

## Alok Sharma, MP for Reading West

1<sup>st</sup> November 2016

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about Sir Philip Green.

You may be aware that two Parliamentary committees recently published a joint report into the collapse of BHS. This case shows why the Government is determined to tackle corporate irresponsibility and reform the economy so it works for everyone, not just the privileged few.

The report was very concerning and the Insolvency Service is now carrying out an accelerated investigation. Jobcentres are also standing by to provide support and advice to those who were affected by the closure of BHS. In the long run, we need to do more to prevent this kind of irresponsible and reckless behaviour.

On the question of honours being taken away, you may be interested to know that someone's honour can be taken away if they are, for example, sentenced to prison for at least three months for a criminal offence, or censured or struck off by a professional or regulatory body for something directly relevant to their honour. Other reasons for 'forfeiture', as this is known, can also be considered.

Cases are considered by the Honours Forfeiture Committee. If the Committee recommends an honour is withdrawn, the decision is sent to the Queen by the Prime Minister. The Queen decides if the honour should be forfeited. I understand that it has been reported that Sir Philip Green's knighthood is being 'kept under review'.

The vote you refer to was a vote on an amendment to the motion being debated, which addressed BHS more widely. You may be interested to know that motions passed in such 'backbench business debates' are not binding on the Government. While the House of Commons may express its opinion in this way, the question of whether an honour should be taken away is exclusively for the Honours Forfeiture Committee to consider.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**

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