

Data Protection and constituents queries

I have asked my office to be fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation.

We will pass information on to public bodies or other counterparties involved in a complaint or query when a constituent writes in. We will regard the submission of the complaint or query as consent to this. We will keep a record of that query and response usually for the life of the Parliament in case of follow up issues, and will update constituents as appropriate on that topic.

Where the data sent is particularly sensitive, as with details on medical conditions and treatment, we will usually request express permission to share this with the other bodies involved.

We have always sought to handle people's data well and to respect confidentiality. We have to trust government, local government and their Agencies to do the same when we pass on information to seek to resolve an issue.

We have also often have to point out that I cannot act on a case affecting someone's adult relative without the express permission of the person affected. I understand why people often want to intervene for their adult children or for their parents, but unless they have power of attorney I do need to ask for consent from the person at the centre of the complaint or query. If a power of attorney is involved then my office need to see the written record of it. Where the relative is living in another constituency it will usually be necessary to refer them to the MP for that constituency, whilst I am happy to take up all such issues affecting people living in my constituency, even if they have been initiated by a relative living elsewhere. I will always need the consent of my constituent.