

IPSA

Afghanistan: Support for MPs and Staff



31 August 2021

We know that the situation in Afghanistan has had a significant impact on some of your constituency workloads, and that this is not simply additional work but it is also emotional and stressful. We have heard from a number of MPs that their staff have been working very long hours and over weekends and this past bank holiday in England and Wales. We are keen to do what we can to support you and your staff during this time and hope the following information is helpful.

Sources of support

We would like to remind MPs of the funding that was put in place in 2020 to support the wellbeing of MP's staff (details [here](#)) which can be used to purchase support for workplace stress, vicarious trauma and so on. In addition, the House of Commons provides access to an Employee Assistance Programme which is available to you and your staff which provides support with mental health and wellbeing issues – contact details are available on the parliamentary intranet. We also know that the MP's staff Wellness Working Group has done a lot of work to support MP staff, and their wellbeing hub can be found here: [Wellbeing hub for members' staff](#).

Contingency funding

Our initial understanding is that the impact of the situation with Afghanistan on

MP offices is varied but for those offices with the greatest impact, we will consider contingency funding applications. We are conscious that the situation in Afghanistan is on-going and that it might not yet be completely clear what additional budgetary support may be required, so we will be contacting those MPs who have been in touch with us, and others, to work out how best we can help. Once we have identified the specifics of the support required, we will write to you again.

To maintain our duty for the effective use of public funds, when we come to consider any contingency applications we will need to be assured that there is an exceptional case to be made and that the additional COVID-19 staffing budget provided this year will also be fully utilised.

We will soon be preparing next year's budget proposals for the Speaker's Committee on IPSA and it always helpful to hear from you on the support we currently provide. We have recently surveyed offices on workloads, but if you have any further comments please do contact us at info@theipsa.org.uk.

Ian Todd
Chief Executive
