

Rt Hon John Bercow MP
Speaker
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Dear Mr Speaker

ESTIMATE 2014/15

I write, ahead of the meeting of the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA (SCIPSA) scheduled to take place next month, to provide you with a copy of IPSA's draft Estimate for 2014/15 and supporting paperwork. That paperwork includes the Estimate memorandum, an outline for our programme of work in preparation for the General Election and our Corporate Plan for 2014–18.

It may be helpful if I set out here the context in which we submit this Estimate. It reflects a further reduction in the cost of our core operations of 5% against last year and a total reduction in that cost of 20% since 2010. At the same time, the coming financial year will be our most challenging yet. As you will see from the programme outline enclosed, work is well under way for the General Election. We will shortly be moving to new office accommodation, offering even better value for money and ensuring we have space to accommodate the staff we will need for the election. And, in anticipation of the possibility that our appeal against the decision of the Information Commissioner's Office (currently at the Court of Appeal) may prove to

be unsuccessful, we will need to be ready to prepare for the publication of over 850,000 receipts and invoices.

You will know that, over the last four years, we have taken a number of steps to improve the administration of the Scheme (for example, the introduction of the greater use of direct payments and the payment card, and improvements to the process for making claims). This year, we plan to go further, and extend the operating hours of our phone line so that members of our team will be available to take calls from MPs and their staff throughout the working day. We are confident that we will be able to do so within the Estimate we are proposing.

We are in no doubt that to deliver this significant plan of work, and to do so while still delivering the savings to which we are committed, will be demanding. Nevertheless, it is – in our view – achievable.

I look forward to discussing this with you and your colleagues at the meeting of the SCIPSA next month.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Hayes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Hayes
Interim Chief Executive