

Findings from the Annual Survey of MPs and their Staff

June 2025



Findings from the Annual User Survey of MPs and their Staff

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Survey overview

Introduction

1. The Annual User Survey of MPs and their Staff is held each year as a way for IPSA to understand how well we are meeting the needs of our customers. Feedback obtained through the survey, and other consultations held throughout the year, is used to assess and improve the services we provide.
2. Our aim is to rebuild trust and confidence in the use of public money to support the work of MPs, so that MPs can focus on what really matters – fulfilling their parliamentary role – facilitated by an efficient, regulatory service. This is reflected in IPSA's new regulatory principles and our objective to evolve our regulatory approach.
3. IPSA has implemented a number of improvements to its services based on customer feedback, as part of a key initiative within the Transformation Programme that commenced in 2021 and was completed in 2023, and later as part of the Improving IPSA Programme, which is aimed at delivering a more effective and proportionate regulatory model. Results showed that the programmes have had an overall positive effect – respondents who rated IPSA's performance as good or very good increased from 34.8% in 2020 to 66.3% in 2024-25. Most notably, MPs' Office Managers and 'proxies' (nominated members of staff that are able to engage with IPSA on an MP's behalf) who rated IPSA's service as good or very good increased from 56.7% in 2020 to 77.5% in 2023. However, this slightly decreased again to 76.8% in 2024-25.
4. The feedback received indicates that there are still areas which require improvement. 11.4% of respondents still rate IPSA's performance as poor or very poor (a slight increase from 2023's result of 9.9%). However, the proportion of MPs who rate our service as good or very good has increased significantly from 31.6% in 2023 to 48.4% in 2024-25. Analysis of responses to the free-text questions highlights key areas for improvement, many of which reflect concerns raised in previous annual user surveys. We will continue to take this feedback into account as part of the Improving IPSA Programme and our ongoing transition to a new regulatory approach.

Survey details

5. The survey is usually held at the end of each year. However, due to the 2024 General Election, the survey was held from 17 March to 18 April this year, which allowed us to gain insight into our performance during and after the election. The timing of the survey is reflected in the tenure of respondents: 62% of respondents were new (in their role less than 1 year), 9.6% of respondents were in their role between 1 and 5 years, and 28.3% of respondents were in their role for more than 5 years.

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6. We received 332 responses in total, with 62 responses from MPs, 190 from MPs' Office Managers/proxies and 80 from other staff members. Comparing this to the response rate from 2023, we can see that there has been a slight increase in participation: there were 294 respondents last year, of whom 38 were MPs, 138 were MPs' proxies and 118 were other staff. However, the response rate remains low when compared to 2021 and 2022 results (459 and 418 responses respectively).
7. In attempts to boost participation rates and enhance the reliability of the data collected, we maintained a regular, well-advertised presence at Portcullis Hub during the period the survey was live and made paper copies available to MPs and staff who visited. We would like much higher participation for future surveys and will take some time to assess how we increase accessibility and engagement going forward.
8. It is important to note that the participation rate represents only a small proportion of the total customer base invited to complete the survey—just 9.5% of MPs and 6.6% of staff members responded. While this limits the statistical representativeness of the findings, the responses still provide valuable insights into individual customer experiences. These insights help us identify where our services are most effective and where improvements are needed. IPSA continues to engage with MPs and their staff through a range of consultations, customer forums and other activities throughout the year to build a deeper understanding of their needs and the challenges they face.

Key findings & satisfaction ratings

9. Similar to results seen in previous years, overall satisfaction ratings have improved. 66.3% of customers rated IPSA's performance as good or very good. This is only a slight increase compared to last year's figure of 65.3%, which shows there are still areas for improvement in IPSA's service delivery. MPs notably have a lower average satisfaction score compared to their staff.

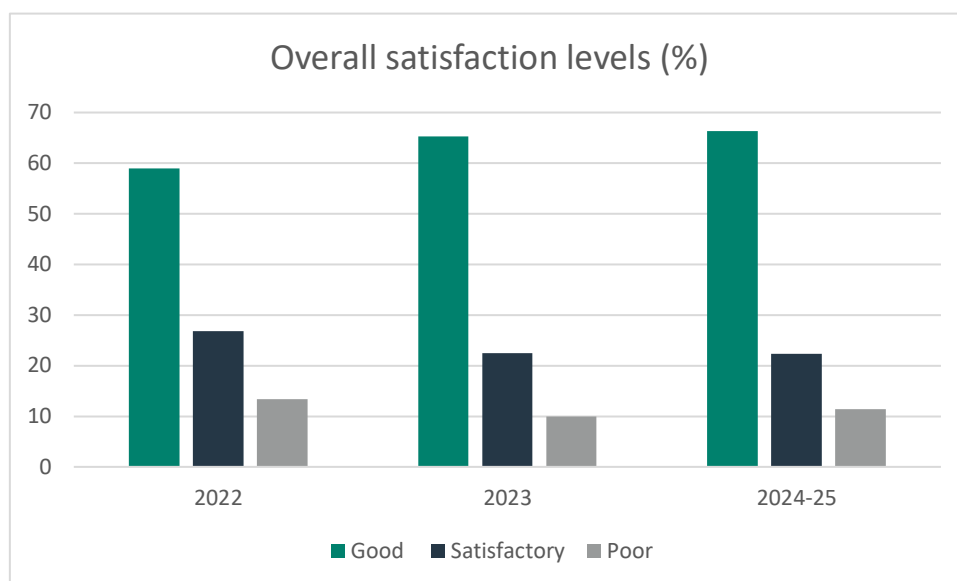


Figure 1

10. Feedback from the survey offers a deeper understanding of the specific concerns raised by MPs and their staff, as well as the improvements they would like to see. A review of the written responses to the question 'how could IPSA improve further' revealed following key themes:
- **IPSA Online** – In-line with past feedback, respondents think that the online budget management system is not user friendly, intuitive, nor efficient, making submitting claims a demanding and time-consuming task. Respondents have called for a system-upgrade to make the process easier or for IPSA to replace the system completely.
 - **Customer service & consistency of advice** – Respondents would like better access to their named Account Manager and Payroll Officer, especially by phone, faster email response times, and more consistent advice.
 - **Online Guidance** – The online guidance could be made clearer, especially the step-by-step guides. Navigation of the website is hard, and guidance is thus sometimes difficult to find, which could be rectified by improving the search function.
 - **BACS & direct debits** – Respondents want the option to make BACS payments and set up direct debits so the payment of regular costs such as utility bills is easier and less of an administrative burden. Preferably, IPSA should handle the direct payment of invoices centrally.
 - **Budgets** – Similar to past feedback, respondents think that the IPSA budgets are inadequate, most notably the staffing budget. Offices feel understaffed and respondents believe that staff are underpaid for the work that they do. Budgets

Survey overview

should also be decided earlier in the year so offices can plan more efficiently. Budgets are also considered too tight for accommodation and office rent.

11. Other notable themes include calls to improve payroll tools on IPSA Online, increase engagement with offices, including organising more face-to-face events/meetings, improve general communications, and offer more support when looking for and securing a constituency office.
12. We are also pleased to have received a large amount of positive feedback again, especially from MPs' Office Managers and proxies. When asked what IPSA does well, respondents overwhelmingly commented on the service provided by our front-facing teams – respondents thought IPSA staff were accessible, helpful, and quick to respond. Respondents also commented on the communications IPSA sends and the guidance it produces. All feedback is being reviewed by the relevant teams within IPSA and will help shape future improvements to our services.

Improving IPSA and the 2024 General Election

13. The Improving IPSA programme launched in 2024, replacing the Transformation Programme covering the 2021-24 Corporate Plan. We successfully met our strategic objectives to improve customer service, simplify policy, deliver financial value for the taxpayer, and grow IPSA's people to deliver an exemplary regulatory service.
14. We agreed a new regulatory philosophy and set out clearly defined regulatory principles- parliamentary purpose, value for money, integrity and accountability - which have now been published in the 2025-26 edition of the Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs.
15. Our focus is on delivering an effective, proportionate regulatory model built on the regulatory philosophy and principles and using a sophisticated assessment of risk to target our regulatory interventions. This moves us away from excessive bureaucracy and prescriptive rules and provides MPs flexibility to determine how they run their parliamentary affairs and meet local needs, while still taking robust action to support the public's trust in democracy. To support this, this year we are conducting a wholesale review of the Scheme with the aim to simplify and bring it in-line with our new principles-based approach.
16. During 2024-25, we ran a 12-month proof-of-concept to explore the feasibility of centralising and outsourcing responsibility for identifying and leasing constituency offices to MPs. Eddisons, a property management business, was enlisted to deliver an end-to-end service to MPs to save MPs time and effort in identifying and securing suitable constituency offices.
17. 82 MPs volunteered for the proof-of-concept with 30% of them securing a new office. The concept was good in parts but not an absolute success and we took the learning and have built a variety of options to test for the 2025-26 year. We believe there is a valuable opportunity with a modified approach.
18. We also co-designed a front-end portal for the funding system, IPSA Online, building a low code prototype platform for the reimbursement of funding. We paused the work to deliver the General Election but there is now work underway to refine the prototype and move it to a live portal.
19. The General Election 2024 was announced in May 2024 and we paused the Improving IPSA programme to focus on the election. The turnover of 350 MPs was the highest ever and we repurposed all our people to work on election activity.
20. Our aim was to provide a significantly improved experience compared to the 2019 election. Within the four months from Polling Day, we met 347 of the new MPs in person, conducted 348 exit interviews, processed 2378 MP staff leavers, made 28,785 salary payments, validated 26,000 funding requests, registered 539 properties and cancelled 532 leases, handling 13,000 calls.

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21. In the survey, respondents were asked to rate IPSA's support during the General Election out of a score of 5 (5 being the highest). 44.6% of respondents rated IPSA's support as a 4 or a 5, 21.4% rated IPSA's support as a 3 and only 11.4% rated IPSA's support as a 2 or a 1. Looking by respondent type, MPs typically rated IPSA's support lower than Office Managers or proxies and other staff members – only 22.6% of MPs rated IPSA's performance as a 4 or a 5, compared to 51.1% of Office Managers and proxies and 46.3% of other staff.

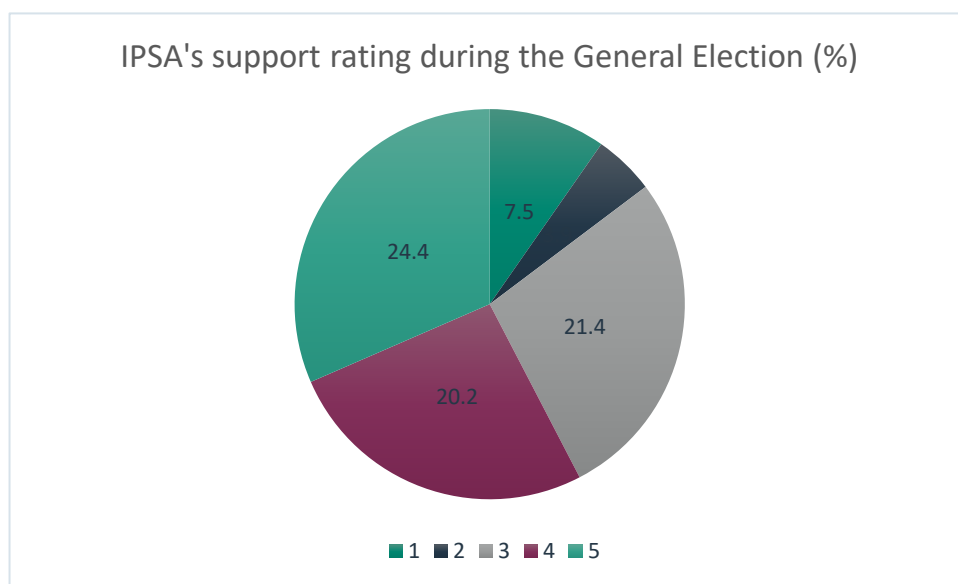


Figure 2

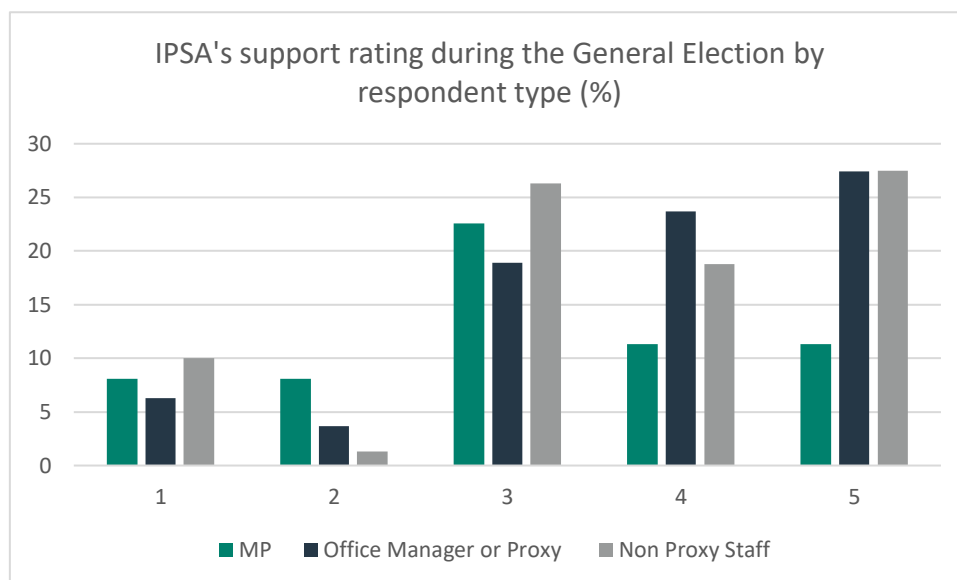


Figure 3

Survey findings in detail

Satisfaction levels

22. 66.3% of the 332 respondents rated IPSA's overall performance as good or very good. This is a slight improvement on last year's figure of 65.3% and a significant improvement when compared with the figure of 34.8% in 2020. Respondent satisfaction levels are now just below the rating achieved in 2018 (67.7%). However, we understand that there are still improvements to be made to improve this score further.
23. Tracking the satisfaction levels across the different types of respondents, higher satisfaction levels (as measured by those rating services as good or very good) were given by MPs' Office Managers or proxies. However, there was a slight reduction compared to last year – 77.5% in 2023 to 76.8% in 2024-25. Ratings fell more significantly for other staff from 61.9% in 2023 to 55% in 2024-25. In user surveys, MPs have typically given IPSA lower satisfaction ratings when compared to staff members. Whilst this year's results show the same, there has been a significant increase in MPs' satisfaction score from 31.6% in 2023 to 48.4% for 2024-25. In previous years MPs tended to comment on areas related to IPSA's data, culture, and overall regulatory approach, rather than the services which staff members focused on. This year, similar to 2023, the MPs who responded particularly expressed concerns about IPSA Online (the online budget management system), IPSA's customer service and being able to set up direct debits. This reflects similarly to the main concerns that MPs staff have expressed.

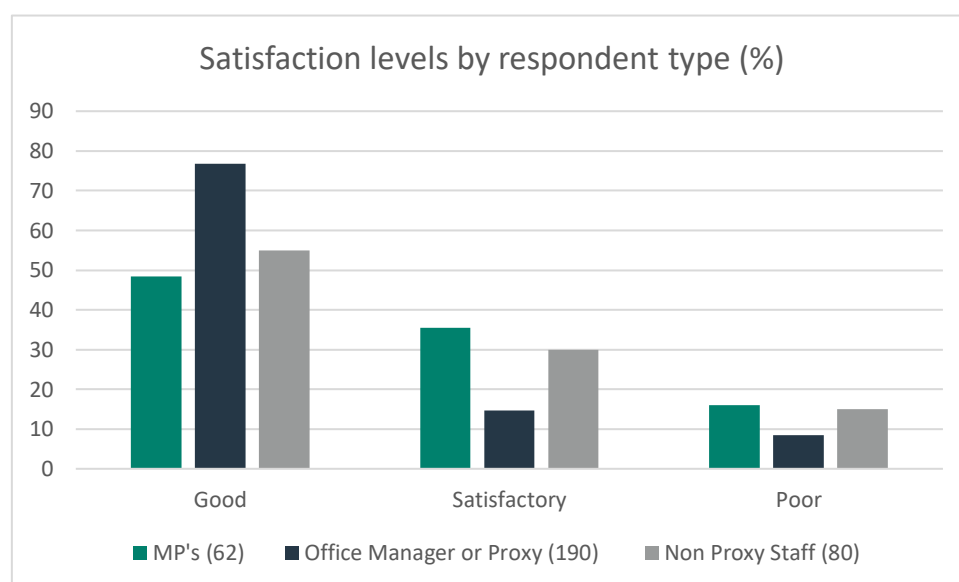


Figure 4

Survey findings in detail

24. Looking at satisfaction levels according to how long respondents have been in their role, higher satisfaction ratings were given by those who have been in their role for 5 years or more - 70.2% of those in their role for 5 years or more rated IPSA's service as good or very good, compared to 62.5% of respondents who have been in their role between 1 and 5 years and 65.1% of respondents who have been in their role for less than 1 year. Notably, a higher percentage of respondents who have been in their role for less than 1 year rated IPSA's service as poor or very poor compared to those who have been in their role for longer - 13.1% compared to 9.4% of respondents who have been in their role between 1 and 5 years and 8.5% who have been in their role for more than 5 years.



Figure 5

Satisfaction with individual services

25. In addition to asking about the overall satisfaction levels of customers, the survey also asked how satisfied users are with individual services. We also asked respondents how important each service is to them, so that we can calculate a 'service gap'. The 'service gap' is calculated by deducting the score provided for how important a service is from how satisfied respondents are with that service.
26. This method delivers a measurable summary of customer satisfaction and in-depth insights into the services users find most and least satisfactory, the reasons behind their opinions, and helps us consider what we can do to improve. Additionally, the feedback helps identify any additional services necessary to support customers in their parliamentary roles. A more detailed discussion on open-text comments can be found towards the end of the report.

Survey findings in detail

Satisfaction ratings

27. Respondents were asked to give individual services a satisfaction rating between one and five, with one representing 'not satisfied at all' and five representing 'very satisfied'. The graphs below (figures 6, 7 and 8) show the satisfaction ratings given for a number of MP services, payroll services and communications services. In the graphs a satisfaction score of four or five is classed as 'very satisfied', three 'moderately satisfied' and one or two 'not satisfied'.
28. A lot of IPSA's key front-facing services are delivered by the MP Services team, who are the initial point of contact for MPs and staff. Each MP's office is supported by a named Account Manager within the team and a Payroll Officer. Last year's survey asked about Account Manager and Payroll Officer satisfaction separately. However, this year's survey has combined the two services. As such, the average of these two services was taken as the 2023 and 2022 score for comparison. Respondents were also asked about their satisfaction of the payment card facility, direct rental payments, and getting help with additional funding for disability support or through the contingency process. Whilst Account Manager and Payroll Officer support, the payment card, and direct rental payments have high satisfaction ratings, getting help with additional funding has a notably lower satisfaction rating. Similar to last year's satisfaction scores, respondents were most satisfied with the service of IPSA paying rent directly (68.1% were very satisfied) and support from a named Account Manager and Payroll Officer (66.3% were very satisfied). However, ratings for all services have dropped since 2023, most notably the proportion of respondents who were 'very satisfied' with the payment card dropped from 77.4% in 2023 to 64.8% in 2024-25; and those who were 'very satisfied' with getting help with additional funding dropped from 61.2% in 2023 to 38.6% in 2024-25.
29. Results from the survey have shown that respondents who have been in their role for fewer than five years typically have lower satisfaction rates. It is worth highlighting that 62% of respondents are new MPs or staff who have been in their role less than 1 year. The difference in satisfaction rates may be due to those who have been in their role for more than 5 years having a greater exposure to working conditions. They may be likely to have quantitatively and qualitatively differences in their experience of the job than colleagues completing the survey for the first time.

Survey findings in detail

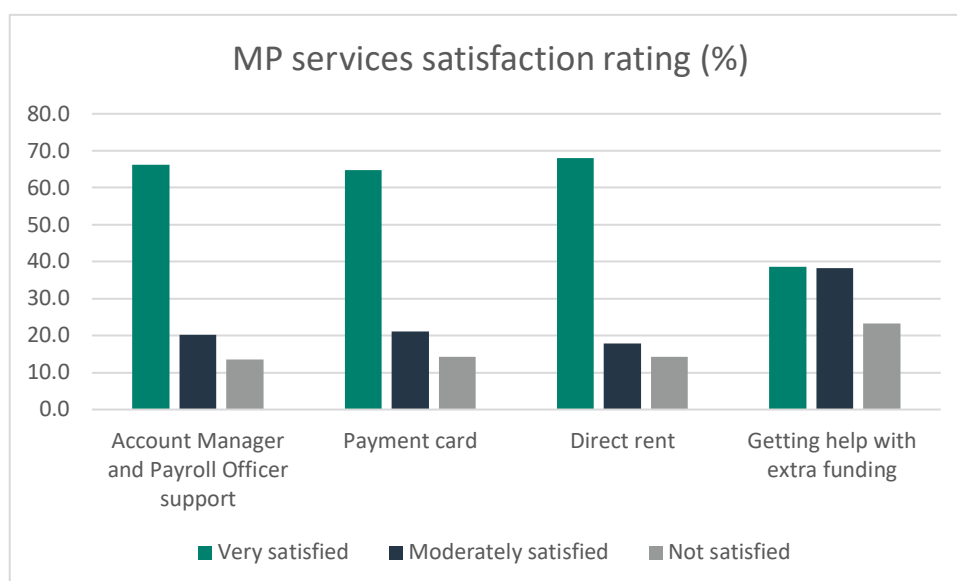


Figure 6

30. The same set of questions were asked for a number of payroll-related services (not including support from a Payroll Officer). Results showed that a majority of respondents were very satisfied with all services. However, satisfaction has dropped when compared to 2023, most notably for the contract and job description tools which dropped from 72.3% in 2023 to 59.3% in 2024-25. Similar to last year, the contract and job description tools were rated the highest, whilst payroll alerts, trackers and tools were rated the lowest. (To note, payroll tools and timesheets and payroll alerts and trackers were asked about separately in the 2023 and 2022 surveys, whereas this year's survey combined these services. As such, the average of these two services was taken as the 2023 and 2022 score for comparison.)

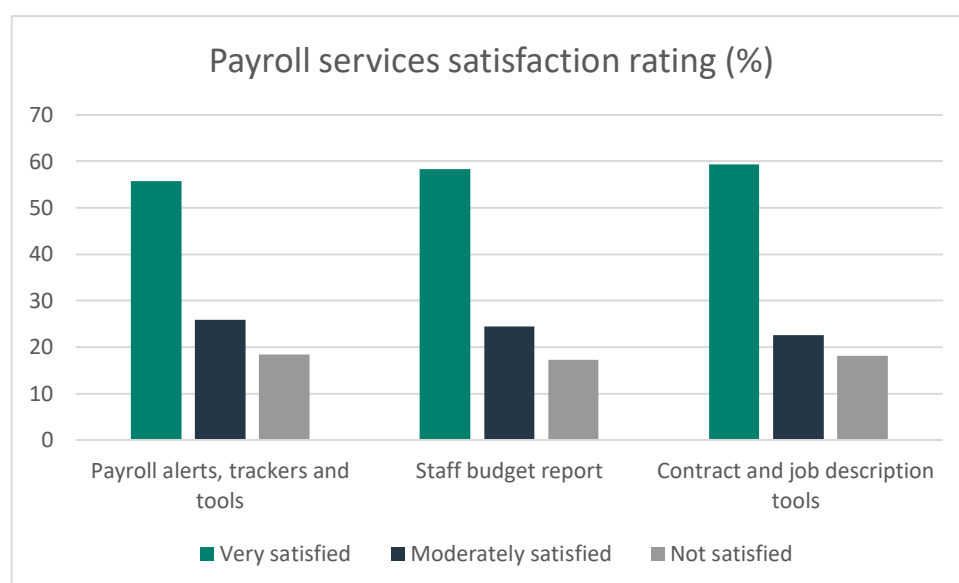


Figure 7

Survey findings in detail

31. As part of IPSA's commitment to delivering information efficiently, the survey asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with how information is communicated. The highest satisfaction ratings were for the newsletter and other IPSA communications and the customer-facing information website (www.ipsaonline.org.uk). The lowest satisfaction rating was for POM (Proxy and Office Manager) meetings, webinars and training. Similar to the results for MP services and payroll services, all communications services dropped in satisfaction rating compared to the 2023 results. (To note, the 2023 and 2022 surveys asked respondents about webinars and training only, and did not ask about POM meetings, which is reflected in the 2023 and 2022 satisfaction score). Most notably, only 53.3% of respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with POM meetings, webinars and training, compared to 58.5% in 2023.

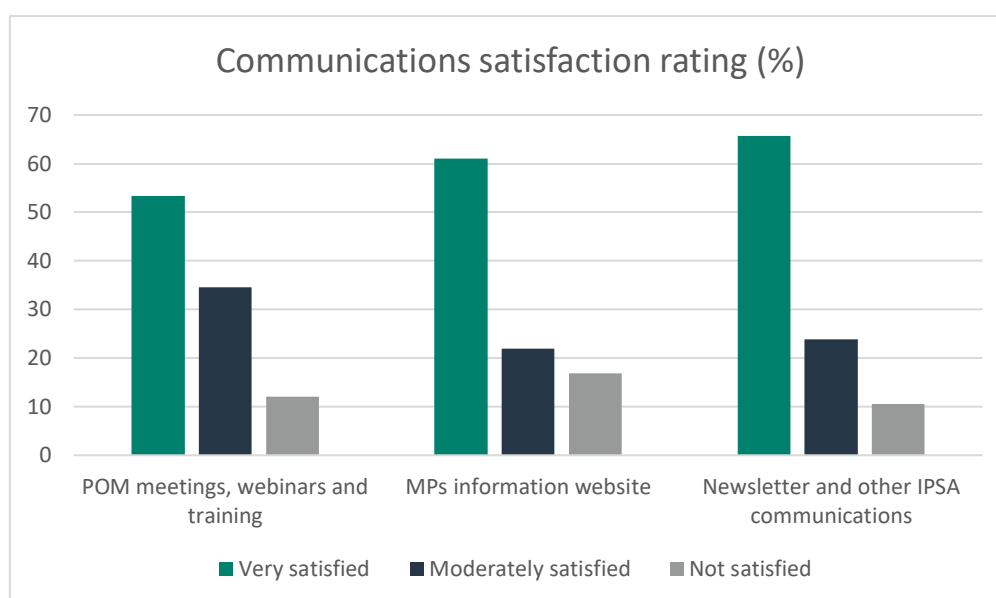


Figure 8

Service gaps

32. To calculate the 'service gaps' for individual services, the importance score given by a respondent is subtracted from the respondent's satisfaction score. As an example, an importance score of eight and a satisfaction score of seven would result in a service gap of minus one.
33. Figure 9 shows the services with the largest service gap and provides a comparison with the service gaps for 2022 and 2023. Figure 10 shows the services with the smallest service gap. Full details of the service gaps for all individual services, along with importance and satisfaction ratings are provided in Figure 11 and Figure 12.
34. The findings show that services such as the MPs information website, staff budget report and contract and job description tools have large service gaps. Whilst the service gap for the staff budget report has reduced compared to 2022 and 2023, the

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website and contract and job description tools has increased. The findings also show that the other communication services have the smallest service gaps, similar to 2022 and 2023 results. However, again, the service gap for the newsletter and other IPSA communications has increased.

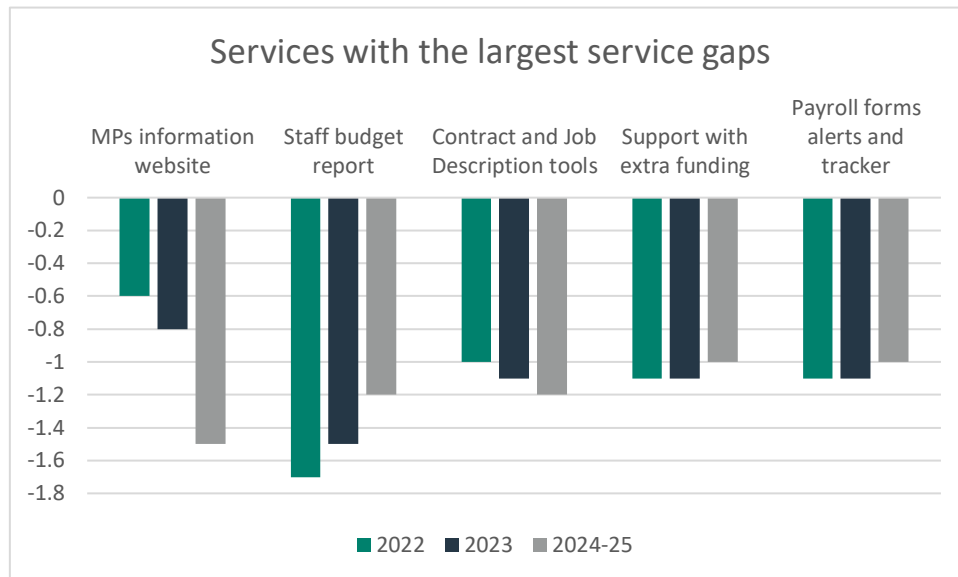


Figure 9

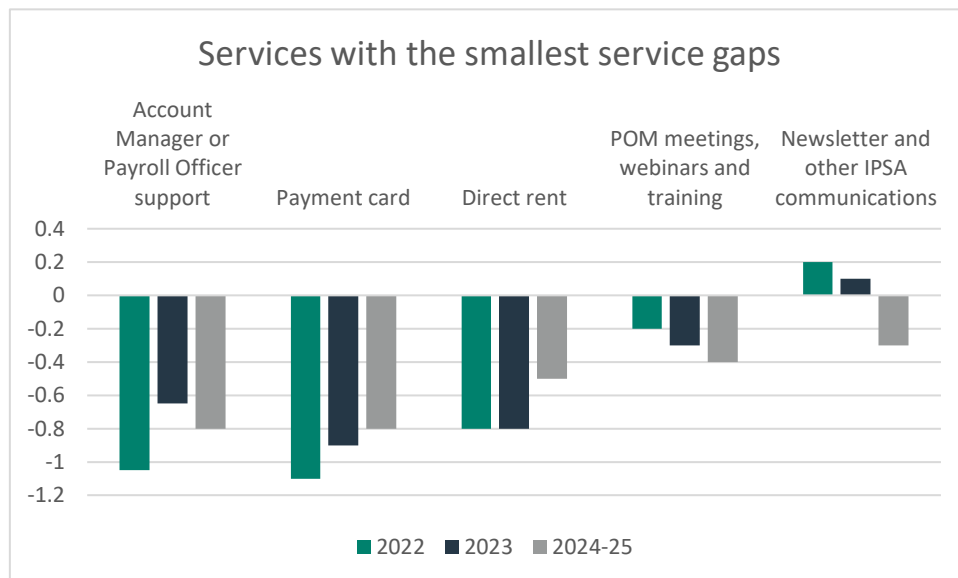


Figure 10

Survey findings in detail

Figure 11: MP Services: average service gaps*

Services	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap 2024-25	Gap 2023	Gap 2022
Support from your Account Manager or Payroll Officer	8.5	7.7	-0.8	-0.65 ^a	-1.05 ^a
The IPSA payment card	8.4	7.6	-0.8	-0.9	-1.1
IPSA paying rent on your behalf	8.5	7.9	-0.5	-0.8	-0.8
Getting help with extra funding such as disability or contingency	7.4	6.4	-1	-1.1	-1.1

*The service gap score is rounded to 1 decimal point. As such, the figure may not be the exact difference between the satisfaction and importance rating.

^aPrevious surveys asked respondents how satisfied they were with the support from an Account Manager and Payroll Officer separately. As such, the 2022 and 2023 service gaps detailed here are the averages of these two service gap scores.

Figure 12: Payroll, communications, and other services: average service gaps*

Services	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap 2024-25	Gap 2023	Gap 2022
Payroll alerts, trackers and tools	8.1	7.1	-1.0	-0.9 ^a	-0.95 ^a
Staff budget report	8.4	7.2	-1.2	-1.5	-1.7
Contract and job description tools	8.5	7.2	-1.2	-1.1	-1.0
POM meetings, webinars and training	7.6	7.3	-0.4	-0.3 ^b	-0.2 ^b
MPs information website (www.ipsonline.org.uk)	8.8	7.3	-1.5	-0.8	-0.6
Newsletter and other IPSA communications	7.9	7.6	-0.3	-0.1	-0.2

*The service gap score is rounded to 1 decimal point. As such, the figure may not be the exact difference between the satisfaction and importance rating.

^aPrevious surveys asked respondents how satisfied they were with payroll tools and timesheets and payroll alerts, trackers and forms separately. As such, the 2022 and 2023 service gaps detailed here are the averages of these two service gap scores.

^bPrevious surveys asked respondents how satisfied they were with webinars and training only, and did not ask about POM meetings. As such, the 2022 and 2023 service gaps detailed here are the service gap scores for webinars and training only.

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Claiming business costs

35. IPSA is responsible for regulating MPs' business costs and ensuring compliance with the Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs. To support this, requests for funding are subject to approval through a validation process, which checks whether they meet the requirements of the Scheme and are accompanied by the necessary supporting evidence.
36. When respondents were asked about their confidence in understanding the Scheme, 22% said that they were very confident, 60.8% said that they were broadly confident, and 17.2% said that they were not confident. This is a slight increase in confidence compared to last year's results where 21.2% of respondents said that they were very confident. However, this is also a slight increase in respondents who said that they were not confident (11.3% in 2023). Office Managers and proxies are more confident in understanding the Scheme compared to other staff and MPs.

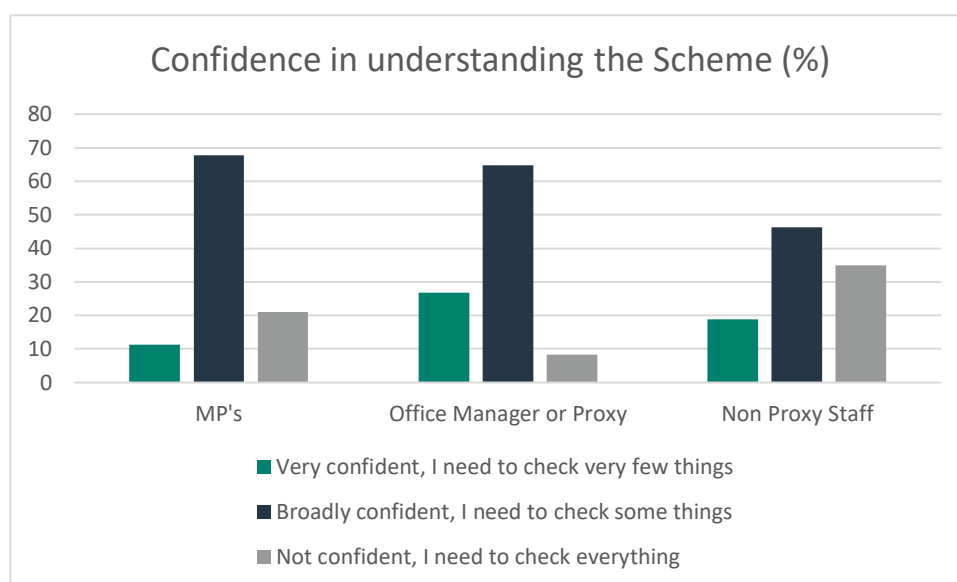


Figure 13

37. If a request for funding is made which does not fall within the Scheme rules (for example, where supporting evidence has not been provided), IPSA returns it to the MP and/or staff member via IPSA Online, along with a note explaining the reason for return. When asked whether these return notes were clear, 33.5% of respondents stated that the notes were not clear. This is a slight increase compared to last year (27.2%) and so we recognise that this is still an aspect of our service that needs to be improved upon. Note, the graph (Figure 14) does not include respondents who answered 'not applicable' (6.3% of respondents). To help improve understanding of the reason requests for funding are returned or rejected, we have refreshed our guidance and published the IPSA Funding Handbook on our website. The handbook includes best practices on how to submit claims and the criteria against which they

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are checked and returned if additional evidence is required. While we endeavour to take a proportionate approach, if there is a history of not providing suitable evidence, we may refuse to pay for any more items without evidence attached, regardless of the other criteria. We will continue to issue additional guidance, feedback, and support to reduce the number of requests that are returned or rejected.

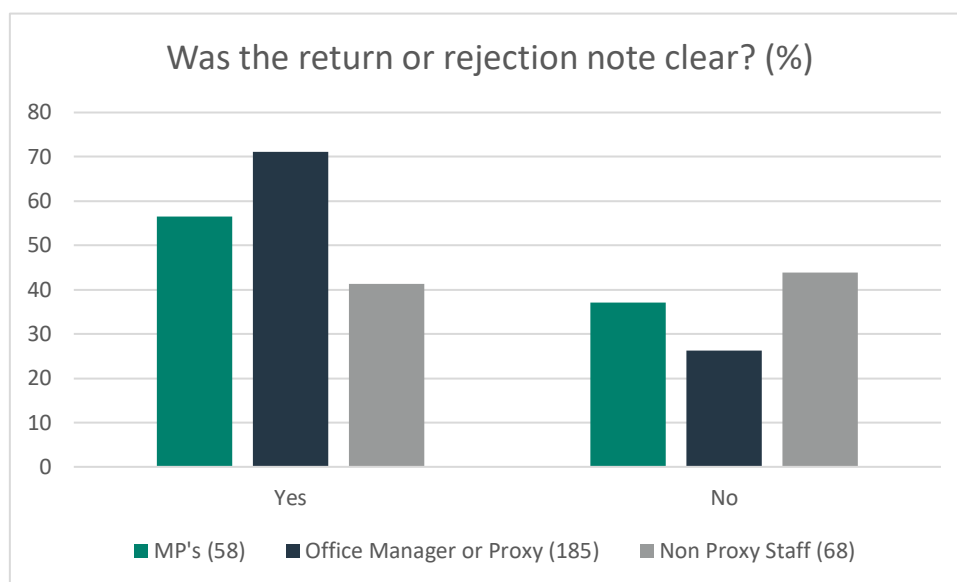


Figure 14

IPSA Online

38. IPSA Online is the digital system which MPs and their staff use to submit and manage their business and staffing costs. When asked about their confidence in using IPSA Online, 23.8% of respondents said that they were very confident, 59.6% said that they were broadly confident, and 16.6% said that they were not confident. This is a slight decrease in confidence compared to last year's results (in 2023, 28.8% of respondents said that they were very confident and 8.9% of respondents said that they were not confident). The data shows that the MPs who responded to survey are less confident using IPSA Online compared to their staff.

Survey findings in detail

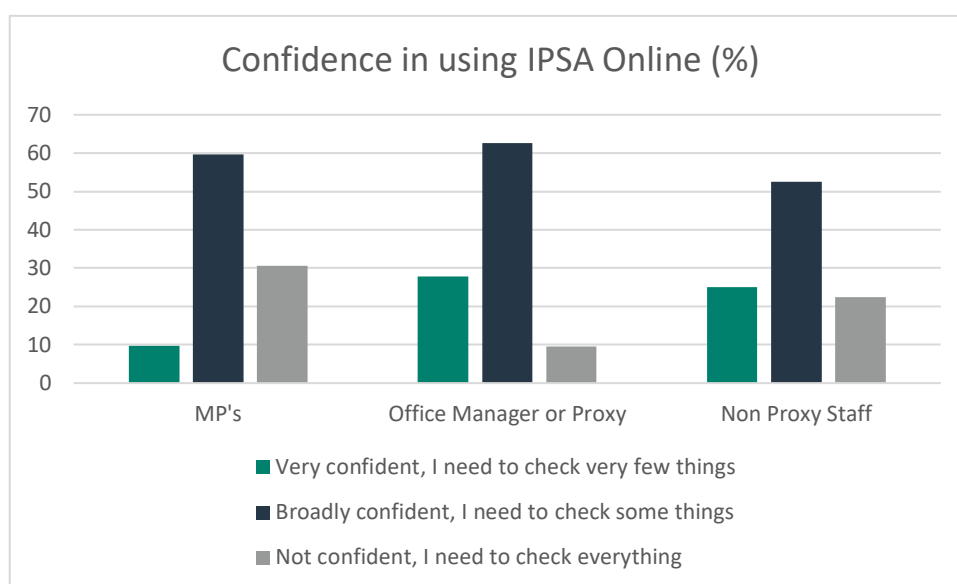


Figure 15

39. Respondents were also asked how they rated the IPSA Online guidance. 48.2% of respondents thought that the guidance was good, 42.8% thought that it was ok, and only 9% thought that it was poor.

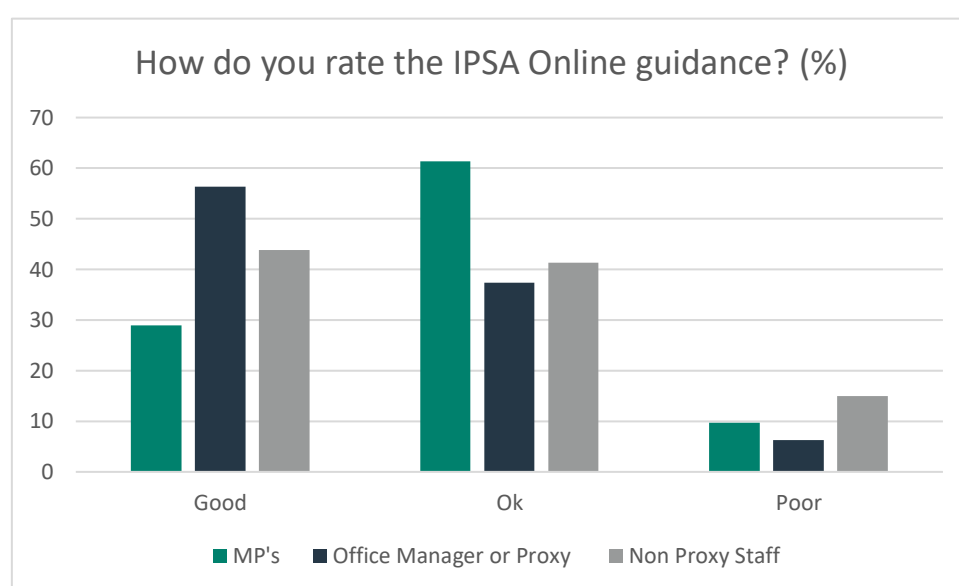


Figure 16

40. Respondents were asked how IPSA could improve its IPSA Online guidance. The biggest concern amongst respondents was that the online guidance is hard to find and the search function needs improving. Respondents also thought that the guidance could be made clearer and more consistent. There were also a large number of comments stating that guidance is good/sufficient as it currently is and nothing more needs to be done. The below section on survey comments picks up on some of the key themes mentioned here in more detail.

Survey findings in detail

Survey comments

41. To gain a clearer understanding of how users perceive our services and the context behind their views, we asked four free-text questions. The first question asked users how we could improve the IPSA Online guidance. Figure 17 shows the most frequently occurring themes in the comments, and Figure 18 goes into further detail on the comments that were made.

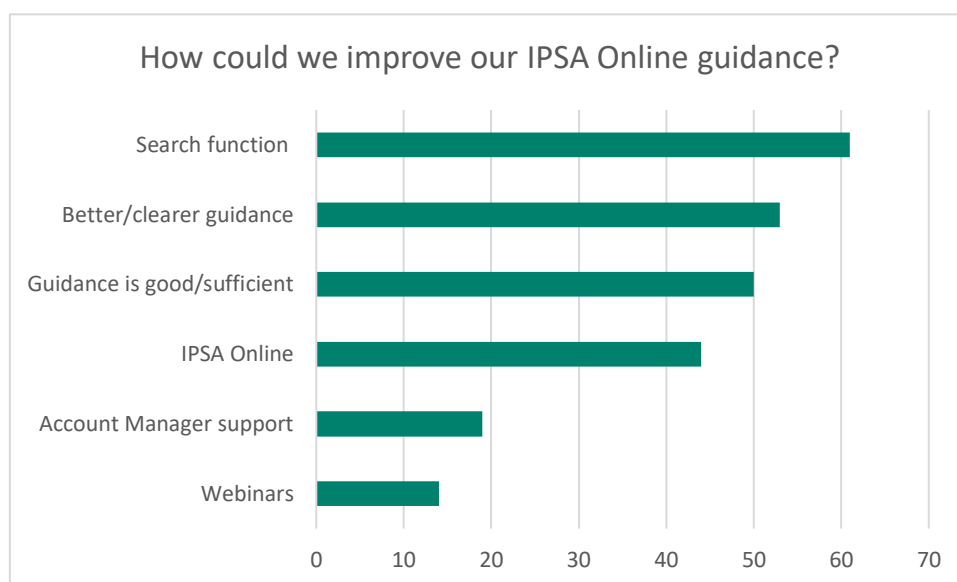


Figure 17

Figure 18: Summary of comments for question ‘How could we improve our IPSA Online guidance?’		
Theme	Typical Comments	Count
Search function	Users thought that navigation of the online guidance site could be made easier, as information is not easy to find.	61
The guidance could be clearer/better	Guidance could be clearer, more accurate, and more consistent. Whilst some respondents want more detail and for guidance to be less vague, others want simplification. More screengrabs could be provided, and clarity of screengrabs could be improved.	53
The guidance is already good/sufficient	Users thought the online guidance was sufficient/good already.	50
IPSA Online	The system is clunky, not user-friendly, and should be made more intuitive to make the reimbursement process and reporting easier and more efficient. Some users called for a new system altogether.	44
Account Manager support	Respondents want more direct access to their Account Manager and faster email response times. The phone booking system should be brought back.	19
Webinars	There should be more step-by-step videos and recorded webinars to make the guidance more accessible – screengrabs alone aren’t always helpful.	14

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Examples & FAQs	IPSA should include real life, practical examples and FAQs in guidance to assist with understanding the Scheme.	9
New staff support	Users would like more customer service support and training for new staff.	6
Updates	Guidance should be updated more regularly.	3
Other themes*	Users want better data, links to the guidance on IPSA Online, IPSA to listen to feedback, simplification of the payment card process, to be provided with a hard copy of the Scheme, more PDFs, more prescriptive rules, improved communications, and an improvement of the returned claims process.	10

The count column shows the number of times a theme was mentioned, rather than the number of responses. As most user comments included reference to a number of different themes, the number of mentions will equal a different amount to the number of participants in the survey.

*Other themes include all comment categories which received two comments or less.

42. The second question asked users what they thought IPSA currently does well. The intention of this question was to get an insight into how the improvements made as part of the Improving IPSA Programme has impacted our customers. Figure 19 shows the most frequently occurring theme in the comments, and Figure 20 goes into further detail on the comments that were made.

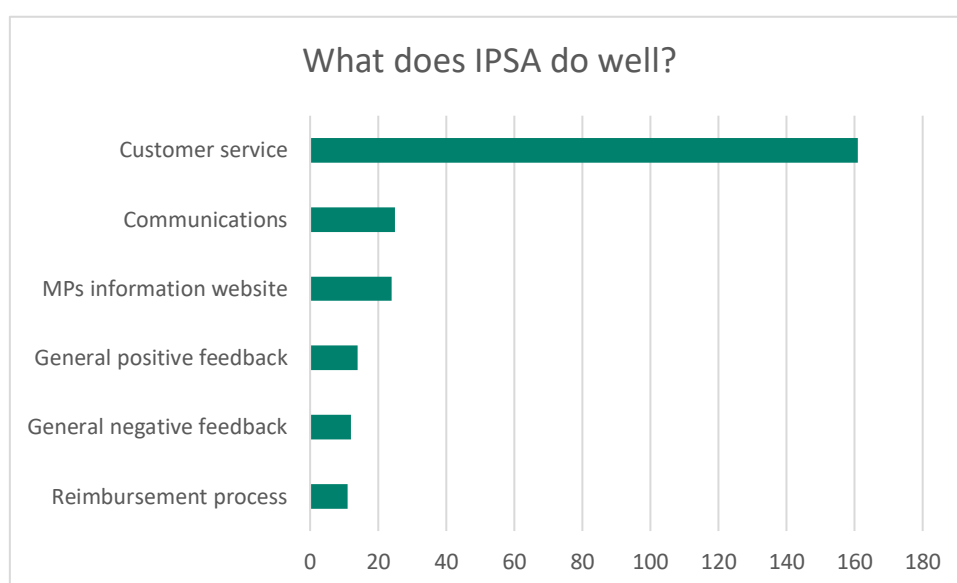


Figure 19

Figure 20: Summary of comments for question 'What does IPSA do well?'		
Theme	Typical Comments	Count
Customer service	Respondents are overwhelmingly happy with the level of customer service provided by IPSA's front-facing teams – staff are helpful, knowledgeable, quick to respond to queries, and accessible.	161

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Communications	Communications are informative and useful. General engagement with MPs' offices has improved.	25
MPs information website	The guidance is clear and easy to follow, and users like the screengrabs.	24
General positive feedback	Respondents think that IPSA has improved in general and does most things well.	14
General negative feedback	Users mostly focused on the IPSA Online system – it is clunky, complicated, and not fit for purpose.	12
Reimbursement process	IPSA processes and pays claims quickly and efficiently.	11
Proxy/Office Manager (POM) & Member and Office Manager (MOM) meetings	POM/MOM meetings are invaluable; users appreciate the additional engagement.	6
Training	Training is useful and of high quality.	5
Regulation	IPSA is transparent and good at ensuring compliance with the Scheme, which supports overall trust.	5
IPSA Online	The online claims system is easy to use and has helpful reporting features.	5
Payroll tools	Payroll tools and the staff budget report are helpful.	5
Pay	Staff wages are accurate and paid on-time.	4
Budgets	Budget management is easy and IPSA administration is good.	3
Direct rental payments	Users like that IPSA pays rental payments on the MPs' behalf.	3
Payment card	The payment card system is helpful and works well.	3
Other themes*	Users think alerts are good, IPSA is good at implementing guidance, listening to feedback, and supporting new staff; its processes, the Scheme, the guidance website, proxy access and year-end support is also good.	10
The count column shows the number of times a theme was mentioned, rather than the number of responses. As most user comments included reference to a number of different themes, the number of mentions will equal a different amount to the number of participants in the survey. Whilst we received three responses regarding management of HR issues, this is not a service that IPSA provides and so has been omitted from the table above. *Other themes include all comment categories which received two comments or less.		

43. The third question asked respondents how IPSA could improve further. Figure 21 shows the top comment themes and Figure 22 goes into more detail on the comments that were made.

Survey findings in detail

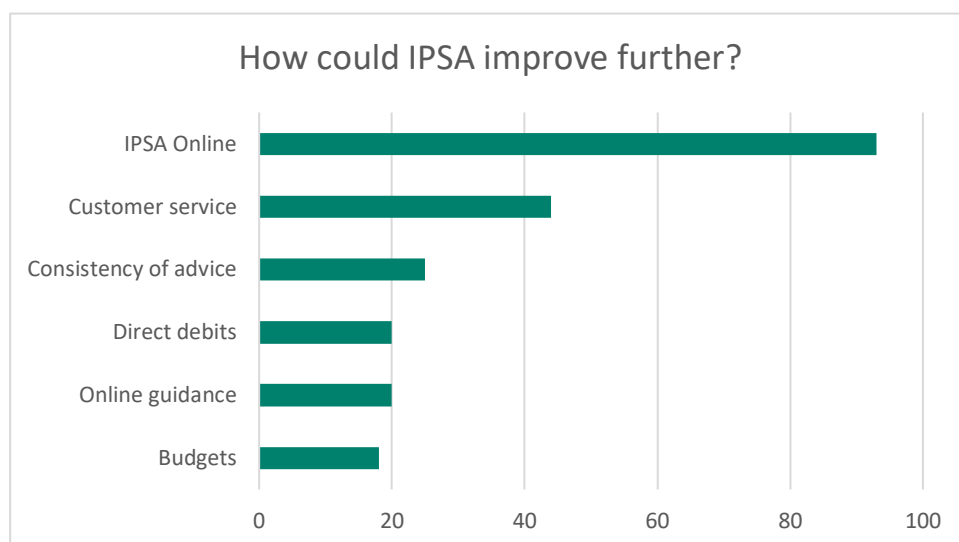


Figure 21

Figure 22: Summary of comments for question ‘How could IPSA improve further?’

Theme	Typical Comments	Count
IPSA Online	The online claims system is not fit for purpose and should be improved or replaced – its interface is clunky, complicated, and overall, not user-friendly; reports are difficult to find, generate, and use, and tools are not intuitive; the claims process should be made more efficient.	93
Customer service	Users want direct access to their named Account Manager and Payroll Officer, via email and phone, more availability, and email response times should be quicker.	44
Consistency of advice	Advice is sometimes different depending on who you speak to; users want more consistency and definitiveness.	25
Direct debits	Users want to be able to set up direct debits to pay regular costs such as utility bills more efficiently, or IPSA should handle these payments centrally; allowing BACS transfers would be really helpful. Users also want more direct payments to suppliers to avoid using personal bank accounts.	20
Online guidance	Guidance can sometimes be complicated with too many steps. The rules and policies could also be clearer and more consistent. On the other hand, some users want more detail.	20
Budgets	Budgets are tight, especially the staffing budget, causing overworked offices and staff retention issues. Users want more flexibility to rollover budgets and to be told earlier what the next year’s budgets will be.	18
Engagement	IPSA should continue to build relationships through engagement, including face-to-face, and encouraging an open dialogue.	12

Survey findings in detail

Payroll tools	Payroll tools such as the staff leave and job description tools should be improved. The staff budget report is also not user-friendly.	11
Simplify processes/guidance	Processes should be simplified and made easier, such as the reimbursement process and payment card reconciliation. Users want to do less administration.	11
Search function	Navigation of the online guidance website should be improved.	10
Rules should be less prescriptive	A one-size-fits-all approach is not sufficient; users want more discretion.	10
Returned claim support	Claims can be returned/rejected incorrectly, the notes on the returned claims are sometimes hard to understand and users want more support in general when a claim is returned.	9
Proxy access	Proxies should be able to see and do as much as possible, including more oversight of the progress of submitted claims and the ability to run the staff absence report.	8
Communications	Users want quicker and more direct communications and clearer alerts.	7
Property support	IPSA should offer more property and legal support when sourcing properties or take this task on centrally. IPSA should pay service charge directly.	7
Survey feedback	The survey should allow 'not applicable' answers and some questions should be made clearer.	7
Training	Users would like more training, especially on the claiming process.	6
New staff support	More training, webinars and tutorials for new starters.	6
Pay	Staff pay and progression should be improved to attract talent and retention. The salary pay-bands often do not reflect the work that is being done.	6
Reimbursement process	Users want faster reimbursement.	6
Payment card	Proxy limits should be uplifted and the payment card reconciliation should be saveable as a draft.	5
IT hardware funding/support	IPSA should allow equipment purchase of hardware again, or guidance and advice from IPSA and PDS should be clearer.	5
Rules should be more prescriptive	Users want more specific and prescriptive rules.	4
Better job description	Users want flexible and better job descriptions to attract and retain staff and so roles can be more flexible.	3
Other themes*	Other themes include clearer guidance on applying for contingency funding, IPSA managing the hiring of staff directly, an increase in the hotel cost limit, send out payslips by post, more pension support, allow vehicle loan, more disability support, less grey areas, relax the rules on mobile phones, benchmark MPs pay, more procurement, and support in building trust.	23
The count column shows the number of times a theme was mentioned, rather than the number of responses. As most user comments included reference to a number of different themes, the number of mentions will equal a different amount to the number of participants in the survey. *Other themes include comment categories which received two comments or less. The list includes examples of comments and is not exhaustive.		

Survey findings in detail

44. One of IPSA's strategic aims is to support the public's trust in democracy. As such, the fourth and final question asked respondents what IPSA could do to better support this. Figure 23 shows the top comment themes and Figure 24 goes into more detail on the comments that were made.

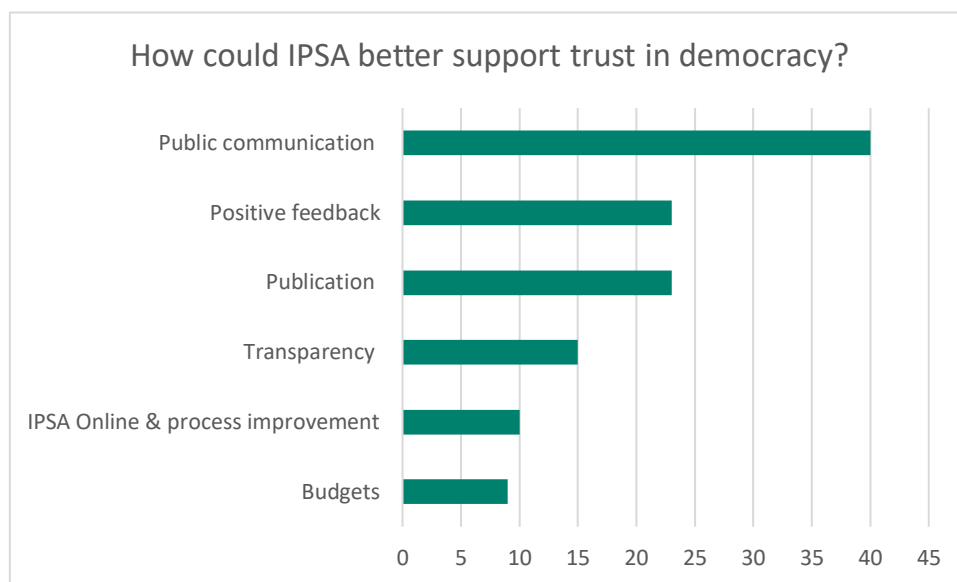


Figure 23

Figure 24: Summary of comments for question 'How could IPSA better support trust in democracy?'		
Theme	Typical Comments	Count
Public communications	IPSA should explain better to the public that spend is legitimate and necessary for an MP to carry out their parliamentary role, potentially through public awareness/education sessions. IPSA should highlight that MPs act in good faith and just want to do the right thing.	40
General positive feedback	IPSA does a good job at supporting trust in democracy through its regulation and transparency.	23
Publication	Redact publication where it makes sense and where security could be an issue, publish clear aggregation of spending (e.g. publishing staffing costs separately or not at all). Explanations need to be clearer and some costs should be published as an aggregate rather than itemised.	23
Transparency	Users want as much transparency as possible to ensure total accountability without infringing on the privacy and security of MPs.	15
IPSA Online & process improvement	The system should be more user-friendly so costs are recorded accurately; processes should be simplified and standardised.	10
Budgets	Budgets should be uplifted, especially the staffing budget, and there should be more budget flexibility (to rollover and transfer claims between budgets).	9
Support	Users want more proactive support, especially when being externally scrutinized.	8

Survey findings in detail

Consistency of advice	Advice should be clearer and more consistent to ensure mistakes aren't being made.	6
Rules should be less prescriptive	Rules should be less restrictive and more for the MP to decide what is reasonable.	5
Survey feedback	Users thought IPSA could have explained this question more.	5
Not IPSA's role to build trust in democracy	Users do not think it is within IPSA's remit to build and maintain trust in democracy.	4
Communications funding	Users want additional funding for communications to allow MPs to communicate with constituents more easily.	4
Online guidance	Guidance should be made clearer for better decision-making.	3
Rules should be more prescriptive	Rules should not be vague, but more prescriptive.	3
Other themes*	Other themes include users wanting more accessibility, for IPSA to benchmark pay and benefits, increased collaboration with the House, to allow direct debits, higher engagement, a HR department, more procurement/centralisation of costs, better regulation, a Scheme review, increase in staff pay, better support for new staff, more property support and training in general.	23
The count column shows the number of times a theme was mentioned, rather than the number of responses. As most user comments included reference to a number of different themes, the number of mentions will equal a different amount to the number of participants in the survey. *Other themes include all comment categories which received two comments or less. The list includes examples of comments and is not exhaustive.		

Conclusion

45. The Annual User Survey is conducted every year and is a vital way for us to collect feedback on our performance. Findings from the survey show an improvement with 66.3% of respondents rating IPSA's services as good. This is a slight improvement from last year's level of 65.3%. This suggests that the Improving IPSA programme has continued to drive improvements in the overall user experience for our customers.
46. The improvements we have made are acknowledged in the feedback from respondents but there is still work to do. Respondents would like further changes to IPSA Online and the guidance needs to be clearer and more accessible, more support from their Account Managers and Payroll Officers, alternative payment options and uplifted budgets. Reassuringly, these areas identified for improvement are already being addressed by the new Corporate Plan.