



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rushanara Ali MP

*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
Homelessness and Democracy*

2 Marsham Street
London
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Our reference: MC2025/02065

Doug Chalmers
Chair
Committee on Standards in Public Life
Room G.07
1 House Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

10 February 2025

Dear Doug,

Thank you for your letter of 20 January addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, regarding the Committee on Standards in Public Life's 2021 report, 'Regulating Election Finance'. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

I appreciate you writing to highlight your committee's recommendations to address gaps in the existing regime for regulating donations.

Financing of electoral campaigns in the UK should only come from those with a legitimate right to participate in our elections. Foreign money should not be used to fund election campaigning beyond the exception for Irish donations to Northern Ireland parties. It is why accepting or facilitating the transfer of illegitimate foreign money in electoral campaigning is rightly a criminal offence.

While it is clear foreign donations to political parties and other campaigners are illegal, the Government recognises the risk posed by actors who seek to interfere with and undermine our democratic processes. It is why we made the commitment in our manifesto to strengthen the rules around donations to political parties.

Robust regulation and enforcement of political finance rules are crucial for maintaining public trust in our electoral systems and combatting the threat of foreign interference in our democracy. Therefore, we will also be considering whether any changes to the way these rules are enforced are required to ensure enforcement provides a clear deterrent against breaking the law whilst remaining proportionate.

We are developing policy proposals to give effect to these commitments and in doing so we are considering the evidence provided by a range of stakeholders, including recommendations from your committee and from the Electoral Commission. We will introduce legislative measures in due course.

I am copying this letter to Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Thank you again for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rushanara Ali', is centered on the page.

RUSHANARA ALI MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Homelessness and Democracy