



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme – Use of Parliamentary Resources

Reference: SPCB (2025) Paper 5

Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to consider whether they wish to take any action in relation to the use of parliamentary resources by Jackie Dunbar MSP, in issuing a party branded communication using her Scottish Parliament email account.

Issues and options

2. Under the SPCB's use of parliamentary resources policy, resources are provided to support Members in undertaking their parliamentary duties and must not be used to any significant extent for party political activities. These resources include the Parliament's email system.
3. Ms Dunbar issued a Christmas greeting which contained the SNP logo to other MSPs and their staff via the parliamentary email system. As the email system is considered a parliamentary resource covered by the policy this should not have been used to distribute a Christmas greeting containing a party-political logo.
4. Having investigated this issue, Ms Dunbar confirmed that the version of the Christmas greeting was sent in error using the parliamentary email system as there was a version of the greeting without the SNP logo that should have been issued instead. Ms Dunbar apologised, and offered to pay any costs associated with the original message.
5. Having discussed any cost implication with BIT colleagues they have confirmed that the costs associated with sending such an email to all MSPs and their staff equates to a fraction of a pence, and therefore it wouldn't be possible to calculate a cost that Ms Dunbar could repay.
6. As the financial implications are incalculable for this use of parliamentary resource and Ms Dunbar has acknowledged and apologised for the error, we would recommend to the SPCB that the Head of Allowances

write to Ms Dunbar reminding her of the rules on behalf of the SPCB and that no further action is taken in relation to this matter.

Governance

7. Under the SPCB's policy on use of parliamentary resources the SPCB can take action in relation to any breach of the policy.

Resource implications

8. There are no resource implications linked to this paper.

Publication Scheme

9. The paper can be published in line with the SPCB publication policy.

Next steps

10. The Member will be advised of the outcome following SPCB consideration of the matter and if SPCB agree reminded of the rules regarding use of parliamentary resources by the Head of Allowances on their behalf.
11. The Head of Allowances will also respond to the complainer to advise on the outcome of their complaint.

Decision

12. The SPCB is invited to agree that:
 - The Head of Allowances writes to remind Ms Dunbar of the requirements of the use of parliamentary resources policy on their behalf and advise the complainant of the outcome of the matter.

Allowances Office
6 February 2025