

Rt. Hon Harriet Harman QC MP
Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

5 March 2020

Letter ref: VF-2020-003

Dear Ms Harman,

Joint Committee on Human Right's report: Democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of association: Threats to MPs

We welcome the Joint Committee on Human Right's report into Democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of association: Threats to MPs and will carefully consider the recommendations.

IPSA takes the security of MPs, their families and staff very seriously. A core part of IPSA's role is to resource and support MPs to carry out their parliamentary functions. We ensure that MPs have funding for security measures, as advised by the police, which allows them to carry out their parliamentary roles safely and provides appropriate security provisions for them, their families and their staff.

We support the report's recommendation that IPSA should continue to regularly assess its policies to ensure that they are in line with the challenges faced by MPs, their families and their staff. We review security funding on a regular basis, working closely with the Parliamentary Security Department and following recommendations from the National Police Chiefs' Council.

In response to the recent increased level of abuse directed at MPs, IPSA decided to fund additional measures in MPs' constituencies, including CCTV and security guards, that, whilst not recommended by the police, may nonetheless reduce the fear of harm. In the light of the Joint Committee's report, the IPSA Board has resolved, in addition, to fund the installation of CCTV for MPs' homes for the financial year 2020-21. This is to demonstrate IPSA's seriousness in responding to MPs' fears.

These new measures are in addition to the security measures recommended by the National Police Chiefs' Council. IPSA funds a recommended security package for all MPs, and further security measures when recommended by the police or the Parliamentary Liaison and

Investigation Team. We hope that these measures will enable MPs and their staff to feel safe as they carry out their parliamentary duties.

IPSA spent £3.5m on security measures for MPs, their families and staff in 2018-19. The security budget is uncapped, and published in aggregate to ensure that MPs' security details remain confidential. Our publication policy is informed by police advice and we will be happy to consult with the Information Commissioner's Office when we are next reviewing our publication policy.

We will continue to work with the House, the police and others to review how best to protect MPs, their families and staff. We will also conduct an assurance review of our spending of public money on these measures. We are also in contact with the Home Office and are committed to ensuring that MPs, their families and staff are kept safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. C. Fox', followed by a small dot.

Vicky Fox

Director of Regulation and Insight