

# **New SNP group leader continues claims of Labour administration in “coalition”**

**Cllr Simita Kumar will lead the SNP group in the City Chambers today at her first full council meeting in the role.**

She confirmed to The Edinburgh Reporter that she will gradually make some changes and she is giving herself time to settle into the leadership chair recently vacated by Cllr Adam Nois-McVey. But she maintains the view the former leader has repeated since 2022 that the minority Labour administration is actually in coalition with the Tories and the LibDems.

Recognising that the SNP group is the largest political group on the council, Cllr Kumar said it is time for the group to take power. She said: “We are the largest party, the people of Edinburgh voted for us to be the largest party on the council. I think what people did not expect is the coalition of Labour Lib Dem and Tories.”

This is not a position that any of those political groups have admitted is an actual coalition, and ahead of the 2022 council elections the Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar vetoed any Scottish councils entering into formal coalition arrangements such as there had been in the last administration.

Cllr Kumar continued: “Really, if we’re saying it’s not a coalition, it is undermining the intelligence of other councillors, our Council offices, and our residents. We’re not making the point just to throw political punches. It’s true,

and its factual.”

The representative for Southside/Newington was elected in May 2022 but said to The Edinburgh Reporter that she has a great deal of experience from her work with the NHS where she has a “strategic policymaking role” which she will bring to the job. She is the first woman to be elected as SNP group leader, and also the first woman of colour – recognised by former First Minister, Humza Yousaf in a recent tweet.

*Well done [@SimitaSKumar](#) – proud of you for making history as the first female from an ethnic minority background to lead a Council group. My thanks to [@adamnolsmcvey](#) for his stewardship of our Edinburgh SNP Council group for so many years. <https://t.co/h7lf9000g1>*

*– Humza Yousaf (@HumzaYousaf) [May 1, 2024](#)*

Looking ahead, Cllr Kumar said that her priorities will be examining the housing emergency in the city as well as the policies for children and young people., But she also hopes to hold the administration to account to make sure that the council is speaking for the working class in Edinburgh. She said: “They are the people who are in a cost of living crisis and we are here to protect them. It is difficult to do that with the backdrop of being knocked back time and time again by the coalition administration, but we will try our best even if we don’t have the numbers in committees. Where our policies and values are aligned I am also more than willing to work across political parties – but only when our values are aligned.”

The meeting of The City of Edinburgh Council begins at 10am. [The papers and how to watch the meeting live or as a recording afterwards are here.](#)



Cllr Simita Kumar the leader of the SNP Group at The City of Edinburgh Council PHOTO ©2024 The Edinburgh Reporter