MPs draw on CIOT evidence in call for HMRC service improvements

Briefings



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The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has drawn on evidence provided to it by CIOT to conclude that taxpayers and their agents are not receiving an acceptable level of customer service.

In the report of its inquiry into HMRC's Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22, the PAC noted: 'The Chartered Institute of Taxation submitted evidence to us that highlighted concerns about the difficulties both advisers and taxpayers face getting timely responses and action from HMRC.' (Para 15)

The committee has asked HMRC to write to it setting out its plan to improve customer service to adequate levels as quickly as possible, and within three months,

including the metrics that HMRC will use to monitor its customer service performance and the level of customer service that taxpayers and their agents can expect to receive over the next three years against each of these metrics.

In its evidence to the committee, CIOT expressed concern that staff numbers within HMRC are being cut in anticipation of securing savings from digitalisation when these savings have not yet been realised.

CIOT President Susan Ball welcomed the report, saying: ‘The Public Accounts Committee are right to be challenging HMRC on customer service levels. The delays that taxpayers and their advisers currently face are not acceptable. It is crazy that people trying to get help from HMRC on paying the right amount of tax find it so difficult to get through. The first principle of compliance surely has to be making it easy for willing taxpayers to comply with their obligations.’

The government is obliged to respond to the PAC’s report within two months.

‘Susan Ball, president of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, whose evidence was referenced in the report, said: “Our members tell us every day of the delays they face getting answers and action from HMRC – and the impact this is having on businesses and individuals.”’

Daily Telegraph