

Derby Medical Society Meeting Minutes Wednesday 10th November 2021
Derby Medical School Lecture Theatre

Apologies

Rami Gontescu

Speaker

Mrs Pauline Latham, OBE, MP for Mid-Derbyshire

“The inside track of being inside the House”

Pauline has been an MP since 2010
Previous Councillor and Mayor of Derby

MP job split into 2: legislator and constituency MP
Mid-Derbyshire formed in 2010 so no predecessor

In London Monday - Thursday each week.

Constituency role

Support constituents with health, housing, education, anti-social behaviour issues to name a few.
Has a team to work with her.

Ceremonial functions in Derbyshire
Variety of civic services
Tries to work only 6 days per week.
Most MPs work 60-70 hours per week.
Visits to organisations in the constituency vital to feedback to parliament.

MPs represent the constituency and ultimately make a decision/vote in parliament based on information from organisations, contact with campaign groups and individuals.
All contact to Pauline are responded to
Need to assess what the views of the majority of the constituent are - Pauline reflected that she does not hear from the vast majority.

Lobbying ministers “in the lobby” is an opportunity to speak to individual Ministers.

Legislator role

Cannot be present at every debate.
Whipps summarise the issues. There are free votes on some issues (eg TOP, assisted dying).
Law making in the House is either made by a vote or by agreement if there is no objections in the Chamber.
House of Commons can now vote remotely and electronically.

Government Bills:

Private members Bills (Pauline is taking a Bill through regarding marriage between 16-18)
There are question sessions in addition to PMQ's - PMQs are not indicative of normal sessions in parliament
Select Committees can do a lot of work and many of these are collaborative .

Prayers are said before each sitting.

Pauline described her experience of her first Queen's speech but she was unable to get into the chamber and missed everything! She now chooses the gallery.

One line whip- do not need to be present in parliament

Three line whip - required to be present as it is an important issue

Upsides to the job but also downsides:

Personal risk, particularly since the murder of Sir David Ames

Pauline carries a personal alarm that can alert the police.

People approaching her in her personal time, especially if people want to moan.

"People can hate you as an MP" and see you as "fair game".

Pauline has chosen to attend church in parliament not at home now to have some quiet time.

Questions

Does anyone other than the Speakers chaplain take prayers - No and if a deputy is needed it is CofE as parliament is affiliated to the CofE. Only MPs and chaplain allowed to prayers.

Differences being in parliament when one party has a large majority

Are you sensing a shift to popular legislation rather than effective law making?

How can a government make long term decisions?