

# Lord Hanningfield expenses scandal: 'There are 50 other peers doing it that I could name'

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Lord Hanningfield has defended himself over a “clock in, clock out” row and said: “I could name 50 other peers that do it.”

Defiant Hanningfield admitted there was a culture within the House of Lords of peers turning up just to claim their £300 tax-free allowance.

But he insisted the money was used by Lords for “entertaining and meeting people”, as well as paying staff.

[Despite our overwhelming evidence that he was spending just minutes inside Parliament in exchange for the £300 attendance rate](#), he still insisted he had done nothing wrong.

[In a heated exchange in the car park of Ingatestone train station, in Essex, at 1pm yesterday, we confronted him.](#)

After hearing our undercover team followed his movements throughout July, he gave a series of bizarre excuses, such as it being a “hot month”, that he “has to eat” and “hasn’t been well”.

At one point he even blasted: “Clocking in and out of Parliament is only part of being a peer.”

He told the Mirror to examine his career in public service, saying he had “worked for 40 years for nothing”.

He even said he “shouldn’t have been jailed” in July 2011, despite a jury finding him guilty on six counts of false accounting following the last Parliamentary expenses scandal.

Labour’s John Mann said Hanningfield must now identify the other peers. The MP said: “He needs to name them, all of them. It is an absolute scandal.”

**Q How do you explain claiming £300 pounds per day for each of the days you were in for minutes?**

A It's cost me, by the time I have people at home to help, time I have people in the House of Lords to help me, I actually spend something like £150 per day on expenses, so I don't really make any profit,

**Q But, Lord Hanningfield, do you understand how the British taxpayer may see a £300 claim for an attendance allowance in which you are supposed to attend Parliament and you have come out after just minutes? People may see that as not a good use of taxpayer's money?**

A No not really because I've actually spent my whole life serving the taxpayer, and I am now trying to get back again. I've spoken twice recently, I'm getting very involved in transport, I have been through a very traumatic time, a terrible time. I still don't believe I'm that guilty of expenses problems initially at all.

I've made some mistakes, and I've paid back everything I've ever claimed before. I've paid back £70,000 and I'm now trying to get myself going again. When you're in the Lords, most of my Lords work is actually in post, it's meeting people and things like that...

**Q But don't you see how people will see this as the system being used by Lords as clocking in and out of Parliament for minutes, simply to claim £300 pounds?**

A Well, you will see at least half of the people doing that actually.

**Q Half of the Lords in the House of Lords are doing the same thing?**

A Many go in...let me explain, again, it isn't (just) what you do you in the House. I am now speaking more in the House of Lords. When you go in the House of Lords, if you speak you are there a lot longer.

**Q But Lord Hanningfield, for that month of July you didn't speak, you didn't say anything, you didn't attend a committee?**

A I have been trying to get myself on track again, I have spoken twice, I have now been to some committees since October...

**Q So why were you attending Parliament?**

A Because I am a member of Parliament and I want to be back again, what I was trying to do was was get myself on track again, which I've done

**Q On track by turning up and claiming money though?**

A Yes, because I was doing things there you see

**Q You weren't doing anything there were you?**

A I was.

**Q I can show you the 16th of July right here, where you arrived at 14.36 and then you left at 15.02, that isn't doing anything though is it, that's turning up claiming £300 and going back home?**

A You are talking a load of rubbish quite honestly because being a Lord is not just going in the House of Lords, it's the post you have. I have 15 letters a day, I have all sorts of things like that. I can do some of it at home, some of it at my office in the Lords.

**Q You are effectively clocking in and out of Parliament?**

A You are talking a load of rubbish quite honestly . . . Shut up. I have worked my heart out for the taxpayer.

**Q You are spending more time on the train than you are in Parliament, aren't you?**

A You are talking a lot of rubbish.

**Q Don't the rules clearly state as a fact, that you can claim that money if you vote, if you attend a committee or if you attend the main chamber of Parliament? You are effectively going into the main chamber of Parliament, staying a couple of minutes so a clerk ticks you off on a register and then you are coming home?**

A Well I admit I don't go much into the main chamber, if you look at my records since October it's changed dramatically because I've spoken twice...let me explain again I was trying to get myself organised after a nervous breakdown... I have been exhausted by this and I find you pretentious and talking a lot of utter rubbish

**Q Are you going to pay back any of the £5,700 pounds you claimed for July?**

A No, because I've spent that on what I did there, you misunderstand. I am absolutely fed up with people like you lying about it. . . I have given the British taxpayer hundreds of thousands of pounds in my life, I have worked for 40 years for nothing, I have done a jolly good job under pressure

**Q And yet you have been jailed for your expenses?**

A That is wrong, it was wrong, I shouldn't have been jailed.

**Q A jury found you guilty though?**

A I didn't stand a chance though did I? Being the last one I didn't stand a chance, I could have carried it on through the European court. I didn't realise how much effect it would have afterwards.

**Q Just on a wider thing, what you're saying, it's not just you, there are lots of peers doing it?**

A Lot's of peers just go in and check in for their expenses I agree, but they are using their expenses for a lot of things, entertaining, meeting people, employing people. Lots of peers like I do have an assistant ....

**Q So you are saying that perhaps the rules need to change, because what you have been doing is not in the spirit of the rules?**

A I have to live don't I? I don't do anything else. How do you think I am going to eat, how am I going to pay my electricity bills?

**Q I realise that, but people won't see that as good enough though, you're a Lord, people hold you to a very high standard.**

A I have to eat, other people have to eat. My income from the Lords will be about £30,000 a year, I pay about that in £18,000 in expense to other people, I'll end up with 12000 a year.

**Q I don't think the taxpayer will see what you have done in July as value..**

A Well no, why don't you choose October?

**Q The fact that Lords clock in and out is a thing that annoys people, I don't think it's just you, I think it is a wider thing.**

A No I can name 50 that do it.

**Q Right, would you like to do that now?**

A I see the same people go in and out as I do. I don't want to be persecuted.