

Christina McKelvie 1968 – 2025

The Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy, Christina McKelvie MSP, has died.

The First Minister, John Swinney has issued a statement.

Mr Swinney said: “I am devastated to learn of the passing of Christina McKelvie – one of the kindest and most generous people I have ever met in my life.

“In all the years since I first met Christina, I have been so grateful to call her my friend and colleague and to benefit from her warmth and loyalty.

“Christina was fiercely proud of her Easterhouse roots, and she often spoke of how injustices her family experienced in her childhood had inspired her to join the trade union movement and enter elected politics.

“In her almost two decades as a Member of the Scottish Parliament, Christina put her values into action. Whether it was helping her constituents in Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse, serving as a highly-respected committee convenor, or in the Ministerial posts she held, Christina was always a fierce champion for equality, social justice, for Scottish independence and for a better world.

“But for all her many political achievements, Christina was first and foremost deeply committed to her family. Everyone could see the joy that she and her partner Keith brought to each other’s lives, and she spoke so often over the years of her pride for her sons, and more recently her immense joy at

becoming a granny.

“In recent years, when Christina returned to Parliament after treatment for breast cancer, she was determined to help those around her – using her platform to encourage women to check themselves and go to screening appointments.

“The Scottish National Party has lost one of its finest, and I have lost an outstanding Minister in my government. I know her loss will be felt right across the Parliament and among the countless constituents she supported over the years. Christina was such a big-hearted woman, with compassion and social justice at her core. Her political allies and opponents would agree – she truly was a force of nature.

“Today, my thoughts and prayers are with Keith, her sons Jack and Lewis and her wider family and many friends.”

Ms McKelvie’s long term partner, Keith Brown MSP and her sons have issued a statement:



Christina McKelvie MSP
4 March 1968 – 27 March 2025

"Christina's sons Lewis and Jack and I are heartbroken to announce the death of Christina at Glasgow Royal Infirmary this morning.

"Christina was an MSP from 2007, serving her constituents in Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse, from 2011. She convened two committees before becoming a Minister in 2018. She loved her job, and she loved her party and was always a champion for the people of Scotland and an advocate for social justice and for Scotland to be an independent nation in Europe.

"To us, she was our beloved mum, partner and gran to Maeve and Leo. She was always hard working and enthusiastic and lit up every room she was in with her positivity and bright smile. She was always proud of her working class roots in Easterhouse and often said she could not have dreamt of becoming a government minister for the Scottish Government.

"We are immensely proud of all Christina achieved. She was passionate about many issues, including advocating for people living with MND and sponsoring the first Wear It Pink at the Scottish Parliament in support of Breast Cancer Now many years before her own diagnosis with breast cancer, after which she used every opportunity to encourage women to check themselves and go to screening appointments.

"As a Parliamentarian, she was proud of her work as convener of two Committees - European and External Relations and then the Equalities Committee which added Human Rights to its title and remit under her convenership. She also championed policy and legislation through promoting 'Clare's Law' - to allow the disclosure of previous violent and abusive behaviour to those at risk. As a Minister, she launched the world's first strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness as a health issue, tackled the stigma surrounding menopause, and introduced legislation banning FGM.

"As a constituency MSP, Christina worked hard to support her constituents and many local groups and absolutely loved every part of Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse. Christina was also a committed trade unionist and long-standing member of Unison from her time working in social work services in Glasgow.

"Today, we have lost our much loved Christina and know she will be very much missed by all our family and also her many, many friends, staff and constituents."

Keith Brown MSP
Partner of Christina McKelvie MSP,
and Depute Leader of the SNP

And The Presiding Officer Alison Johnstone MSP has also offered her condolences:

I am so deeply saddened by the death of our dear parliamentary colleague Christina McKelvie MSP. On behalf of all at Parliament, my most sincere condolences to Christina's partner, our friend and colleague Keith Brown MSP, and to Christina's family and many friends.

Rt Hon. Alison Johnstone MSP
Presiding Officer





Scottish Green Co-Leader Patrick Harvie said: “This Parliament has lost one of our very best today. And I want to offer my deepest sympathy to all those who knew and loved Christina.

“Today is a moment of pain and sadness. But Christina’s life and her extraordinary spirit deserve to be celebrated.

“In her first speech, she said she would “rather be a citizen of a nation that looks to persuade and co-operate than bully and cajole”

“She was talking about Scotland as a nation, but I think those

words also captured the kind of person she was, and the kind of politician she was.

“Lots of people in politics start out with those kinds of values and ideals, but Christina was someone who absolutely held fast to them. Compassion and kindness were at her core.

“As Christina’s partner, and our colleague, Keith Brown said today: she “lit up every room she was in” – that was certainly true of this room, our national Parliament. She brightened it in every sense.”