

Transparency row as candidates demand info on membership numbers

The SNP has got itself in a bit of a pickle over transparency in its leadership election, as campaign teams for two of the three candidates published a formal open letter to the party's Chief Executive, Peter Murrell, demanding information on membership numbers and voting processes are released.

In an extraordinary move, the open letter from Edinburgh Eastern MSP Ash Regan, with the backing of Kate Forbes' team, called for key figures to be released on the number of members voting in the contest, to ensure the ballot process is "transparent, fair and equitable". The letter states previous requests for this information from the party's National Secretary had not received a response.

Specifically, the letter demands the release of (1) the number of paid-up members of the SNP, (2) the number of digital voting papers that have been sent out and (3) the number of physical postal voting papers that have been published.

Both candidates have called for an independent auditor to oversee the processes and eventual tally of the vote, which is

being run by third-party firm Mi-Voice. Humza Yousaf has stated that [while having confidence in the processes](#), his team has also called for the membership figures to be published as soon as possible.

SNP Party Headquarters has previously stated they would not release figures on the number of votes, percentage share and turnout until after the conclusion of the contest on 27th March, although [it is reported](#) that the party's ruling body, the NEC, has now been advised there are 72,186 members (down from 104,000 in 2021).

Ash Regan had stated she would be holding a press conference outside the Scottish Parliament if a satisfactory response was not received before 3pm today. The saga continues.

SNP Leadership Election

F.A.O. Peter Murrell
Chief Executive Officer
Scottish National Party (SNP)
Gordon Lamb House, 3 Jackson's Entry, Edinburgh, EH8 8PJ

Subject: Request for Information on SNP Membership and Voting Process

Dear Mr Murrell,

I am writing this open letter on behalf of the campaign teams of Ash Regan and Kate Forbes, both of whom are contesting for the leadership of the Scottish National Party (SNP). We request that you provide essential information pertaining to the current membership status and voting procedures within the SNP, which is necessary for ensuring a fair and transparent leadership election.

Specifically, we ask that you disclose the following information to all campaign teams:

1. The total number of paid-up members currently within the SNP.
2. The number of digital voting papers that have been sent out to members.
3. The number of physical postal voting papers that have been issued.

We have previously reached out to the National Secretary, Lorna Finn, with a request for this information. However, we have yet to receive a response, which has prompted us to address this matter through a formal open letter.

As the Chief Executive Officer of the SNP, it is your responsibility to ensure that the leadership election process is transparent, fair, and equitable. Providing this information is crucial to fostering trust and confidence among the candidates, their campaign teams, and the party members who are participating in the election.

We kindly request that you respond to this letter and share the requested information as soon as possible. Your cooperation in this matter will not only demonstrate the SNP's commitment to democratic values and principles but also help maintain a strong and united party during this leadership contest.

We look forward to your prompt response and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Ash Regan MSP

Open letter to SNP Chief Exec Peter Murrell, on behalf of Ash Regan and Kate Forbes' campaign teams



SNP Leadership Candidates. Image: BBC Scotland Debate Night.