

## Independent Offices -

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 18 June 2009 22:52  
**To:** Inquiry  
**Subject:** MPs Expenses - Suggestions for Fundamental Change  
**Signed By:**

E628  
AKK

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to propose the following radical changes to MPs expenses:

- constituency offices should be provided and run by the civil service, to give an agreed level of support to the constituency MP. They should be politically neutral. MPs would not need to claim - the offices and staff would be centrally funded, and the employees would be hired and paid as civil servants by the office manager
- MPs travel should be arranged through a central civil service run travel office. The travel office would be able to negotiate discounts with hotels, train operators, airlines, etc. MPs would not need to claim - travel would be paid out of central funds. MPs choosing to drive would receive the equivalent of a (2nd class?) rail ticket.
- MPs living in or near London would be paid a London weighting to their salary reflecting the increased costs of living in London or having to pay to commute into and out of central London. These MPs would not be able to claim any other allowances. If they are 'outer London' and need to stay overnight, the Travel Office would book and pay their hotel bill.
- MPs not living within a commutable distance would be paid a fixed additional costs allowance on top of their salary, say £25,000 per annum. They would not be able to claim any other amounts, and no receipts would be needed. It would be for MPs to manage their 2nd homes within the allowance. This allowance would not be paid to MPs **entitled** to live in a grace-and favour government building (whether they were living there or not) unless it was occupied by another MP, nor to an MP living in a grace-and favour home which was the entitlement of another MP.
- For capital gains tax purposes, an MP's main residence would be the one in which their spouse/partner/children lived most of the time. If an MP re-designates their main home, the re-designation would be deferred for 1 year for capital gains tax purposes.

That's it. No receipts, no creative accounting, no Fees Office, no forms, no opportunity to milk the system. Total transparency, very simple, reasonable value for money. MPs would know how much they were getting and could plan and budget accordingly.

The level of MPs salaries, London weighting and additional costs allowance would be set by the Senior Pay Review Board, just as it is for judges, senior civil servants, etc.

I hope you find my suggestions worth considering.

Yours sincerely

J R Parlett

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19/06/2009