

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Thursday 10 September 2026 (Session 7)

Reimbursement of Members Expenses – Edinburgh Accommodation Groups

Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to consider an application to change the Edinburgh Accommodation status of the Stirling Constituency from Group 2 to Group 3 from Mark Ruskell MSP.

Issues and options

2. Mr Ruskell is asking the SPCB to consider a change on the group status of the Stirling Constituency where he lives from a Group 2 to a Group 3 if not in full then in part in the Scheme. The groups in the Scheme are based on commute time to Edinburgh from the centre of the constituency or its nearest main transport hub.
3. When reviewing the Scheme and the boundary changes and whether the changes affected any of the constituencies in terms of commute to Parliament only one constituency changed from a Group 1 to a Group 2 due to the extension of the constituency away from Parliament which meant the centre or closest travel hub was further from Parliament.
4. Stirling constituency goes from Stirling City in the southeast of the constituency to Tynrdum in the north which is 89 miles from Parliament. Given the nature of the constituency Stirling is the main travel hub with other parts of the constituency being more rural in nature. The constituency is split between 7 council wards with the Member living in the most northern part of the constituency in ward 1 Trossachs and Teith, which entails a commute of at least 2 hours each way to get to Holyrood using a combination of car, bus and/or train. The Member is seeking SPCB consideration of splitting the constituency using the council wards between the groups for Edinburgh Accommodation as with some other neighbouring constituencies.
5. There are a number of constituencies that are split by ward across the groups. These are:
 - a. Midlothian South, Tweeddale & Lauderdale,
 - b. Perthshire North constituency,
 - c. Hamilton Larkhall & Stonehouse, and
 - d. Renfrewshire North and Cardonald.

REFERENCE: SPCB (2026) - Paper 60

6. This means that part of each of these constituency falls into different groups, either Group 1 and Group 2 as for Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale or between Group 2 and Group 3 for the rest of the constituencies named above.
7. Many of the constituencies adjacent to Stirling Constituency are Group 2 but some do fall into Group 3 in full or in part. For example, Perthshire North which Stirling shares a border with is split over Group 2 and 3 with Ward 1 Carse of Gowrie and Ward 12 Perth City Centre falling into Group 2 as being closer to Parliament and the remaining wards falling into Group 3.
8. Similarly, if the Member resided in Scone, just North of Perth it's only 47 miles to Parliament, with East Kilbride 50 miles and Dundee 62 miles all of which would fall as Group 3 but are actually closer to Parliament than the ward the Member resides in but because Stirling is the closest transport hub the constituency sits in Group 2 as it is at the bottom of the constituency and much closer to Edinburgh.
9. The Member is asking the SPCB to consider that ward 1, Trossachs and Teith Ward of Stirling Council which extends from Doune to Killin and Tyndrum, could be considered for Group 3, with the remaining 6 wards, which are closer to the south of the constituency, staying as Group 2. A map of the wards is included in Annex A to help with this consideration.
10. On reviewing the Members case and based on the application of groups to the surrounding areas we would recommend that the SPCB agrees to the Member's request and splits the Stirling constituency into two parts with Ward 1 Trossachs and Teith Ward of Stirling Council falling into Group 3 as it meets the criteria for Group 3 as travel to Parliament taking more than 90 minutes but the rest of the wards remaining as Group 2 as they take less than 90 minutes commute.

Governance

11. It is for the SPCB to determine the Scheme and put forward a Scheme to Parliament for their agreement. This includes such a change, but this would mean a change to the Scheme and then subsequent agreement to that change by the whole Parliament.

Resource implications

12. There are some resource implications, as whilst the Member would only be entitled to the same amount of Edinburgh Accommodation Provision, he is currently entitled to there would be additional cost in terms of the council tax premium at 300%. This is dependent on what council tax band any flat would fall into but will be approx. £6,000 to £7,000.

Publication Scheme

13. This paper can be published under the SPCB's publication policy.

Next steps

14. To advise the Member of the SPCB's decision and if agreed to amend the Scheme, prepare a motion for the portfolio Member, Maggie Chapman MSP, to lay on behalf of the SPCB, and secure a date for consideration of the amendment.

Decision

15. The SPCB is invited to agree the request from Mark Ruskell MSP to split the Stirling constituency over two Groups for Edinburgh Accommodation with Ward 1 Trossachs and Teith falling into Group 2 and all other Wards remaining in Group 3.

Travel and Expenses Office
September 2026

Annexe A: Map of the wards of Stirling Constituency

