

SPEAKER'S COMMITTEE FOR THE IPSA

FORMAL MINUTES 2026

FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 3 FEBRUARY 2026

THE SPEAKER'S STUDY

Present:

Mr Speaker (Chair)	
Sir Alan Campbell	Marie Goldman
Alberto Costa	Theresa Middleton
Mary Curnock Cook	Charlotte Nichols
Helena Dollimore	Jesse Norman
Tina Fahm	

In private

1. Declarations of interests

The Committee noted Helena Dollimore's interests. Helena noted her office had received donations from GMB and Unite the Union.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 20 October 2025.

3. IPSA's Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26

The Committee noted:

- IPSA's Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26 and Estimates Memorandum.
- a letter from the Rt Hon. James Murray MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, to Mr Speaker dated 19 January 2026, providing Treasury's advice on IPSA's Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26.
- a letter from the Chair of IPSA to Mr Speaker, responding to Treasury comments, dated 22 January 2026.
- the Scrutiny Unit's briefing on the Supplementary Estimate.

4. Briefing by IPSA on its Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26

Richard Lloyd, Chair, Karen Walker, Chief Executive Officer, and Lee Bridges, Director of Standards and Information, IPSA, were questioned on IPSA's request for a supplementary estimate.

5. Consideration of IPSA's Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26

The Committee reviewed the estimate to consider whether it was consistent with the efficient and cost-effective discharge of IPSA's functions.

The Committee considered IPSA's position as an independent public body, their statutory duties and their need for additional resources at this point in the 2025/26 financial year.

It was noted that the Chief Secretary's advice was given on the basis as to how HM Treasury would treat a central government department. The Chief Secretary stated that if IPSA were a department, the Treasury would have rejected the reserve claim because it resulted from higher demand against existing policies. He stated regular government departments would only be allowed a reserve claim where they encountered an unavoidable policy decision or cost shock.

The Committee, noting the Chief Secretary's observations, agreed that IPSA must continue to drive efficiencies, strengthen forecasting and cost controls, and where possible manage pressures within existing settlements.

Having considered IPSA's written and oral evidence and having regard to the Treasury advice, the Committee concluded that the supplementary estimates offered met the test imposed by the Parliamentary Standards Act in their being consistent with the efficient and cost-effective discharge by IPSA of their functions.

The Committee agreed to:

- lay IPSA's Supplementary Estimate for 2025/26 before the House;
- lay a Statement in pursuance of paragraph 22(7) of Schedule 1 to the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 setting out the Committee's reasons for finding the Supplementary Estimate as presented met the statutory test in pursuance of paragraph 22(3) of Schedule 1 of the 2009 Act.
- publish IPSA's Supplementary Estimate Memorandum;
- publish a letter from the Chair of IPSA to Mr Speaker, responding to Treasury comments, dated 22 January 2026; and
- publish a supplementary note by IPSA relating to IPSA's Main Estimate, dated 11 March 2025.

The Committee agreed to ask the Secretary to the Committee to produce a draft Statement and to agree this by correspondence ahead of the Estimates Day on which supplementary estimates for 2025/26 would be considered by the House.

The Committee discussed IPSA's practice in recent years of giving MPs and their offices early notice of IPSA's proposed changes to MPs' staffing budgets.

6. Any other business

None.

[The Committee adjourned

Pursuant with the Committee's resolution of 22 January 2025 to allow decisions by correspondence, the following decision was taken by correspondence:

24 February 2026

The Committee agreed its First Report on *Statement on IPSA's Supplementary estimate 2025/26*, HC1715.

FORMAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 4 MARCH 2026

Committee Room 15

Present:

Mr Speaker (Chair)	
Alberto Costa	Tina Fahm
Sir Alan Campbell	Marie Goldman
Mary Curnock Cook	Charlotte Nichols
Helena Dollimore	Jesse Norman

In private

1. Minutes of last meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 4 February 2026.

2. Committee's powers on estimates

The Committee considered a note on SCIPSA's statutory powers and working practices, which included advice on the scope of SCIPSA's functions in reviewing estimates.

The Committee noted that Mr Speaker would consult Speaker's Counsel on the advice provided, following the Committee's discussion. Mr Speaker would report back to the Committee on this matter.

The Committee agreed to publish an information note, for publication on its website, on its statutory oversight role in reviewing IPSA's estimates of resources to ensure they were consistent with the efficient and cost-effective discharge of IPSA's functions.

The information note would set out SCIPSA's role in the context of IPSA being independent of Parliament and Government in taking decisions on MPs' staffing and business costs, pay, and pensions.

3. Discussion on IPSA's Main Estimate for 2026/27

The Committee had a discussion on IPSA's draft main estimate for 2026/27 and considered:

- a note by IPSA on its main estimate and Business Plan for 2026/27, which provided an update on IPSA's performance in relation to its 2024-27 Corporate Plan and on progress made on principles-based regulation;
- IPSA's Business Plan for 2026/27;
- a letter from Richard Lloyd, Chair of IPSA, on MPs' staffing budgets, dated 24 February 2026; and
- a briefing paper by the House of Commons Scrutiny Unit.

The Committee noted correspondence on MPs' staffing budgets. Members, Members' staff and staff representative bodies had raised concerns over the level of the MPs' staffing budgets proposed for 2026/27.

4. Consideration of Treasury advice on IPSA's main estimate for 2026/27

The Committee considered the Treasury's advice on IPSA's main estimate for 2026/27.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury's comments on IPSA's budgets and those relating to IPSA's proposed pay award for MPs for 2026/27 were considered.

The Committee noted that IPSA was independent of Government and Parliament when determining the rules on MPs' business costs and on determining MPs' salaries.

The Committee noted its statutory role was to review estimates to ensure that they were consistent with the efficient and cost-effective discharge of IPSA's functions, having had regard to Treasury advice.

5. Discussion of lines of questioning for public evidence session with IPSA witnesses

The Committee discussed and allocated questions for the evidence session with IPSA.

In public

6. Evidence session: IPSA's Main Estimate for 2026/27

Richard Lloyd OBE, Chair, and Karen Walker, Chief Executive, IPSA, gave oral evidence on IPSA's main estimate for 2026/27.

In private

7. Consideration of IPSA's Main Estimate for 2026/27

Points in discussion

The Committee discussed the pressures that Members' staff were facing owing to the volume and complexity of constituency and policy work with which they were dealing. Members found there was a need to collect better data to assess the adequacy and level of funding provided to meet MPs' staffing needs.

The Committee noted concerns that Members had raised relating to staff well-being, staff retention and on the increased security burden carried by MP's staff. The Committee also noted an Administration Committee inquiry that was underway looking into the health and wellbeing services available to those working in Parliament.

IPSA had stated that while some office managers considered the pressures on offices was unsustainable, others found there was scope for improved prioritisation of casework and better management of existing budgets.

In respect of MPs' staffing budgets, it was noted that the main estimate was providing an additional £11.5 million of funding from April 2026, which IPSA stated represented an increase of 7% on last year's budget.

Given the concerns raised in correspondence with SCIPSA, the Committee supported a proposal that IPSA establish a working group with MPs' staff, IPSA representatives and others to assess the evidence on workload and to agree a delivery plan to support MPs' offices. The group would gather data on caseload volumes and complexity of cases, and help identify best practices.

The Committee questioned why this data collection and analysis had not already taken place to better understand and determine resources for the 2026/27 financial year. However, given the working group was due to report back to Mr Speaker in four months' time, this would now enable a more comprehensive analysis to take place ahead of IPSA's budget setting for 2027/28.

As IPSA had reported delays and difficulty in obtaining data on email volumes to MPs' offices, the Committee agreed to write to the Parliamentary Digital Service to help ensure this data was made available as soon as possible and to ask for an explanation as to the reasons for the delay in the provision of this data.

The Committee, having had regard to the Treasury advice and IPSA's evidence, found IPSA's request for resources to be consistent with the efficient and cost-effective discharge of IPSA's functions for 2026/27.

The Committee agreed to:

- lay IPSA's Main Estimate for 2026/27 before the House of Commons.
- publish IPSA's Main Estimates memorandum.
- publish the letter from Richard Lloyd, on MPs' staffing budgets, dated 24 February 2026.
- publish the letter from the Chief Secretary to the Treasury providing advice on IPSA's estimate for 2026/27, dated 27 February 2026.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

[The Committee adjourned