



**Public Administration  
and Constitutional Affairs  
Committee**

From the Chair  
**William Wragg MP**

Dame Meg Hillier MP  
Chair, Public Accounts Committee  
*Via email only*

4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Dame Meg,

**Public Accounts Committee – Report on the AEA Technology Pension Case**

I am writing to respond to part of the third recommendation in PAC's AEA Technology Pension Case report, which was directed at our Committee (PACAC):

*The government should review ombudsman arrangements to ensure that all aspects of people's interactions with their pensions have an adequate route of appeal. We also ask that the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee consider examining whether the current time limits on government for retaining information and ombudsmen awarding redress are fit for purpose when it comes to pensions ([Recommendation 3](#)).*

Policy specifically relating to pensions and the work of the Pensions Ombudsman falls outside the remit of PACAC. However, as part of the Committee's annual scrutiny of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO), we have repeatedly recommended that the Government introduce legislative reform of the Ombudsman landscape. In response to our latest report, the Government said once again that "fundamental reform [of the Ombudsman system] is not a priority at the current time". We therefore welcome that your report adds further weight to our arguments for Ombudsman reform more broadly, and suggest this is shared with the Cabinet Office.

Unfortunately, the specific matter of data retention policies in relation to complaints about pensions does not fall within the Committee's remit. However, we will bear this issue in mind in the context of our ongoing security sessions with the Cabinet Office, the department responsible for cross-Government coordination of such matters.

I am copying this letter to the Rt. Hon. Stephen Timms MP, Chair of the Work and Pensions Committee.

**William Wragg MP**  
**Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee**