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Summary

I investigated an allegation that the Member had breached paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct by providing guests with a tour of the Palace of Westminster and tea on the Terrace as part of a fund-raiser for a political party.

- 5 During my inquiry, I established that the Member had hosted the tour and provided tea (at her own expense), following a request from another Member. I found that both Members had acted in breach of the rules. Both acknowledged their breach, apologised and undertook not to repeat it.

- 10 I concluded the inquiry using the rectification procedure available to me under Standing Order no 150.

Ms Kate Osamor MP and Ms Ruth Cadbury MP: Resolution Letter

Letter from the Commissioner to Mr Simon Clarke MP, 1 May 2019

5 I wrote to you on 14 November 2018 to tell you I had begun an inquiry into your allegation that Ms Osamor had acted in breach of the rules of conduct. I am writing to you now to tell you the outcome of my inquiry.

As you will see from the enclosed evidence pack (item 12), my enquiries led me to add Ms Ruth Cadbury MP as a second respondent on 24 January 2019. Ms Osamor and Ms Cadbury both co-operated fully with my inquiry and I have established that:

- 10
- Ms Cadbury asked Ms Osamor's office if Ms Osamor would host tea on the terrace as part of fundraiser in Ms Cadbury's constituency (initially this was as a suggested raffle prize, in the end the opportunity was auctioned)
 - Following the fundraiser, Ms Osamor hosted a guided tour of the public areas of Parliament, followed by tea on the terrace (for which she paid)

15 Both Members acted in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for Members which says that "[...] *Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal advantage or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation.*"

20 Raffleing or auctioning a tour of the Palace of Westminster and tea on the terrace entails the use of publicly provided resources and results in financial advantage to the recipients of the funds raised - this case a constituency Labour Party. Neither Ms Cadbury nor Ms Osamor received any personal financial benefit, but the Labour Party did and that was, therefore, a misuse of parliamentary resources.

25 Both Members have acknowledged their breach of the rules; apologised and committing to avoiding a recurrence. I consider that to be an appropriate outcome and have concluded the matter using the rectification procedure available to me under Standing Order no 150.

30 I will notify the Committee on Standards of the outcome in due course and the evidence pack will be posted on my webpages in the next few days.

1 May 2019

Written evidence

1. Letter from Mr Simon Clarke MP to the Commissioner, 8 November 2018

I am writing to request that you launch an investigation into the Member of Parliament for Edmonton, Kate Osamor MP.

- 5 It has been brought to my attention that Kate Osamor raffled an afternoon tea on the House of Commons Terrace at a Labour Party fundraiser. I have enclosed a copy of this evidence for your reference.

- 10 In late October, Mrs Osamor took the winner and a plus-one on a tour of Parliament before taking tea on the Terrace. This is despite the rules clearly set out by Mr Speaker in October 2010 that Members should not offer privileged access to the House, in raffles or auctions.

Indeed it is also clear in the Members' handbook, that services provided by the House should not be abused to confer undue advantage on a political organisation.

- 15 I believe that Ms Osamor has clearly breached these rules and would therefore urge you to investigate as a matter of urgency.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

8 November 2018

2. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 14 November 2018

- 20 I would welcome your help with an allegation I have received from Simon Clarke MP about your compliance with the House of Commons' Code of Conduct for Members. I enclose a copy of Mr Clarke's letter for information.

My Inquiry

- 25 I have decided to begin an inquiry into his allegation that you acted in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for Members by raffling "tea on the terrace" for the benefit of the Labour Party.

The Code of Conduct for Members ¹

Paragraph 16 of the current Code of Conduct for Members states:

¹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmcode/1474/147401.htm>

5 *“Members are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their use of any expenses, allowances, facilities and services provided from the public purse is in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters. Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal advantage or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation”*

The Members’ Handbook

10 Under the heading *“Essentials – Everyone’s responsibility; and the use of parliamentary resources”* it says:

“Use of parliamentary resources

The House provides various facilities and services to Members, the cost of which is either met in full or subsidised by public funds. These include, but are not limited to:

- Accommodation, including offices and meeting rooms
- 15 • Stationery and postage
- Research support
- Computer equipment and services
- Catering facilities.”

Next steps

20 In the first instance, I would welcome your comments on the following questions.

- Whether the tweet by [the Councillor] accurately reflects the circumstances, i.e. that
 - you entertained two guests for tea on the parliamentary estate on 23 October 2018.
 - 25 • access to the estate on that, or another date, was offered as a raffle prize.
 - the raffle in question was raising funds for the Labour Party.

- Please describe any steps you took to ensure the bona fides of any such guests.
- Whether, on reflection, you consider any of the above to have been a breach of the rules of conduct and, if you do not, the basis for that belief.

5 Any other points you may wish to make to help me with this inquiry would be most welcome.

Important information

As you will be aware, my inquiries are conducted in private. Following the decision taken by the House on 19 July 2018, I will not publish the fact that I am conducting
10 an inquiry into an allegation into an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct. I must ask that you respect the decision of the House and the confidentiality of my inquiry. My office will not comment on any aspect of the inquiry to third parties. They will answer direct factual questions about the processes I follow and the standards system more generally but will neither confirm nor deny that I have begun an
15 inquiry.

This letter and any subsequent correspondence between us in connection with this inquiry is protected by parliamentary privilege. It should be kept confidential until the outcome of my inquiry is published. (I am making a similar request of the complainant.) All the relevant evidence, including our correspondence, will be
20 published when I have concluded my work.

Procedure

I am writing to Mr Clarke to let him know that I have decided to begin an inquiry into this matter.

I enclose a copy of the Commissioner's Information Note, which sets out the
25 procedure for inquiries. Please note that this has not yet been updated to reflect the changes flowing from the decision of 19 July 2018.

While I do not, at this stage, know whether it will be necessary to interview you about this matter, it would be open to you to be accompanied at any such interview. I am, of course, very happy to meet with you at any stage if you would find that
30 helpful.

I should say now, as a matter of courtesy, that I may seek the advice of the relevant House authorities as part of this inquiry.

Action

I would be grateful to have your response to this letter as soon as possible and no later than 22 November 2018. Please let me know before that date if you think more time is required

14 November 2018

5 **3. Letter from Ms Kate Osamor MP to the Commissioner, 19 November 2018**

Thank you for your letter of 14 November regarding the allegation you received from Simon Clarke MP about compliance with the House of Commons Code of Conduct for Members.

You have asked the following;

10 Whether the tweet by Cllr [name redacted] accurately reflects the circumstances that I:

(1) Entertained two guests for tea on the parliamentary estate on 23 October 2018

(2) Offered access to the estate as a raffle prize

15 (3) Ruffled a prize to raise funds for the Labour Party

Firstly, I was approached by Ruth Cadbury MP who asked if I would give a couple of her constituents a Tour of the Commons. I did so to be helpful. After showing them around, we sat down for a cup of tea on the Terrace.

20 Secondly, I did not offer access to myself, nor the estate, as a raffle prize. I was not involved in the raffle nor with any prize. This came out of an event held by Ruth Cadbury. You will need to approach Ruth Cadbury for the details of the Hounslow event, the raffle and how it was advertised. As far as I am aware, this was not billed as access to me.

25 Thirdly, given the above, I have no idea whether the prize was raffled for funds or not.

I hope this is helpful in providing the answers to the questions you have raised with me.

19 November 2018

4. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 26 November 2018

Thank you for your letter of the 19 November 2018; the information you have provided is helpful. As I am sure you will appreciate, I now need to write to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP.

- 5 I enclose a copy of the letter I am sending to her today for your information. I shall write to you again once I have her reply. Our correspondence continues to be protected by parliamentary privilege. Please do not discuss this matter with her in the meantime. Until I send you my decision concluding this inquiry, this matter should remain confidential.

10 26 November 2018

5. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP, 26 November 2018

I would welcome your help with an inquiry I am conducting into the conduct of Ms Kate Osamor MP, regarding an alleged breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for Members.

15 The Code of Conduct for Members ²

Paragraph 16 of the current Code of Conduct for Members states:

20 *“Members are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their use of any expenses, allowances, facilities and services provided from the public purse is in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters. Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal advantage or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation”*

The Members’ Handbook

25 Under the heading *“Essentials – Everyone’s responsibility; and the use of parliamentary resources”* it says:

“Use of parliamentary resources

The House provides various facilities and services to Members, the cost of which is either met in full or subsidised by public funds. These include, but are not limited to:

- 30 • *Accommodation, including offices and meeting rooms*

² <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmcode/1474/147401.htm>

- *Stationery and postage*
- *Research support*
- *Computer equipment and services*
- *Catering facilities.”*

5 I wrote to Ms Kate Osamor MP on 14 November 2018 after I received a complaint stating she had offered “tea on the terrace” as a prize in a raffle and, that the raffle was held as part of a Labour party fundraiser.

In my letter I asked for her comments on the following questions.

Whether;

- 10
- she had entertained two guests for tea on the parliamentary estate on 23 October 2018;
 - access to the estate on that, or another date, was offered as a raffle prize; and
 - the raffle in question was raising funds for the Labour Party.

She wrote back on 21 November 2018 and said;

15 *Firstly, I was approached by Ruth Cadbury MP who asked if I would give a couple of her constituents a tour of the Commons. I did so to be helpful. After showing them around, we sat down for a cup of tea on the Terrace.*

20 *Secondly, I did not offer access to myself, nor the estate, as a raffle prize. I was not involved in the raffle nor with any prize. This came out of an event held by Ruth Cadbury. You will need to approach Ruth Cadbury for the details of the Hounslow event, the raffle and how it was advertised. As far as I am aware, this was not billed as access to me.*

Thirdly, given the above, I have no idea whether the prize was raffled for funds or not.

25 I would welcome your comments on her reply and, if appropriate, the questions I originally asked her.

You should know that this letter and any subsequent correspondence between us in connection with this inquiry is protected by parliamentary privilege. It should be kept confidential until the outcome of my inquiry is published.

All the relevant evidence, including our correspondence, will be published when I have concluded my work. You should not discuss this matter, including the fact of my inquiry, with anyone else.

26 November 2018

5 **6. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury, 10 December 2018**

I wrote to you on 26 November 2018 to seek your assistance with an inquiry I have begun into the conduct of Ms Kate Osamor MP. I enclose a copy of that letter for ease of reference.

10 I appreciate that the last few weeks have been particularly busy. However, I am keen to progress my inquiry and require your response to my questions to enable me to do so.

I would be grateful to have your reply as soon as possible and no later than 17 December 2018. Please let me know before that date if you think more time is required.

15 *10 December 2018*

7. Letter from Ms Ruth Cadbury MP to the Commissioner, 17 December 2018

Following your letter of 26 November 2018 I can confirm the following;

Brentford & Isleworth Constituency Labour Party held a Gala Dinner on 22 March 2018 to raise money for party funds.

20 There was an Auction, and one of the items was afternoon tea for two with Kate Osamor MP (see attached list of Auction and Raffle Prizes). It was never mentioned that this would take place on the Parliamentary estate and there was no assumption that this was to be the case.

25 The person who secured the tea was then put in touch with Ms Osamor's office to make the arrangements.

17 December 2018

Enclosure 1. Promotion advert for Gala Dinner event, 22 March 2018

Gala Dinner hosted by Ruth Cadbury MP

Auction Prizes

30 *3-night holiday overlooking the sea in St Ives*

2017 manifesto signed by Jeremy

Afternoon tea for two with Kate Osamor MP [Shadow] Secretary of State for International Development

Jeremy Corbyn signed bottle of Merlot

- 5 [donor redacted] A specialist London tour, the retail value of this is £250. To be claimed up to a 12 month period.

Raffle Prizes In no particular order [...]

- 10 *We are here tonight as we enter the final leg of the Hounslow's local Council Election Campaign, thank you for joining us and for your support for our Councillors and candidates. The one downside of the amazing election result last year is that Brentford & Isleworth will no longer be seen by the Labour Party as a key target marginal seat. Therefore, we will lose the national funding that has paid for our organiser's [name redacted] salary. This makes your financial contribution tonight all the more important to help secure the future of a brilliant organiser here in Brentford & Isleworth whose work remains key to Labour's success. Enjoy the evening and dig deep!*
- 15

[...]

8. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP,

- 20 Thank you for your letter of 17 December 2018; the information you have provided is helpful. As I am sure you will appreciate, I will now need to write to Ms Osamor and give her a further opportunity to comment. I will send her a copy of your letter.

Our correspondence continues to be protected by Parliamentary Privilege. Please do not discuss this matter with Ms Osamor or anyone else until my decision on the complaint about her is published.

- 25 *19 December 2018*

9. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 19 December 2018

- 30 On 26 November I wrote to let you know I would be contacting Ms Ruth Cadbury MP as part of my ongoing investigation. I specifically asked her questions regarding the fundraising event held in Hounslow earlier this year, a copy of this correspondence was shared with you.

Ms Cadbury has now replied, and I enclose a copy of her letter, and the advert promoting the event, for your information. As you can see, the advert offers "afternoon tea for two with Kate Osamor...".

5 In your letter of 19 November 2018, you said “...I was approached by Ruth Cadbury MP who asked if I would give a couple of her constituents a Tour of the Commons. I did so to be helpful”. You also said “...I did not offer access to myself, nor the estate, as a raffle prize. I was not involved in the raffle nor with any prize. This came out of an event held by Ruth Cadbury.”

In light of Ms Cadbury’s letter, it would be helpful if you would tell me:

- when Ms Cadbury approached you about hosting the tour;
- whether you were aware that Ms Cadbury’s request arose from an auction to be held at a gala dinner;
- 10 • whether you discussed with Ms Cadbury what her constituents were expecting from their visit; and
- any other factors that contributed to your decision to take them to tea on the parliamentary estate.

15 I would be grateful to have your reply as soon as possible and no later than Wednesday 9 January 2019.

As previously stated this letter and any subsequent correspondence between us remains protected by Parliamentary Privilege. Please do not discuss this matter with anyone. Until I send you my decision concluding this inquiry, this matter should remain confidential.

20 19 December 2018

10. Letter from Ms Kate Osamor MP to the Commissioner, 9 January 2019

Thank you for your letter dated 19th December 2018.

25 From searching through my office's emails from the beginning of 2018, we have ascertained the below in response to your questions. Please find attached the relevant emails.

30 Ruth Cadbury first contacted my office on the 7th March 2018 with a request that I attend a gala dinner in her constituency. On the 20th March my office informed Ruth that I was not available for the event. On the same day, Ruth asked if she could offer a raffle prize at her gala dinner of tea in the Commons (with an optional tour). My office agreed to this suggestion the same day.

I was not aware of any other arrangements or discussions until the 5th April, when Ruth's office passed on the dates for the tour and tea suggested by the raffle prize

winner to my office. Then on the 17th April the raffle winner was put in touch with my office directly.

As I have previously stated, I was not involved in the organisation of the raffle itself or the event at which it was held. I was not aware whether the prize of tea and a tour
5 was raffled for funds or not. I simply accepted a request to help a colleague.

I met the prize winners in Parliament, showed them parts of the estate open to the public, as requested by my colleague. I then took them for tea on the Terrace, which I paid for. When Ruth arrived at the end of the tea I left the guests with her.

I hope this helps answer your questions.

10 *9 January 2019*

Enclosure 1. Email from Ms Ruth Cadbury MP to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 7 March 2018.

From: Ruth Cadbury

Sent: 7 March 2018. 16:11

15 To: Kate Osamor

Subject: Could you speak at my Gala Dinner - 22 March?

Hi Kate

This is to formally invite you as a guest speaker at my gala dinner (raising funds for Brentford & Isleworth CLP). It's on Thursday 22 March, at the Indian Gymkhana club
20 in Isleworth. It's just around the corner from Osterley Station on the Heathrow branch of the Piccadilly line.

(The IGC was set up as a sports and social base 101 years ago by Indians living in London who'd been excluded from membership of local cricket clubs. It's still very much a place if and for local people of South Asian origin.)

25 Do let me know.

Thanks, Ruth

7 March 2018. 16:11

Enclosure 2. Email exchange between Ms Ruth Cadbury MP and Ms Kate Osamor MP, 20 March 2018.

From: Ruth Cadbury

Sent: 20 March 2018. 13:14

To: Kate Osamor

5 Subject: My Members are asking for you to come & speak at our Gala Dinner on Thursday!

Kate

10 I haven't heard from you so I wondered if you'd seen my email. I had a specific request from clp members that I invite you, and they indicated they'd only come to our dinner if you are there! So do let me know (even though I know it is very short notice).

With best wishes

Ruth

20 March 2018. 13:14

15 From: Kate Osamor

Sent: 20 March 2018. 13:24

To: Ruth Cadbury

Subject: My Members are asking for you to come & speak at our Gala Dinner on Thursday!

20 Dear Ruth

Thank you for your kind invitation.

We have been trying to move around a prior engagement in Kate's diary.

Unfortunately this has not been possible, which means Kate will not be able to attend your event.

25 Kate wishes you a great event

Kind regards

Office of Kate Osamor MP

20 March 2018. 13:24

5 From: Ruth Cadbury

Sent: 20 March 2018. 13:31

To: Kate Osamor

Subject: My Members are asking for you to come & speak at our Gala Dinner on Thursday!

10 Thanks for letting me know.

Would she be up for offering a raffle prize for four in the Commons (with optional tour?)

Ruth

20 March 2018. 13:31

15

From: Kate Osamor

Sent: 20 March 2018. 13:38

To: Ruth Cadbury

20 Subject: My Members are asking for you to come & speak at our Gala Dinner on Thursday!

Hello

Kate would love to host Tea for 4 at the Commons

Kind regards

Office of Kate Osamor MP

20 March 2018. 13:38

From: Office of Ruth Cadbury MP

Sent: 5 April 2018. 14:46

5 To: Kate Osamor

Subject: Tea with [name redacted]

Hi,

We have had a request from someone named [named redacted], who won a competition for tea with Kate Osamor.

10 I don't have any further information on this. Do you have any further details?

I have the dates from [name redacted] noted for this as either Tuesday August 29th or Wednesday 30th August.

There is also a back up date of Friday November 3rd.

Kind regards

15 *5 April 2018. 14:46*

11. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 24 January 2019

20 Thank you for your letter of the 9 January 2019; the additional information you have provided is helpful. As a result, I have decided it is appropriate to include Ms Ruth Cadbury MP as a 2nd respondent in this inquiry and to give her a formal opportunity to respond.

25 I enclose a copy of the letter I am sending to her today for your information. I shall write to you again once I have her reply. Our correspondence continues to be protected by parliamentary privilege. Please do not discuss this matter with her in the meantime. Until I send you my decision concluding this inquiry, this matter should remain confidential.

24 January 2019

12. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP, 24 January 2019

I wrote to you on 26 November about an inquiry I am undertaking concerning the conduct of Kate Osamor MP. The information you provided was helpful.

5 I shared your reply with Ms Osamor and asked for her comments. In light of that correspondence, a copy of which I enclose, I think it is appropriate to include you as a 2nd respondent in this inquiry and to give you a formal opportunity to respond.

The Code of Conduct for Members

Paragraph 16 of the current Code of Conduct for Members states:

10 *“Members are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their use of any expenses, allowances, facilities and services provided from the public purse is in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters. Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal advantage or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation”*

15 The Members’ Handbook

Under the heading *“Essentials – Everyone’s responsibility; and the use of parliamentary resources”* it says:

“Use of parliamentary resources

20 *The House provides various facilities and services to Members, the cost of which is either met in full or subsidised by public funds. These include, but are not limited to:*

- *Accommodation, including offices and meeting rooms*
- *Stationery and postage*
- *Research support*
- 25 • *Computer equipment and services*
- *Catering facilities.”*

You should also be aware that in the Code of Conduct and Related rules of the House it states,

Chapter 5. Rules on use of parliamentary buildings

iii Tours of the Parliamentary Estate, raffles and auctions

5 *Members are reminded that the rules of the House apply to any tours which they or their office arrange, and that the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards may investigate if there is sufficient evidence of a breach of the rules.*

Members must not offer tours of the House or of the Elizabeth Tower or Big Ben in raffles or auctions.

10 *Members are reminded that tours on the parliamentary estate which would otherwise be available at nil cost (for example, public tours of the Visitor Route) should under no circumstances be offered as raffle or auction prizes.*

It would be most helpful if you would tell me;

- 15 (1) whether you were aware of the rules detailed above when you approached Ms Osamor to ask “Would she be up for offering a raffle prize tea for four in the Commons (with optional tour?)”;
- (2) whether you took advice from the House authorities before asking Ms Osamor to do this and
- (3) if you did, to describe that advice and share with me any correspondence you exchanged;

20 Important information

As you will be aware, my inquiries are conducted in private. Following the decision taken by the House on 19 July 2018, I will not publish the fact that I am conducting an inquiry into an allegation into an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct. I must ask that you respect the decision of the House and the confidentiality of my inquiry.

25 My office will not comment on any aspect of the inquiry to third parties. They will answer direct factual questions about the processes I follow and the standards system more generally but will neither confirm nor deny that I have begun an inquiry.

30 This letter and any subsequent correspondence between us in connection with this inquiry is protected by parliamentary privilege. It should be kept confidential until the outcome of my inquiry is published. (I am making a similar request of Ms Osamor and the complainant.) All the relevant evidence, including our correspondence, will be published when I have concluded my work.

Procedure

I am writing to Ms Osamor to let her know that I have named you as 2nd respondent in this inquiry. I will also send her a copy of this letter.

5 I enclose a copy of the Commissioner's Information Note, which sets out the procedure for inquiries. Please note that this has not yet been updated to reflect the changes flowing from the decision of 19 July 2018.

While I do not, at this stage, know whether it will be necessary to interview you about this matter, it would be open to you to be accompanied at any such interview. I should say now, as a matter of courtesy, that I may seek the advice of the relevant House authorities as part of this inquiry.

10 Action

I would be grateful to have your response to this letter as soon as possible and no later than 7 February 2019. Please let me know before that date if you think more time is required.

24 January 2019

15 **13. Letter from Ms Ruth Cadbury MP to the Commissioner, 13 February 2019³**

Thank you for your letter of 24 January stating that you are now including me as a second respondent in the inquiry.

20 Thank you also for enclosing the email exchange between myself and Ms Osamor's office that I had not found after receiving your first letter I had only searched my parliamentary accounts. It subsequently transpired that I was asking Ms Osamor's office if Ms Osamor would offer a raffle prize of tea for four at the Commons with an optional tour.

25 As I said in my previous letter and the attachment confirms, the auction "offer" at my constituency dinner was "Tea with Kate Osamor MP". It did not specify where this was to take place so those bidding would have done so in order to meet Ms Osamor, not to gain access to the House of Commons or its facilities or for a tour. As you can appreciate from the email exchange the arrangement was changed without the knowledge of the winner. At the time of the auction, Ms Osamor was the shadow cabinet member with the International Aid portfolio.

30 I seem to remember that the "winner" was very keen to meet Ms Osamor because of her (the winner's) interest in International Development and had been disappointed that Ms Osamor was unable to attend the dinner.

³ Ms Cadbury had agreed with the Commissioner extra time to reply

However, although the auction wasn't advertised as tea with Kate begin taken in the Commons, the email exchange shows that I must have intended this to be the case.

5 On reading the rules that you have sent through this was clearly an error on my part and shows that I was indeed in breach of the rules, for which I wholeheartedly apologise and will do all I can to ensure that such an error does not happen again.

It was not my intention at the outset, as I hope I have made clear I can confirm, regrettably, that I did not seek advice from the House authorities at the time.

If I can assist further please let me know.

13 February 2019

10 **14. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury 21 February 2019**

Thank you for your letter of 13 February 2019, your reply has been most helpful.

I appreciate you acknowledge a breach of the rules has occurred; thank you for your full apology for this. In light of your letter, I think it appropriate for me to share your response with Ms Osamor and invite her comments.

15 Standing Order No 150 makes provision for me to conclude an inquiry without making a referral to the Committee on Standards in certain circumstances. The Committee would generally expect the Member to have acknowledged and apologised for their breach of the rules, and to have taken any steps necessary to rectify their breach.

20 My decision

In light of the information I have received from both yourself and Ms Osamor, I have decided that you did act in breach of paragraph 16 of the rules of conduct. However, I think it appropriate to let you know now that I consider this breach to be at the less serious end of the spectrum and have, in principle, decided to conclude this matter
25 through the rectification procedure.

This is a provisional decision and I will not conclude this inquiry until I have received Ms Osamor's comments.

30 It might be helpful for you to know that before I conclude my investigation I would share the evidence pack with you and Ms Osamor to check its factual accuracy, before publishing that material on my webpages, [hyperlink]. I would also report the outcome to the Committee on Standards in due course.

I will write to you again once I have received Ms Osamor's reply. In the meantime, our correspondence remains protected by parliamentary privilege and I must ask that you continue to maintain the strict confidentiality of the inquiry.

21 February 2019

5 **15. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 21 February 2019**

I wrote to you on 24 January 2019 to let you know I would be writing to Ms Ruth Cadbury as a 2nd respondent to my inquiry. I have received Ms Cadbury's reply and I have enclosed a copy for your information. In light of the information Ms Cadbury has provided, I am now able to make a decision on the allegation that you used
10 House-provided resources to confer an undue advantage on a political organisation.

Finding of Fact

- On the basis of the emails I have seen, your responses to my questions and Ms Cadbury's response, my inquiry has established the following facts:
- 15 • Ms Cadbury contacted you, via your @parliament.uk email address, on the 07 and 20 March 2018 to invite you to attend a gala dinner in her constituency, to be held on 22 March 2018.
- 20 • Your office replied on your behalf on 20 March 2018, from your @parliament.uk email address. In an exchange of emails your office declined the invitation to the gala dinner but agreed to Ms Cadbury's suggestion of offering tea for four in the Commons as a raffle prize at her event.
- 25 • The gala dinner and raffle prizes were organised and advertised as a fundraising evening for Hounslow Labour party's Local Election Campaign fund.
- You met the two raffle prize winners on 23 October 2018 and took them on a guided tour of public areas of Parliament, followed by tea on the terrace, which you paid for.

My decision

30 In light of the information I have received from both yourself and Ms Cadbury, I have decided that you did act in breach of paragraph 16 of the rules of conduct.

It is, of course, open to Members to entertain guests on the estate. Paragraph 16 of the Code says that

5 *“Members are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that their use of any expenses, allowances, facilities and services provided from the public purse is in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters. Members shall ensure that their use of public resources is always in support of their parliamentary duties. It should not confer any undue personal advantage or financial benefit on themselves or anyone else, or confer undue advantage on a political organisation”*

10 And, the published advice on raffles and auctions states that *“Members must not offer tours of the House or of the Elizabeth Tower or Big Ben in raffles or auctions.”*

Based on the findings of fact above, the events of 23 October 2018 conferred an undue advantage on a political organisation. While this should not have happened, I do consider this breach to be at the less serious end of the spectrum and have decided to conclude this matter through the rectification procedure.

15 Standing Order No 150 makes provision for me to conclude an inquiry without making a referral to the Committee on Standards in certain circumstances. The Committee would generally expect the Member to have acknowledged and apologised for their breach of the rules, and to have taken any steps necessary to rectify their breach.

20 Next steps

If you agree to this proposal, I would share the evidence pack with you and Ms Cadbury to check its factual accuracy, before publishing that material on my webpages, here [hyperlink]. I would also report the outcome to the Committee on Standards in due course.

25 Please let me have a response to this letter by 28 February 2019. In the meantime, our correspondence remains protected by parliamentary privilege and I must ask that you continue to maintain the strict confidentiality of the inquiry.

21 February 2019

16. Letter from Ms Kate Osamor MP to the Commissioner, 27 February 2019

30 Thank you for your letter of 21 February detailing the finding of fact and your decision.

On reading your letter I accept your findings and decision and see how I made an error. I never intended to infringe on parliamentary rules, and was instead seeking only to assist a colleague who asked for help.

35 Ruth Cadbury asked me to attend an event in her constituency, but I was not available. When I was asked by Ruth to host a tea in the Commons, I should have

checked the rules or with your office whether this was correct. I am sorry I did not seek advice at the time.

I apologise wholeheartedly and will do everything I can to ensure such an error does not happen again.

- 5 Do please get in touch if there is anything further I can assist you with.

27 February 2019

17. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 19 March 2019

- 10 Thank you for your letter of 27 February 2017, accepting my findings, offering your apologies and committing to doing everything you can to avoid making the same mistake again.

- 15 I am sorry it has taken a little longer than usual to reply but I now enclose a copy of the written evidence pack which I plan to publish once you have had this opportunity to comment on its factual accuracy. As you would no doubt expect, I am writing in similar terms to Ruth Cadbury today, offering her the same opportunity to comment on the factual accuracy of the material.

Subject to your responses, I will write to you again to formally close the inquiry. I will send a copy of the evidence pack to Mr Clarke at the same time. (The draft of my letter to him is in the pack, as the first item.) Shortly after that, I will publish the written evidence pack on my webpages. That will bring this matter to an end.

- 20 Please let me know by 26 March 2019 whether you are content with the above, and whether you have any comments to make on the factual accuracy of the evidence pack.

19 March 2019

18. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP, 19 March 2019

- 25 When I wrote to you on 21 February 2017 I said that I would not conclude my inquiry until I had received Ms Osamor's comments on my findings about her conduct. Ms Osamor provided those on 27 February. I am sorry that I have not shared them with you sooner. (Her letter is reproduced at item 16 of the written evidence pack enclosed.)

- 30 I am writing to you now to give you an opportunity to comment on the factual accuracy of the material which I propose to publish after I conclude the inquiry. I am writing in similar terms to Ms Osamor today to give her the same opportunity to comment on the factual accuracy of the material.

Subject to your responses, I will write to you again to formally close the inquiry. I will send a copy of the evidence pack to Mr Clarke at the same time. (The draft of my letter to him is in the pack, as the first item.) Shortly after that, I will publish the written evidence pack on my webpages. That will bring this matter to an end.

- 5 Please let me know by 26 March 2019 whether you are content with the above, and whether you have any comments to make on the factual accuracy of the evidence pack.

Thank you again for your co-operation with my inquiry.

19 March 2019

10 **19. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Kate Osamor MP, 3 April 2019**

I wrote to you on 19 March 2019 to provide you with a copy of the written evidence pack from my inquiry (another copy is enclosed) and asked you to reply by 26 March 2019. I am disappointed I haven't yet received a reply.

- 15 If you have already replied and it has gone astray please can you scan and send a copy to me, as I haven't received it.

If you have not replied, please do so by 23 April 2019.

3 April 2019

20. Letter from the Commissioner to Ms Ruth Cadbury MP, 3 April 2019

- 20 I wrote to you on 19 March 2019 to provide you with a copy of the written evidence pack from my inquiry (another copy is enclosed) and asked you to reply by 26 March 2019. I am disappointed I haven't yet received a reply.

If you have already replied and it has gone astray please can you scan and send a copy to me, as I haven't received it.

If you have not replied, please do so by 23 April 2019.

- 25 *3 April 2019*

21. Letter from Ms Kate Osamor MP to the Commissioner, 11 April 2019

Thank you for your letters of 19 March and 3 April.

I take note of your letter and there is nothing I wish to add to the evidence pack.

11 April 2019

22. Letter from Ms Ruth Cadbury MP to the Commissioner, 15 April 2019

Thank you for your letters of 3 April and 19 March. I do apologise for the time it has taken to reply, but as you acknowledge, it has been an exceptionally busy time in Parliament, and furthermore I have just returned from a spell away from London.

- 5 In response to your letters, I would ask for one change. In the extract detailing the list of auction prizes (page 11) – I would ask that you redact identifying information about the [name redacted]. As the donor company are not subject of your investigation I feel it is not appropriate to describe the prize in a way that identifies them, particularly as their postal address is in my constituency. The difficulty is that
- 10 they are in an almost unique market, so the words [redacted] easily identify the company offering this auction prize – as a google-search on these words confirms.

I would therefore ask if you could please redact most of the detail around that auction prize and instead insert [details redacted] “The retail value of this is £250...To be claimed up to a 12-month period”. I hope you find this acceptable.

15 *15 April 2019*