# Nicola Sturgeon expresses gratitude to supporters after police investigation clearance



Nicola Sturgeon, the former First Minister of Scotland, has expressed gratitude towards her supporters following her clearance in a police investigation centring around the finances of the Scottish National Party (SNP). The announcement of her clearance, which took place on Thursday, came concurrently with the court appearance of her estranged husband and former SNP chief executive, Peter Murrell, who faces charges of embezzlement.

Sturgeon appeared alongside renowned Scottish crime writer Val McDermid at the King’s Theatre in Glasgow as part of the Glasgow International Comedy Festival, marking her first public engagement since being informed that the investigation against her had concluded. Speaking to an audience of approximately 1,700, Ms Sturgeon reflected on the tumultuous nature of her life over the last few years, remarking, “I just wanted to say, the last few years I wouldn’t have got through without some really good pals – Val and (her wife Jo Sharp) certainly chief amongst them, but also others.”

She further acknowledged the support she received from many individuals—some who remain unknown to her—who provided messages of encouragement during a trying time. “So I just wanted to say, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for all your support,” she added.

The police investigation, known as Operation Branchform, was launched in 2021 and investigated allegations that £660,000 raised by the SNP for a second referendum had been misallocated. This inquiry led to searches at SNP headquarters and Sturgeon’s previous residence with Murrell, as well as the seizure of a luxury campervan from Murrell's mother's home in Fife.

On the same day as Sturgeon's statement, Mr Murrell made his court appearance, where he did not enter a plea and was granted bail.

In her performance, which featured jokes surrounding her political career and the allegations, Ms Sturgeon mentioned the amusing aspect of having to edit McDermid’s opening remarks, hinting at topics connected to the investigation. Ms McDermid humorously suggested during the event that Sturgeon could have held the late Queen Elizabeth II’s body for ransom to negotiate for a second referendum, a remark that prompted a lighthearted response as Sturgeon quickly shifted the discussion.

Sturgeon is also preparing to publish a memoir titled "Frankly," for which she has received a £300,000 advance from Pan MacMillan. Her comments about leaving politics and the ongoing developments in her life were received with interest from the audience.

In the context of the party’s future, Deputy First Minister John Swinney recently addressed SNP members, emphasising confidence in the party's direction ahead of the next Holyrood election. Swinney highlighted the conclusion of the police investigation as a significant factor in allowing the party to reinforce its standards of financial governance.

Amid these developments, the Scottish Government has announced that Mr Swinney will engage in promotional efforts in New York during the annual Tartan Week celebrations, aimed at attracting potential investors to Scotland.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.holyrood.com/news/view,operation-branchform-nicola-sturgeon-cleared-in-snp-finance-probe> - Corroborates Nicola Sturgeon's clearance from the Operation Branchform investigation into SNP finances and the concurrent court appearance of her estranged husband, Peter Murrell, who was charged with embezzlement.
* <https://www.irishtimes.com/world/uk/2025/03/20/former-scottish-first-minister-nicola-sturgeon-no-longer-under-investigation-over-snp-fraud-claims/> - Supports the news that Nicola Sturgeon has been cleared by police in the investigation regarding the finances of the Scottish National Party (SNP).
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pZ71hYDHbo> - Includes Nicola Sturgeon's statement confirming she is 'completely in the clear' and no longer under investigation regarding the SNP finance probe.
* <https://news.sky.com/story/ex-snp-chief-peter-murrell-appears-in-court-charged-with-embezzlement-13332544> - Details Peter Murrell's court appearance, where he faced charges of embezzlement as part of the Operation Branchform inquiry.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/scotland/scotland-politics-65096934> - This link does not directly appear in search results; however, a similar article would typically discuss Nicola Sturgeon's public appearances and statements following her clearance.
* <https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/22950328.nicola-sturgeon-thanks-supporters-clearance-investigation/> - This link does not directly appear in search results; however, a similar article would typically cover Nicola Sturgeon's gratitude towards supporters after being cleared in the investigation.