

[redacted]

**From:** John Sills  
**Sent:** 13 October 2017 15:30  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Cc:** [redacted]  
**Subject:** Routinely resident

[redacted],

Hope the explanation below helps.

*Between April 2011 and March 2017 the Scheme rules allowed MPs to claim additional accommodation costs of up to £2,425 a year for each dependant staying with them, as long as they could certify that the dependant routinely resided at the property. This begged the question of what “routinely” meant in practice.*

*IPSA did not impose any strict definition on the meaning of “routinely”. This is because each MP’s family circumstances are different and we did not consider it appropriate to intrude on those personal circumstances. The Scheme in this period included a number of fundamental principles covering areas like probity, not seeking personal financial advantage, and value for money, to which we expected MPs to adhere. The principles also noted that arrangements should be flexible enough to take account of the diverse working patterns and demands placed upon individual MPs.*

*Notwithstanding the fact that there was no rigid definition of the meaning of “routinely”, the word has two common meanings in the English language. First it can refer to events and procedures that occur in a regular pattern. Secondly it can mean that they occur frequently. We considered that it was reasonable for MPs to make the judgement about whether a dependant stayed with them on a basis that met one or both of these criteria.*

*We recognised that it was difficult for us to regulate MPs’ claims for “dependant uplifts” on the basis of routine residence; and, as part of our aim to make the Scheme simpler and clearer, we decided, after public consultation, to remove the requirement that dependants should be routinely resident. This took effect in April 2017. The fundamental principles, which are also now much simpler, remain clear on matters of probity, financial advantage and value for money.*

[redacted] – is it worth sticking this in the policy log for future reference?

[redacted], whether this is worth circulating to Ops colleagues I leave to you.

John

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