

Dear Sir,

Please find below my responses to the IPSA consultation document:

QUEST 1: Generally yes, but with doubts about Item 5 - is the scheme truly independent of influence from the House of Commons and Lords i.e. are there any lay members on any of the proposed or existing panels?

Also with Item 9 - this will not be possible until all parties are funded by the state, thus removing all outside influence with regard to finance.

QUEST 2: Yes - I feel that this will cover general costs

QUEST 3: Yes - but overnight accommodation should be provided by the state by the purchase of flats not by providing expenses

QUEST 4: Yes

QUEST 5: Yes

QUEST 6: Yes

With regard to section 5.31 and the proposed sanctions, there should also be a place for an MP that abuses the new system to be removed from office with immediate effect, not let off with repayment / or waiting until the next election

QUEST 7: I agree with this approach, but with the proviso that with matter of urgency you should for permanent accommodation for MP's outside this zone.

QUEST 8: Obviously the most important is the cost to the tax payer, this is where the one off cost of purchasing flats for MP's should be looked at immediately. Whilst I also agree that MP's should be responsible for their own actions it is imperative that they have no control of the finance involved and they definitely should not have any say in identifying property.

QUEST 9: The payment of mortgage interest should end at the next election. I have no sympathy whatsoever for their problem, also the idea that 'parliamentary privilege' would in any way negate any sanction for the 2nd home fiasco.

QUEST 10: Yes

QUEST 11: Again the immediate purchase of flats for use by MP's would cover all of these items. These would then come under the service charge for the building, MP's would not have to claim expenses for any items on the proposed list.

QUEST 12: Option 1 seems reasonable

QUEST 13: Yes

On item 7.29 - I would like to see the £25 allowance for food and drink abolished for non parliamentary business

SECTION 8 - STAFF FOR MP'S - They should only be responsible for employing staff in their constituencies, the House of Commons should employ staff at Westminster.

QUEST 14: MP's should not be allowed to fund family members from public money. With regard to 8.24 - the funding should be stopped at the next election. I also believe that the definition of 'Family member' should be on the basis of 8.31

QUEST 15: Yes, this is correct, however I feel that the idea of the local authority in each constituency should provide an office for use by the the MP is excellent and should be looked at as a matter of urgency. There are an abundance of empty property in all areas.

QUEST 16: Yes

QUEST 17: Absolutely not

An MP is not in a position of an ordinary worker as per employment and redundancy. There should be no form of redundancy payment, only winding up payments to staff etc. which should be under CSPL recommendations.

Item 12.22 - I agree that the speaker should be removed from any responsibility with regard to the general services budget, the more lay people involved in all aspects would be most welcome and desirable.

QUEST 18: Unfortunately unless other major changes occur - namely on the voting system, the way political parties are funded and the operation of the House of Commons and Lords - I do not see a greater diversity of people at Westminster. Indeed the next election will see an increase in MP's from the so called top 1%, the mix seems to be getting smaller and is based on only a minority of professions and backgrounds - it is gradually creeping back to the old days of lords of the manor only.

QUEST 19: I feel that any watering down of the proposals should not be undertaken or allowed.

In summary: You have addressed the problems associated with assumed and factual greed and arrogance of our representatives, however being of an extremely cynical nature, which has grown particularly over the last 10 years, I have little or no faith in the independence of the IPSA or CSPL in carrying out the necessary reforms. There has been platitudes for the promises of action for years on changing this and that and with the example of the banks where nothing has been done against the people responsible being the latest example. The establishment is untouchable.

The MP's themselves had a chance to change the system 2 years ago but voted against it, they should now expect the consequences, but will they? I feel I am justified in stating that all these reforms will in the end be watered down - the establishment never changes and never loses.

Yours sincerely

Andy Denker