

Scottish Parliamentary Election 2021 – Marco Biagi raises the bar on campaign spending

Only yesterday we related the story about Marco Biagi, the candidate for the SNP nomination for the seat of Edinburgh Central at the Scottish Parliamentary Election 2021.

Mr Biagi explained that he wanted a level playing field and that all candidates for this nomination should [spend the same amount on advertising](#) whether online or on social media. At the time the amount was £2980 – the total then raised by Angus Robertson who is competing for the nomination. A plea to the SNP National Executive to put a rule in place has not achieved any response.

Today Marco Biagi has raised £3,000 on his crowfunder from donations. He says that 66% of these donations are from people in Edinburgh and the average donated was £20.

Mr Biagi said: “No one should have to raise this amount just to become a candidate through a party’s internal processes. This is especially galling when this is such a difficult time for so many people. After being stonewalled by those administering the election, this was the only way to reach a level playing field.

“This level of fundraising is not open to most people who would wish to be candidates. It is therefore vital that all parties take action to restrict internal campaign spending, just as it is restricted in general elections.

“Transparency is important too, but political party donations are a reserved area. Westminster should extend the more stringent transparency rules for general election donations so they cover donations to internal party contests too.”

Mr Biagi has said that if elected as MSP, he will donate a sum matching what the crowdfunder has raised into the local party’s independence campaign fund. Unspent money from the crowdfunder will be donated to the Edinburgh Central SNP constituency party. A full account will be provided to the local party treasurer. Biagi will voluntarily apply the general election transparency rules to any donations received.

