

Scottish Greens Revise Candidate List After Software Blunder Sparks Internal Fallout

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The Scottish Green Party has issued a corrected list of candidates for the 2026 Holyrood election after a vote-counting error triggered by third-party software led to a row within the party and the resignation of its internal election officer.

The original list, released on Monday, immediately raised concerns among party members over how votes had been tallied. An internal review later revealed that a technical issue in the software used to count votes had skewed the results. Although the top-tier candidates remain unchanged, including most sitting Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) who retain prominent positions, adjustments were made further down the regional lists, particularly in Edinburgh and Lothian East, and South Scotland.

Under Scotland's Additional Member System, political parties rank candidates on regional lists. The higher a candidate is placed, the greater their likelihood of securing a seat. The discrepancies prompted significant unrest, especially after high-profile figures such as co-leader Patrick Harvie and Northeast MSP Maggie Chapman did not initially secure leading positions.

The party said it had been assured by Mi-Voice, the external firm contracted to manage the selection process, that the vote count had met all internal rules. However, by Tuesday morning, the Scottish Greens were informed of a software fault within the counting programme. Mi-Voice has since apologised for the disruption, admitting a technical error had distorted the initial count.

Simon Thomson, Director of Mi-Voice, confirmed that once the error was identified, the results underwent a full manual validation to confirm their accuracy. He acknowledged the upset caused, saying: "We understand the frustration and confusion, and we sincerely apologise for the inconvenience and concern it has caused."

In the aftermath, the party's internal elections officer, Kate Joester, resigned. She admitted she had initially signed off on the results, believing them to be sound, but later concluded that her endorsement had been premature.

Despite the disruption, all 15 lead candidates previously announced remain in place to head the Greens' campaign. A party spokesperson thanked members for their "vigilance, patience and trust" during what was described as a stressful and regrettable episode.

The incident raises broader questions about the reliance on external digital platforms in internal democratic processes, particularly for parties that advocate greater transparency and accountability in public life.