

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Memorandum by the Accounting Officer

1. Under Standing Order No 22C, a motion which if agreed would have a direct consequence of additional expenditure under the House of Commons: Administration Estimate estimated to be £50,000 or more shall not be considered by the House unless a memorandum setting out its expected financial consequences has been made available to the House by the Accounting Officer.
2. This memorandum therefore seeks to set out the expected financial consequences of the motion in the name of the Leader of the House, on the Independent Complaints and Grievance Policy, for the House of Commons: Administration Estimate. Further information on the proposals can be found in the Report of the Working Group on an Independent Complaints and Grievance Policy.
3. The motion seeks the House's endorsement that the necessary steps to take forward the recommendations in the report be taken and asks the House of Commons Commission to authorise House officials to undertake the work necessary. This work would, if approved, include procurement of services required to run an independent complaints and grievance process and provide a specialist, trained Independent Sexual Violence Advocate; establishment of a system of training to support the proposed Behaviour Code; and procurement of a human resource advice service for staff employed by Members of Parliament, Peers or jointly by political parties.
4. A Programme Manager, supported by another member of staff, will be recruited to oversee the implementation of the recommendations, and will work closely with those leading on the separate workstreams to develop a detailed project plan. Since it is envisaged that the work will be completed in the short-term, the current intention is that these tasks will be undertaken within the current staffing resource, although some modest additional staff resources may be needed. I estimate that the one-off staffing and procurement costs of implementing the recommendations of the Working Group to be around £100,000.
5. It is estimated that the ongoing costs will include additional staff resource within the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and HR teams, the provision of training, contract management costs, and the cost of HR advisory services and the third-party services to deal with complaints of sexual harassment and bullying and harassment. The costs are difficult to estimate accurately as the take-up of the service is unknown at this stage and may fluctuate. I therefore estimate ongoing annual costs of around £500,000.
6. In the current year the costs can be met from underspends elsewhere. In 2018-19 they will be met from contingency. Once the services are established the cost will be factored into future financial plans.

David Natzler
Accounting Officer
8 February 2018