

Standards at Westminster

I understand the interest in the various stories about actual and alleged misconduct by MPs at Westminster. I have no intention of writing about them and will not be publishing any comments about individual cases. I do not know the rights and wrongs of individual cases and have no wish to get in the way of any enquiry or legal process.

If criminal wrongdoing has taken place it must be prosecuted. If an MP has behaved unprofessionally but not criminally then there needs to be an apology and some recognition of the error. If an MP is falsely accused they deserve a fair and independent process to clear their name.

The Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition are working together to produce a new procedure for anyone working at Westminster to pursue a complaint about another MP or staff member. This needs to be done with due process in a way which ensures it will be properly examined independently, with judgement and arbitration as needed. Staff members need protecting against any predatory MP, and MPs need to be able to dismiss any false allegations in a timely and convincing way.