

---

**1. Please use the space provided to suggest ways in which our guidance, website, bulletins and letters could be made more useful to you.**

---

Best are inquiries that address personal circs and where you can talk to someone.

Clearer, simpler, easier to use website please.

don't really look at them unless it's an expenses problem for me

easier to access

For below; it is stupid to have no contact with Ipsa when MPs are not in the chamber or in the mornings. The best time for MPs to contact Ipsa is in the morning when they are not busy NOT for 4 hours of the day when they are. Ft

Guidance and website can be difficult to negotiate

I get different advice at different times. It's always advisable to check 3 times. Payroll is appalling - I have received two emails on the same day from the same person saying different things after over two months of raising an issue.

I have real problems using the website and extracting information. It is time consuming, complex and unlike any other website or database I have come across. Please let us return to a paper based system.

IPSA's interpretation of its own rules seems to change without any reason. For example taxis from a station where there is no reasonable alternative used to be reimbursed and now are not.

IPSA's staff provide my office with an exemplory service.

It is not an easy website to negotiate - finding timesheets for example is not straightforward when you are perhaps using the site infrequently.

It is not very easily or creatively searchable, ie it does not look for 'likely' answers as google does

It would be useful if the changes in the annual guide were highlighted in yellow

Less is more.

letters need to respond to questions asked

Most of the guidance on website is out of date

MP's such as myself choose not to claim many expenses but the information is always focused on claims about accomodation, council tax, and a variety of information irrelevant to MP's such as myself. Anq queries I have about basic office costs always end up requiring a telephone call and then the advice is please put it in an email.

personal face to face explanations. Be human for a change and explain your actions and 'new' interpretations.

relate topics in guidance on website to the categories used when actually submitting claims

### Speaking to someone actually more helpful

The content on the website is important and useful but the website is not easy to navigate and could be much improved. It is not obvious what is there and not easy to find. Many times I have discovered I have done something one way only to discover later a much easier way existed or a form existed for the purpose.

The guidance we receive is too limited; I have repeatedly asked about how much I can spend on certain items or if I can purchase items or services only to be told that I have to claim then find out. This is extremely unhelpful. The information contained in the bulletins is very useful however difficult to find elsewhere. The website needs to be revamped to make it much easier to find the information required. I suspect this would also reduce the calls to IPSA.

The search function on the IPSA website is poor and hard to find relevant documents. IPSA Guidance is occasionally useful, but given the labyrinthine system it needs to be better. References to how to apply the guidance to specific claims would help. The so-called Help function when logged in and processing an expense claim is worse than useless - as admitted by IPSA staff when in conversation with them. Many of the search terms offered on the right of the page are irrelevant to functions that the system is offering. That is probably associated with the fact that the claim system itself is the least user-friendly piece of software it has been my misfortune to encounter in 22 years of working with computers. The tone of letters [Redacted] is high-handed and arrogant. It might encourage a mutually beneficial approach that would help MPs help IPSA do their job if [Redacted]. the truth is that i dont really engage with ipsa at all. it is clear that recovering that money you allow us to recover is just too time consuming. so i pay one of your former employees to do so.

The website search function could be improved, and more availability of forms for online completion for staffing etc

we want to follow the rules and they keep changing however we are notified please be consistent

### Website is confusing

Website is not very user friendly whilst the guidance can be confusing. The bulletins are generally useful whilst the letters being specific are of use on most occasions.

Website search facility not great, and what you need isn't always in the most obvious place e.g. staff forms and payscales, HR info etc.

you need to be much less bureaucratic and streamline the amount of work necessary to make a claim. It cannot make sense to spend more on administration than you are claiming on expenses!

---

## 6. How can IPSA assist you to make the most of the payment cards and direct payment options?

---

My office manager is probably aware of and has used the payment card for some more of these options.

a clear bulletin listing what is acceptable so that we can pin it to the office wall - some of these expenses are infrequent and it's easy to forget. Anything that avoids money going in and out of my personal bank account is an improvement. It can be very hard to juggle payments sometimes. We generally only purchase certain items at certain times of the month so that I can ensure my account does not go overdrawn.

a tutorial

allow direct payments to BT by direct debit - would save IPSA money and me time.

better communication with my office

brief summary of how to use the card and for what purposes it can be used?

Could you allow accommodation utilities to be paid by card?

Helpful info and training for staff - especially when proxies change, as the induction info is awful!

I am discouraged from using the payment card because of the long delay between using the card and having to submit receipts to reconcile use of the card which makes it very hard to manage claims for fear of making an error in using the system after so much time has elapsed between travel, for example, and reconciling the card. (It is rarely possible to know what time I will travel so it is rarely possible to use the payment card for my weekly travel and chose low fares). This could be resolved by allowing claims to match expenses incurred rather than require separation of expenses incurred on anyone journey, eg. taxi and train fares. This makes it very hard to keep track of claims - a symptom of the system being established for the benefit of its administrators I suspect. I use direct payments for stationery which works well. That should be extended to bespoke stationery as quickly as possible.

I am happier not using direct payment options

I am reluctant to use my payment card because IPSA's email reminders to reconcile claims regularly do not reach me and IPSA then threatens me with suspension of my card; the whole process is working badly.

I would use payment card but it means more admin time

Increase use to include rent (office and London accommodation) paid on payment card

keeping members up to date with all information. Perhaps simplifying the payment card reconciliation process.

List as simple and clear as the one in this questionnaire, clearly flagged up on your website

Make it simpler

mobile phone bills would be helpful also software

Rather than turn down claims for bills perhaps they could call MPs and advise them of the options to pay direct. I was unaware that these direct payments were possible even after several conversations with people who never mentioned this as an option.

Remove the much maligned expenses system completely and hence remove the bureaucracy inherent in the system and the need for an overly bureaucratic and financially expensive and inept organisation - IPSA. Paying MPs a monthly allowance to include salary, travel and accommodation etc., but not staff or office costs would cut down time wasted by MPs dealing with IPSA and reduce the burden of IPSA (£7MILLION + PA?) on taxpayers

Stop blocking the card

The limit is too low if you travel every week. It is also not recognised by a number of companies, ESP TV licence.

The payment card is great apart from the tedious work involved with the forms at the end of the month which are often duplicating the information. Great to have the card but any work you can do to simplify the claim form would be appreciated.

The use of credit card for all payments would greatly improve the scheme costs and efficiency. MP's would still provide invoices as they do at present and money could be clawed back if spending was not correct under the scheme.

There are some inexplicable exceptions to the types of bills that can be paid with the card. This wastes time and causes needless confusion

There have been many mistakes with my simplified payment arrangements for my office landlord that I have decided not to use that for anything else. It has made for more bureaucracy and difficulties not less. Getting it right would make a big difference to me.

Why can we not pay for data information commissioner by IPSA card

widen direct payments to cover car parking monthly fees etc

---

---

## 7. What changes to the expenses system would make it easier to submit your claims?

---

A contemporary system with efficient workflows.

A less clunky software system

A much simpler system for mileage claims

A paper based system and repayment within working days.

Able to use the card at more retailers. Amazon for example where we often buy our disability guides

as per previous answer... and the rules not being re-interpreted after 3yrs. Remove the much maligned expenses system completely and hence remove the bureaucracy inherent in the system and the need for an overly bureaucratic and financially expensive and inept organisation - IPSA. Paying MPs a monthly allowance to include salary, travel and accommodation etc., but not staff or office costs - would cut down time wasted by MPs dealing with IPSA and reduce the burden of IPSA (£7MILLION + PA?) on taxpayers.

Because my Proxy administers all my expense claimss

do away with the lot and set a figure aggregated on previous years costs

er... not expecting us to enter the data. a paper based system? somethign simple.

Even greater use of the payment card/direct payments

Get rid of all the different codes on your remittance advice notes (four different codes on each, only one of which is the actual IPSA form code and even that's disguised with seven extra digits) and put useful information on it, like which account it is being paid to so that I know whether to check my own account. It would also make things easier if the narrative notified to the bank said something other than just 'IPSA' and if the remittances didn't group different payments so that the totals that showed up on the bank account don't match the ones on the forms (meaning you have to open each remittance attachment to try to work out which one the item on the bank statement actually is). It would also be helpful if the emails the remittance advice attachments are attached to gave some information too, preferably the form code, so that you don't have to open every attachment to find out what it is even if it turns out to be an automatic payment you don't need to worry about. Also PLEASE allow more flexibility to proxies, for instance to generate staffing budget reports and see all the forms on the website, whatever stage they are at in the process. I know these contain salaries but it is our decision to allow one staff member to access these who manages our budgets and performs the function of an HR member anyway. Two golden keys would be good too - one for each office. And an easy look-up spreadsheet reports, one for each main IPSA budget heading, listing all expenses by form number, with notes fields for our use and the status of each claim would be good, although we've done this ourselves in our office.

Having not to fill on the time wasting reconciliation as the electronic statement has the information stated for all to see. All we do is duplicate an electronic sheet that is already transparent and accountable for the sake of it. Total waste of time.

I am having difficulty making a claim for office costs under the disability budget.

I find the mileage claim between constituency and London laborious to use. Why can't the system recall a particular journey, and we can just put the dates of that journey?

I have yet to see any information about my trainline claims for about last 6 months? A little concerned that no checking is required of these

It is slow, cumbersome, inefficient and unreliable,

It would help if IPSA didn't keep on losing paperwork.

Model system on standard practice in the business world and not require additional information or documentation where no real purpose is served e.g. Requiring tickets where details are available on credit card account.

Monthly timesheet rather than weekly. They demand too much paperwork with bills it is too time consuming to provide all of the copies they need. IPSA waste too much time on small sums of money that cost more to deal with in terms of time than they could ever be saved in cash, which suggests that IPSA is overstaffed.

More ability to use payment card

More effective communication when changes are made. They seem to be buried in reports but not easily identified by any other means. Make it more paperless.

More things payable on card, direct payment via Trainline

more trust on your part

none

Not all categories are applicable for all MPs - particularly those with no constituency office as they are London MPs. This leads to a compromise in the details of claims made and queries from IPSA

Online system is clunky. Receipts should be random spot check, not universal submission - at least up to a certain value.

Pay staff directly for services procured

Payment card should be usable for all claims. Where possible, payments should be automatic without the need to submit claims (e.g. subsistence for late sittings). Massive savings in time and admin could be achieved by moving to flat rate payments for things such as living away from home costs (I would suggest a flat rate payable at 75% of the amount that could be claimed otherwise)

Please could there be an extension to the three month claim period where it can be proved the expense was genuine.

provide a small allowance for incidentals so that small claims could be avoided

Really irritating and time consuming adding constituency station to every line of every travel claim. Why can't it just default to your home station? Everytime I need to go through several screens to search for [Redacted], whereas form should just default to that station.

Remembering arrangements already agreed. Eg use of rail ticket carnets or treatment of items on business centre invoices.

simpler reconciliation of card statement process.

## Stationary

The ability to speak to IPSA staff during normal working hours i.e. before 1pm would greatly assist in resolving queries and reduce the need to quadruple check everything. It would also bring IPSA in line with, frankly, every other organisation I can think of. When making a claim, for example for travel, I may want to claim for train ticket on PAYment Card taxi paid for by cash and mileage. It would greatly speed up this process if I can do so in one claim rather than completing three separate forms that are required today. The system should mirror the expenses incurred. The interface of the claims system is appalling. Menus could be greatly simplified and offer drop down options rather than having to wait for a pop-up box to load. A test of the system would be how long it takes a reasonably experienced person to get to grips with the expenses system. Today it is far, far to long.

the complexity of the system means that it is impossible to submit claims without staff so I am not convinced that it is secure

The main problem is monthly direct debits, which I have for accommodation for telephone, electricity, home insurance. I only get billed for some of these occasionally and yet the money goes out monthly. [Redacted]

The monthly mileage form is still dreadfully beaucroatic. Rather than listing all journeys individually, day by day, you could simply have a cumulative total for a whole week-end or, best of all, an allowance.

The most difficult and time consuming to do are all the small payments with the need to copy lots of small receipts for lots of small amounts of money.

The payment card forms need to be simplified. It is by far the most time intensive form that I complete with IPSA.

the process for online completion is still slow and repetitive despite the changes made. The requirement to print out receipts which are sent to me by email ( eg phone bill, utility bills) rather than forwarding or scanning is cumbersome

The requirement for printing off the barcode receipt and sending with invoices is t necessary. IPSA immediately get this barcode when claims are submitted online. Unnecessary duplication.

The website could be streamlined - still lots of clicks to print. Ideally not printing claims but having an easier to search on-line archive. It's so fiddly entering every single small claim line by line. The receipts provide information. Sometimes it's easier not to claim - this is presumably part of the reason for outsourcing to much of your admin to MPs directly.

unblock the card

when IPSA make a mistake and refuse a claim - it should not be up to the MP to resubmit, IPSA should be able to fix from their end when it is their mistake

---

---

## 8. Which aspect of submitting claims takes the most time?

---

ALL

All of it!!

All very time consuming. Correcting and identifying IPSA errors most time consuming

answering IPSA's inaccuracies.

Arguing with IPSA representatives when an item should get paid or not paid on the whim of an individual when the explanation has been used many time before and accepted.

Attempting to reconcile what we think we have spent with what you think that we have spent. You never respond promptly!

Collating invoices/evidence

Completing the claim forms as described above.

constituency mileage - too much detail required

Dealing with claims held up in the process where adequate evidence has been submitted but not in quite the exact form required .This is particularly aggravating where the evidence submitted would satisfy any test of reasonableness and is often in the end accepted but is rejected initially on the basis that no trust whatsoever can be put in MPs . A system built on maximum distrust ends up being very time consuming and expensive.

Dealing with small receipted items and inconsistency of advice from IPSa staff

Dealing with the website

everything. The system is hopeless

Filling in the forms and making sure I have the correct form for the claim - there are still some confusing criteria

Finding the right category

For me, reconciling IPSA forms, remittances, my bank account and the spreadsheet we have to set up ourselves to keep track of it all which we have to do in order to know what we're spending and plan expenditure for the remainder of the year. For my staff, I think it is using the website forms and in particular the lengthy process of dealing with forms that are returned.

having to use the elect facility for railway station for every row, mercifully using trainline has relieved me of that.

I started out not reconciling things. I am now having to reconcile things.

I used to be able to claim (for 35 consecutive months) my office electricity and phone service charge as a single invoice as that is how it comes in. Now I have been asked to break it down and itemise it into two separate claims. I also find calculating the precise mileage for every trip and the precise post code takes quite a long time every week. It also can be time-consuming to work out which of

my many claims for £10 for surgery rental has been reimbursed as IPSA aggregates payments a bit randomly.

inputting

Itemising claims such as mileage and having to input the same answer to different questions.

Mileage and staff claims

Mileage calculation

mileage details

Monthly mileage

Monthly mileage claims

overtime and printing copies of paperwork IPSA demand.

paperwork

Payment card forms - by a very long way.

photocopying, printing and chasing up original copies of tiny invoices such as meeting room hire from community centres. I do my own expenses personally so i get to do all the admin, which really is bureaucratic

pointless paper shuffling printing photocopying submitting - no de minimus etc - all a massive waste of time

preparing information to send with claims

Presumably costs relating to second homes. I do not have one.

Proxy time less now we have paid rather than expense only interns.

Rationalisation of travel paid for on credit card.

receipts for small items, chasing ipsa,

Reconciliation

Refreshing the form after each line

resubmitting

Reviewing the accuracy of IPSA's remittances and ensuring they are deducted from the correct budget.

See above re mileage which is the only thing I do myself. I think my office manager - who is away this week - used to find the itemising of petty cash items laborious but that this has now been improved? I know she would also prefer me to use train line for train tickets - which I will!

submitting a claim is a bureaucratic nightmare!

Tedious entering of data, sometimes with repetition Why not have standard claims to be recalled?

The computer system is fiddly and slow and each claim is separate. Printing and collating is an additional time factor which seems unnecessary with an on-line system. Dealing with silly queries like rude refusals - one for security measures for staff at the front-line. Not a quick phone call to check but an officious email which required a return email. [Redacted]. None of us want to talk about this aspect of our work in public or even in an FOIable email for obvious reasons - but we do need to be responsible employers and protect our staff. I had several sections of the police supporting me and nervous about me even travelling on public transport but IPSA queried security measures - one of which was very low cost and well within budget. IPSA is our trade body but it seems very detached. When you're worrying about staff who've faced aggression and attacks, your family who are victims in the home the last thing you want is a callous approach from IPSA. And it's so bureaucratic. On these very human issues a phone call would be friendlier at least. I get quite upset just remembering what my staff and family have been through and then IPSA write to me saying I'm spending public money inappropriately. I bet IPSA staff get security is they need it. And so they should.

The computer system not working, repeated attempts to use system.

the filling in of forms and printing out, reconciling the card statement. I have resigned myself to spending 2-3 hours each week, at the weekend, to prepare and submit claims.

The most difficult and time consuming to do are all the small payments with the need to copy lots of small receipts for lots of small amounts of money.

The pointless card reconciliation. A stupid waste of time for the sheer hell of it.

the poor computer system

The stupid requirement to enter every single mileage journey of a few miles for each individual date rather than being trusted to put in a monthly total figure

The system is slow, badly designed and unreliable. On 8 occasions I spent hours putting in claims only for system to hang and lose them.

the web site is not fit for purpose. too slow, screens freeze, partial screen displays i could go on!

the whole process: redoing, checking, dealing with IT issues, laboriously entering detailed information for pitifully small amounts of money that no professional organisation would countenance. Photocopying and filming all receipts and actions because of IPSA incompetence there is no quick bit and you must be very careful

Travel expenses

travel in constituency details

Trying to get hold of IPSA staff, just hanging on the phone waiting for some one to answer

Unnecessary duplication and the new hours of IPSA,s staff i.e. 1.p.m. to 5.p.m. is very inconvenient and caused delays.

Waiting for the online system to respond. Collating receipts.

Waiting for web pages to load

---

## 10. If you think any of IPSA's queries have been unreasonable, please explain briefly why?

---

[Redacted]. Rejecting a mobile phone bill on the grounds the full four pages of calls (I have an unlimited contract) was not included. Rejecting a mobile claim on the grounds I had obscured the number. Rejecting the invoice that had been paid for 35 months in a row on the grounds it now needed to be itemised into 2 claims in two different categories of office expense. Rejecting travel costs to Birmingham airport to join a trip of Holocaust Memorial. Rejecting a claim based on an invoice date, when the payment date was two days later. All of these claims involved me reclaiming and all were agreed on appeal [redacted]. [Redacted].

A mistake by IPSA told me my payment card had not been reconciled. It took days to resolve the error and the unreasonableness was manifested in the way your managers behaved in responding to me and my staff. A challenge to taxi claims approved every week for two years was unreasonable. Not only in challenging it in the first place but in the reaction to my staff explaining the challenge - officious but resolved with the now additional information required  
Asked for information which had already been provided

Asking me to amend staff contracts that had previously been agreed by IPSA

Asking to clarify what is already written on an electronic statement that quite plainly says what it is is just spiteful.

Because some of the information IPSA used appeared not to have been read properly and they then changed their position; having to repeat explanations for the use of the same service or expense - having to put it onto every form. Insisting on my not redacting items on a receipt, of which part was to be claimed, which were personal and absolutely nothing to do with my IPSA claim - then not paying any of the receipt even though the purchases were entirely proper.

Because you change the rules and have no concept of an MP's job whatsoever. You are autocratic and as bad as the Stasi. You make mistakes but refuse to admit them, instead claiming we make mistakes, when we just can't with the processes we follow to fill out your endless forms and provide receipts and proof.

Can't be sure of this without asking office manager but I rarely hear complaints from her about IPSA and she seems to always be able to get a quick answer when she calls.

Constant chasing for hard copy BT bills when previously billed online

diverted journeys

Documentation was either lost by IPSA or reminders to reconcile the payment card never received; it's also very irritating that you cannot talk to IPSA in the morning about problems

e.g. refusing legitimate claims due to IPSA staff not knowing rules

for example if one charges an Oyster card with one's ipsa card it is listed on the account as such a transaction and then it is referred back because of the absence of a receipt. What does possession of the receipt add to the audit trail. On machines you have to remember to press for a receipt - it does not come automatically and of course needs to be carefully retained while one is rushing off to a mainline station.

Frequent loss of original receipts sent to IPSA is especially irritating. Putting claims through wrong category by IPSA very annoying and time consuming..eg putting my office lease through as accommodation!!!!

I am unhappy with the arguments about my train fares.

I have been asked to provide information which is not stated as required in the scheme. This is in relation to visit to European parliaments. I believe that it would be better if IPSA approved the visit before it took place. Currently MPs have to risk hundreds of pounds not knowing whether IPSA will agree or not.

I have occasionally had claims where it seems that the IPSA staff member didn't read the Notes attached to the claim.

I have on more than one occasion been asked to provide information I have already provided. It is only when I have queried it that this has been acknowledged.

I have two examples; 1. A travel claim for a staff member was lodged using "travel from home office to Westminster". This was returned with an instruction to use an option that was not available. Since the problem was simply the use of the wrong drop down option (not obvious) then why waste almost half an hour when the drop down option could have been corrected by IPSA? 2. Numerous claims over three years for subsistence have been paid without an itemised bill (not least the vouchers from the restaurants here in Parliament). Then with no apparent change to the rules such a claim is rejected for lack of an itemised breakdown. This leaves an MP with a rejection on their record which is often used by political opponents and does not reflect the fact that previous identical claims have been paid. Very frustrating.

I only had one query ever but it was over £1 I couldn't ignore the query as it was possible that it would be reported in a way that would make me look dishonest but it must have cost all of us a great deal more than £1 to sort this out

I've had claims returned when i've already submitted the evidence twice - for small amount s too - don't return claims and initiative yet more work and bureuacracy - use some common sense

Including taking along time to sort out claims which were wrongly apportioned to me when in fact they were for another MP

Inconsistency - demanding information at validation whcih wasn't requested at claim. On the other, a completely illogical and self-evidently incorrect reading of the rules.

Inflexible, bureaucratic mindset. Takes no account of the cost of wasting Members' time.

Keep asking for repeat of information given in previous claims. Rejection of identical claim to ones which had been paid without query a number of times.

Many of the queries have covered matters for which an explanation was submitted at the point of claim.

my pa will advise, but there has been some inconsistency where what is allowed in one claim is not then subsequently allowed.

nit-picking

Requesting information which you had already been sent

Security was one. Taxis another. These are rarely used by me - even in pre IPSA days - but even with an explanation they have been queried - and my taxi use never goes over £80 a year. I do not claim for any other travel. I'm out of pocket on travel but no one looks at the whole. No credit for not spending taxpayers money. One improvement has been a more supportive approach if a form is submitted twice in error (usually related to an internet access problem).

See answers to question 9. Very frustrating when items are repeatedly queried under arrangements already agreed.

such a waste of time

The responses are inconsistent.

There is a lack of understanding about the nature of an MP's work and a refusal to accept that individual MPs run their lives in different ways. Far too much of my staff's time is spent dealing with IPSA and I have had staff reduced to tears by the frustration of dealing with you. The strong sense remains that you are there to punish MPs not to

They are for trivial reasons and take up too much time

They go out of their way to make things as difficult as possible

They have covered things like tube tickets paid for on the payment card, where it has been difficult to get a receipt but common sense could have told you that no fraud was taking place as the card statement showed London Underground as the receiver of the payment.

They have rejected mileage claims because of a problem they had converting their own spreadsheet. They have rejected late night taxis. They have got my direct payments to my landlord wrong every month since February

They have requested invoices when they have already been submitted

too many

When its 6.00 in the morning, wet, cold and you have just spent the night on an aeroplane, walking and struggling with a bag to use public transport rather than a cab seems unreasonable

While some queries were reasonable, it is not reasonable for the same query to come up again and again ( ie for regular direct debits for utility bills etc) There are also occasions when I have booked travel myself rather than via the travel office, to secure a better price. However the added work involved in making those claims and having them queried is not an incentive to do this

---

## 12. How could IPSA improve the service it provides in relation to your expense claims?

---

Advanced payments for large bills are terribly slow.

Answer emails much more promptly and answer the phone in normal working hours.

Apart from improvements to the website, it would help if the hours when IPSA staff will answer the phones could be extended. It is very difficult for MPs to call during IPSA hours, as these coincide with chamber business. perhaps a Friday morning in addition to Friday afternoon would be possible? Being willing to discuss face to face. Process more quickly so that I am not continuously owed money. Put more on advances.

direct payments to BT

Do not trust the system have to check that all claims are paid and the IPSA have not got my claims mixed up with other MP. also remittance notes not always sent so have to spend time cross referencing claims with banks statement. Also when you make a mistake you never apologise !

Faster processing

faster return

For example...IPSA delay informing me of money due eg on train fares.....slow response to queries...asking for money to reclaim twice for same item...

For the first few months of my appointment it took a number of months for expenses to be processed. This seems to have resolved itself now.

Have a less complicated system, one that actually reflects an MP's job and be more responsive and understanding. The situation whereby you refused to put up the overnight accommodation allowance, when London rents were rising by at least 8% per year, is just designed to make MPs suffer.

I have made arrangements with my bank which insulate me from IPSA's performance.

I have not checked the accuracy of IPSA's own work, but I am told by others that there is a degree of error in the IPSA processing of claims.

I try to do my expenses in the mornings so it would be helpful if the line was open then, rather than when the House is sitting.

Improve the payment card forms Be consistent!

IPSA does not currently offer any service in relation to my claims. It polices my claims and provides a staggeringly inefficient way to justify those claims and request payment. It could improve its approach to "customer service" overall and should behave as if it was less of a policeman and more of an administrative body. It could answer the phone before 1pm. Managers who email me as "Dear MP" about specific issues relevant only to my claims could start with using my name - for such individual queries it would be reasonable to be treated as an individual. That's what I do with my constituents and there are 62,000 of them not just 650. When an IPSA manager signs off an email with their name they should be prepared to engage in correspondence with me and my staff when asked to do so by in response, rather than pretend to be busy and avoid calls. The call-centre staff have been almost universally charming, helpful and knowledgeable. They are badly let down by their apparently phantom managers who demonstrate none of those qualities and hide behind

them. IPSA could in general make use of the telephone rather than standard emails. My staff in dealing with various queries have asked for a call back from IPSA on a dozen or so occasions in the last year - not many really. They have received that call back on precisely zero occasions. The system could save time with default settings. It knows who I am when I am logged in so it could default to the usual station for travel for example and non-London MP options in menus. It's as if each claim is a complete surprise and has never been made before when in fact most are very regular. When there is a challenge to a claim a phone call or personal email would help resolve it quickly rather than requiring a log in to the system and progress through an obscure set of menu options etc etc. It also help build a mutual sense of respect which in my experience in business and politics tends to help both parties get their job done more easily. IPSA gives the impression - not the call centre staff but as an organisation - that it believes MPs are contemptible and my and my staffs response is to feel a sense of dread and irritation before any engagement with it.

It can pay all claims within 5 days. That is from the moment it is submitted to being placed in the bank. Most claims take 20 days especially petrol. The claim is submitted on the 1st. It is looked at on the 5th. It goes through validation for 10th and then a remittance is given on the 15th and payment is on the 20th. It's a joke.

It is frustrating having to wait to call in the afternoon. Often the only time I have to deal with something is the morning, so it takes a while til I am able to get in touch. E-mailing is often useless as I don't get a reply or have to chase repeatedly to get a response. I have waited over a month on occasion to get a response to an e-mail. Sometimes the answer is helpful, but sometimes it is just a rehash of what is on the website, which frankly I have already looked at before e-mailing!

it is our money that we are trying to recover. i loose hundreds of pounds a year because of the 3 month rule

It would be helpful if remittances which do not arrive in a continuous flow back were more predictable in terms of timescale -at times it can seem there is stockpiling going on - but more usefully it would help if repayments were not a simple lump or occasional sum but unpacked so that one could see item by item reimbursements

Let me ring in the morning

no system for making repayments that I am aware of

Over the past year, IPSA has recalculated budgets on countless occasions without telling us. It wastes incalculable amounts of time.

Paper based system and faster repayment.

Please stop us having to pay up front for so much and pay more suppliers direct. It is so improper to have so much taxpayers money swilling through my own bank account. I've had to arrange an overdraft in case of problems and am worried that I will have to use it and that this will affect my credit rating. The bank was under the impression I was a big spender. We must separate personal and business expenses.

Reconciliation forms should be one per claim for ease of identification. They should not be aggregated.

Remove the much maligned expenses system completely and hence remove the bureaucracy inherent in the system and the need for an overly bureaucratic and financially expensive and inept organisation - IPSA. Paying MPs a monthly allowance to include salary, travel and accommodation etc., but not staff or office costs would cut down time wasted by MPs dealing with IPSA and reduce the burden of IPSA (£7MILLION + PA?) on taxpayers. Act like humans who want to help and assist MPs in their job. You just don't and haven't done for over 3yrs now. You still have no backbone as an organisation.

reply quicker

Repayments I have made (which have been IPSA's errors) have never been allocated back to my budget until I have called several times; in fact this has caused the wrong figures to be published for my expense claims and has looked like I went over budget when I did not. Recently I had a claim that went unpaid for 4 months. This with other unpaid claims caused me financial hardship. I contacted IPSA to say that I had no money at all, and it took 12 days before I was given any payment, despite contacting IPSA 3 more times in this period. I do not think this is acceptable.

Respond much more quickly and accurately to queries. I have been left waiting several weeks even for an acknowledgement.

Some claims are processed in a week or so, others take more than a month with no queries from IPSA to explain delay. As this money is paid from our personal finances, there should be minimum delay in reimbursement once a claim has been made

speed up repayment as out of pocket by large amounts for many, many weeks

Speed up the process. Don't always get e-mail saying claim has been send back for more information so only discover there is a problem when I realise the claim hasn't been paid and go in to system to find out why not. It means I keep having to check up on claims, and have to keep a very close eye on what has been paid and what hasn't.

streamline the accounting package to make it much easier and less cumbersome to claim.

system has gone from too lax (fees office) to overly time consuming and

The current system is unsustainably costly and burdensome to administer. A much simpler system is required, whenever possible based on a flat payment, as in, for example, Germany.

The notification that a payment has been/is about to be made appears detached from what the payment is for, which then requires a check-back that is unnecessary. The notification also does not appear to distinguish between payments made TO me and payments made ON MY BEHALF to a supplier. Again that would appear simple to correct by a slight variation in the way the notification is worded, and it would save further back-checking (and when standing payments are first initiated would avoid confusion and/or non-payment due to misunderstandings).

This year IPSA sat on 1450 pounds recovered from my landlord and owed to me for 4 months because they couldn't decide on the accounting treatment. I was personally out of pocket for this item. Pay the money THEN decide on your internal processes.

---

## 15. How could IPSA improve the service it provides in relation to payroll services?

---

Answer emails and comment in something less than a month would be nice

Better people

Don't know seems ok to me

Have a website that works. I have been sent a link to my staffing budget which I have yet to be able to access. I have given up trying.

Having a dedicated IPSA member of staff responsible for ensuring that IPSA's increasingly complex rules are followed, while this cumbersome system is in place.

I can't work out how to get any useful information out of the staff report. If I had more time and it was the afternoon, I could ring IPSA and get someone to talk me through it, but I rarely have the time! I can only work out how to see a total amount paid out every month for all staff when what I want is a breakdown by staff member, as used to be available from the Fees Office. I feel I have far less information about staff payments than I used to, which means that if there were any errors I wouldn't be able to pick up on them.

I think the budget reports are excellent

I think the information given this year about whether there will be a budget increase, and the possibility pay rises for staff, has been a bit confusing.

improve paperwork when hiring

IPSA should calculate the staff budgets in the event of new employee or increase of salary for existing

it is a complex spreadsheet to get and it makes it hard to predict what salary you could offer new staff

IT on staff budgets is complicated

I've never managed to get staffing report to work

make it easier to access

Make it reliable

Make it simpler to use.

Make the budget easier to access!

make the staff budget report work

more advance notice of deadlines for staff bonuses etc

More up to date data quicker as reports are out of date sometimes weeks behind

n/a

n/a

na

no opinion

not certain so no answer

Nothing to change

online forms or accept forms that can be emailed

Outsource them.

Posting a monthly report showing amounts paid and remaining budget.

Provide an online service to make changes to payroll.

Re-introduce all day phone-line

send a letter or email each month with spend to date against budget. H

send me a note on who to contact

simplify the way in which to claim mileage reimbursement so you do not have to put in each individual day

Staffing budget report is very complex and difficult to download

System keeps crashing. Payroll have paid staff twice some months or not at all others. They are unable to answer questions and very, very reluctant to meet.

The on line timesheets take forever to complete

The staff budget report is badly set out. It ought to be simply to project staff costs when thinking of hiring. It isn't.

the time sheets have worked well where used. However the staffing budget is not always up to date - particularly regarding contingency

There is a lack of flexibility in the relationship between the job descriptions/job actually done/ability to set pay rates.

they should be current not a month out of date

We have used our own timesheets for one part-time member of staff because the IPSA ones looked too inflexible and are difficult to access. The staffing budget report is pretty clear but difficult to find in the first place and not as clear as it might be.

---

**17. [Which of the following, if any, were reasons for not claiming a business cost or expense?]**

---

**If you selected other, please provide further details.**

---

1. Environmental reasons - I haven't claimed for my rare use of my private car as I believe in incentivising public transport use (including my own) 2. I don't claim the daily food allowance as I think it has proved unacceptable to the public.

Amongst other things, I never claim for food and drink as I don't want details published. This costs me a lot of money.

As a Minister, I have claims that are 100% necessary to allow me to do my job and you refuse to reimburse those claims.

budget limits

For small amounts do not claim because cost IPSA more to administer not a good use of tax payers money

Have received mixed advice from IPSA. Compared with colleagues who has received a range of different advice so was not confident that I would be able to claim. It's costing me a lot of money.

I am concerned that claims approved by IPSA will subsequently be regarded as "unacceptable" or that it would be implied by others that a claim is based on some kind of deceit. Where there is any doubt in my own mind, I do not claim.

I do not trust IPSA so I minimise my exposure. I also do not want to spend taxpayers' money.

I dont claim food even when I am entitled as we get slammed by the press and it is simply not worth the abuse

I don't ever claim for mobile/ Internet use, even when I travel abroad and I need to stay in touch with the office - many hotels charge for wifi, and even receiving texts, retrieving voicemails from people who don't know you're abroad can be expensive. Data roaming is very expensive but often necessary to keep up with emails. I don't have paper billing for phone, etc, or even an email - you have to look on their websites - so claiming would be complicated.

i don't really bother with IPSA. It is easier to have outside interests to subsidise my parliamentary duties than deal with IPSA and claiming for expenses

I dont think ordinary commuting should be claimable

I don't want to claim for everything

I have been confident that ipsa would accept the claim but having to explain a non-standard claim where the sum was not considerable and where to and fro-ing could be anticipated made it seem not worth the candle . The notes section on claims is helpful because it enables one to explain a claim where it may not be totally clear.

I have not submitted several claims which came to me from my staff as outwith the timescales and I did not wish to have the hassle of explaining why they were late. Similarly I have not claimed for subsistence payments for my satff when they have been in parliament for training as the process/rules appear unclear

I haven't claimed any food allowance or petty cash

i should also say here that i have paid many hundreds of pounds out of my own pocket as running a london and 2 constituency offices is not possible on current budget

I was over the 3 months deadline and couldn't be bothered to argue about it!

In common with a number of members, I continue to pay mortgages on property in London and the constituency when I would be entitled to claim rent for a flat. Essentially I am saving the tax payer a considerable sum by paying my own 'expenses' out of taxed income. IPSA may want to consider whether an optional 'flat rate' payment at a lower level than the rent which could be claimed might encourage more members to save the tax payer money in this way.

IPSA refuse to defend MPs expenses so I do not claim for about £100 per month as there is a lack of education from IPSA on what MPs expenses are.

Life is too short

Local mileage and parking, under a value of c,£3.00, on ground of too much admin for a small claim.

Local newspapers delight in highlighting charges for a few pounds and the system plays into their hands highlighting in minute detail every such claim. No-one recognises such fees add up and are fair.

Many MPs are aware which of their colleagues claim which aspects of expenses, or which they don't - it varies due to circumstances. Many do not claim all at all for some aspects: be that subsistence, hospitality, mileage or rent etc. that they are perfectly entitled too but the system in place is too time consuming and complicated and not worth the effort to go through regularly whether on a weekly or monthly/b/tri monthly basis, in some areas no matter what amount can be claimed - it just isn't worth the hassle. Analyse the amounts an MP could have claimed, but didnt and publish that league table and total - with some reasons why it is so big. You cannot claim the money isnt required, but it is reality that MPs are subsidising their roles despite the other financial pressures we have IPSA to thank for... do you get it yet?

Missed the three month deadline. My fault really but as no one would lose out as long as it is within same year can nt see purpose of three month rule.

my staff often dont bother to recover work related rail fares saying it is too difficult and time consuming

Strictly some of these reasons are connected, because a small claim would take to long I haven't claimed them. There are other claims that I haven't made because they are too old. Just because something is over three months old is no reason to reject it. Believe it or not my priority is serving my constituents not getting claims completed.

The allowances are inadequate and do not cover the full scope of an MP's work - particularly the 0% overnight accomodation rise whilst Central London rents were rising at 8% pa. It cost me about £1500 pa on this, and other areas, just to do my job.

The fact that even rejected claims are published, no matter if they are done in good faith does lead me to hesitate to claim some items

the rules don't allow all of what are real costs of doing the job.

unable to locate receipt

What I dont claim for is meals on late night sittings, simply because I am not sure that this is appropriate and I would not want to be highlighted as someone who claims

**18. Please use the box below if there are any further comments you would like to make about IPSA's administration of the *MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses*.**

---

Access to ipsa staff would be helpful An apology is in order when IPSA make a mistake , or lose an original receipt, try to reclaim twice monies due, put claim through incorrectly.

All dealings with IPSA are necessarily overhead to be minimised. I am grateful I do not need or have a second home. There is no sign that IPSA appreciates that politics is categorically different from both business and official service. We are not officials or indeed employees. We are not here to administer but to lead and we should do so as citizens. Finally, there is little sign that IPSA seriously wishes to rebuild the reputation of Parliament. IPSA appears more concerned with its own reputation for holding MPs to account. Let us not forget that the previous shenanigans were as a result of Parliament avoiding settling the issue of pay openly. Where is the proactive defence of MPs? Perhaps this issue will change with a change of board.

as someone who is claiming for accomodation in the north of the country rather than london, Ipsa seem ot have little understanding of conditions outside of London.

Be friendlier! The call centre staff are friendly on the phone but letters are officious and unhelpful in tone. Payroll is inept and also have lied to me. Comparing notes with colleagues we have received different advice and I have been told absolutelty no, another colleague received a yes on the same issue. I have not confidence in them. They take up ridiculous amounts of time and advice is worse than inconsistent. I have been reduced to tears and so have colleagues. I'm all for transparency but why we ever moved payroll to IPSA I don't know. Why don't you outsource the process to another body and stop pretending you give advice. It would be cheaper and a better service. YOu cost far too much anyway.

Collecting in, scanning and storing every single receipt - right down to the most trivial level - seems a very onerous and largely pointless exercise.

I am likely to stand down in 2015 due to IPSA's handling of pay and expenses. The public nit picking makes us all feel like greedy criminals. IPSA seem to have no concept of the job or comparibilities. For example MPs standing down will be expected to spend 2 months winding down their office for no pay. Tell me another job where that happens?

I am pretty cross that I have just had to give up the small one bedroom flat I have been renting as an MP on and off for eight years which was within the accommodation budget under the old system, has been borderline under the new one and is now too expensive for it because IPSA gave virtually no increase at all in the budget for accommodation this year despite the fact that London rents are obviously rising and my landlord wouldn't accept no increase yet again. I think this allowance is now wholly unrealistic. On one major estate agent website I found nothing at all in central London within the IPSA limit. Because you don't allow the virement of expenses from one budget to another I can't even subsidise it by reducing expenditure elsewhere. I am now having to waste time looking for really basic studio accommodation further from parliament in central London which just means less time working when I'm here and more travelling to the flat and back. I suppose I could ask my PA to look for hotel accommodation for me every week but having tried this for a period, it is unreliable in peak season and takes more of her time (or mine if I did it every week) and often can't be reliably booked in advance because of changeable parliamentary business. I could move further out but that is yet more time and expense travelling and since I commute at least six hours a week already to get here in the first place I rather resent having to spend even more of my week travelling instead of doing what is already a very demanding job.

I am very concerned about the cost of the IPSA operation.

I am very supportive of the scheme with only two specific and one general concern; 1. Payment card forms are far too complicated and make using the card a pain 2. Consistency and not blaming an MP when IPSA treat an identical claim in a different manner. Many of us are concerned about our reputations and find a rejected claim to be a big issue. Such a claim resulting from a change of emphasis from IPSA is deeply frustrating and more than any other issue creates a distrust of the system. On a more general point I find the publication of IPSA information to be damaging to an MP due to the lack of context provided by IPSA. For example, both myself and another colleague were slaughtered in the press for claiming first class travel whilst another local MP was portrayed as a saint for his minimal claims. A few weeks later when further information was published it transpired that the 'saint' had the highest car travel claim in the region and thus he was slaughtered and we were the heroes. Thus we were all abused in our local press simply because IPSA provided no context. This fosters a degree of resentment of the organisation that is damaging and could be avoided if there was a little thought given to the consequences. Despite the above I stress that I support the intentions of the system and apart from the payment card forms it is much easier to use than it was in 2010 and I have very few complaints about slow payments which were a blight during the first few months.

I believe ipsa have made great progress in being more helpful with queries. However, there are still some aspects which seem petty and time consuming.

I dealt with someone on the phone recently who was really good.

I feel that IPSA offers a very poor service where MPs have children particularly when travelling and seem to have very little understanding of the role MPs play and the practicalities of performing the role.

I have been constantly amazed how often IPSA has managed to lose paperwork or provide completely contradictory advice.

I know you are trying to be helpful but the failure to have a point of contact and inability to communicate clearly makes me feel like my constituents who struggle with faceless organisations. IPSA could learn a lot by being transparent and approachable.

I object strongly to you wasting time and money on surveys of what we should be paid.

I repeat my plea that the phone lines should be open in the morning too

I would repeat my plea for a small allowance, with the emphasis on small, for incidentals that could be claimed without the need for inputting into the system or needing to provide invoices.

If there is no progress in improving the cost of running IPSA by simplifying the processes and trusting the MP more, IPSA should be closed down. Why on earth isn't a simple spreadsheet sufficient?

Improvement to website in terms of speed and loading times. Longer availability of phone lines. Update website to run on googlechrome.

Increase of payment card use; Reverse the hours of validators availability for guidance. N.B. This is the most negative change IPSA has made; Better feedback from validators on reasons for delays in claims validation. Stop the inconsistency of dealing with claims. send all claims back if MP,s err in submission. registering a refusal before discussing a claim with the MP should not happen.

IPSA assumes that I can find the time to read each and every bulletin and guidance note produced which are often too long and not clearly set out or wellwritten. I simply cannot keep up with all of the info and changes and rely on my proxy to keep me informed which on the whole works. But I have from time to time missed a deadline by a day or two and consider the utter inflexibility of IPSA on these occasions to be intolerable as the claims or requests are still completely valid and the money is there to meet them. Also the inability to be able to speak to an IPSA official with decision making status at reasonable notice is quite unacceptable.

IPSA does not see its role as supporting MPs in performing their duties. It places its own processes above the responsibilities of MPs. It does not understand the demands and expectations of constituents and has interfered with the relationships MPs have with the people they represent. It is not the role of IPSA to dictate to MPs how they should do their job. We have elections through which electors judge whether MPs are providing value for money it is not for IPSA to guess what constituents think on these matters. Many inner city MPs have very heavy caseloads and IPSA should allow them extra resources if they require them. I calculate that I have paid approximately £500 in the past year out of my own pocket which IPSA has either refused or I have failed to claim due to the three month cut off. The system is designed to suit IPSA not the busy lifestyles of MPs. I have had a claim refused despite other claims for the same item being paid in the past without IPSA demanding extra paperwork. The inconsistency and incompetence is unacceptable.

IPSA is a very difficult and, at times, unpleasant service for MPs to use. It is far too time consuming and fails to adequately compensate MPs for expenses incurred in pursuing their job. I was not caught up in the expenses scandal but, since your arrival, it now costs me about £1500 per annum to remain an MP.

IPSA need to defend what the system is better. The recent reports of "business" travel was a nonsense as it depends on which airport you travel from that determine the categorisation on the receipt. IPSA left individual MPs to defend that and this is totally unacceptable. IPSA need to be clearer on the system and what is for the support of MPs. My local newspaper reported that my expenses last year were the equivalent to a pre tax salary of £300,000 a year. The IPSA response was no comment. Totally unacceptable.

IPSA seems to be a very bureaucratic and expensive organisation existing to pay relatively small sums to a small number of people. Any business would manage this function with a tiny fraction of the cost and establishment.

it is a fantasy on your part to suggest that mps do not have to put their hands into their own pockets for work related costs. unfortunately ipsa are now as afraid of the press as mps are.

It is still too cumbersome and requiring of more effort than should be necessary

It is too detailed and complicated and does not reimburse MPs for the true range of additional costs of being an MP.

It still feels as if IPSA has been set up to punish MPs for the excesses of the last Parliament not to recompense them fairly for the expenses of doing the job. All MPs do the job slightly differently and IPSA's rigid rules structure does not allow sufficient flexibility and is far too aware of public and press reaction to treat MPs fairly.

It would be very helpful if IPSA were to receive calls in the mornings It would be helpful if decisions could be made in advance of expenses being incurred Rules are not always clear, eg claiming taxi fares Improve the software system

It would help if decisions could be more consistent. If the claim is out of the usual it can be very difficult to get an answer from the helpline.

ludicrously top heavy and bureaucratic.

My only complaint is that sometimes IPSA steps over into acting like the employer of my staff

My staff (who handle all this) have highlighted how pleasant and helpful the staff are at IPSA. Indeed, they enjoy speaking with the staff. Where I have had any experience of IPSA, I have also found them both helpful and intelligent, and extremely personable. One observation is to have limited periods of the day for contact, but my staff seem pretty relaxed about this, so this is merely an observation as opposed to criticism. A second is that being a complete luddite with regard both expenses and IT, were I handling this myself I might have a different comment. But since my staff are more competent than I in both these areas (both proper IT training and trained bookkeeper), I take their advice regarding IPSA and they consider the service efficient, personable and well run.

NONE

None.

On balance i am pleased with the service I receive from IPSA

Pay the expenses so that we can pay our bills on time. I have had to pay fines countless times waiting for reimbursement. All other corporations are within 5 days and not 20. Pay taking into account of weekends. Have staff available 9 to 5 and not 1 to 5 as this is just inoperable to the MPs. Stop asking stupid questions that are not covered in the handbook like give more details of your distances when claiming travel. It is not in the handbook so why ask as what we do is confidential and would be a human rights case if we were not MPs and fearful of the press. Ditch the brainless reconciliation of what's blatantly obvious on a credit card statement. It makes no sense and is a waste of time to those that are running the country. What is it all for? Have a complaints system for MPs that we can address quickly and efficiently instead of going through committees. When there is a question that is answered pay immediately instead of waiting another period for payment. I have had times where the claim has timed out and had to be reapplied for due to Ipsa procrastination. Most of all play by the rules of other corporations and pay on time.

PHONING ONLY AFTER 1PM IS UNREASONABLE

Please can we have a paper based option so I never again have to log into your website!

Please have a phone line open from 9-5

please improve the speed and efficiency of the website, it wouldnt be tolerated in the private sector

please make the monthly payment scheme as easy as possible for the regular things like mobile phones. Good luck with increasing MPs pay, I think we are all going to be damned for it...even though it is the right thing to do.

The administration is over bureaucratic but at least it works. Only the Auditors can tell us if it is good value. My main complaint is that I am spending over £8,000 per year out of my own pocket as the rules don't permit reimbursement.

The claims system is such a poor piece of software it would be laughable if it were not so serious and time consuming. It should be replaced with something less complex. It smacks of being built by engineers for engineers (admirable people) not for users. Some simple improvements such as using the same reference number for a claim that is returned rather than creating another one, improving menus and choices, and speaking to the human beings who put the data in would be sensible interim steps.

The computer system is very cumbersome. The number of keystrokes just to make and print a claim, then we have to make a copy, file it, send it to you, match the incoming payment with the claim, make the payment etc. Payments are made without a reference to what the claim was for and so we then have to track back. As expenses are so sensitive, I do not want to burden a staff member with the responsibility of doing it and so I spend 10 hours a month of MP time operating the system. Decisions to reject have been inconsistently applied and invariably overridden when I appeal. Monthly direct debits are not easy to handle as there is no current invoice and if these could be done as an annual claim of 12 payments that would save a lot of time. Similarly, small weekly rental payments to advice surgeries - it would be very helpful if they could be paid direct. More councils are letting you park by mobile phone which means there's no receipt to claim against for parking.

The fact that staff training has to go through an MPs personal bank account and cannot be put on the payment card is ludicrous - all expenses are far as possible should be paid directly by IPSA or on

the card - nothing should go through personal accounts

The lack of a telephone service during normal business hours is a real pain! It is not always convenient to have to wait till 1 pm.

The majority of the work on my claims is done by my proxy as the whole set up is so unbelievably tedious as set up. That's also a reason for me choosing not to pursue claims such as car mileage out of constituency on parliamentary business, where the trouble and inconvenience has led to me deciding to write it all off regardless. BASicaly I've opted out of engagement. Which saves you money, and drives my proxy mad that I'm not claiming as I should.

The process is still much too complex with lots of different systems for different sorts of claims requiring numerous passwords etc

The system is getting far worse. Claims take ages to be paid. Just hopeless

We need a good scheme that encourages confidence all round but a good scheme cannot be one which is based on maximum distrust but on a principle of reasonableness

When I have dealt with IPSA staff they have been helpful and friendly. It is however too difficult to get hold of someone quickly to make a quick but relevant query when you are in the middle of a claim. Longer opening hours of the telephone hotline would be very useful

While there have been improvements in the scheme, I feel that the process is still cumbersome. My Office Manager still uses a spreadsheet to reconcile office costs on an ongoing basis as it takes too long for the system to update online, and there has been confusion over which financial year costs are apportioned to - IPSA seems to depart from normal accounting conventions in this regard.

Why wont you remove the much maligned expenses system completely and hence remove the bureaucracy inherent in the system and the need for an overly bureaucratic and financially expensive and inept organisation - IPSA. Paying MPs a monthly allowance to include salary, travel and accommodation etc., but not staff or office costs would cut down time wasted by MPs dealing with IPSA and reduce the burden of IPSA (£7MILLION + PA?) on taxpayers. No? It would free up MPs to do the job they were elected to do - most notably for those in marginal or particularly 'trying' seats where the focus is on servicing constituents and dealing 24/7 with issues. Time is the commodity that is in such short supply that anything that cuts down on 'wasted' non role essential activity would be so very welcome and gratefully received. What reasons have been used internally to self justify not proposing the c£15k rise in MPs base salary, mooted openly in early 2011 and recently resurrected - two years later. What prompted that decision and actually what is the true base point of what an MP should be paid in IPSA's view when compared to other similar level professional roles? Dare you to make that figure public... don't wuss out and 'do a consultation' man-up!