

# Beattie resigns as SNP Treasurer

Colin Beattie MSP for Midlothian North and Musselburgh has resigned as Treasurer of the SNP with immediate effect.

Mr Beattie (71) was arrested at his home in Dalkeith on Tuesday morning and later released without charge.



Colin Beattie MSP who was arrested by Police Scotland on 18 April 2023

He issued a statement which said: "This is a sad day for the SNP."

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“I have also informed the SNP Chief Whip at Holyrood that I will be stepping back from my role on the Public Audit Committee until the police investigation has concluded.

“On a personal level, this decision has not been easy, but it is the right decision to avoid further distraction to the important work being led by Humza Yousaf to improve the SNP’s governance and transparency.

“I will continue to cooperate fully with Police Scotland’s enquiries and it would be inappropriate for me to comment any further on a live case.”

Mr Beattie was reappointed as treasurer in 2021, having previously served as treasurer for more than 16 years. He took the place of Douglas Chapman MSP who resigned saying he did not receive the support or financial information that was needed.

Scottish Labour deputy leader Jackie Baillie said: "This is the right decision, made by the wrong man.

"While Humza Yousaf played for time and failed to do the right thing, Colin Beattie at least could see the writing on the wall.

"For too long, a culture of secrecy and cover-up has been allowed to fester at the heart of the SNP.

"And while the investigation spreads, the SNP is still refusing to take the basic step of suspending MSPs who are the subject of police inquiries.

"Humza Yousaf's failure to act has made it clear – his priority is the cover up to protect the SNP, not the people of Scotland."

**Scottish Conservative Chairman Craig Hoy MSP, said:** "Colin Beattie's resignation highlights Humza Yousaf's total lack of leadership in tackling the ever-growing scandal engulfing the SNP.

"As soon as Colin Beattie was arrested, the First Minister should have immediately suspended him as SNP treasurer and a party member, as well asking him to stand aside from the two key Holyrood committees he sits on. Instead he has been allowed to depart on his own terms.

"Humza Yousaf is like a rabbit in the headlights. His failure to remove Colin Beattie from these roles – as well as not suspending Peter Murrell and Nicola Sturgeon – makes a mockery of claims that he has taken decisive action.

"The SNP are in meltdown and consumed by chaos and it is the real priorities of Scotland that are being ignored as a result. Only the Scottish Conservatives are focused on those real priorities like supporting people with the cost-of-living, fixing the NHS and strengthening the economy."

Mr Beattie is the second SNP office bearer to be arrested in two weeks. The former Chief Executive, Peter Murrell, was arrested a fortnight ago and then released without charge pending further investigation. Mr Murrell is married to Nicola Sturgeon.

Operation Branchform as the Police Scotland investigation is called is looking into the party's finances. Complaints were made in summer 2021 about the way donations were used. The party had raised more than £660,000 in appeals for cash to fight future independence referendums and had promised the money would be ring-fenced for that purpose. The 2019 accounts showed less than £100,000 in the bank with assets of less than £300,000.

Since then the police have seized a motorhome from the driveway at Peter Murrell's mother's house in Fife.



Police leave SNP Headquarters Edinburgh after the arrest of Peter Murrell in connection with an investigation into the party's finances. PHOTO Alan Simpson Photography