



SUBMISSION TO IPSA
MPS' STAFF PAY 2027/28

RESTORE THE FLOOR

The case for a 5.8% pay award and a return to the 2019 pay band structure for MPs' staff



2027/28 submission from the GMB MPs' and Peers' Staff Branch to the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority

Submitted 21 September 2026

OUR ASK

5.8%

consolidated increase to all MPs' staff pay bands

2019

pay band structure restored, so minimums regain their value

1 April

2027 effective date for both measures

2,353

staff currently below the restored minimum: 450 in London and 1,903 outside London

THE EVIDENCE IN BRIEF

0.83

years: median service of staff leaving in 2025/26, down from 1.99 years in 2023/24

805

staff left within their first year in 2025/26, up from 505

55%

of all MPs' staff sit in the bottom half of their pay band. Just 18% reach the top quarter

–£1,871

the gap between a London caseworker's minimum salary and the London Living Wage

64%

of our members considering leaving say pay is the main reason

50%

of MPs' staff rarely or never feel their pay matches their skills, the highest on record

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1 Executive summary

- 1.1** We represent more than 1,500 staff working for MPs and Peers in Westminster and in constituency offices across the UK. We ask IPSA to approve a **5.8% consolidated increase to all MPs' staff pay bands** and to **restore the 2019 pay band structure**, both from 1 April 2027.
- 1.2** This is not a redesign of IPSA's pay framework. It restores the structure that existed in 2019, updated to current values. Because the minimum of each band has fallen furthest behind, restoring that structure raises London band minimums by between 23% and 36% (Table 1). We set this out plainly so that the full effect of the proposal is clear.
- 1.3** The gap between the legal minimum wage and parliamentary pay has narrowed sharply. In 2019/20 a London caseworker's starting salary sat well above both the National Living Wage and the London Living Wage. Today the minimum for the same role is **below** the London Living Wage. Combined with pay bands that have stretched far wider, the framework now makes it harder to attract, and easier to lose, the people Parliament depends on.
- 1.4** IPSA's own data shows rising turnover, shorter service and more staff leaving within their first year. The 2026 MPs' Staff Survey records the highest level of dissatisfaction with pay since the survey began.
- 1.5** When experienced staff leave, Parliament loses knowledge, skills and continuity. Offices recruit and train again while remaining colleagues absorb the work, and constituents wait longer for help. Paying repeatedly to recruit people who do not stay is poor value for the taxpayer.
- 1.6** Pay cannot solve every pressure on MPs' staff. It is, however, one of the few levers IPSA controls directly, and restoring the value of the framework is a targeted and proportionate response.



IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE FACT THAT I GENUINELY BELIEVE I'M SERVING MY COUNTRY, THE POOR PAY WOULD MAKE ME LEAVE IN A HEARTBEAT."

WESTMINSTER-BASED STAFF MEMBER

Passion might bring people to Parliament, but passion alone will not persuade them to build a career here.

2 Introduction

- 2.1** We welcome the opportunity to contribute to IPSA's annual review of MPs' staffing budgets for April 2027.
- 2.2** The GMB MPs' and Peers' Staff Branch is one of Parliament's recognised trade unions, with formal recognition signed with over 400 MPs via the Parliamentary Labour Party. Our members work for MPs and Peers from across the political spectrum. Through them we see first-hand how the staffing framework works in practice and the difficulties MPs' offices face in recruiting, keeping and developing skilled staff.

- 2.3** The Branch also leads the **One Parliament, One Employer** campaign, which calls for a single, accountable employer for MPs' staff to deliver fairness, consistency and proper protections. MPs' staff currently work for more than 650 separate employers, and pay outcomes vary widely between offices doing the same work. A properly structured, properly funded pay framework is the foundation that consistency depends on.
- 2.4** Since 2019/20 two things have happened at once. The gap between the minimum and maximum of each pay band has grown sharply. At the same time the real value of pay, particularly at the minimum, has fallen behind inflation. Together they amount to a serious deterioration in pay for MPs' staff.
- 2.5** Pay is one of several factors affecting recruitment, retention and wellbeing. It is also the factor IPSA can act on most directly, and the evidence shows that the current structure is no longer doing its job.

3 Four sources, one consistent picture

- 3.1** This submission draws on four sources of evidence:
- a. Our analysis of the pay framework** and the cumulative changes to the pay bands since 2019, which underpins the proposal to restore the 2019 structure.
 - b. Recruitment and retention data from IPSA**, obtained through Freedom of Information requests RFI-202603-15, RFI-202603-16, RFI-202604-01, RFI-202604-06 and RFI-202606-01. IPSA Board papers were released under RFI-202606-01.
 - c. The 2026 MPs' Staff Survey**, commissioned by the MPs' Staff Wellbeing Working Group (WWG), covering pay, workload, wellbeing and retention across Parliament.
 - d. Our own 2026 survey of GMB members** working for MPs and Peers. The anonymous survey ran from 19 August to 4 September 2026 and was distributed digitally, by email and text message. It received 306 responses: 56% of respondents were mainly constituency-based, 26% Westminster-based, 13% split their time between the two and 5% described their working pattern as hybrid. Respondents were self-selecting, so we present their views alongside IPSA's own data and the WWG survey rather than in isolation.
- 3.2** Taken together, these sources give a consistent picture of the pressures on the parliamentary workforce and the evidence base for the proposals below.

A NOTE ON HOW WE MEASURE INFLATION

In all pay bargaining GMB measures inflation using the **Retail Prices Index (RPI)**. RPI captures housing costs such as mortgage interest payments that the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) leaves out, and CPI consistently runs lower than RPI.

In this submission we have used **CPI deliberately, as the more conservative measure**, so every real-terms loss we report is a minimum. Between April 2019 and April 2026, CPI rose by **32.1%**. Over the same period RPI rose by **43.8%** (ONS series D7BT and CHAW).

Our use of CPI is a concession for the purposes of this submission only. It is not an acceptance that CPI is the right measure of the cost of living for MPs' staff, and it should not be treated as a precedent for future reviews.

4 Meeting IPSA's duty to the taxpayer

- 4.1** IPSA has a statutory responsibility to ensure public money is spent appropriately and transparently. We share the aim that any change to MPs' staffing budgets represents value for money and maintains public confidence.
- 4.2** Parliament's ability to deliver effective representation also depends on MPs having skilled, experienced and motivated staff. Constituents rightly expect timely casework, high-quality scrutiny, effective engagement with government and well-run constituency offices. Those outcomes rely on a framework that lets MPs recruit, keep and fairly reward the people who deliver them.
- 4.3** Our proposal has been built with both aims in mind. Investing in the retention of experienced staff is not separate from value for money. It is one of the most reliable ways of securing it.

5 Our proposal

- 5.1** We recommend that IPSA makes the following changes to the MPs' staff pay framework from 1 April 2027:
- a. A 5.8% consolidated increase** to all MPs' staff pay bands.
 - b. Restoration of the 2019 pay scales**, returning the relationship between the minimum and maximum of each band to its 2019 structure, with the 2027/28 award applied across the revised scales.
- 5.2** The proposed pay scales are set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Proposed pay scales from 1 April 2027

Job family	London			Outside London	
	Minimum	Maximum	Change to minimum	Minimum	Maximum
Admin 1 Secretary	£34,283.50	£40,835	+33%	£26,965	£34,702
Admin 2 Senior Secretary	£38,133	£48,842	+32%	£33,922	£43,308
Admin 3 Office Manager	£49,119	£63,947	+32%	£46,799	£60,226
Exec 1 Caseworker	£36,622	£47,210	+36%	£33,599	£42,762
Exec 2 Senior Caseworker	£45,666	£56,763	+23%	£41,271	£53,978
Research 2 Parliamentary Assistant	£36,065	£47,623	+28%	£31,795	£43,728
Research 3 Senior Parl. Assistant	£50,694	£68,234	+26%	£45,882	£60,131

Change to minimum compares each proposed London minimum with the 2026/27 London minimum for the same band.

- 5.3** The two measures work together rather than as alternatives. The pay award addresses the current level of pay. Restoring the structure fixes the framework itself, so that experience and progression carry real value again. One without the other would leave the root of the problem in place.
- 5.4** A 5.8% consolidated increase would help reverse the fall in the real value of parliamentary salaries. It also reflects members' views: in our survey, **83% of respondents** said an increase of at least 5% was needed to fairly reflect their role, responsibilities and the cost of living.
- 5.5** Restoring the 2019 scales would reverse the stretching of the bands that has taken place since 2019 and weakened incentives for recruitment, progression and retention. It would do so using a structure already familiar to MPs, staff and IPSA.

6

What the proposal will achieve

- 6.1** The proposal is designed to:
- a.** help MPs recruit suitably skilled staff across all job families;
 - b.** keep experienced staff and reduce avoidable turnover;
 - c.** restore confidence that experience leads to progression within MPs' offices;
 - d.** make the parliamentary workforce more resilient over the long term;
 - e.** ensure pay reflects the skills, experience and responsibility the roles demand; and
 - f.** provide a stable, transparent framework that is good value for the taxpayer.

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

PART TWO

What IPSA's own data, the WWG survey and our members tell us about pay in Parliament.

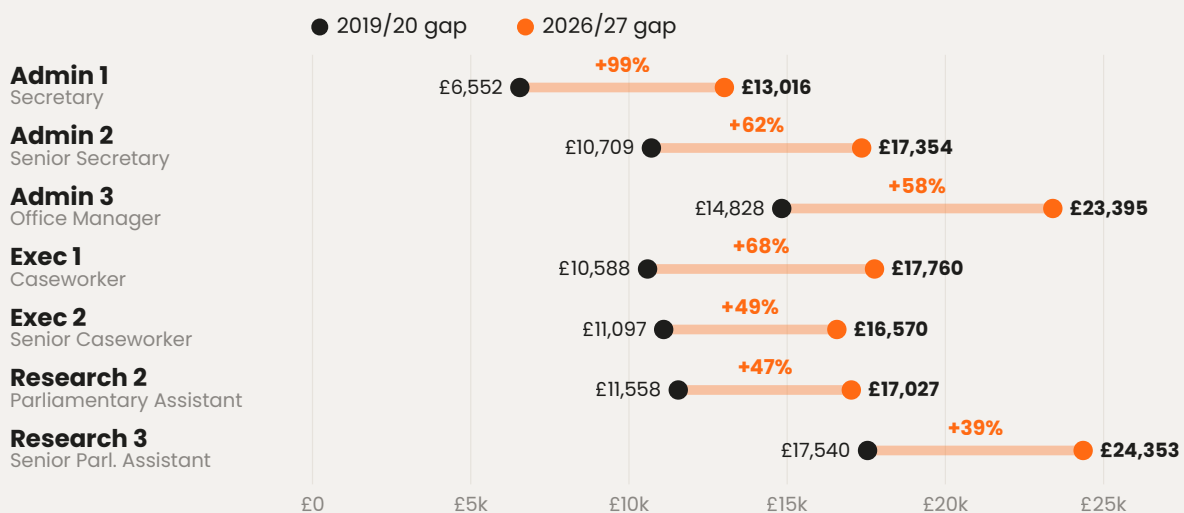
7 The pay framework no longer supports a sustainable workforce

- 7.1** IPSA's pay framework is meant to give MPs enough flexibility to recruit, keep and reward staff, while ensuring consistency, transparency and value for money. The cumulative changes to the framework since 2019 have pulled the pay bands away from those aims.
- 7.2** Annual pay awards have raised both the minimum and maximum of each band, but not in step. Minimum salaries have failed to keep pace with the top of each band, so the gap between the lowest and highest salary for the same role is now far wider than when the framework was introduced. In London the Admin 1 band has almost doubled in width (Graphic 1).

GRAPHIC 1

Pay bands have stretched since 2019/20

Gap between the minimum and maximum salary in each IPSA pay band, London, 2019/20 and 2026/27



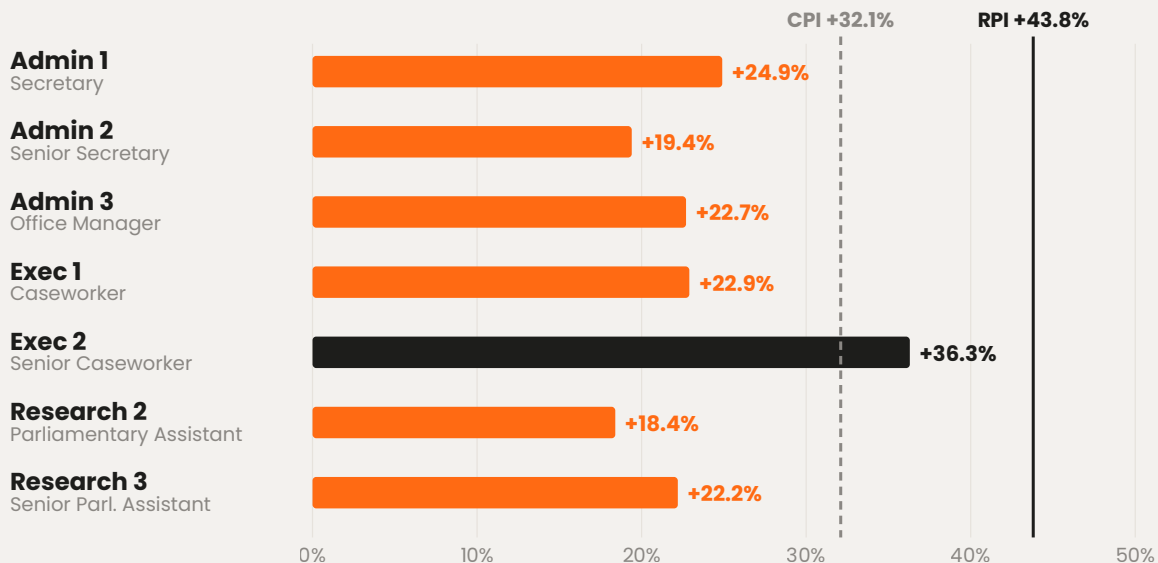
Figures cover London-based staff. Pay bands outside London have followed the same pattern. Source: IPSA published pay scales, GMB analysis.

- 7.3** A wider band is not a problem in itself. It can allow offices to recognise experience or specialist skills within a role. But that flexibility only helps if staff actually progress through the band. Where progression is limited, a wider band simply reduces the value of having a meaningful minimum.
- 7.4** That is what has happened. The bands have widened mainly because minimum salaries have failed to keep pace with inflation, not because the value of the bands as a whole has grown. Even on CPI, the more conservative measure, only one London band minimum has kept up since 2019/20. **On RPI, none has** (Graphic 2).

GRAPHIC 2

Only one band minimum has kept pace with CPI. None has kept pace with RPI

Increase in the minimum salary of each band, London, 2019/20 to 2026/27, compared with cumulative inflation



Inflation measured April 2019 to April 2026 (ONS series D7BT and CHAW). Bars in orange fall short of CPI, meaning a real-terms cut to the starting salary on even the most conservative measure. See the note on inflation in section 3.

7.5 As minimums have weakened, so has the framework's ability to reward experience. In practice, lower minimums have become an anchor. Within a fixed staffing budget, the wider the gap between the minimum and maximum of a band, the harder it becomes for staff to progress beyond IPSA's annual uplift, even as they take on more responsibility.

7.6 This is exactly why a proper pay scale matters. Without defined points to progress through, staff concertina at the bottom of their pay range (Graphic 4). Pay bands with low floors allow poor pay to flourish. Where an office budget cannot stretch to a real pay rise, a more senior-sounding job title is too often offered as the reward instead: a promotion in name, not in pay. With more than 650 separate employers, where someone sits in their band depends as much on which MP they work for as on the job they do. A restored structure with a meaningful floor limits that lottery.

7.7 The result is a steady squeeze on meaningful progression. Published ranges have become broader, but staff at the lower end have seen the real value of their pay fall while the distance to the top of their band has kept growing. The framework now gives staff little confidence that experience and long service will lead to higher pay.



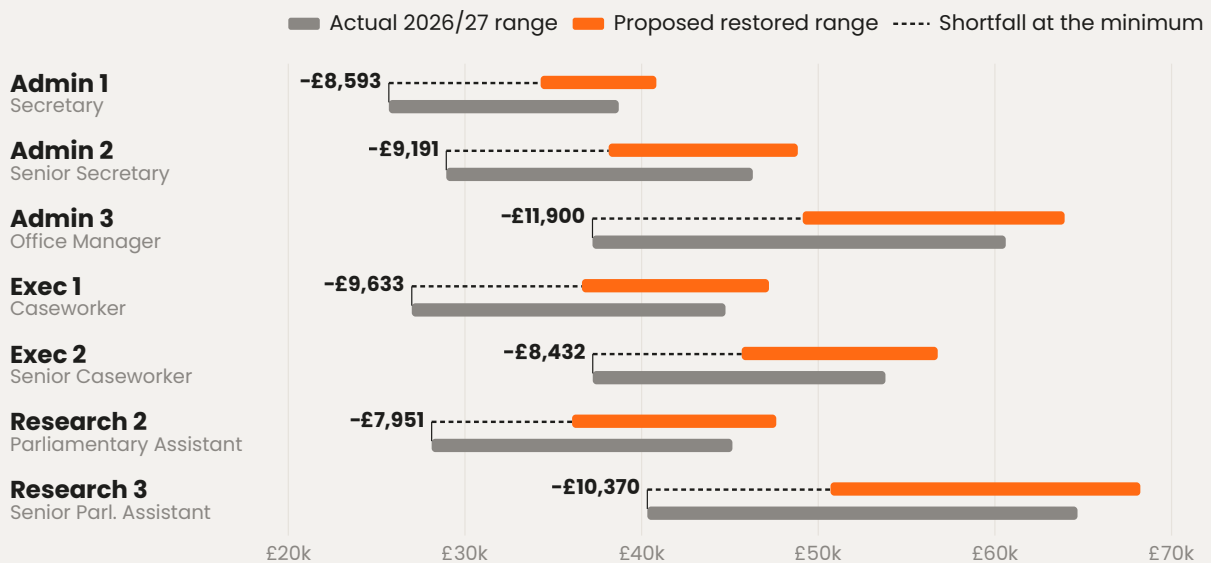
I HAVEN'T RECEIVED A PAY INCREASE TO MOVE FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE PAY BAND IN TWO YEARS."

MPS' STAFF MEMBER

GRAPHIC 3

Starting salaries sit thousands below the restored minimum

Actual 2026/27 pay ranges compared with the proposed restored ranges, London



The shortfall at the minimum ranges from £7,951 (Research 2) to £11,900 (Admin 3). Restored ranges reflect the 2019/20 band structure updated to current values, as set out in Table 1.

7.8 The consequences show up in how salaries are distributed. Staff are not spread evenly across the wider bands. Across all MPs' staff, **55% sit in the bottom half of their band and only 18% reach the top quarter**. In five of seven job families a majority are in the lower half, including 65% of Exec 1 caseworkers, the largest staff group. Admin 2 and Admin 3 are the exceptions. The added flexibility has not turned into consistent progression. Within fixed budgets, the floor becomes the default starting point.

7.9 Our own survey confirms that wider bands are not delivering progression. **79% of respondents** said their pay had risen only through IPSA-wide annual awards, that their responsibilities had grown much faster than their pay, or that their pay had barely changed despite gaining experience. Only 12% said their pay had risen meaningfully as their experience and responsibilities grew.



**THE ONLY REASON I DID
END UP GETTING A RAISE
WAS BECAUSE ANOTHER
STAFF MEMBER DROPPED
A DAY OF WORK."**

**WESTMINSTER-BASED
RESEARCHER**

GRAPHIC 4

Staff concertina at the bottom of their pay bands

Number and share of staff in each quarter of their current pay band, all MPs' staff, as at 30 April 2026

	Bottom quarter 0 to 25%	Second quarter 25 to 50%	Third quarter 50 to 75%	Top quarter 75 to 100%	Staff	In bottom half
Admin 1 Secretary	67 39%	45 26%	25 14%	36 21%	173	65%
Admin 2 Senior Secretary	13 12%	23 21%	48 44%	25 23%	109	33%
Admin 3 Office Manager	40 7%	131 22%	205 34%	224 37%	600	28%
Exec 1 Caseworker	407 30%	482 35%	316 23%	157 12%	1,362	65%
Exec 2 Senior Caseworker	158 20%	290 37%	230 30%	99 13%	777	58%
Research 2 Parliamentary Assistant	146 28%	152 29%	164 32%	54 10%	516	58%
Research 3 Senior Parl. Assistant	142 28%	137 27%	110 22%	121 24%	510	55%
All staff	973 24%	1,260 31%	1,098 27%	716 18%	4,047	55%

Shaded cells show the bottom half of each band. A healthy distribution would show roughly 25% in each quarter. Source: IPSA FOI response RFI-202604-01. These figures are a different data cut from Graphic 5 (dated 30 April 2026 rather than before 1 April 2026), so band totals differ slightly.

- 7.10** IPSA's own workforce data shows that **around 2,353 of 4,018 staff (59%)** are currently paid below what would become the minimum salary under the restored framework. This is not confined to a few employees or job families. It runs across the whole parliamentary workforce.
- 7.11** In London, **450 of 1,369 staff (33%)** earn below the restored minimum, with every job family affected. The impact is sharpest in Admin 3, where 62% of Office Managers fall below it. Research 2 has the largest number affected, at 129 staff.
- 7.12** Outside London the position is more serious still. **1,903 of 2,649 staff (72%)** earn below the restored minimum, including 935 of 1,103 Exec 1 caseworkers. Restoring the 2019 structure would therefore mainly lift those furthest from the floor, rather than benefit those already near the top of their bands.



I'M NOT NEAR THE TOP OF THE BAND DESPITE HAVING DONE THE JOB FOR 11 YEARS AS THERE ISN'T BUDGET FOR IT."

CONSTITUENCY CASEWORKER

GRAPHIC 5

Most MPs' staff earn below the restored minimum

Staff currently paid below the proposed new minimum for their band

33%

of London staff (450 of 1,369)
earn below the proposed
minimum

72%

of staff outside London (1,903 of
2,649) earn below the proposed
minimum

59%

of all MPs' staff (2,353 of 4,018)
earn below the proposed
minimum

London

Admin 1 new min £34,283.50	17 of 62 (27%)
Admin 2 new min £38,133	8 of 22 (36%)
Admin 3 new min £49,119	77 of 124 (62%)
Exec 1 new min £36,622	56 of 296 (19%)
Exec 2 new min £45,666	43 of 133 (32%)
Research 2 new min £36,065	129 of 414 (31%)
Research 3 new min £50,694	120 of 318 (38%)

Outside London

Admin 1 new min £26,965	73 of 128 (57%)
Admin 2 new min £33,922	44 of 86 (51%)
Admin 3 new min £46,799	230 of 453 (51%)
Exec 1 new min £33,599	935 of 1,103 (85%)
Exec 2 new min £41,271	504 of 627 (80%)
Research 2 new min £31,795	69 of 130 (53%)
Research 3 new min £45,882	48 of 122 (39%)

Full-time equivalent salaries, excluding casual contracts. Source: IPSA FOI responses RFI-202603-15 (London) and RFI-202604-06 (outside London). Figures predate any cost of living increases made by employing MPs on 1 April 2026.

8 Pay is affecting recruitment and retention

- 8.1** An effective staffing framework should let MPs not only recruit staff but keep experienced employees and build expertise over time. Recruitment and retention are shaped by many factors, including workload, workplace culture and the unique nature of parliamentary employment. But the evidence points to a growing gap between what the pay framework is meant to achieve and what it delivers.
- 8.2** Wider bands have practical consequences for recruitment. Vacancies are often advertised "in line with IPSA guidance", with appointments made at or close to the band minimum. Where a band now spans more than £24,000, MPs have considerable room to appoint at the bottom. MPs are not acting outside the framework. The problem is that the framework itself encourages recruitment from a floor that has weakened over time, making parliamentary roles less competitive from the start.
- 8.3** The comparison with the legal minimum wage makes this clear. In 2019/20 a London Parliamentary Researcher (Research 2) earned a minimum of £23,750, against a National Living Wage equivalent of about £16,000 to £17,000 depending on contracted hours: a premium of around 40% to 50%. By 2026/27 the National Living Wage is worth £24,784.50 (37.5 hours) or

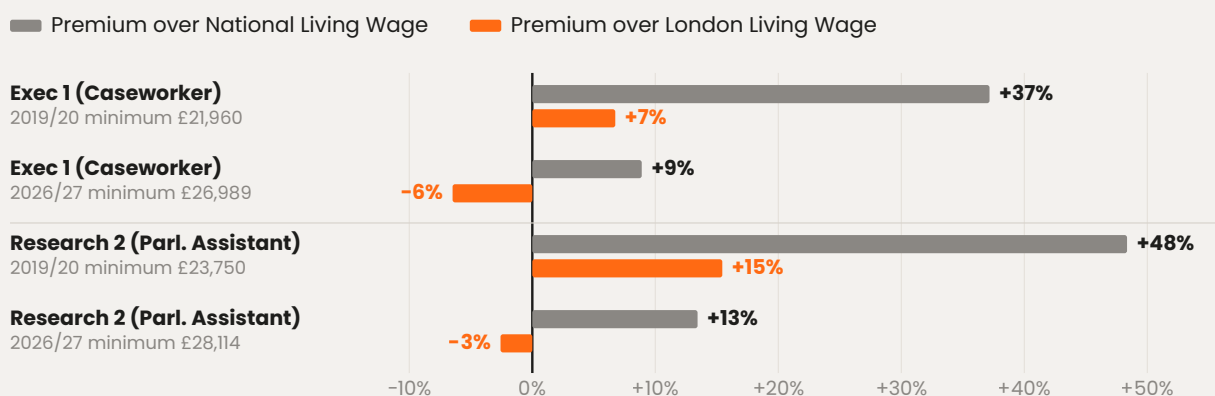
£26,436.80 (40 hours), while the minimum for the same role is £28,114. The premium has fallen to between 6% and 13% for a role that demands specialist skills, political judgement and real responsibility.

- 8.4** The squeeze is sharpest for caseworkers. In 2019/20 the London Caseworker (Exec 1) minimum was £21,960, a clear premium above the minimum wage. By 2026/27 it has risen to £26,989, but the premium has narrowed to just 2% on a 40-hour week. Measured against the London Living Wage of £28,860 (£14.80 an hour over 37.5 hours), the London Exec 1 minimum is now **£1,871 a year below it**, and the Research 2 minimum £746 below it. In 2019/20 both sat above the London Living Wage (Graphic 6). Increases to the minimum wage are rightly welcomed, but Parliament's own framework has not kept the relative value of skilled roles.

GRAPHIC 6

Starting pay has fallen below the London Living Wage

Premium of the London band minimum over the National Living Wage and the London Living Wage, 2019/20 and 2026/27



Annual equivalents based on 37.5 hours a week, using the rate in force at the start of each pay year: National Living Wage £8.21 (2019/20) and £12.71 (2026/27); London Living Wage £10.55 (2019/20) and £14.80 (2026/27).

- 8.5** The fall in the relative value of pay is reflected in members' lives. **49% of respondents** to our survey said their salary did not let them meet normal living costs without regularly relying on savings, borrowing or help from others. In the past 12 months, 46% had used savings for everyday costs, 43% had used credit or gone into an overdraft, 18% had cut their pension contributions and 15% had taken on extra work.
- 8.6** The workforce data tells the same story. FOI data shows 1,514 people joined MPs' offices in 2025/26 while 1,300 left. The challenge is not only attracting people into Parliament but giving them a reason to build a career here. As the relative value of parliamentary pay has fallen, experienced staff are leaving for roles that better recognise the skills and experience they have built.
- 8.7** The clearest sign is the fall in length of service. FOI data (RFI-202606-01) shows that the median length of service of departing staff fell from 1.99 years in 2023/24 to **just 0.83**



I OFTEN SKIP MEALS AND HAVE HAD TO CUT BACK ON MY SOCIAL LIFE, BUT I STILL USE SAVINGS EVERY MONTH. I HAVE MOVED INTO SOMEONE'S HOUSE AS A LODGER TO SAVE MONEY."

**WESTMINSTER-BASED STAFF
MEMBER, 2+ YEARS' EXPERIENCE**

years in 2025/26, a drop of about 58%. Over the same period the number of staff leaving within their first 12 months rose from 505 to 805.

TABLE 2 MPs' staff turnover, 2023/24 and 2025/26

	2023/24	2025/26	Change
New starters	1,259	1,514	+20%
Leavers	1,120	1,300	+16%
Median length of service of leavers	1.99 years	0.83 years	-58%
Leavers within 12 months	505	805	+59%
Leavers with 3+ years' service	236	122	-48%

Source: IPSA FOI response RFI-202606-01. Figures for April 2024 to March 2025 were not included.

- 8.8 The 2024 general election falls between these two years, and we have considered its effect carefully. Turnover would normally be expected to be **higher** in 2023/24, the run-up to an election, as staff plan ahead for their MP standing down or losing their seat. The comparison also excludes April 2024 to March 2025, the immediate post-election period when turnover is naturally highest. Yet turnover in 2025/26, early in a new Parliament, is higher still. Staff hired in the months after the election would mostly have passed their first year by 2025/26, so the rise in first-year leavers reflects people joining and leaving within the same period. Members also report growing use of short fixed-term contracts, often six months, which adds to the churn.
- 8.9 The fall in leavers with more than three years' service needs reading with care. After the 2024 election, 335 of 650 MPs were newly elected, so far fewer staff had long service with their current employer. That fall is therefore largely structural. It is the sharp rise in very early departures that is the clearest warning sign.
- 8.10 Taken together, these trends suggest Parliament is increasingly replacing experienced staff with colleagues who themselves leave before they gain equivalent experience. That affects individual offices and Parliament's ability to retain expertise, provide consistent support and make good use of public money. High turnover means repeated recruitment, induction and training, less resilience and more pressure on the staff who remain.
- 8.11 IPSA's own internal analysis points the same way. Board papers released under FOI (RFI-202606-01) identify recruitment and retention as an area of concern and show that turnover in several MPs' staff pay bands is higher than the Civil Service average.
- 8.12 In particular, IPSA identifies Exec 1 roles, the largest staff group in MPs' offices, as having especially high turnover. The papers also show that IPSA has already accepted pay as part of the response, through previous targeted uplifts for particular staff groups.



OF THE 13 PEOPLE WHO
HAVE WORKED IN MY
OFFICE OVER THE PAST
TWO YEARS THERE ARE
JUST TWO OF US STILL
HERE."

WESTMINSTER-BASED STAFF
MEMBER

- 8.13** The WWG's 2026 MPs' Staff Survey adds further context. It identifies workload, training, management practice and workplace culture as important to staff experience. It also reports that **50% of respondents** rarely or never consider their pay to match the skills their role requires, the highest level of dissatisfaction since the survey began. The survey recommends that the overall offer to staff, including funding for pay, be reviewed.
- 8.14** The same survey found that 33% of respondents felt like leaving their job and 42% said their role was harming their wellbeing. These findings cannot be put down to pay alone, but they reinforce the wider picture of pressures that make it harder to keep experienced staff.
- 8.15** Staff themselves draw the link between pay and retention. Common themes in the survey responses were that parliamentary salaries compare badly with equivalent public sector roles, that growing responsibility is not reflected in pay and that chances to progress are limited. Others described staying out of commitment to public service despite knowing their skills would earn more elsewhere.
- 8.16** Our own survey makes the link plainer still. **64% of respondents** named pay as the main reason they were considering leaving. Asked what would make them more likely to stay, **85%** chose higher pay, clearer progression or both. Retention depends on more than pay, but members themselves identify pay and progression as the changes most likely to keep them.



**I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THIS
ROLE, BUT AS I CURRENTLY
CANNOT PAY MY MORTGAGE
ON MY SALARY I SEE NO
ALTERNATIVE TO SEEKING
ANOTHER JOB."**

CONSTITUENCY CASEWORKER

9 The cost to wellbeing and effectiveness

- 9.1** High turnover affects more than the people who leave. Experienced staff carry institutional knowledge, build specialist expertise and provide continuity. When they are replaced by new starters, that knowledge goes with them, and offices must spend significant time on recruitment, induction and training before new colleagues can work at the same level. The remaining team carries the extra load.
- 9.2** The WWG's 2026 MPs' Staff Survey reflects these pressures. Almost two-thirds of respondents found it difficult to meet the demands of their role in the time available, alongside signs of growing psychological strain. These outcomes cannot be put down to pay alone, but they are consistent with a workforce under sustained pressure and high turnover.
- 9.3** A framework that struggles to keep experienced staff is less efficient and poorer value for money. Frequent recruitment, repeated training and lost continuity all carry



**HIGH STAFF TURNOVER
HAS CONSISTENTLY
DISRUPTED THE OFFICE...
COLLEAGUES HAVE HAD
TO TAKE ON
UNREASONABLE
WORKLOADS."**

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE MANAGER

costs for MPs' offices and the public purse. Supporting the retention of skilled staff is an investment in the effective running of Parliament itself.

10 Why this is a proportionate response

- 10.1 IPSA must balance the proper use of public funds, value for money and the need for MPs to have the resources to do their jobs. We have built this proposal with those responsibilities firmly in mind.
- 10.2 The evidence shows the current framework is contributing to the loss of experienced staff. Turnover is not cost-free. Every departure means more recruitment, induction and training, the loss of knowledge and experience and extra pressure on already stretched offices. Keeping experienced staff is central to getting value from Parliament's investment in staffing.
- 10.3 Pay alone will not resolve every challenge. Workload, training, culture and management all matter, and many of these fall outside IPSA's remit. The design of the pay framework, however, is one of the main levers IPSA holds.
- 10.4 The proposal is targeted. It combines an annual pay award with a return to a known structure, raising the minimum of every band so that the lowest-paid gain most. It addresses both the immediate value of salaries and the long-term working of the framework, strengthening Parliament's ability to recruit and keep skilled staff while delivering better long-term value for the taxpayer.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The bands have stretched, the floor has sunk and staff are leaving faster and earlier than before. We are not asking IPSA to redesign the framework. We are asking IPSA to restore it. A 5.8% consolidated award and a return to the 2019 pay band structure from 1 April 2027 would lift the pay floor for around **450 staff in London and 1,903 outside London**, while keeping the flexibility of the existing system. We believe these proposals meet IPSA's duty to the taxpayer, and we respectfully ask IPSA to approve them.
- 11.2 Restoring the pay structure is a practical step IPSA can take now. In the longer term, we believe the fairest way to end the lottery of more than 650 separate employers is **One Parliament, One Employer**: a single, accountable employer for MPs' staff, with consistent pay, contracts and protections across every office. A fair and properly funded pay framework is the first building block of that system.

Parliament cannot keep asking skilled people to serve at a loss. Restore the floor, and the people who make Parliament work will stay to keep it working.

On behalf of the GMB MPs' and Peers' Staff Branch

Lisa Gillmore

President, GMB MPs' and Peers' Staff Branch

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APPENDIX

IN MEMBERS' OWN WORDS

The following comments were submitted by MPs' staff in our 2026 member survey. They are reproduced as written.

//

I claim universal credit to top up my salary as I am a single parent with several children. This is demeaning for a job with such responsibilities."

//

I am very aware of the level of pay I am receiving vs the rate available in roles outside of Parliament which is demoralising as I enjoy my work but see very limited pay progression."

//

I do this job almost as a vocation. I have over a decade of experience and a degree, yet earn not much more than minimum wage."

//

Considering the people I manage, who do important and skilled work under difficult circumstances, it is impossible to reward them adequately and maintain necessary staffing levels."

//

The annual salary budget for staff just about barely covers enough man-hours... [there is a] choice between salary progression vs maximising staff hours."

//

I've had to take on another job as I cannot support myself solely on my current salary which is now not much above the minimum wage due to almost no wage progression in my 9 years of working for an MP."

//

It is absurd how much more I could get paid doing the same role in another sector. I will be leaving soon."

//

I'm a caseworker with 25 years experience of working in the community in my current role with member and 12 years in the third sector... I cannot be paid more than the mid point in my caseworker banding as the member would not be able to cover the cost of other roles."

//

The negative feedback loop means talented people leave, making it harder for those left behind."

//

In my current role 4 staffers have left in as many months and always the dual reasons quoted are terrible pay and not enough opportunities to progress."



GMB Union

MPs' and Peers' Staff Branch (ML1)

Representing the staff who make Parliament work

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