

To whom this may concern,

This is a blog posting I have recently made on the expenses issue. Please take into consideration these ideas;

"If I were to claim £50 for a £25 rail ticket I would be hauled into the office; if I were to claim from my bosses for my mortgage I would be laughed out the office." Rod Truan 15 May 2009

Originally MP's were not paid a wage. To make representation more effective, more egalitarian, more fair it was crucial for MP's to get a wage. £64,000 is adequate enough. This is way above the average wage that people earn in society. The argument that MP's should be paid the same as doctors and barristers does not hold up. The argument put forward is that you would get better candidates if the age was higher. This is not the case. Politics is not about making money. Politics should be more representative and if you raise the wage would you end up with more CEO's, top barristers and other high ranking professionals? Maybe. But I don't want that. Certainly paying higher wages would not give us better politics.

Solutions:

1) Pay MP's a wage - £64,000 is higher than most and you can live quite comfortably for that amount.

2) Allow MP's to be reimbursed for travel to and from Parliament and to other locations on Parliamentary or Constituency business. *(I was interested to hear a minister say that they would always travel Standard Class privately and First Class when on Ministerial business 'because I have my red boxes' - what message is that - that our Standard Class is a dangerous place to be?!)*

3) Set up a big area near Westminster where MP's can lay their heads (maybe 650 rooms). This may mean an initial outlay but the public would welcome it and it would be a permanent solution. To cover costs rooms could be let out when Parliament is in recess. If there are security issues with regards the latter solution then it is still cost effective as MP's are not paying for private rent.

4) All expenses to be clearly checked and audited and receipts required.

I thought of all of this in 5 minutes in my break at work. How long will it take an independent enquiry to decide upon some half baked, ill thought out proposals. I predict weeks and with lots of squabbling. Oh how easy it is to turn this into a complicated issue when really it isn't. Or maybe it is.

R Truan