

Closure report

Investigation conducted by the Compliance Officer for IPSA

Into

Mark Menzies

Former Member of Parliament for Fylde

Matt Walker

Compliance Officer for IPSA

Introduction

1. This closure report is with regard to an investigation opened in June 2024 into a reported fraud by the now former MP Mark Menzies. The allegation being that the MP used the staff bonus scheme funded by IPSA to repay a member of his team part of a personal debt he owed to them. This has been investigated by the police.
2. I have not produced a statement of findings in relation to this case, due to the fact that, on reviewing the information from the criminal investigation, I have decided to take no further action.
3. This closure report is a summary only. It does not include any findings, summaries or opinions from the other authorities who have conducted any investigation into this matter and associated matters reported in the media.

Background and timeline

4. Mark Menzies (MM), former MP for Fylde, Lancashire had been a Conservative MP since being elected in 2010, however in April 2024 was suspended from the party following allegations that he had misused party funds to pay off 'bad people'. This was widely reported in the media. MM continued as an independent MP until the 4th July 2024 general election, when he lost his seat.
5. On 28th June 2024, the Compliance Officer for IPSA received information from the Conservative Party that they had been informed that a former member of staff for MM had lent MM some money in relation to the same incident as reported in the media. They alleged that MM had repaid some of this by awarding the staff member a staff bonus.ⁱ
6. The act alleged is one of fraud, and as such, I referred this to the Metropolitan Police. The Met Police in turn passed this to Lancashire Police for investigation.
7. On 29th July 2025, Lancashire Police advised me that they were taking no further action and referred the case back to me as Compliance Officer for IPSA.
8. On 21st August 2025, I made the decision that no further action would be taken under the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009.

The Scheme

9. The 15th edition of The Scheme of MPs Staffing and Business Costs is the relevant scheme for the purpose of this investigation.

Parliamentary Standards Act 2009

10. Paragraph 9 PSA 2009 sets out the legal requirement on me as Compliance Officer.
The Compliance Officer may conduct an investigation if the Compliance Officer has reason to believe that a Member of the House of Commons may have been paid an amount under the MPs' allowance scheme that should not have been allowed.

Procedures for investigations by the Compliance Officer for IPSA

11. The Procedures for Investigations by the Compliance Officer for IPSA sets out how as Compliance Officer I must conduct my investigation.

Actions undertaken

12. On assessment of the case, I decided that this must be referred to the Police as it was not appropriate to purely investigate this from a compliance to financial regulation perspective.
13. No notice of an investigation was served on MM, due to the direct referral to the police. I did not approach the MP for any information due to assessing this case as criminal, and being mindful therefore, that any account from the MP would need to be obtained under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1985 before I should obtain an account under my powers under the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009.
14. I obtained factual evidence from IPSA as to bonus payments made by this MP, obtained information from the party and held a video interview with the member of staff concerned to obtain a detailed account of events.
15. I obtained written information from the Conservative Party as to the information that they had had brought to their attention. The Party had been informed that during the reported incident where MM had reportedly been asking for money to pay some 'bad people', a member of the MPs staff had gone to help him. The staff member had lent the MP some of their own money to help in this predicament. The Party had been advised that MM subsequently had used the staff bonus scheme to repay some of this debt.
16. IPSA were able to show that in December 2023, a few days after the incident in question, the MP did approve a staff bonus of £700 to the member of staff who had assisted him. The bonus was logged as being in recognition of work undertaken with regard to a windfarm application.

17. The member of staff in question provided detail of their involvement in this incident where they had assisted the MP and lent him some money. The member of staff explains that the MP said he couldn't afford to pay them back, but that he would pay them through the IPSA staff bonus scheme.
18. The member of staff stated they did not want to be paid back through this method. They did not confirm if the bonus which was in fact paid was genuine for their work relating to the windfarms application or for lending money to the MP. In their statement to the police, the staff member was non-committal on this point.
19. A statement was obtained by the police from another member of staff, who confirmed that the bonus payment had been in recognition of work done on a local project opposing the windfarms.
20. IPSA records show that there had been no other attempted claims for a staff bonus for this member of staff.

Decision & Closure

21. I have reviewed the evidence and reassessed this case under my responsibilities as Compliance Officer for IPSA.
22. The police and the Crown Prosecution Service make their decisions based on the criminal burden of proof, that being beyond all reasonable doubt. To charge, the CPS must be satisfied that there is a reasonable prospect of a conviction.
23. As Compliance Officer, my findings are to the civil burden of proof, that being on the balance of probabilities.
24. Having weighed up the evidence, I conclude that, on the balance of probabilities, I find this case not proven.

Rationale:

Whilst there is evidence of wrongdoing, with the disclosure to the Conservative Party, the evidence that there was a payment made and the timing of that, and the staff member's initial information provided to me direct, there is also evidence which undermines this case, this being that the member of staff was non-committal over the actual payment made, the fact that the staff member stated the MP owed them £1000 yet the payment was for £700 (where the maximum which can be awarded is £1000), and the witness statement which explicitly states that the payment was for the work on the windfarm application.

The former MP has been interviewed by the police. Whilst I have not been supplied with any part of the evidence from any interviews, I am aware that no admissions have been made with regard to any wrongdoings.

25. I have not applied any public interest tests to this decision, as the evidential test is not made out.

26. This matter is now closed, however I reserve the right to reopen this case should new information come to light.

Publication

27. Under paragraph 26 of the Procedures for investigations ⁱⁱ, The Compliance Officer may issue a Closure Report. Under paragraph 27, the Compliance Officer shall publish, [sic] e) any closure report. Paragraph 28 sets out the circumstances where I may decide not to publish. a) and b) do not apply. c) relates to exceptional circumstances where the reasons not to publish outweigh the public interest.

28. Having considered para 28 (above), I am satisfied that there are no exceptional circumstances which I need to weigh up against public interest, therefore this closure report will be published.

Matt Walker
Compliance Officer
21st August 2025

ⁱ The Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs para 7.14 allows MPs to make awards of no more than £1000 per individual member of staff per year. [The Scheme of MPs Staffing and Business Costs 2023-24](#)

ⁱⁱ The Procedures for investigations by the Compliance Officer for IPSA
[Amended Procedures for Investigations Fourth Edition.pdf](#)