# Michael Matheson resignation sparks SNP turmoil amid allegations of backroom deals



Former Health Secretary Michael Matheson’s resignation from Holyrood has been marred by allegations of behind-the-scenes deals, raising serious concerns about the integrity of the SNP's leadership. Reports suggest he agreed to step down under conditions that included passing internal vetting procedures and ensuring fellow party member Toni Giugliano was prevented from succeeding him as the candidate for Falkirk West.

Matheson’s departure follows a scandal involving an eye-watering £11,000 data roaming bill from a family holiday in Morocco, where his sons allegedly used his parliamentary iPad to stream football matches. This glaring misuse of resources has drawn attention away from pressing government responsibilities and reignited calls for his resignation. First Minister Humza Yousaf's regret over the situation underscores the SNP's growing mismanagement.

The party's dismal showing in the recent 2024 general election has only amplified the backlash against Matheson, with Giugliano, who sought a parliamentary seat, linking their losses directly to Matheson's irresponsible actions. Tensions between the two are also rooted in past disputes, with Giugliano previously accusing Matheson of attempting to sabotage his candidacy — a dispute that reportedly led to formal complaints to the party's headquarters.

Further revelations about the circumstances of Matheson’s exit have deepened concern regarding the party’s internal practices. Insiders reveal that the move to keep Giugliano from consideration wasn’t about fair process but rather a calculated strategy by Matheson to negotiate his departure on his terms. A senior party figure indicated, "Matheson had no intention of standing down," suggesting that pressure from party leadership, particularly from John Swinney, played a significant role in crafting the conditions of his resignation.

As dissent within the SNP grows, local party members have raised alarm over the erosion of democratic principles in candidate selection, accusing the party of succumbing to "backroom deals." Calls for a transparent re-run of the selection process in Falkirk West reflect a broader desire for accountability and integrity, highlighting the urgent need for a clean sweep within the party’s leadership.

The ongoing fallout has intensified scrutiny of how the SNP manages complaints and disciplinary actions. While the party has firmly denied any wrongdoing, the discord continues, with Giugliano accusing the leadership of failing to hold individuals accountable for breaches of parliamentary codes — citing Matheson’s past infractions as a glaring example.

As the year progresses, the SNP is at a crossroads regarding its leadership and internal unity. Members are increasingly vocal about the necessity for reform and transparency as catalysts for restoring trust. This turmoil emphasizes not only the reputations at stake but also a larger narrative of accountability in Scottish politics, reflecting a growing appetite for change from a party that has strayed far from its principles.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25154292.michael-matheson-accused-backroom-deal-holyrood-exit/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/feb/08/scottish-health-secretary-michael-matheson-resigns-ipad-roaming-bill> - Michael Matheson, Scotland's Health Secretary, resigned after accumulating an £11,000 data roaming bill on his parliamentary iPad during a family holiday in Morocco. Initially, Matheson claimed the charges were for parliamentary work, but later admitted his sons used the device to stream football matches. The incident led to an investigation by Holyrood authorities, and Matheson stepped down to avoid becoming a distraction to the government's agenda. First Minister Humza Yousaf accepted his resignation 'with sadness' and acknowledged the mishandling of the affair.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9350qz0leko> - Former Health Secretary Michael Matheson returned to the Scottish Parliament after serving a 27-day suspension for breaching parliamentary expenses policy. The suspension was imposed after Matheson incurred an £11,000 data roaming bill on his parliamentary iPad during a family holiday in Morocco. Initially, he claimed the charges were for parliamentary work, but later admitted his sons used the device to stream football matches. Matheson repaid the bill and apologized for the incident.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/may/23/michael-matheson-snp-suspended-scottish-parliament-streaming-expenses-claim> - Michael Matheson, Scotland's former Health Secretary, faced suspension from the Scottish Parliament after improperly claiming £11,000 in expenses for streaming football matches on his parliamentary iPad during a holiday in Morocco. The Scottish Parliament's Standards Committee recommended a 27-day suspension and a 54-day salary withdrawal, marking the most severe sanctions ever imposed on a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP). Despite the sanctions, First Minister John Swinney supported Matheson, describing the process as 'prejudiced' and questioning the fairness of the investigation.
5. <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/michael-matheson-accused-of-degrading-politics-as-majority-say-snp-health-secretary-should-resign-4427513> - Michael Matheson, Scotland's Health Secretary, faced calls to resign after an Ipsos poll revealed that 61% of respondents believed he should step down over his £11,000 iPad data roaming bill. The incident, where Matheson's sons used his parliamentary iPad to stream football matches during a holiday in Morocco, led to an investigation by Holyrood authorities. Opposition parties criticized Matheson for misleading the public and called for his resignation, accusing him of 'degrading' politics.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/03/14/disgraced-snp-health-secretary-quit-matheson-ipad-bill-rule/> - Michael Matheson, Scotland's former Health Secretary, faced demands to resign from the Scottish Parliament after being found to have breached rules by attempting to claim an £11,000 iPad data roaming bill from taxpayers. The Scottish Parliament's Standards Committee found that Matheson had made an improper claim for expenses and failed to ensure his parliamentary iPad was not used for non-parliamentary purposes. The incident led to calls for Matheson to step down from his seat in Holyrood.
7. <https://www.holyrood.com/news/view%2Cin-full-crossparty-committee-statement-on-michael-matheson-suspension> - The Scottish Parliament's Standards Committee issued a statement detailing the suspension of former Health Secretary Michael Matheson. The committee found that Matheson had made an improper claim under the reimbursement of members’ expenses scheme and failed to ensure his parliamentary iPad was not used for non-parliamentary purposes. The committee emphasized the importance of upholding the MSPs' code of conduct and maintaining public confidence in parliamentary standards.