



The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
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By email

7 November 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

We write as the General Secretaries of trade unions representing House of Commons staff. Our members have been alarmed for some time by repeated reports of political parties failing to deal promptly and professionally with allegations of serious sexual misconduct by Members of Parliament.

Some of these allegations have taken months, if not years, to investigate, while in the meantime the alleged perpetrators are free to attend the Parliamentary Estate, and the House Service is unable to take any precautionary measures to protect its staff.

Most recently, the Mail on Sunday reported that attempts had been made by the Conservative Party to allegedly control or minimise allegations of sexual misconduct, including rape, against one of its MPs. It is clear that repeated institutional failures of the party's internal investigatory processes alarmed senior colleagues of the MP to the extent that they felt compelled to contact the police.

Equally importantly from our perspective, this failure allowed the alleged perpetrator to continue to attend Westminster, as well as constituency meetings and surgeries, despite the potential risk his behaviour posed to staff and others in Westminster and the constituency.

This issue is of course not confined to one political party. Earlier this year, a Labour MP was suspended by the party after a formal complaint about alleged misconduct was received. It later emerged that several women had raised allegations - dating back five years - with the party whips, and that fellow Labour MPs also had longstanding concerns about his behaviour. We have been advised that the House Service was not formally alerted at any point about the potential risks to its employees posed by this individual as the formal means of doing so does not currently exist.

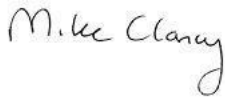
Parliament needs a new approach to information sharing with the political parties that both maintains the confidentiality that is so crucial in these investigations, while permitting the limited sharing of information, for example with the Speaker, the Clerk of the House of

Commons and the Director of Parliamentary Security, that would allow precautionary measures to be put in place to protect all staff and visitors to Parliament.

Therefore, we request that you, as party leader, make a commitment to support the introduction of a formal protocol between your party and the House Service to report when an MP is placed under a party investigation for an alleged sexual offence, and to provide relevant information to allow the House Service to ensure its duty of care to its employees and others.

The reputation of Parliament - and of politics more generally - continues to be tarnished by the seemingly endless allegations of sexual misconduct by MPs. The trust and confidence of parliamentary staff - let alone the wider public - cannot be re-established unless the parties themselves commit to take stronger action, and to act with Parliament to ensure the highest possible standards.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Clancy
General Secretary
Prospect union



Dave Penman
General Secretary
FDA