

Public Petitions Committee
Thursday 8 October 2026
4th Meeting, 2026 (Session 7)

PE2234: Reduce MSP Salaries to the Median Scottish Full-time Income

Introduction

Petitioner Tomas Frydrych

Petition Summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to (a) permanently cap MSP salaries at the level of median Scottish income for full-time employment, adjusted annually (£39,719, as of October 2025; the equivalent of the salary of a band 5 NHS nurse), and (b) cap any additional salaries and payments arising from MSPs extra duties (for parliamentary offices, Government positions, severance pay, etc.) proportionally to the adjustment of the MSPs annual salary (a reduction of 50%).

Website <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2234>

1. This is a new petition that was published on 21 July 2026.
2. A full summary of this petition and its aims can be found at **Annexe A**.
3. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 220 signatures have been received on this petition.
4. A SPICe briefing has been prepared to inform the Committee's consideration of the petition and can be found at **Annexe B**.
5. The Committee seeks views from the Scottish Government on all new petitions before they are formally considered.
6. The Committee has received a submission from the Scottish Government which is set out in **Annexe C** of this paper.

Action

7. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
October 2026

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2234: Reduce MSP Salaries to the Median Scottish Full-time Income

Petitioner:

Tomas Frydrych

Date published:

21 July 2026

Petition summary:

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to (a) permanently cap MSP salaries at the level of median Scottish income for full-time employment, adjusted annually (£39,719, as of October 2025; the equivalent of the salary of a band 5 NHS nurse), and (b) cap any additional salaries and payments arising from MSPs extra duties (for parliamentary offices, Government positions, severance pay, etc.) proportionally to the adjustment of the MSPs annual salary (a reduction of 50%).

Previous action:

I have contacted the Scottish Government as well as 'my' 8 MSPs. Discounting three automated responses (one from the Government and two of the MSPs), I have received a single response, which explained how MSP salaries are determined, but did not engage with the substantive issues.

Background information:

It became clear during the previous Parliamentary session that MSPs are detached from the lived experience of the nation, with their legislative agendas and priorities not matching the needs of the people of Scotland. As a former First Minister acknowledged, the overly generous pay causes a major perspective skew.

The £77,711 annual salary puts MSPs in the top 7% of UK earners, alongside those working in highly skilled professional jobs that require extensive formal qualifications and/or extensive practical experience. Yet, the MSP position requires neither qualifications nor work experience, has no binding workload, and comes with virtually no accountability, making such remuneration inappropriate.

The Scottish median full-time salary, corresponding to that of a band 5 NHS nurse, would seem more appropriate, and would make our MSPs invested in improving the living standard of the nation.

Capping the MSP salaries at the Scottish median would fund 129 band 5 NHS nurses.

Annexe B: SPICe Briefing



Scottish Parliament
Information Centre
Ionad Fiosrachaidh
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Briefing for the Public Petitions Committee on petition PE2234: Reduce MSP Salaries to the Median Scottish Full-time Income, lodged by Tomas Frydrych

Overview of petition

Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) receive an annual salary of £77,711.

The petitioner is calling on the Scottish Parliament to (a) permanently cap MSP salaries at the level of median Scottish income for full-time employment, adjusted annually of £39,719 (the equivalent of the salary of a band 5 NHS nurse)¹, and (b) cap any additional salaries and payments arising from MSPs extra duties (for parliamentary offices, Government positions, severance pay, etc.) proportionally to the adjustment of the MSPs annual salary (a reduction of 50%).

The petitioner notes that the MSP position requires neither qualifications nor work experience, has no binding workload, and comes with virtually no accountability, making such remuneration inappropriate.

The petitioner suggests that the Scottish median full-time salary, corresponding to that of a band 5 NHS nurse, would seem more appropriate, and would make MSPs invested in improving the living standard of the nation. The petitioner also states that capping the MSPs salaries at the Scottish median would fund 129 band 5 NHS nurses.

UK Legislatures

Members' remuneration varies across the UK's legislatures. The table below summaries the basic salary paid to elected members in each parliament and assembly.

Legislature	Basic Salary
UK House of Commons (MP)	£98,599
Senedd Cymru (Member of the Senedd)	£79,817
Scottish Parliament	£77,711
Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA)	£67,200

Source: Official remuneration and salary determinations published by the Scottish Parliament, UK Parliament, Senedd Cymru, and Northern Ireland Assembly.

¹ While SPICe has been unable to verify the specific figure cited by the petitioner (£39,719), this is broadly consistent with the latest available estimate of median annual full-time earnings, which was £39,878.84 in April 2025.

Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body is responsible for the payment of salaries for MSPs and members of the Scottish Government. These arrangements are made under the [Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme](#).

In 2001, the Review Body on Senior Salaries (SSRB) was commissioned to examine MSPs' remuneration. [It recommended](#) that MSPs' salaries be set at 87.5% of MPs' salaries at Westminster, based on the differing roles of MPs and MSPs. [SPCB have noted](#) that the linkage provided a "relevant, independent benchmark against which MSP salaries could be automatically uprated annually, without a requirement for MSPs to vote each year on their pay arrangements". In 2013, given IPSA's review of MPs' remuneration (see below) and the 10% salary increase proposed, [it was decided](#) to break the link with MPs' salaries.

Since then, changes in MSPs' salaries have been linked to the ASHE index for public sector salaries in Scotland.

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) from 1 April 2026 is £77,711.

Office holder	Annual salary	Annual salary (including MSP salary)
MSP	£77,711	£77,711
MSP (dual mandate)	£25,905	£25,905
First Minister	£112,573	£190,284
Cabinet Secretary	£58,401	£136,112
Minister	£36,586	£114,297
Presiding Officer	£58,401	£136,112
Deputy Presiding Officer	£36,586	£114,297
Lord Advocate	£76,295	£154,006
Solicitor General for Scotland	£55,172	£132,883

The petitioner suggests that the MSP position requires neither qualifications nor work experience, has no binding workload, and comes with virtually no accountability, making such remuneration inappropriate. While no formal qualification or prior work experience are required to become an MSP, and the role does not have prescribed working hours, MSPs are subject to electoral accountability and a formal standards regime, including an enforceable [Code of Conduct](#) and sanctions for misconduct.

Westminster

Since 2011 MPs' salaries and pensions have been set and administered by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA). Between 6 and 31 October 2025, [IPSA consulted on the mechanism for setting MPs' pay for the remainder of the current Parliament](#) (assumed to be 2026 to 2029).

IPSA announced its decision on the MP salary adjustment for the 2026-27 financial year. From 1 April 2026, both the basic salary for an MP and the additional salary for committee chairs increased by 5%, including a 3.5% cost-of-living element and a 1.5% benchmarking increase. The data, metrics and information considered and rationale for this decision were published in [IPSA's Supporting Democracy report](#).

The basic annual salary for a Member of the UK Parliament (MP) from 1 April 2026 is £98,599.

In addition to the basic salary, MPs may receive additional pay if they are a chair of a select committee, or a member of the Panel of Chairs. These additional salaries are also administered by IPSA.

MPs who are government ministers may also receive a ministerial salary. The Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975, as amended, provides the terms on which salaries can be paid to government ministers. A list of all government ministers, indicating which ministers are paid and which are unpaid, is available on the [government website](#).

Senedd Cymru

In Wales, the [Independent Remuneration Board](#) of the Senedd Cymru determines members' remuneration packages each year in a process known as "Determination."

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Senedd Cymru from 7 May 2026 is £79,817.

Members who hold [additional offices](#) will be entitled to receive an additional annual salary.

Northern Ireland Assembly

In 2011, the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) gave power to set members' remuneration to the [Independent Financial Review Panel](#), to be implemented by the Assembly Commission.

The basic annual salary for a Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly from 1 April 2026 is £67,200.

Members who hold additional offices will be entitled to receive an additional annual salary.

Earnings in Scotland

The latest data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings published by the Office for National Statistics show Scotland's median annual earnings for full time employees as of April 2025 is £39,878.84.

The petitioner calls for MSP salaries to be permanently capped at the median annual earnings for full-time employees. While SPICe has been unable to verify the specific figure cited by the petitioner (£39,719), this is broadly consistent with the latest

available estimate of median annual full-time earnings, which was £39,878.84 in April 2025.

In this instance, each MSP would see a salary reduction of £37,833 per year, equivalent to a 48.7% pay cut.

The petition states that the reduction in MSP pay could be used to fund 129 nurses. This overstates the number of nurses that could be funded by the savings because it compares the gross salary saving from MSP pay reductions with a nurse's basic salary only. In practice, NHS employers must also meet pension, National Insurance and other employment costs, meaning the saving would fund significantly fewer nurses than claimed.

At £77,711, MSPs earn around twice the median full-time salary in the UK and are paid at approximately the 90th percentile of full-time employee earnings, placing them among the highest-paid 10% of employees.

Key Organisations and relevant links

- [Scottish Parliament salaries](#)
- [Westminster salaries](#)
- [Senedd Cymru salaries](#)
- [Northern Ireland Assembly salaries](#)
- [NHS staff pay scales](#)
- [SPICe Earnings in Scotland](#)

Rachel Cook
Senior Researcher
9 September 2026

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

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Annexe C: Written Submissions

PE2234/A: Reduce MSP Salaries to the Median Scottish Full-time Income

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body written submission, 15 September 2026

Does the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body consider the specific ask[s] of the petition to be practical or achievable? If not, please explain why.

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) recognises the concerns expressed by the petitioner regarding the remuneration of elected representatives and welcomes debate on how public funds are used. However, the SPCB does not support the proposals set out in PE2234 and does not consider them practical. The SPCB considers that the current approach to MSP remuneration remains fair, proportionate and appropriate to the responsibilities of the role. It is considered that reducing MSP salaries to the levels suggested would further increase difficulties in attracting people to become MSPs.

MSPs occupy a unique constitutional role. They are elected legislators responsible for scrutinising the Scottish Government, holding public bodies to account, developing and passing legislation, representing constituents across Scotland, and overseeing expenditure of many billions of pounds of public funds. The role demands significant levels of responsibility, accountability, public scrutiny and workload. The SPCB considers that remuneration should reflect these responsibilities and support a Parliament that is accessible to people from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances, rather than being affordable only to those with independent means. This principle has long underpinned parliamentary remuneration arrangements across the UK.

The petitioner proposes reducing the MSP salary to the median Scottish full-time income. The current MSP salary from 1 April 2026 is £77,711. This is set in accordance with the Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme and reflects an annual uprating mechanism linked to earnings indices rather than discretionary political decisions.

The SPCB notes that MSP salaries are not out of line with comparable legislative roles and, in fact, remain below those of equivalent legislators elsewhere in the UK. The current basic salary for an MSP is £77,711, compared with £79,817 for a Member of the Senedd in Wales and £98,599 for a Member of Parliament at Westminster.

The petition also proposes a 50% reduction in additional salaries paid to officeholders and Members who undertake extra responsibilities. The SPCB does not support this proposal. Additional salary payments exist because certain parliamentary and governmental roles carry substantially greater responsibilities and workloads than those of a backbench MSP. Positions such as the Presiding Officer, Ministers, Cabinet Secretaries, committee conveners and party leaders require significant additional commitments and responsibilities. Appropriate remuneration for

these roles ensures transparency and reflects the differing demands placed upon officeholders.

The SPCB further notes that, in recent years, MSP pay has increased at a rate below inflation. Analysis undertaken as part of the Parliament's budget process showed that between 2021-22 and 2026-27 MSP pay lagged CPI inflation by approximately 8.2 percentage points. Had MSP pay simply kept pace with inflation over that period, the salary would have been approximately £83,000 rather than £77,710.

This trend is even more noticeable when set against annual wage growth. Comparing back to 1999 when MSP salaries were originally introduced at £40,092, annual wage growth has been in the region of 152%. Had MSP salaries kept up with this growth, they would now be around £101,000, approximately £23,000 above the current salary.

For these reasons, the SPCB does not consider that reducing MSP salaries to the level proposed in the petition would be appropriate. Such a reduction would place MSP remuneration significantly below that of comparable elected representatives elsewhere in the UK, would not reflect the responsibilities and constitutional importance of the role, and could create barriers to ensuring that people from all backgrounds are able to seek election. The SPCB therefore does not support the petition's proposals and considers that current MSP remuneration arrangements remain fair, proportionate and reflective of the responsibilities of elected office.

What, if any, action is the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body currently taking to address the issues raised by this petition, and is any further action being considered that will achieve the ask[s] of this petition?

The SPCB actively considers salary levels annually as part of the budget process, ensuring they take into account wider public and private pay levels across the country as well as pay levels for legislators across the UK.

The SPCB is not currently taking any action to reduce MSP salaries to the level of median Scottish full-time earnings, nor is it considering the introduction of a salary cap of the nature proposed by the petition. MSP remuneration continues to be governed by the Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme, which provides for annual uprating using an earnings-based index determined by the SPCB. For 2026-27, MSP salaries were increased in line with the annualised Average Weekly Earnings index, consistent with the SPCB's established approach to salary indexation

The SPCB's current focus is on maintaining a transparent, consistent and evidence-based approach to MSP remuneration. In recent years, the SPCB has sought to avoid ad hoc or discretionary decisions by applying a consistent indexation methodology and has stated publicly its intention to avoid the perception of selecting indices that produce particular outcomes.

While the SPCB does not support the specific proposals contained in this petition, the previous SPCB indicated that there may be merit in undertaking a broader review of MSP remuneration during Session 7 of the Scottish Parliament. As part of its Session 6 legacy report, the previous SPCB identified the potential for a wider review

covering MSP salaries, pensions, resettlement arrangements, party leader remuneration and other elements of the remuneration framework. However, no decisions have been taken on any changes.

Any future review would be intended to consider the overall remuneration framework in the round, rather than to implement the salary reductions proposed by the petition. The SPCB's current analysis notes that MSP salaries remain below those of Members of the Senedd and Members of the UK Parliament, and that MSP pay has increased by less than CPI inflation over recent years.

Accordingly, the SPCB is not currently pursuing, and is not actively considering, measures that would achieve the specific asks of the petition. Instead, any future work is likely to focus on reviewing the overall remuneration framework to ensure it remains fair, transparent, sustainable and reflective of the responsibilities of elected office.

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body