

[Scottish Conservatives call for minister to explain himself to the Scottish Parliament](#)

- [Home](#)
- [All News](#)
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The Scottish Conservatives are calling for the parliamentary business minister, Joe Fitzpatrick to return to Holyrood and explain his previous answers on freedom of information requests, as evidence suggests he may have misled the Scottish Parliament.

In June 2017 Mr Fitzpatrick was asked if “freedom of information responses were being screened for potential political damage by special advisers” to which he replied: “No.”

Yet evidence uncovered today has shown that Scottish Government freedom of information requests are routinely reviewed and amended by special advisers for political purposes, not accuracy.

Indeed, in one email chain Deputy First Minister John Swinney is referred to as requesting certain documents are not included in the freedom of information response, for political purposes.

Commenting on the minister’s responses Scottish Conservative MSP Edward Mountain said:

“We now know that the answer given by Mr Fitzpatrick to the Scottish Parliament are not true.

“The evidence suggests that special advisors are routinely involved in the freedom of information process for political purposes and John Swinney himself is suppressing documents when it suits him.

“Mr Fitzpatrick categorically denied this on the floor of the Scottish Parliament.

“Joe Fitzpatrick must return to the Scottish Parliament immediately and explain these responses.

“It appears this may well be a breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct. It is entirely unethical for a Scottish minister to mislead the Scottish Parliament.”