon, following the announcement of the result which is expected just after 2pm.

The council will advise the Party's MSP group on whether it should stay in government, and who it should vote for to be First Minister.

As confirmed by Scottish Green Co-leader Patrick Harvie on BBC Sunday Politics, a phone call will take place with the successful candidate and the Scottish Greens leadership team, between the time of the result being known and the meeting of the Party Council.

The Scottish Greens Co-leader, Patrick Harvie MSP, said: “We are a democratic party and it is right that our members shape the decisions that we make. This is a really crucial time for Scotland, and the choices that are made in the days and weeks ahead will have an impact for years to come.

“Progressive politics and climate justice are not optional. They are at the very core of what our Party believes in, and must be at the heart of any vision for Scotland that we will support.

“We are proud of everything that we have achieved through the Bute House Agreement and the long-term plans that we have put in place. From banning new incinerators to expanding the ground-breaking Scottish Child Payment and introducing free bus travel for everyone under 22, we are already having a positive impact for people and planet.

“We want to stay in government and build on this vital work. But we will only do that with a First Minister who is committed to collaboration, environmentalism and equality. These are the vital building blocks of the fairer, greener and better future that we want for Scotland.”

Speaking at the Scottish Greens spring conference on Saturday, Co-leader Lorna Slater said: “We will never be a party that is prepared to put our principles to one side.

“We will only vote for the SNP’s new Leader to become First Minister if they are committed to the politics of cooperation. If they respect and share our values of equality and environmentalism. If they will prioritise climate justice. And if they agree that trans rights are human rights and that our

trans siblings cannot be used as political fodder by Westminster...

“We are, first and foremost, true to ourselves and committed to delivering change. We will put ourselves in the place where we can best achieve this. If that is in opposition to an SNP Government that has lost its way and abandoned its commitments to cooperation, equality and environmental progress then so be it.”



Alex Cole Hamilton MSP rejoicing at the local council election results in May 2022 PHOTO © The Edinburgh Reporter
SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton who leads a group of four MSPs at Holyrood said: “These candidates are vying to be the last nationalist First Minister of Scotland. The SNP are taking people for granted. Their priorities are not your priorities.

“The last four weeks of bickering and internal warfare has

shown that the nationalist party is tired and out of ideas. Health, the climate and the cost of living have barely featured as three out of touch candidates debate how best to break up the UK. It's why the SNP are haemorrhaging fair minded, reasonable voters, who aren't fussed about the constitution.

"Despite her undoubted talents, Nicola Sturgeon left our health service and education in a worse position than she found them because she was fixated on breaking up the UK. Frankly none of her successors possess her abilities. It's time for a change.

"More and more people are seeing for themselves that when you elect a Liberal Democrat you get someone who will fight your corner. It's why Scottish Liberal Democrats are part of what's next."