

Rachel Squire MP
Constituency Office
Music Hall Lane
Dunfermline
FIFE
KY12 7NG

Thursday 29th January 04

Dear Mrs Squire,

With reference to your letter of 23rd January 04 I would advise you that I have written to the Parliamentary Ombudsman in identical terms to those given to the Standards Commissioner and would respond to your numbered points as follows:

1. Your comments are noted.
2. I asked you on 28th December to raise specific questions on my behalf and you insist that I accept answers to similar questions posed at various dates by others. It is self evident that the answers you insist I accept cannot be in answer to my specific questions.
3. I have contacted the MPs in question and I will consider my position on this matter when they have all responded. You will be aware of the terms of my letter as I understand that Paul Flynn has forwarded his letter to you.
4. I am aware of your concern regarding costs which is a constant refrain from you. This refrain was aired again when I asked that your letter of 19th December agreeing to waive your objection to me raising concerns regarding freemasonry with another MP should be a single letter dealing solely with that topic. I made this request as your letter will possibly be read by those MPs that I will contact with a view to taking this matter on. My reason for doing so was that I did not wish to complicate this issue with reference to my other business with you, which you had also referred to in your letter of 19th December. You refused my request on the grounds of cost and I must accept your dual topic letters on those grounds.
5. You now advise me that the maximum amount of allowances available to MPs is available on the parliament's website and I can only wonder why you refused to provide me with this information at your surgery? However I asked about the amount **you** had received and I am sure that you will not have claimed the maximum allowance, driven as you are by thrift. Furthermore the question I asked you was how much money you received in respect of office and clerical assistance and what monies were for other things so that I could evaluate if there were grounds for a complaint from me as to your reason for (as opposed to the efficacy of) holding joint surgeries with Scott Barrie being

financial. I am still awaiting your answer as to how much income you receive as expenses and how that income is apportioned?

6. You say that costs were mentioned in passing and I do not read your letter as stating or implying this but I also judge your letters against a background of continual carping from you on the need to keep expenses down.
7. I did enquire in light hearted manner as to your staff's wages again due to your constant refrain of fiscal prudence. I note the information that you are now so forthcoming with and contrast this new glasnost with your previous frosty refusal to answer any of my questions in this regard. I am heartened by your openness and take this as a sign of a new understanding between us. I am sure this welcome development will ensure that my strong desire to fully understand the financial restraints that my MP/MSP are operating under will be satisfied.

Yours faithfully,

Thomas Minogue.