

Parliamentary expenses and allowances



Dear resident

I believe very strongly that you should know how taxpayers money is spent supporting my work as your Member of Parliament. My spending was almost exactly average for an MP last year and second lowest among Gloucestershire MPs.

The official figures for this financial year (2007/08) will be published by the House of Commons in April and will be available on independent website theyworkforyou.com, but as I am sending you my parliamentary report now, I thought I would take the opportunity to let you know the most significant spending in advance of that.

Office costs

The biggest expenditure is on staffing. Currently, I have four members of staff. These are my office manager David Fidgeon, my personal assistant Claire Wilson, my caseworker Roberta Crawley and my parliamentary researcher Anna Harvey. This financial year, their combined salaries (including employers national insurance contributions) will come to £90,788. And just to reassure you, I don't employ any members of my family.

The rent, rates and utility bills on my constituency office in Cheltenham will come to £11,400. Last year, a number of volunteers worked unpaid in my office in London and I paid them travel expenses. This came to £1,175.

Staying in London

I have to stay overnight in central London most weeks because of my parliamentary duties, and I can claim back the cost of this, which is mainly rent. I haven't got the final figures for this financial year, but last year I claimed back £22,110.

Travel

I am also reimbursed for travel from Cheltenham to London on parliamentary business. I use the train for almost all my journeys to reduce my carbon footprint. Last financial year I claimed £5,093 for train travel, and just £49 for car journeys. I claimed nothing at all for plane flights.

I hope this information is useful but please do let me know if you would like to discuss this further.

With best wishes

Mark Littlewood