

Review of a determination by IPSA and subsequent appeal decision

Review conducted at the request of Imran Hussain MP

Member of Parliament for Bradford East

Compliance Officer Statement of Review Decision

Author and Review Officer

Matt Walker

Compliance Officer for IPSA

Introduction

1. This review has been conducted following a request made by Mr Imran Hussain, Member of Parliament for Bradford East on 12th June 2025 for the Compliance Officer for IPSA to review an IPSA determination to not cover the costs of new computer monitors for his office.

Background and timeline

2. The circumstances subject to this review being, that Parliamentary Digital Services (PDS) were replacing the desktop computers in Mr Hussain's office with laptops and docking stations.
3. Mr Hussain believed that he needed to order monitors direct, and did so on 3rd February 2025 using his IPSA provided payment card. Mr Hussain has stated in his request for review – *"it must be emphasised that our office did in fact speak with PDS and were advised—explicitly or implicitly—that external purchases would be necessary."*
4. IPSA declined to cover this payment as computer monitors are supplied direct by PDS, and the MP's IPSA provided budget does not have provisions to purchase IT equipment.
5. Mr Hussain subsequently made this application through the IPSA contingency panel. The panel declined to cover this payment.
6. Mr Hussain appealed the decision with IPSA. IPSA upheld their decision and communicated this to the MP on 21st May 2025.

The Scheme

7. The 17th edition of The Scheme of MPs Staffing and Business Costs is the relevant scheme for the purpose of this review.

Fundamental principles

8. Within The Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs, there is a section for the MP and IPSA as to the fundamental principles. These are:

For MPs

In claiming for public funds through the Scheme, MPs must adhere to the following principles.

1. **Parliamentary:** MPs may only claim for expenditure for parliamentary purposes.
2. **Value for Money:** MPs must have regard to value for money when making claims.

3. **Accountability:** MPs are legally responsible for all money claimed and for managing their budgets and their staff.
4. **Probity:** When making claims, MPs must adhere to the MPs' Code of Conduct, including the seven principles of public life.

For IPSA

IPSA's role as an independent regulator is to resource MPs appropriately to carry out their parliamentary functions and support them in making eligible claims. In administering the Scheme we will adhere to the following principles:

5. **Diversity:** IPSA will take account of MPs' diverse working arrangements and treat MPs fairly, so that they are not disadvantaged or advantaged financially because of the Scheme.
6. **Transparency:** IPSA will operate transparently, making information about MPs' expenditure accessible to the public.
7. **Value for money:** IPSA will administer the Scheme efficiently and cost-effectively.
8. **Proportionality:** IPSA will regulate proportionately and effectively.

Actions undertaken

9. To consider this case, on 18th June 2025, I wrote to the MP and set out the following points and questions:

From your letter, I can see that you have covered most of the review request points, however I wish to draw your attention to page 12 paragraph 5(b). This part is where you are required to tell me why you are saying IPSA's decision was incorrect. Your email tells me that you are not happy with IPSA decision, but does not set out why you believe it to be incorrect.

I would be grateful if you could set out why you believe, paying due regard to the scheme of MPs staffing and Business Costs, you consider IPSA have made the wrong decision. If you haven't any further detail to add on this point then I shall take your email as the instructions for review.

You will also note from the procedures at paragraph 8, that I may request information from any source I deem appropriate. I shall obtain details from IPSA and PDS, and I have the following questions for information from yourself. For clarity, I would be grateful if, when responding to any of my questions, you can advise what actions were completed by yourself and those done by your proxy or another member of your team.

1. *Please confirm if you asked IPSA if they would pay for computer monitors prior to ordering.*
2. *Have you any record of when contact was made with PDS to ask about monitors. Who made this enquiry?*
3. *Did you place the order yourself or was this done by your proxy?*
4. *If the monitors were needed for the transition from desktop computers to laptops, what has happened to the monitors which would have been part of the set up with each desktop computer? Was there any reason why these monitors could not be used?*

10. On 18th June 2025, I requested full disclosure from IPSA for the details as follows:

1. A copy of the [REDACTED] record for this transaction [REDACTED]. Record to include the invoice, delivery note and any notes on [REDACTED] which cover how the questions have been raised.
2. A copy of all correspondence IPSA have had with Imran Hussain and his Proxy [REDACTED] pertaining to this matter.
3. A copy of the records from the Contingency Panel relating to this matter.
4. Any other material used by the Contingency Panel to assist them in coming to their decision.
5. A copy of the appeal documentation to include who made the decision and which director / leader has signed off the appeal decision.

11. On 18th June 2025, I wrote to the PDS to advise them that I have been requested to carry out a review, and I requested the following:

Imran Hussain MP has asked that I conduct a formal review of an IPSA decision.

I am contacting you, as the Member has informed me that he had had some contact with PDS relating to this matter.

Mr Hussain has told me that he ordered some computer monitors believing IPSA would pay for them, but that this was after he had made enquiries with PDS.

The Member has stated that [REDACTED] with someone in PDS (no further details known) to ask about monitors to connect to their laptops.

He has said that he was told that it would be permissible to purchase external monitors independently, but that no one told him that PDS will supply monitors.

The Member ordered some monitors which IPSA have declined to pay for on the basis that they do not fund these as they are available through PDS.

Mr Hussain has not provided me with a timescale over this, although the emails pertaining to it are all from 1st May, so I suspect that any discussions would have been sometime from Feb, March, April this year.

Can you advise please if you hold records of enquiries with your team, and if so, have you a record of any discussions with Imran Hussain about this.

Additionally, please could you provide me with a copy / screenshot / weblink of information provided to MPs as to what they can have supplied by PDS. I believe the supply offer changed at last general election, so I would also be grateful if there is any information available as to what was communicated to MPs when any changes were made.

12. On 30th July 2025, the MP responded to my initial letter, and to a follow-up letter, in which I asked the MP to provide his account as to adherence to the fundamental principles for MPs when applying 'the scheme'. The MP has not provided any further information which had not been presented to IPSA when the MP appealed their initial decision. The MP's case is that the PDS provided his office with verbal advice that they would need to purchase their own screens independently, and acting upon this, they ordered screens and peripherals (keyboard and mouse sets).
13. IPSA have provided the following information: The IPSA records of the payment being declined by IPSA and the subsequent conversations and emails with the Member and the [REDACTED]. IPSA have also provided me with the invoice for these goods, these being 4 x HP Series 5 31.5" monitors, total cost £796 and 3 x Trust Primo wireless keyboard and mouse sets, total cost £44.97. The total cost of the monitors, keyboards and mouse being **£840.97**.
14. Within the information from IPSA, it is clear that IPSA have advised the MP that, as the cost of the keyboard and mouse sets are under £50, this can be claimed through the office budget. The MP was advised that this must be resubmitted for this purpose. I have confirmed with IPSA that the MP has not responded to this direction to have this element reconciled. If the MP had responded to this, then my review would be just for the monitors.
15. PDS have informed me, that they make a record of contact with MPs and their staff, that phone calls are usually logged, and emails held on case notes. PDS have records of contact regarding upgrading the IT equipment, but no record of anyone querying about monitors. The PDS state that the MP had raised a ticket for a new laptop, and on 4th February 2025, they contacted Mr Hussain's Office [REDACTED] to arrange replacing all desktop computers. There was no mention of monitors, however there were monitors with each desktop computer. On 7th February, [REDACTED] contacted PDS by email where he stated *"I didn't realise that we could keep the screens and I have ordered new screens for the office which have been delivered."* PDS further informed me that Mr Hussain's [REDACTED] [REDACTED] made contact three more times in March stating he had been given verbal advice that they could purchase screens and be reimbursed. The PDS have asked their team if anyone recalls having a conversation with this MP or OM but no one has any recollection of this.
16. PDS have advised that a mass email was sent out on 21st November 2024 to all returning .mp email accounts which linked them to the new funding policy. The email stated that they would be contacting offices to discuss what IT equipment they have, what should be returned, and then they would place an order for their new equipment. It also explained that unlike previous refreshes, not all equipment would need replacing – for example, monitors and printers wouldn't need to be withdrawn, unless they were faulty. For each workstation, PDS supply a Laptop dock, monitor, keyboard and mouse.
17. Until the July 2024 General Election, IPSA funded office IT equipment, however, this was transferred to PDS who received a finance uplift for this purpose.
18. IPSA Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs states at 3.27 IPSA will not pay for claims that are insurable or can be funded from other sources.

Parliamentary Standards Act 2009

19. Paragraph 6A PSA 2009 sets out the legal requirement on me as Compliance Officer. My duty is set out in Para 6 (2) The Compliance Officer must –
- (a) Consider whether the determination (or altered determination) is the determination that should have been made, and
 - (b) In light of that consideration, decide whether or not to confirm or alter it.

Procedures for investigations by the Compliance Officer for IPSA

20. Page 12 of the procedures sets out how as Compliance Officer I must handle the review.

The basis of the review from Imran Hussain MP

21. Mr Hussain and [REDACTED], having had some contact with PDS, believed that they could source their computer monitors independently. As IPSA cover office costs, they believed that IPSA should fund this purchase. When IPSA have declined to cover this cost, Mr Hussain has appealed that decision. When the appeal upheld IPSA's decision, Mr Hussain has asked for a Compliance Officer review.
22. Mr Hussain had stated that his office purchased the screens and equipment in good faith, believing this was permitted. He ordered the screens on 3rd February 2025, and states that by the time he discovered that IPSA would not fund these, they were beyond the 30 day return and refund window with the supplier.

Mitigating factors

23. Both IPSA and PDS supply / fund equipment to equip an MP and their staff to conduct their business. Both are from 'the public purse', and neither supply route gives any personal direct benefit to the MP.

Findings & Conclusions

24. I find that IPSA applied the policy correctly in declining to pay for the computer monitors and keyboard and mouse sets.
25. I find that IPSA took into account the information provided by Imran Hussain MP to consider their appeal, and that the information Imran Hussain MP provided to me as review officer has no fundamental difference to that he provided to IPSA.

26. I wish to note at this time, that the MP had opportunity to reduce the amount this review claim by separately submitting his claim for the keyboard and mouse packages (£44.97), but has not responded to that request from IPSA. Additionally, twice, the Compliance Officer has requested the MP set out why he believes the IPSA decision was incorrect. The MP has not set out why he considers the IPSA decision to be incorrect.
27. Furthermore to the above paragraph, I have twice asked the MP what he did with the existing computer monitors which would have been compatible with the laptop docking stations, but the MP has not provided me with this information. I have therefore not been provided with any information to justify purchasing these monitors regardless of out of whose budget this would come from. Additionally, in my initial email to the MP, I explicitly asked him to, in his response, to inform me which actions relating to this (such as liaison with IPSA, PDS, ordering the goods, etc) were conducted by him or a member of his staff. The MP has not advised at any time who has made contact or conducted these actions.
28. Under the fundamental principles, I find that the MP did not apply 'Value for Money' or 'Accountability' sufficiently in relation to this claim. To expand upon this further:
- i. Best VFM would be achieved by having the monitors supplied by PDS who hold corporate procurement contracts with suppliers. An individual office purchasing through a high street retail outlet does not benefit from bulk purchase discounts.
 - ii. To apply appropriate accountability, the MP should have complied with the directions given by PDS in November 2024, when he was told that PDS would be supplying all this equipment.
29. IPSA are not the provider of office IT for MPs. Since July 2024, IPSA budget does not include provisions for IT.
30. The timing of IPSA not approving this purchase is not an issue, as the MP had been told some 2+ months prior that PDS were the providers of IT equipment. The MP ordered the monitors on 3rd February, and on 7th February was informed by PDS that PDS would have supplied them. This is well within the 30 day returns window for the goods.
31. Therefore – in accordance with PSA 2009 Para 6A (2)(a) my first finding is that the determination made by IPSA is the determination that should have been made.

Decision

32. In accordance with PSA Para 6A (2)(a), my decision is, that I consider that the determination made by IPSA is the determination that should have been made.
33. In the absence of any new information which was not known to the Contingency Panel at the time of considering the appeal made by Imran Hussain MP, I find that IPSA applied the correct policy, and I uphold the decision made by IPSA to reject this claim. Under PSA Para 6A(2)(b) I confirm that decision.

34. My conclusion is in relation to the whole cost (£840.97), however, if the MP resubmits the claim to cover the keyboard and mouse sets (£44.97), then this can still be funded by IPSA, and the final amount subject to my review which the MP will now need to repay will be £796.
35. PSA 2009 Para 6A (6) provides that an MP requesting a review may appeal the decision of the Compliance Officer made under subsection (2)(b) to the First-tier Tribunal. (7) the appeal must be brought before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day on which notice of the decision is sent to the member (unless the Tribunal directs that it may be brought after the end of that period).
36. In accordance with the Guidance on the Conduct of Reviews by the Compliance Officer for IPSA, para 13, the details of this review will be published in such a manner as the Compliance Officer sees fit.

Matt Walker
Compliance Officer
5th August 2025