

**FOI**

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**From:** Marcial Boo  
**Sent:** 14 September 2018 10:37  
**To:** Tom Brake  
**Subject:** RE: (Case Ref: TB91206)

Dear Tom,

Thanks. We currently have no way to regulate the staffing of pooled services (or other suppliers of professional services to MPs) in the way that we regulate the staffing of MPs themselves. Indeed the pooled services (or other suppliers) may raise data protection issues if we asked for information about individual employees and their salaries. So our focus is on the pooled services, and the MPs who subscribe to them, complying with the rules and principles of the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses.

Marcial

**Marcial Boo**  
Chief Executive

**Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA)**

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**From:** Tom Brake [mailto:info@tombrake.co.uk]  
**Sent:** 13 September 2018 14:58  
**To:** Marcial Boo <@theipsa.org.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: (Case Ref: TB91206)

Dear Marcial,

Thank you for sending this through.

One point you did not respond to was whether IPSA could decide to require the names of third parties employed through a pooled resource arrangement to be declared, if they were being paid above a particular threshold (like happens with Short money in some circumstances).

Could IPSA choose to request this?

Regards,

**Tom Brake MP**  
Liberal Democrat for Carshalton and Wallington

PS. Why not follow me on Facebook [www.facebook.com/brake](http://www.facebook.com/brake) or Twitter [www.twitter.com/thomasbrake](http://www.twitter.com/thomasbrake) to find out more about the work I do on your behalf.

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From: Marcial Boo  
Sent: 11 September 2018 14:57  
To: Tom Brake  
Cc:   
Subject: RE: (Case Ref: TB91206)

TB91206

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your email. I attach a reply. Do please feel free to get in touch if you would like to discuss.

Kind regards

Marcial

\*Marcial Boo\*

Chief Executive

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\*From:\* Tom Brake [<mailto:info@tombrake.co.uk>]

\*Sent:\* 07 September 2018 11:37

\*To:\* Marcial Boo

\*Subject:\* (Case Ref: TB91206)

Dear Marcial Boo,

- Allegations in relation to the funding and activities of the European Research Group

You will be aware of concerns held across the House of Commons and outside regarding the alleged use of IPSA funding claimed by a number of Members - it is suggested at least 60 - with total funds claimed for "research" in the hundreds of thousands of pounds. This funding is allegedly being funnelled to the European Research Group, a group I believe to be a hard-right, hard-Brexit 'mini caucus' within the Conservative Party that has a restricted and secret membership.

You will note this arrangement appears to be significantly different from the funding that is used for other pooled research facilities, which are open to all MPs and used by most political parties across both chambers.

Additionally, in recent days it has further been alleged that the ERG is working with Lynton Crosby and his staff to manipulate internal Conservative Party politics. I think it would be deeply inappropriate, and a serious misuse of public funds, for IPSA to be paying for Lynton Crosby or any of his associates to work on an ERG campaign to counter the Government's Chequers proposal.

I believe the group have serious questions to answer and IPSA has a key role in delivering transparency in the expenses system.

Could you advise us as to whether:

If IPSA funds are permitted to be claimed for research of this nature, what requirements exist around the registering of such claims, and the transparency required of the overall activities, funding and operations of closed pooled research services?

What a) the total amount of IPSA funding claimed for the ERG comes to and b) or other "European Research" broken down by the individual Member claiming it?

Whether the ERG or any of its members, staff or third parties paid through IPSA funding are registered in any capacity that would allow them the use of Parliamentary offices, phones, passes etc?

I also believe it would be in the public interest to require the ERG to declare any staff employed by them using IPSA funding, including third parties, and to report how many staff they employ within different salary bands, including the names of any staff members in the higher pay bands.

In the interests of transparency, I will be publishing this letter.

I look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Brake MP  
Liberal Democrat MP for Carshalton and Wallington

PS. Have you signed the petition to Save St Helier Hospital? Thousands of local people have already signed - visit [www.saveoursthelier.co.uk](http://www.saveoursthelier.co.uk) to sign the petition

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may pass on all or some of the information to agencies such as the DWP, HM Revenues and Customs or the Local Council if this is necessary to help with your case. Tom Brake MP may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues that you may find of interest. Please let him know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

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