

Reaction to election of new SNP leader

Cllr Adam McVey, leader of the SNP group on The City of Edinburgh Council, said that he was delighted that Humza Yousaf is the new leader. He said: “I voted for Humza and actively supported him. I think he is the best person for our party. Not just to lead the government and do a good job of delivering for people, but to take our independence movement forward. Humza has said some really interesting things about local government and empowering an agenda of change and I am looking forward to being part of that discussion with him as to how best we can shape that for not just the people of Edinburgh but the people right across Scotland.”

The leader of the SNP group on [@Edinburgh_CC](#) Adam McVey said he was delighted with the result and had actively backed [@HumzaYousaf](#) in the campaign. [@adamrmcvey](#) pic.twitter.com/dLB0vpKiiU

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [March 27, 2023](#)

Scottish Conservatives

Scottish Conservative leader Douglas Ross said: “I congratulate Humza Yousaf on his election, and on becoming the first leader of his party from an ethnic minority.

“We encourage him to govern for all of Scotland and abandon his divisive plans to push independence relentlessly as the self-styled ‘First Activist’.

“As the main opposition party, we will hold Humza Yousaf to account when he lets the Scottish people down.

“Unfortunately, we have serious concerns about his ability. For the good of Scotland, we hope he does not lurch from failure to failure as he did when he was Nicola Sturgeon’s Health Secretary, Justice Secretary and Transport Minister.

“Humza Yousaf’s election as leader shows that the SNP Government are moving further and further away from the real priorities of the Scottish people to obsess over independence.

“The Scottish Conservatives will continue to focus on the issues that matter to people across the country, such as strengthening our economy, supporting our struggling NHS and helping families with the global cost-of-living crisis.”

Labour

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar said: “I extend my sincere congratulations to Humza Yousaf on his election.

“While I question his mandate and the SNP’s record, it is important to reflect on the election of what will be the first First Minister from an ethnic minority background. Regardless of your politics, this is a significant moment for Scotland.

“But while Scotland faces the twin crises of the cost of living and the NHS emergency, it is clear that the SNP does not have the answers that Scotland needs.

“This chaotic and divided party is out of touch and out of ideas.

“Humza Yousaf has inherited the SNP’s woeful record, but he has not inherited Nicola Sturgeon’s mandate.

“We need an election now, and Scottish Labour is the change that Scotland needs.”

Scottish Greens

A Scottish Greens spokesperson said: “The Scottish Greens congratulate Humza Yousaf on his leadership victory, and hope he will build on the legacy of his predecessors in delivering a progressive, climate driven and fair legislative agenda for all of Scotland.

“As partners in the Bute House Agreement, we are encouraged his election will be viewed as an endorsement of these shared values, as Scotland looks to embrace a fairer, greener and more equal future.

“In line with our constitution, and following a capacity spring conference at the weekend in which we discussed the partnership arrangement, we will consult with our party members through Council which will meet later today to agree our next steps.

“We will share those conclusions in due course.”

Liberal Democrats

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton said: “I would like to congratulate Humza Yousaf on becoming the first minority ethnic leader of his party.

“Scotland is crying out for a First Minister who will put the people’s priorities first and be a leader for the whole country.

“There are huge challenges facing our country but sadly Humza Yousaf has not proven equal to those challenges in his previous roles. That’s not just my verdict but that of his colleague Kate Forbes.

“On his watch, 1 in 7 Scots are on a waiting list and his NHS recovery plan has completely failed to tackle crises in A&E,

cancer care, mental health and dentistry.

“Reasonable, fair-minded people are turning away from the SNP and looking for someone who will fight their corner. This country is ready for change and Scottish Liberal Democrats will be part of what’s next.”

On tomorrow’s vote for First Minister, Mr Cole-Hamilton added: “I will be putting myself forward in the vote for First Minister. I believe that Scotland is at a crossroads.

“This leadership contest has shown Humza Yousaf will always prioritise breaking up the UK. My priorities are the cost of the living crisis, the state of the NHS and the climate emergency. That is what the public want to see Scotland’s Parliament focused on at this difficult time.”

UNISON

UNISON general secretary Christina McAnea said: “Congratulations to Humza Yousaf. UNISON looks forward to building on the good working relationship the union has shared with him. It’s vital that public services are central to his vision for Scotland.

“Public services are suffering after years of under-investment, with problems mounting. Local services will continue to suffer unless councils get a sustained increase in funding. NHS waiting lists will continue to rise unless urgent action is taken to solve the staffing crisis.

“Profits will come before people unless the proposed national care service bill is scrapped. Students will suffer if college staff vote to strike, and communities will be less safe if police staff cuts go ahead. And so, the list goes on.

“UNISON members don’t just work in public services, they and their families use them too. They’ll all be watching closely to ensure public services remain top of the government’s

list.”

Scotland in Union

Pamela Nash, chief executive of Scotland in Union, said: “Humza Yousaf must learn from his predecessor’s mistakes and focus on what really matters to people, not the SNP’s priorities.

“We have suffered 16 lost years in Scotland under Nicola Sturgeon and Alex Salmond’s stewardship, leaving our NHS in crisis with zero progress on tackling poverty and a devastating education attainment gap holding back a generation of Scots.

“With so many challenges facing the country, from the cost-of-living crisis to the climate emergency, Yousaf has a duty to represent everyone in Scotland as First Minister – not just the minority who back separation.

“The turmoil in the SNP and the divisions exposed by this unedifying leadership contest have eroded trust in the government elected to run our public services, which is just one reason why a growing majority of people in Scotland want a more positive future for our country as part of the United Kingdom.”



Humza Yousaf the new leader of the SNP PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter