

I am a simple humble rural GP. perhaps naively I go out to vote to elect someone to represent the needs and view of our locality. I had assumed that was the basis of our democracy. That role is a very responsible role and one that requires my MP to attend the house and live in London to do so. The system of allowances that has developed is obviously complicated and can lead to abuse even if the members follow the rules.

My solution would be on several fronts both to lead to openness, integrity and sponsor an improvement in the democratic process

1. MP's should be paid a proper living wage which allows them to live and work as an MP, that would be in excess of £100,000
2. The government would supply free of charge to MP's flats in a complex which will provide all that they need to live for them and their families. If MP's do not want to live there then they would have to buy/rent their own property and at their own expense Such a complex would provide them with much better security.
3. A log of attendance in the house should be kept and for each MP their attendance should be published in local newspapers on a monthly basis
4. MP's should not hold any external appointments which bring them in substantial pay. This is to avoid an suggestion of conflicts of interest and to ensure that MP's are in the house doing what the state pays them to do.
5. The system of allowances could then be dropped in its entirety
6. The basic staff that MP's need to run their office and official work should be provided for by the house at no cost to the MP. Any staff in excess of this would be the responsibility of the MP and at his individual expense.
7. MP's who choose to work on committees should be paid more to represent the extra work they will have to do.
8. MP's pay and terms and conditions of employment should be set by an external body to which they can give evidence etc.

There is an urgent need to demonstrate that our politicians are servants of the state and that they are able to demonstrate their integrity. I think the above is simple, reasonable and transparent. If our esteemed members don't like it, well they are free to resign. Politics and politicians in this country are increasingly despised and we need to ensure that there is radical change to re-invigorate the democratic process.

M Boulter