



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body  
Thursday 8 May 2025 (Session 6)

## **Reimbursement of Members Expenses Scheme – Use of Parliamentary Resources**

### **Executive summary**

1. The SPCB is invited to consider a complaint regarding John Swinney MSP's annual report being distributed outwith his electoral area of Perthshire North Constituency.

### **Issues and options**

2. A complaint was received on 1 April 2025 raising concerns that Mr Swinney had issued his annual report outside his constituency. The complainer highlighted that the report was received in the Perthshire South and Kinross-shire constituency, outwith the Mr Swinney's constituency.
3. Under Section 7 of the Code of Conduct, Members must abide by the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme and the policies of the SPCB. Section 4.1.2 of the Scheme does allow Members to be reimbursed for the cost of the publication and distribution of newsletters, annual reports and surveys. The SPCB's policy on Members' communications states that a publication funded through parliamentary allowances must not be distributed outside a Member's electoral area.
4. Having looked into the matter, the Member has confirmed that he used an organisation called Tradeprint to produce the leaflets. As part of their service offering, they have a mailing team who will liaise directly with Royal Mail to book the door-to-door contract for delivery to the constituency. Tradeprint have confirmed they supplied Royal Mail with the incorrect postcodes, despite having the correct postcode list and having previously provided this information to Royal Mail without issue. The result of this was that some of the constituency did not receive the annual report as planned and 3,331 annual reports, which cost £502.60, were delivered to addresses outwith the Perthshire North Constituency.
5. Tradeprint have apologised for this error, are going to deliver to the missed addresses in the constituency at no additional cost and negotiations around compensation are ongoing. The Member's office has confirmed they will liaise directly with Royal Mail in future to avoid the incorrect delivery being repeated.

## **REFERENCE: SPCB (2025) - Paper 25**

6. As the SPCB is aware, it has delegated decisions to the Allowances Office on such breaches where they are below the agreed threshold of £50, given there are some instances of delivery errors where postcodes cross constituencies and regions. However, as this amount is above that threshold, the SPCB is invited to consider; whether they wish to seek recompense from Mr Swinney for the cost of these reports issued outwith the region; or given the error was on the part of the supplier and outwith his control, confirm that no action should be taken.

### **Governance**

7. The SPCB's policy on Members parliamentary funded communications specifically prohibits distribution of publications outside a Member's electoral area. However, the SPCB has recognised previously that such errors can occur.

### **Resource implications**

8. The costs in relation to the publication and distribution outwith the region equates to £502.60.

### **Publication Scheme**

9. This paper can be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

### **Next steps**

10. To inform the Member and complainant about the SPCB decision.

### **Decision**

11. The SPCB is invited to agree that no action should be taken as this was a supplier error outwith the Member's control.

**Allowances Office**  
**May 2025**