



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body  
Thursday 29 January 2026 (Session 6)

## Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme – Claim Review

### Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to consider a request for a claim review by Stuart McMillan MSP following rejection of his claim to reimburse the costs of an advert on a school planner with calendar.

### Issues and options

2. Under the Members' Expenses Scheme and the SPCB's policy on Members' parliamentary funded communications, Members can issue a calendar, but such communications must include other information such as surgery or contact details for the Member. Members may also claim the costs of including contact details or surgery information on other organisations calendars and planners.
3. However, in an election year this is different as Members are only permitted to issue calendars that include dates up to the start of the dissolution or in relation to the 2026 election, the campaign period i.e. 25 March 2026. Although the SPCB's policy on Members' parliamentary funded communications only applies to communications issued using parliamentary funds, the principle of the rule on calendars has been applied to similar spend under the Scheme on including adverts in other organisation's calendars and planners in election years to ensure consistency.
4. In this instance, Mr McMillan submitted a claim for £218.40 to meet the cost of including his contact details in the Greenock school planner with calendar. The school planner covers the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026. The claim was rejected by officials given the position on calendars and planners in an election year. Mr McMillan was advised of the election rules and advised that the costs would need to be met personally given the calendar went beyond the permitted dates. This aligned with advice provided to another Member who proposed to include such an advert in their local school planner but didn't go ahead based on the advice provided in advance.
5. The SPCB will wish to note that the advert is for contact details and if issued in any other type of publication or on its own would have met the requirements of the policy, the Scheme and election guidance.

## **REFERENCE: SPCB (2026) - Paper 6**

6. Mr McMillan subsequently asked that this decision be reviewed by the SPCB, as allowed for under the Scheme, on the basis that he entered into the arrangement in good faith. Mr McMillan advised he has included an advert in the same planner every year this session and as previous claims had been approved, he proceeded with the advert without seeking further advice. Mr McMillan advised he was not aware of the restrictions in an election year. The SPCB will wish to note that the election guidance had yet to be issued at the time of the claim.
7. Given the circumstances, the SPCB is invited to consider allowing Mr McMillan to claim a portion of the costs from his 2025-26 Engagement Provision. Mr McMillan wishes to claim £141.81, which is the cost for the period 1 August 2025 to 25 March 2026. Mr McMillan recognises that the balance of £76.59 to cover the period 26 March to 31 July 2026 would need to be met personally to be in line with the election guidance.

## **Governance**

8. The Members' Expenses Scheme provides an opportunity for Members to appeal any decision against non-payment of a claim by officials, and such appeals are to be considered by the SPCB.
9. The Members' Expenses Scheme and the SPCB's policy on parliamentary funded communications does normally allow Members to issue calendars and planners or include adverts in other organisations planners, however there are restrictions in election years, and the Allowances Office decision was based on these restrictions.

## **Resource implications**

10. Mr McMillan has sufficient monies in his current Engagement Provision to meet the claim, should the SPCB approve his appeal.

## **Publication Scheme**

11. This paper can be published in line with the SPCB publication policy.

## **Next steps**

12. Advise the Member of the SPCB's decision.

## **Decision**

13. The SPCB is invited to consider the request for review on Mr McMillan's claim.

**Allowances Office**  
**January 2026**