



Parish Council

Long Sutton, Langport, Somerset

14th April 2023

Public Correspondence Team
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

Dear Sirs,

Lack of MP representation in the House of Commons

Long Sutton Parish is located in the Heart of the Somerset Levels, and falls within the boundary of the Somerton and Frome constituency. The elected Member of Parliament (MP) since 2015 is David Warburton.

Long Sutton Parish Council resolved recently to contact the House of Commons with regards to the lack of MP representation in Parliament over the past 12 months.

Mr Warburton last spoke in Parliament on 11th January 2022. There are no votes on Mr Warburton's voting record from 28th March 2022, to 1st March 2023. It is understood that Mr Warburton is now able to vote, using a proxy vote, and this is apparent from his voting record from 1st March 2023. However, a proxy vote does not compensate for the presence of the constituency MP in sessions at the House of Commons.

There is no evidence of an MP surgery being held in the local area during the past twelve months.

The length of time taken to investigate the allegations made against Mr Warburton have left the parishioners in Long Sutton with inadequate representation. Where code of conduct allegations have occurred in other constituencies (the constituency next door to Somerton and Frome in particular), the elected MP stood down from the post which led to a by-election. The by-election resulted in constituents benefitting from minimal disruption to their

Chairman: Mr G R Cox, Orchard Leigh, Martock Road, Long Sutton, Langport, Somerset TA10 9HU
Tel: 01458 241616, Email: chair@longsutton-pc.gov.uk

Clerk to the Council: Mrs L Newby, Nyumbani, Bow St, Langport, Somerset TA10 9PS.
Tel: 07561 695671 Email: clerk@longsutton-pc.gov.uk

MP representation in Parliament. Sadly, the constituents of Somerton and Frome have not been afforded the same courtesy.

This letter is not a complaint about Mr Warburton's actions or behaviour. The complaint is to highlight the disadvantage felt by Long Sutton Parish Council parishioners at the protracted process of investigation of allegations, and lack of Parliamentary representation of the constituents as a whole during a time of a cost of living crisis, energy bills crisis, the Ukrainian war (supporting refugees coming into the UK), and also the challenges that leaving the EU have created.

Somerset and Frome constituents are entitled to an MP who can attend Parliament and fight their corner. Sadly at the current time, this is not the case. The lack of adequate representation over the past year is undemocratic and frustrating. The constituency requires an MP that can be fully functional and committed to the constituents that took part in the democratic process to elect the MP in the first place.

The Parish Council looks forward to receiving your comments in due course.

Yours faithfully,

Lisa Newby
Parish Clerk and RFO
Long Sutton Parish Council

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Speaker's Office Houses of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tuesday 2nd May 2023

Dear Lisa,

Mr Speaker has asked me to thank you for your letter of 14th April, and to reply on his behalf.

Parliament's Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) operates on the basis of confidentiality for the benefit of all parties. Therefore, we cannot provide any information on complaints or investigations, including whether or not a complaint has been received or whether an investigation is ongoing.

The Speaker has no involvement in this process because, rightly, ICGS is an independent organisation separate from Parliament.

Mr Speaker appreciates you taking the time to write and sends his best wishes.

With kind regards,

Alessandra Dixon
Speaker's Office

Mrs Lisa Newby
Parish Clerk and RFO
Nyumbani
Bow St
Langport
Somerset
TA10 9PS



The Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Lisa Newby
Parish Clerk and RFO
Long Sutton Parish Council
Somerset
TA10 9NT

Our Ref: PM/TO3167
10th May 2023

Dear Ms. Newby,

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the ongoing investigation into David Warbuton MP.

As Leader of the House, I agree that it is important for investigations to be conducted in a timely manner. However, any complaints under the ICGS are treated on a confidential basis and therefore I am unable to comment on individual cases.


Although he is not currently attending the Parliamentary Estate, Mr Warburton remains your local MP and can raise issues in the House of Commons in other ways, including by tabling Written Parliamentary Questions.

With regards to Mr Warburton's use of a proxy vote, the current scheme agreed by the House is clear that Members should only apply for a proxy vote on the grounds of absence caused by parental leave or serious long-term illness or injury. A Member not attending the estate for any other reason should neither apply for nor expect to be granted a proxy vote.

Under the Recall of MPs Act 2015, MPs can be recalled under three circumstances:

- Conviction in the UK of any offence and sentenced or ordered to be imprisoned or detained, after all appeals have been exhausted;
- Suspension from the House following report and recommended sanction from the Committee on Standards for a specified period (at least 10 sitting days, or at least 14 days if sitting days are not specified);
- Convicted of an offence under section 10 of the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 (making false or misleading Parliamentary allowances claims).

The investigation into Mr Warburton is being overseen by the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) process, which is independent of Parliament and Government, therefore you may wish to raise your concerns with the ICGS directly at icgsdirectorfeedback@parliament.uk.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John ...', with a large, stylized initial 'P' or 'R' below it.