

Closure report

Investigation conducted by the Compliance Officer for IPSA

Tahir Ali

Member of Parliament for Birmingham Hall Green and Moseley

Matt Walker  
Compliance Officer for IPSA

## Introduction

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025, following a referral from the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA), I commenced an investigation into some of the costs incurred by Tahir Ali MP (TA).

The areas I investigated categorised under the following:

- 5           i. Office costs – This is in several parts, specifically purchase and allocation of telephone handsets, office equipment, and refurbishment / building costs.  
          ii. Travel costs – mileage and congestion charges claimed.  
          iii. Accommodation costs – Hotel and London accommodation claims which do not appear to correlate with travel claims.

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TA has cooperated fully with my investigation, providing all information and evidence when requested.

15 My findings are that **Tahir Ali MP has not breached The Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs** ('the scheme') in all parts subject to my investigation.

20 This closure report is the only report I shall be publishing. There is no requirement for me to produce a statement of findings, as my investigation has concluded that there are no breaches of the scheme and therefore there are no repayment directions for me to make.

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## Background and timeline

25 Tahir Ali has been an MP since 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Queries relating to his office costs came to the attention of IPSA when it had been found that one of the office equipment suppliers had inadvertently made more of their catalogue available than was in their contract. TA had ordered three mobile phone handsets through this supplier which was not the correct route.

30 The IPSA Audit and Assurance team took a deeper look into TA's business costs and discovered areas of anomaly. This included return travel claims where hotel accommodation in London had also been provided; train travel claimed on the same day as mileage claims; congestion charges not being aligned to travel claims. It was also found that the MP had ordered high quality appliances for his constituency office, and then, subsequently, some cheaper appliances had also been purchased.

It was also found that TA had been a notably high claimer through IPSA for premises costs to his constituency office.

IPSA referred this to me as Compliance Officer to consider investigation.

## 35 The Scheme

The 11<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> editions of The Scheme of MPs Staffing and Business Costs are the relevant schemes for the purpose of this investigation. The funding subject to this investigation spans these

schemes. The elements of the scheme relevant to this investigation are unchanged throughout these different editions, as are the fundamental principles for MPs and IPSA under the scheme.

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#### Actions undertaken

As part of my investigation, I visited both the MP's current and former Constituency Offices. My initial visit was unannounced and at that time, the new office was still being prepared for occupancy. On my return visit, I was able to see that all items purchased at public expense could be accounted for. The MP made himself available for interview, and at each stage of the investigation has provided evidence to demonstrate how he managed his business costs.

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With regard to the equipment purchased by the MP, I am satisfied that all equipment had been purchased for a parliamentary purpose. My investigation looked at the purchase and allocation of telephone handsets, the purchase and use of appliances and office equipment. All of the equipment purchased for the former constituency office had been moved to the new office.

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The telephone handsets, whilst ordered through a supplier who should not have made such items available were still claimable business costs and therefore not a breach of the scheme.

#### **My investigation revealed no breach of the scheme for any business costs relating to office equipment.**

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My investigation included a detailed assessment of the MPs travel and hotel claims. There had been instances where the MP made claims for return travel but on the same evening also booked hotel accommodation. There were other anomalies with the MPs mileage claims not having correlated parking or congestion charge claims, and instances where rail travel had been claimed on the same day as mileage. I have considered in great detail the dates of each claim, obtained detailed information from the MP, and was able to account completely for all but 4 journeys claimed, having identified any dating errors or confirmation that the travel was for another person. When considered against the fact that TA has been an MP for 6 years and there are only 4 journeys which I have not been able to 100% verify, I am of the conclusion that these will simply be dating errors and it would be disproportionate to look into these any further. I therefore conclude that all the claims were in fact permissible under the scheme.

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#### **My investigation revealed no breach of the scheme for any travel or hotel accommodation costs.**

My investigation revealed that TA is in fact careful with spending public money. When he moved from his former Constituency Office into his current office, TA made the decision to remove and reuse anything that was possible to reuse which had been funded by IPSA. This included the window blinds, kitchen units and vanity units. TA had attempted to have the laminate flooring lifted and re-used, however, due to water damage, this was not possible. There was discontent with the former landlord when the flooring was all lifted, as this left the floor upon vacating the premises without any floor covering. However, when the lease had been taken out, it had no floor finishing, therefore this meant that the floor was left as it was when TA took on the lease. I conducted a detailed

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investigation into the supply and fitting (and removal / disposal in respect of the former office) of the flooring and found that this was all permissible under the scheme. There was consistent information provided by the witnesses I spoke to, to demonstrate that TA had wanted to ensure anything bought through IPSA that could be transferred to the new office was duly considered.

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The landlord of the former office was not happy that when the security equipment was removed, the contractor cut all the wires and therefore these could not be reused. My investigation revealed that this was conducted by a Parliament Security contractor and not a service or provision funded through IPSA therefore this is not in my jurisdiction to comment upon.

My investigation revealed that the lease for the original premises was very brief. The lease was low cost on the basis that the MP completed some internal works to the premises. The MP was satisfied that this represented good value for money. The MP had every intention of being tenant at his original constituency office premises for the duration of his term as an MP, however, a dispute with the landlord resulted in a decision being made to seek alternative premises. It is not for me to comment as to any matters pertaining to any dispute.

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**My investigation revealed no breach of the scheme for the flooring, blinds, kitchen and vanity units, appliances and associated works.**

I looked into electrical works undertaken at the former constituency office. I established that when the MP took on the lease, the building had been unoccupied for some time and there had been fire and water damage. The electrical consumer unit was not to current standards and needed replacing. Additional sockets were needed and the existing lighting and switches were also not fit for purpose in all rooms. The replacement of some sockets and switches was paid for by IPSA, as was the supply of new LED light fittings. However, the MP never claimed for the installation of the new LED lighting or for the supply and replacement of a modern consumer unit. The MP paid for these out of his own pocket. The cost of the consumer unit should have been met by the landlord but the wording of the lease was not suitable to compel either side to pay for these works.

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**My investigation revealed no breach of the scheme for the electrical fittings and associated works.**

#### 105 Regulatory Principles

The scheme sets out the regulatory principles which Members of Parliament and IPSA must adhere to. They can be found in each edition of the scheme [IPSA Scheme of MPs- Staffing and Business Costs 2025-26.pdf](#)

The principles for MPs are:

- 110 Principle 1: Parliamentary purpose
- Principle 2: Value for money
- Principle 3: Integrity
- Principle 4: Accountability

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In conducting my investigation, I have considered all parts against the regulatory principles. I am satisfied that all purchases and claims relating to this investigation had a Parliamentary Purpose.

None of the claims had any suggestion of personal promotion or party advantage. The MP had wanted to ensure value for money by moving whatever he could from the former office to his current office. I found that the MP had been objective in his decisions, perhaps erring too much on the side of caution as there were things which the MP paid for out of his own pocket, sometimes at what I can surmise would have been at quite a considerable cost (eg new consumer unit and fitting of LED lights), where these costs should have been met by either the landlord or by IPSA.

## Words of advice to MP

Whilst I found no breaches of the scheme through TA's management of his business costs, I did find information where he had not submitted claims which were payable under the scheme. TA covered costs himself, advising me that this was as he is very protective of the public purse. I advised TA that where a cost is claimable, he should claim it and there is no expectation that he covers some costs himself.

Prior to my investigation, TA had recognised that his lease on his former constituency office was brief and open to interpretation. TA ensured a much more comprehensive lease was drawn up for occupation of his current office to allow both parties to understand who is responsible for what. I confirmed with the MP that it is appropriate to have a comprehensive lease so both sides understand their obligations.

Additionally, the MP does not have a financial proxy registered with IPSA to handle his claims. Although it is not an actual requirement, I advised the MP, that he should consider having a proxy within his staff team who can manage this function or parts of it. The MP understands this, but is mindful that, with spending, the public will scrutinise claims and is aware that he is responsible for managing his own budget.

## Parliamentary Standards Act 2009

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.

I have completed my investigation under paragraph 9. There are no matters of enforcement to move to and there are no matters which I consider that I need to refer to any other party.

## Procedures for investigations by the Compliance Officer for IPSA

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

All parts of my investigation have been conducted in accordance with the procedures.

Publication

155 Paragraph 9A(1) requires IPSA to determine procedures I must follow (as above). Within the procedures, Paragraph 27 sets out where I must publish my reports. Under this section, I am required to publish this closure report unless I have applied an exemption (para 28). I have not applied any exemption in this case.

160 Matt Walker  
Compliance Officer  
2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026