

15 February 2021

Dear Member of Parliament

We are seeking views on proposed changes to the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs for 2021-22 in two areas: providing funding for cover where MPs take a period of parental leave; and supporting the leave for MPs' staff members who are armed forces reservists.

Cover for MP Parental Leave

Last week, IPSA's Interim Chair [wrote to you](#) confirming IPSA's support for a more family-friendly Parliament and the work we are planning to enhance our current provisions, so that MPs who take parental leave can hire additional staff to cover constituency work during their absence. We are proposing to create a specific MP Parental Leave Cover Fund and a new policy which will clearly set out MPs' eligibility for funding and how we will provide it. This would formalise the provisions already in place for MPs who take a period of leave after the birth or adoption of a child and would make clear that MPs are entitled to this funding.

MP Staff: Armed Forces Reservists Training Leave

We are proposing that the cost of this mandatory training leave taken by MP staff armed forces reservists should be allocated to the staff absence budget, a centrally provided fund, which means that an MP's ordinary staffing budget would not be impacted. The MP may then cover the reservist's absence through overtime or temporary cover, without additional call on their staffing budget. We believe that this would reduce the inconvenience to the running of MP offices and at the same time not require MP staff reservists to lose out financially by taking unpaid leave or miss out on non-committed annual leave.

More details on our proposals can be viewed [here](#).

In order to have these measures in place for the new financial year, we are seeking your views by 1st March 2021. Please send your response to us by email at consultation@theipsa.org.uk.

Best wishes,

IPSA