



Scottish Affairs Committee

Neil Bibby MSP
Convener
Public Audit Committee
Scottish Parliament

By email only

Matters relating to the embezzlement of funds from the Scottish National Party

1 July 2026

Dear Neil,

Congratulations on your appointment as Convenor of the Public Audit Committee. I wish you well in your new role. As Chair of the Scottish Affairs Committee, I am keen to explore opportunities for interparliamentary engagement and hope that we may, in due course, work closely together on matters of shared interest.

I am writing in relation to the embezzlement of funds from the Scottish National Party, and to explore the possibility of our Committees undertaking work to jointly scrutinise matters arising from the case.

Whilst the police investigation and subsequent prosecution established criminal culpability in this case, some of the wider issues raised may merit examination. These issues engage matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament, matters reserved to the UK Parliament, and others which straddle the jurisdiction of both Parliaments. Accordingly, both institutions are likely to have an overlapping interest in the issues arising from this case.

Against this backdrop, the preference of the Scottish Affairs Committee would be for Holyrood to lead scrutiny on this case. However, in the absence of any such inquiry, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss whether there could be scope for joint or co-ordinated work between our Committees.

This joint working would have the benefit of comprehensively covering both reserved and devolved matters raised by this case, and of doing so in a co-ordinated manner. This proposal reflects the Scottish Affairs Committee's broader willingness to work collaboratively with our Scottish Parliament counterparts where matters of public interest cut across reserved and devolved boundaries. Indeed, this is not the first occasion on which the Committee under my chairship has explored opportunities for joint working.

Although joint activity between committees of the UK and Scottish Parliaments is not common, there is precedent for it in both Parliaments, and I am confident any procedural obstacles could be overcome.



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I do not wish to be prescriptive about the form or scope of any such work at this stage. I have therefore written in similar terms to the Convenors of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments, and Finance and Public Administration Committees to invite consideration of a co-operative approach. I also see no impediment to joint work encompassing more than one Holyrood committee.

I am conscious that the Scottish Parliament is currently in recess. Nevertheless, it would be helpful to our deliberations to understand whether your Committee has had any opportunity to consider this matter, and for you to share any views your Committee may hold on the prospect of undertaking an inquiry of its own, or the desirability of joint scrutiny. It would be helpful to receive an initial steer by Tuesday 14 July (prior to our own recess), pending a substantive response by Monday 7 September, the week following the return of both Parliaments from recess.

I would, of course, also be happy to discuss this further with you. I would be happy to meet with you at your convenience, either in Edinburgh or London, for any such discussions. Alternatively, our officials could liaise to arrange a telephone call or virtual meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia Ferguson MP
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee