

Risk identification tool

Purpose

This tool has been developed to identify potential risk(s) to individuals or groups within the Parliamentary community, as well as mitigating and supportive actions, where the House Administration receives information from the police about alleged violent or sexual offending by a Member of Parliament.

It will be used by a staff panel with relevant expertise, nominated by the House of Commons Commission.

It is most likely to be initially used following automatic formal notification to the Clerk of an arrest of an MP but may also be used in response to notification of an ongoing police investigation where this relates to an allegation of violent or sexual offending. It will subsequently be revisited on receipt of new information or developments, including at the point of charge.

Assumptions

The staff panel will not act in a way or propose actions that might compromise the integrity of an investigation or the outcome of a judicial process.

Where possible, the staff panel will take steps to protect the anonymity of alleged perpetrator and victim(s), if these are not already in the public domain.

Process

The staff panel will use the following process:

Stage	Actions
Step 1 – information gathering	The police will provide the Director of Security for Parliament with necessary and proportion information for the purposes of maintaining the safety and security of the Parliamentary community. The type of information that may be shared by the police could include, on a case-by-case basis: • The nature and severity of the alleged offence(s). • Information about the profile of the victim(s) (age group, gender etc). • Whether the victim(s) is a member of the Parliamentary community and if the offence(s) took place on the Estate or in a constituency office. • Any other relevant details about the location of the alleged offence(s). • Any other relevant details about the connection between Member and alleged victim(s). • Any relevant bail conditions. This information will be shared with the staff panel. (A data sharing agreement will be developed with the police to support this aspect of the protocol.)

Step 2 – pre-assessment	If the staff panel is satisfied that the severity and nature of the offence provides a basis for a full risk assessment, it will proceed to step 3. If the staff panel is not satisfied, the panel will stand down.
Step 3 – determining the presence of risk factors	The staff panel will determine the presence of one or more of the following risk factors: • A risk that the wider Parliamentary community, or a particular group or groups within it, could potentially be at risk from future, similar offending by the Member. • A risk that an alleged victim (if connected to Parliament) may potentially be subject to repeat offending during the course of Parliamentary duties. • A risk that the Member, or their office, may be subject to physical or psychological abuse, if or when the allegations are publicised. • Other significant risks to the Member's or alleged victim's (if relevant) health and wellbeing. • Any other significant risk to the Parliamentary community, or a particular group or groups within it, including a risk arising if or when the allegations are publicised. If the staff panel identifies the presence of one or more risk factors, it will proceed to step 4.
Step 4 – judgements about the nature of the risks and scenario planning	In relation to each risk factor identified, the staff panel will consider: • What is the likelihood of it occurring? • Should it occur, what would be the impact? The staff panel will assess the risk(s) and the necessity of actions) to mitigate them, taking account of the potential vulnerabilities of different groups with the Parliamentary Community and the difference scenarios in which these risks might materialise.
Step 5 – assign actions in relation to the risk	The staff panel will consider an appropriate and proportionate response to mitigate identified risks which might include (but is not restricted to): • Health and Wellbeing support for the Member or alleged victim(s) (if connected to Parliament). • Support for the Member's office. • Restricting or adapting services provided by the House Administration to the Member, under existing policies. • Applying measures under the lone working protocol. • Measures to separate the Member and alleged victim(s). • Escorting the Member around the Estate. • Safeguarding measures. • (Post-charge and with the consent of the Member) behavioural interventions. • Exclusion from the Parliamentary estate. • Exclusion from Parliamentary-funded travel.

	The staff panel will also consider with whom information about the mitigation needs to be shared on a need-to-know basis, in order for the mitigation to be enacted while protecting anonymity as far as possible.
Step 6 – formal decisions about exclusion (if applicable)	If exclusion from the Parliamentary Estate and/or Parliamentary-funded travel is proposed, a recommendation will be put to the adjudication panel established by the House, for decision.

Review points

The staff panel will review its initial assessment should further relevant information come to light, using the same process, and make any further recommendation to the adjudication panel as needed (including that an existing exclusion be withdrawn).

An exclusion will automatically come to an end should a criminal investigation or charge be dropped or once a criminal trial has been concluded.

Notes: This tool has been developed specifically for the House of Commons, informed by good practice in the field of risk assessment and in consultation with the police. It has been developed by:

- *Officials with experience of managing risks within Parliament, knowledge of the law and Parliament's relationship with the police.*
- *An external adviser who is an experienced expert witness and trained in the use of established risk assessment tools in relation to violent offending.*