

Home Affairs Committee

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From the Committee Chair

David Bolt
Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
5th Floor, Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1PN

21 November 2018

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter this evening setting out further information about the interactions between the Home Office and the Inspectorate regarding the case studies described in your report on asylum accommodation.

As you will be aware, we were given the following information by your office this afternoon on the understanding that it could be put to the Immigration Minister and Home Office officials in an ongoing select committee evidence session:

- That the Home Office had first requested details of the case studies referred to in the report on Monday 19 November;
- That the Home Office would have been in possession of information about the case study properties described in the report, as the visits were organised with service providers and in some instances attended by Home Office officials;
- That there were two types of evidence in the report: confidential evidence from NGOs and service users, and separate case studies that were subject to visits and photographed for use in the report – meaning they were identifiable to service providers;
- That you would confirm again to the Home Office the details of the case studies, and share that information with the Committee subject to data protection requirements.

This appears inconsistent with the information subsequently set out in your letter and I would be grateful for further clarification about the specific communications between the Inspectorate and the Home Office in relation to the case studies described in the report.

As you will be aware, the Committee's concern is to ensure that there is proper follow-up on these cases to make sure asylum seekers are no longer living in sub-standard properties.

It would therefore be helpful to receive your prompt reply and reassurances that relevant information about these properties - including on the mother and baby unit - will now be shared with the Home Office to ensure that they are identified and the necessary improvements can be made.

We would also like further information about what concerns were raised by NGOs and why they would fear any detrimental consequences and from whom as a result of sharing this crucial information - as that in itself raises a whole series of further questions for the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Cooper', written in a cursive style.

Yvette Cooper MP