

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

June 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for your email about standards of integrity for politicians.

I appreciate you bringing this report to my attention. I completely agree that elected officials should be held to high standards. The Prime Minister pledged "integrity, professionalism and accountability at every level" of government and it is right we have extensive scrutiny placed upon Members of Parliament and Ministers' conduct.

The Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests, for example, exists to observe and enforce the seven principles of public life, and to conduct investigations into any potential ministerial misconduct. If a Minister has been found to have breached the Ministerial Code, they can be sanctioned. The sanction can include removal from their position for serious breaches of the code, a measure that the current Prime Minister has taken since becoming PM.

Furthermore, MPs are subject to the Code of Conduct which includes a general duty to act in the interests of the nation as a whole, as well as a special duty to their constituents. The code is regularly amended to strengthen standards and was last updated in March 2023. This code is overseen by the House of Commons Committee on Standards and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. If an MP is found to have breached the code, they may be subject to a range of disciplinary sanctions

I understand the report's focus on independent investigations into the conduct of MPs. However, I would emphasise that under the current system, the Commissioner for Standards is an independent office holder appointed for a five-year non-renewable term.

More broadly, the most effective method to hold MPs to account is our current electoral system. I firmly believe that existing standards of conduct, and the mechanisms for enforcing them, are of an extremely high standard and reflect the values and expectations of this Government.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again. If you would like to keep up to date with my activities as your Member of Parliament then please subscribe to my Darlington Matters newsletter using this link: [www.petergibson.org/signup](http://www.petergibson.org/signup)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Gibson".

PETER GIBSON MP

*Member of Parliament for Darlington*

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