# Edinburgh council leader cleared by police but controversy over conduct persists



Last week, an investigation by police into allegations against former Edinburgh council leader Councillor Cammy Day concluded with no criminal charges or actions taken. Despite the closure of the police enquiry, the controversy surrounding Day’s conduct continues to reverberate across the city’s political landscape.

Councillor Day, who remains suspended by the Labour Party pending an internal investigation, has maintained that the accusations against him represent a “political attack” orchestrated by his opponents within the City Chambers. Speaking to The Sunday Times, he said, “Things were leaked to the media, leaked to the Labour Party and reported to the police all at the same time. So someone co-ordinated this, and I think it was an orchestrated political campaign against me.” He admitted to having used dating apps, stating, “I have used apps for a gay man like me,” but denied any “offensive” conduct or “chasing any Ukrainians”.

The accusations against Councillor Day emerged in December following a report by the Sunday Mail. It claimed that Day had sent a series of unsolicited and sexually suggestive messages, including emojis and invitations for drinks, to Ukrainian refugees who had recently resettled in Edinburgh after fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. One refugee described feeling “pressured” by Day’s messages, while another recounted attempts to avoid the contact due to his prominent political position.

Further complaints were lodged through the council’s whistleblowing hotline in 2023, although the police previously dismissed two of these due to insufficient evidence. A third complaint was filed towards the end of 2024, leading to the recent investigation. Additional press reports followed Day’s resignation, alleging a pattern of sending unwanted sexual messages and explicit photographs to strangers online, with claims that he could become “aggressive” when ignored. A former council employee also spoke of concerns raised about Day’s “creepy and weird” behaviour that they felt had been ignored by local authority officials.

Councillor Katrina Faccenda, a Labour representative in Edinburgh, cautioned against framing the controversy solely as a political matter. Speaking to The Herald (Glasgow), she said, “That article, he might think that did him good but at the same time it might also make some people feel he’s disregarding what they regard to be quite serious stuff.” Faccenda emphasised the distinction between criminal behaviour and standards expected of public office holders, asserting, “There are two different things: There are criminal activities and there’s not being fit for public office, which does not necessarily mean that you’ve done something criminal. We are subject to rules that are different from the law. It’s not just what’s illegal and legal. It’s not just about having the police at your door. It’s also about how you conduct yourself and how you relate to other people in your position.”

Following Day’s departure, Faccenda noted the Labour group on the council had become “much healthier” and more cohesive. She commented, “The group is working together better since he’s not been there, and there is more leadership in the group as well.” Faccenda herself has experienced internal disciplinary measures, having received a three-week suspension for opposing her party’s minority administration arrangements earlier this year.

The ongoing situation has also prompted calls for transparency and further inquiries. An independent investigation, led by former Scottish Information Commissioner Kevin Dunion, is currently underway to scrutinise the handling of complaints against councillors in Edinburgh since 2003. This wider probe extends beyond the case involving Councillor Day, aiming to assess the council’s procedures in dealing with such allegations more broadly.

Political reactions remain divided. Conservative Edinburgh councillor Jason Rust, a close friend of Day’s, voiced support for the former leader, saying, “The defenestration of councillor Day was damaging not only personally for Cammy but for the city council. For local democracy to flourish we need the battles to be won on policy, in debate and at the ballot box, not a toxic atmosphere or campaign of smear stories, falsehoods and innuendo.” Conversely, SNP group leader on Edinburgh Council, Simita Kumar, dismissed Day’s claims of a political conspiracy as a “gross distortion” and accused him of attempting to “evade accountability to the very serious complaints that have been made about his behaviour,” adding that he “should feel ashamed for trying to spin this as a political conspiracy.”

Councillor Day has indicated he intends to pursue legal avenues, claiming to hold evidence implicating senior Scottish National Party figures in efforts to undermine him. He described the past months as “one of the most challenging times of my life to have your career shattered over the weekend, and then family, friends and a whole number of council officials interrogated by police for hours,” and expressed relief that “police have said there’s nothing to see and I can get on with my job.”

As Edinburgh councillors await the results of the wider independent inquiry, the city’s political environment continues to grapple with the implications of the allegations and their broader impact on public trust and governance.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/edinburgh-former-council-leader-cammy-day-says-he-is-a-victim-of-orchestrated-political-campaign-5083119> - This article corroborates the claim that Councillor Cammy Day states he is a victim of an orchestrated political campaign, denying wrongdoing and acknowledging use of dating apps, while police found no evidence of criminality following the investigation.
* <https://hellorayo.co.uk/forth/local/news/no-evidence-of-criminality-after-investigation-into-former-edinburgh-council-leader-cammy-day/> - This source confirms the conclusion of the police investigation into Cammy Day with no criminal charges, supporting the statement that police found no evidence of criminality after the enquiry.
* <https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23488914.labour-councillor-katrina-faccenda-addresses-accountability-edinburgh-council/> - An article where Labour Councillor Katrina Faccenda discusses the difference between criminal behaviour and standards of conduct expected of public office holders, emphasizing accountability beyond just legal considerations.
* <https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/cammy-day-legal-action-snp-scottish-26811735> - This source reports on Cammy Day's intention to pursue legal avenues, claiming evidence implicating senior SNP figures in attempts to undermine him, consistent with the article's mention of Day's legal plans and accusations of conspiracy.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-65432100> - The BBC article highlights the controversy around Cammy Day, including allegations of inappropriate messages to Ukrainian refugees and resulting political fallout and calls for transparency, as noted in the original article.