



## Public Accounts Committee

**Will Quince MP**  
**Minister of State for Health and Social  
Care**  
**By email: [PSWillQuince@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:PSWillQuince@dhsc.gov.uk)**

20 December 2022

### **Release of papers on Government PPE contracts with PPE Medpro**

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 19 December and for the reassurance that work is underway at pace within the Department to identify the information covered by the Resolution of the House of 6 December.

However, the Committee is concerned at the suggestion in your letter that the Department may choose to withhold the papers until the National Crime Agency (NCA) investigation is concluded. Any such delay would not be acceptable to the Committee and, in our view, would not be in the spirit of the Resolution of the House.

Such a delay in providing Parliament with this information would likely become significant and would in effect thwart the purpose of the Resolution of the House by preventing the Committee from conducting its scrutiny function within a reasonable period.

The House agreed the Resolution on 6 December in the knowledge that the NCA was likely to be conducting an investigation, as well as the open investigation into the conduct of Baroness Mone by the House of Lords Commissioners for Standards.

It is for the Government to comply fully with the terms of the Resolution at the earliest opportunity and I would be very happy to meet with the Permanent Secretary to provide appropriate reassurances including in relation to the Committee's handling of information which the Department has shared with the NCA.

The Public Accounts Committee provides Parliament with a routine confidential scrutiny function in relation to sensitive material and notifications from across Government and other agencies. As such the Committee has a long track record of handling highly sensitive and secret information and has comprehensive internal procedures for handling such documents securely. The Committee has also received papers following previous humble Addresses and has acted responsibly, treating papers in a secure way, and putting in effective safeguards against unauthorised disclosures. It would therefore be entirely appropriate for the Committee to conduct its scrutiny alongside ongoing investigations by law enforcement.

The Committee is furthermore extremely mindful of the need to maintain due process in this case and has no intention of taking any action which would risk interfering with an ongoing investigation.



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The Committee Clerks will be in touch to arrange a meeting with officials to discuss this further and to confirm practical arrangements for receiving the papers in the new year.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meg Hillier".

Dame Meg Hillier  
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts