



HOUSE OF LORDS

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The Rt Hon Mel Stride MP
Financial Secretary to the Treasury and Paymaster General
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22 October 2018

I am disappointed at your refusal to appear before the Finance Bill Sub-Committee on the powers of HMRC on Monday 5 November.

In the course of our current inquiry, the Sub-Committee has received evidence alleging severe failures of oversight over HMRC enforcement. According to personal accounts submitted to the Sub-Committee, these have had a destructive effect on the health, families and employment prospects of individuals.

As is proper, the Sub-Committee has not come to a final opinion on this evidence, and we did not wish to do so without giving the Government an opportunity to respond fully to these issues. Given the serious nature of the issues at hand we invited you, as the Minister responsible for overseeing HMRC, to inform our inquiry.

We did this on the basis of the Ministerial Code, which states "Ministers have a duty to Parliament to account, and be held to account, for the policies, decisions and actions of their departments and agencies." We are grateful to the officials from HM Treasury and HMRC for giving evidence to the Sub-Committee today. However, there are quite understandably some areas pertinent to our inquiry, including the oversight of HMRC, where it is would be improper for any official from the Department to answer our questions.

We therefore reissue our invitation for you to meet with the Sub-Committee on 5 November. We have offered you three possible dates: 22 October, 31 October and 5 November, all of which you have refused while offering no alternatives. If you decide not to attend, we are likely to note this in our final report as evidence of the Government's approach to this matter.

I copy this letter to the Leader of the House of Lords.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne' followed by a flourish.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marnie'.

The Rt Hon. the Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Chairman, Finance Bill Sub-Committee