

## **Letter by the Clerk of the House and Chief Executive to Leaders of Parties at Westminster**

19 March 2010

### **Special Arrangements for Leaders of Parties and their Staff during Dissolution**

I am enclosing a copy of the guidance on *Dissolution Arrangements*, which has been published on the intranet and sent personally to all Members. These arrangements apply equally to all Members. However, by longstanding agreement, there are special arrangements allowing the Leaders of the Government and all Opposition Parties and their personal staffs to work in their office during this period.

These special arrangements for Party Leaders are outlined below and I should be grateful if you would draw the attention of your staff to them.

#### **Principles**

These arrangements are on the understanding that the use of parliamentary facilities is for parliamentary purposes only and not for party political campaigning.

#### **Office use**

Party Leaders and their staff may only use rooms that have been agreed with the Director of Accommodation Services (James Robertson).

#### **Access for staff**

Please let the Deputy Serjeant at Arms (Name) have the names of no more than 12 of your personal staff who will be working at Westminster, or who may need access to the Palace, during dissolution. This should include any staff members who are involved in planning induction arrangements for the new Parliament. Arrangements will then be made to permit them access to the premises.

If any of these staff are not already Palace of Westminster pass holders, they will need to complete a Security Questionnaire as soon as possible. Security clearance normally takes around five working days.

#### **Information Technology**

If you wish your staff to make use of computers which have been provided from parliamentary resources, you will need to make arrangements with the Director of Operations and Members' Services at PICT (Matthew Taylor) for their rental. Section 3 of the *Dissolution Arrangements* booklet ('IT and related services') gives details.

Exceptionally, your parliamentary e-mail account and those held by members of your correspondence team prior to the election will remain available. No additional e-mail accounts will be created for those staff who were previously not pass holders.

Please note that access to shared drives will not be available from 5.00 p.m. on the day of dissolution.

### **Telephones**

If you intend to make use of the telephones in your offices, please let the Telecommunications Manager (Name) know which extensions you intend to use. She will then make arrangements for your Party to be charged for all calls made on those numbers. Other extensions in the rooms you are using will be disconnected during the period of dissolution.

Please note that voicemail and message bureau services will be withdrawn during the dissolution.

### **Photocopying machines**

Photocopying machines provided for Members' use will be disabled during dissolution. If you need access to a machine, the Director of Accommodation Services can make arrangements for one to be moved temporarily into your office. In this case all expenses, including those for the move, the rental, copy costs and any call-out charges for breakdowns, etc., would be charged to your Party at the end of the dissolution period.

Alternatively, you could make a private arrangement for a copying machine to be installed at the expense of your Party. Please let James Robertson know your plans and he will make the necessary arrangements.

### **Parking**

Those who are working in the offices of the Party Leaders and who already hold Underground Car Park permits may continue to use them throughout dissolution. It will not be possible for those to whom temporary Palace of Westminster photo-identity passes are issued to use the car park. No additional permits will be issued.

### **Refreshment arrangements**

Staff working in the Party Leaders' rooms may use cafeteria facilities but they may not entertain guests.

### **Visitors**

Neither you nor your staff may receive visitors – whether ex-Members or others.

### **Media access**

It will not be permitted for live broadcasts on television, radio or the internet to be made from Party Leaders' offices, nor for media briefings to be given on the Estate.

### **Whips' Offices**

I would be also be grateful if you could let your staff know that the regulations set out in the note on 'Dissolution Arrangements' also apply to political advisers in the Whips' Offices.

### **Declaration of election expenses**

Please note that if you choose to use IT, telephone or photocopying facilities supplied by the House and to make repayment for this then you will need to declare the repayment as an election expense.

**Contacts**

If you have queries, please do not hesitate to contact my colleagues:

Accommodation: James Robertson, Director of Accommodation Services .

Access and security: Deputy Serjeant at Arms (Name).

ICT: Matthew Taylor, PICT Director of Operations and Members' Services

For any other issues, please contact Philippa Helme, Head of the Office of the Chief Executive.

Malcolm Jack

*Clerk of the House & Chief Executive*