

Strategy for the House of Commons Service 2016-2021

“SUPPORTING A THRIVING PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY”

WHAT WE WILL DO

<p>1) Facilitating effective scrutiny and debate</p> <p>We will work as a team to support the business of the House. We will provide MPs with outstanding professional expertise, advice, research, facilities and technology, based on a sound understanding of their needs and priorities. Whatever our role, we will be valued by MPs for our expertise, empathy, innovation and customer service.</p>			
Our challenge	In response, we will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	Measuring Success: Outcomes
<p>We know that MPs value highly the range of services we provide to support them, collectively and as individuals, to participate in the work of the House and its committee.</p> <p>However, we have identified through their feedback a number of ways to tailor our services even more precisely to their needs, to provide the conditions for effective scrutiny and debate.</p> <p>We need to collect such feedback more consistently, and use it alongside other sources of evidence to inform the services we provide.</p>	<p>1.1 Support effective committees We will routinely measure the impact of select committees, and base resourcing and advice on evidence of effective ways of working.</p>	<p>For MPs: My committee work informs debate in the House and in the media, and has an influence on Government.</p> <p>For the public: Select committees scrutinise the issues that matter to me.</p> <p>For our staff: I identify effective committee practice, and share and adopt this in my work.</p>	<p>Impact MPS view on ability of house services to help them make an impact</p> <p>MPs staff view on ability of house services to help their MPs make an impact</p>
	<p>1.2 Deliver authoritative and engaging information and advice We will provide authoritative, user-friendly information and advice to MPs about the business and procedures of the House and its committees, and the topics for scrutiny and debate.</p>	<p>For MPs: Information and advice is delivered in an engaging and empathetic manner, which is consistent with my needs and the demands on my time. I use the full range of resources available to support my work in the Chamber, on committees and tabling questions.</p>	<p>Internal Customer satisfaction Members satisfaction with range of services Including information and advice</p> <p>Members staff satisfaction with range of services Including information and advice</p>

	<p>We will support the international business of the House.</p> <p>We will extend the reach of our briefing and research output, to stimulate and inform debate inside and outside the House.</p>	<p>For our staff: I have a good understanding of who uses the information and advice I provide, and why. This informs how I design or deliver it.</p>	<p>Impact on Government MPS view on ability of house services to help them make an impact</p> <p>MPs staff view on ability of house services to help their MPs make an impact</p> <p>Impact on Wider Public Debate MPS view on ability of house services to help them make an impact</p> <p>MPs staff view on ability of house services to help their MPs make an impact</p>
	<p>1.3 Provide essential technology We will build digital capacity and capability, and provide MPs and their staff with secure technology that works, a programme of training opportunities, and a responsive support service.</p>	<p>For MPs and their staff: I have access to the technology I need to do my job, it performs reliably to agreed standards, and I feel confident in using it.</p>	<p>Internal Customer satisfaction Members satisfaction with range of services Including digital services</p> <p>Members staff satisfaction with range of services Including digital services</p>

	<p>1.4 Provide a clear and consistent service to MPs' staff MPs also rely on the support of their own staff. We will clarify our transactional relationship with MPs' staff, in Westminster and in constituencies, and apply it consistently across the Service, to agreed standards. We will ensure all House staff treat them with respect.</p>	<p>For MPs: My staff can carry out the tasks I delegate to them in agreement with the House Service, both in Westminster and the constituency.</p> <p>For MPs' staff: I know to which information and services I am entitled, and how to access them. I am treated consistently by the House Service, and with respect.</p> <p>For our staff: I have a clear understanding of my relationship with MPs' staff and what they are entitled to expect from the service I provide.</p>	<p>Internal Customer satisfaction Members satisfaction with range of services</p> <p>Members staff satisfaction with range of services</p>
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	<p>1.5 Respond to feedback We will proactively seek and share feedback from MPs and their staff in a joined up and regular fashion, ensuring we capture the experience of MPs of all backgrounds. We will use this feedback to inform investment decisions, service provision and individual staff actions across the House Service.</p>	<p>For MPs and their staff: I am consulted regularly about my needs and priorities, and my experiences of the House Service. I can see how the House Service has responded to this feedback. Services are accessible, regardless of my previous experience or background.</p> <p>For our staff: I receive regular feedback from MPs and I act on it.</p>	<p>Internal Customer satisfaction Members satisfaction with range of services</p> <p>Members staff satisfaction with range of services</p>
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2) Involving and inspiring the public

We will open up the House of Commons to the public and show how it is essential to democracy, and changing for the better. Focusing particularly on the young and marginalised, we will create and promote opportunities to engage in the House’s work, make it relevant and accessible, and challenge misconceptions. We will facilitate representation and enhance the reputation of the House in the UK and internationally through our work.

Our challenge	In response, we will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	Measuring Success: Outcomes
<p>39% of people surveyed by the Hansard Society in 2015 for its Audit of Political Engagement did not consider Parliament to be essential to democracy. Only 47% of those surveyed said they knew very much about its work.</p> <p>The evidence suggests that where people engage with the House of Commons, they are more likely to hold positive views about the institution and its work. The Petitions Committee and the Education Centre provide new opportunities for engagement - we need to build on these initiatives and show how the House of Commons <i>is</i> essential and relevant, and involve the public in its work.</p> <p>The UK Parliament has a strong tradition of promoting democracy internationally, but the level of</p>	<p>2.1 Communicate proactively We will explain and promote the work of the House to the public, and be robust in challenging misconceptions through the media.</p> <p>We will ensure our communications are relevant, by focusing on issues that matter to the public, rather than on process. We will ensure they are informed, by harnessing professional expertise in the development of education and outreach products.</p> <p>2.2 Publish open and accessible content People learn and understand information in different ways. We will make use of video, infographics, data visualisation and rich media in our publications; while also catering for the digitally excluded.</p> <p>We will make it easy to find and use information about the House by ensuring the underlying data is of good quality, so it can be linked and easily re-used by others.</p>	<p>For the public: I understand that Parliament is at the heart of our democracy. I know what happens in the House of Commons and why it matters. The House of Commons is relevant to me.</p> <p>For the public: I can access information about Parliament easily, regardless of whether I use technology. If I do use technology, I can access this information in an appropriate format and on a device of my choice.</p> <p>For our staff: I write content that is accessible, and</p>	<p>Reputation We can demonstrate that the public understand the difference between Parliament and Government.</p> <p>An improvement in the level of public perception of the House of Commons over the lifetime of the Parliament.</p> <p>Customer Satisfaction We can demonstrate a wider and deeper following of our work, and that people come directly to us for information about what is happening in the House of Commons.</p>

demand from parliaments overseas for assistance has been difficult to meet.		appropriate for digital formats. I publish data in line with open standards.	
	<p>2.3 Go to where people are We will engage with people where they are, rather than expecting them to come to us.</p> <p>While continuing to provide first class visitor services in Westminster, we will engage people and communities across the nations and regions of the UK. We will build on our existing partnerships with universities, our constituency roadshows and other outreach provision.</p> <p>In addition to developing our own website, we will make information easily available on other platforms and social media, including through strategic partnerships and third party websites.</p>	<p>For the public: I can engage with the House of Commons easily, regardless of where I live or interact online.</p> <p>For MPs: I am supported to engage my constituents in the work of the House.</p>	<p>Customer Satisfaction We can demonstrate a wider and deeper following of our work, with more people coming directly to us for information about what is happening in the House of Commons.</p> <p>Reputation Increased levels and frequency of engagement, especially from young people and marginalised groups.</p> <p>Improved ability for the public to engage.</p>
	<p>2.4 Focus on the young and marginalised Young people and people on lower incomes are less likely to be knowledgeable about Parliament and value its importance. We will therefore develop our understanding of how young people and marginalised groups engage, and tailor our services accordingly.</p> <p>We will expand our education provision so that every school aged child in the UK can engage with Parliament.</p>	<p>For the public: Regardless of my background, I can engage with the House of Commons, and understand how it is relevant to me.</p>	<p>Reputation We can demonstrate an increase in levels of engagement, especially from young people and marginalised groups.</p>

	<p>2.5 Create innovative ways to participate We will explore new and inclusive ways for the public, their representatives and their advocates, to participate in the work of the House and its committees.</p>	<p>For MPs: I have access to a broad range of views and experiences, which I use to inform my scrutiny and legislative work.</p> <p>For the public: My background is not a barrier to participation.</p>	<p>Impact We can demonstrate that we take evidence from a wider range of individuals, and that the fruits of engagement are used by MPs in their chamber and committee work.</p> <p>Reputation Increased participation leads to improved public perceptions of the House of Commons.</p>
	<p>2.6 Promote parliamentary democracy internationally We will respond, within the resources available to us, to appropriate calls for assistance to developing parliaments, both directly and working through other bodies.</p>	<p>For the Members and staff of developing parliaments: I have access to the expertise and experience of UK MPs and staff, to assist me in strengthening parliamentary democracy in my country.</p>	<p>Reputation Participation in capacity building overseas ensures we maintain our international reputation in this area.</p>

3) Securing Parliament's future

We will steer the House through the challenges it faces, balancing innovation with respect for cherished practices. We will work with the House of Lords to protect and enhance the physical fabric of the estate, protect Parliament from threats and prepare for the future, while maintaining vibrant democratic processes. Whatever our role, we will respond flexibly to changing demands.

Our challenge	In response, we will:	Successful delivery "feels like":	Measuring Success: Outcomes
<p>The Palace of Westminster is one of the most important and recognisable buildings in the world, forming part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Significant conservation work is required to prevent major, irreversible damage to the building, and to protect the heritage of the Palace for future generations. We need to prepare, with our Lords colleagues, to implement Parliament's decision on how this is to be achieved.</p> <p>More generally, we need to increase our resilience, capacity and capability to respond effectively to current and future challenges, be they threats to Parliament's security, the changing political and constitutional environment or financial pressures.</p>	<p>3.1 Carry out and prepare for major renovation of the Palace of Westminster We will prepare, with the House of Lords, for the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster during the 2020s. We will provide expert advice to MPs to support the planning and decision-making processes and engender confidence in our ability to deliver.</p> <p>We will plan well in advance for how parliamentary services may need to be revised to reflect new arrangements, focusing on opportunities as well as risks.</p> <p>We will refurbish the Northern Estate of the Palace of Westminster and the Elizabeth Tower, on time and on budget.</p> <p>We will increase the accessibility of our buildings and the diversity of our workforce through the design and delivery of these projects.</p>	<p>For all: the physical fabric of the estate is well looked after. I experience minimal disruption when essential works and maintenance is carried out. I am confident that all building projects will be carried out successfully and on budget.</p> <p>For MPs: I have access to expert advice when asked to make decisions about estates programmes.</p> <p>For the public: I am impressed by how professionally this national asset is being cared for.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>

	<p>3.2 Develop our capacity and capability We will attract and retain the specialist skills required to deliver programmes and projects well, taking a strategic approach to resourcing and development.</p> <p>We will increase capacity and capability efficiently overall, and avoid draining resource from business-as-usual activities.</p> <p>We will determine the appropriate balance of internal and external resource, and develop a flexible, diverse workforce.</p>	<p>For all: I have confidence in the expertise, capability and capacity of House staff to deliver major projects and programmes and maintain business-as-usual activities.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>
	<p>3.3 Introduce new security and resilience capabilities Balancing the need for security with that of openness, we will work with colleagues in the House of Lords to protect Parliament from cyber and physical threats; and ensure business resilience.</p>	<p>For all: I feel safe and secure on the Parliamentary Estate, and on the network.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>
	<p>3.4 Seek to share more services with the House of Lords 64% of the total resource spend of the House of Commons and the House of Lords is already managed through some form of shared services. The review of bicameral services identified a further 26% that might be candidates for further joint working.</p> <p>We will work with the House of Lords to explore how we might increase the value for</p>	<p>For MPs and peers: I benefit from the efficiencies generated by joint working, without experiencing any loss of service.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>

	<p>money of our services, while respecting the constitutional position of each House, maintaining service levels to Members, and supporting each House’s corporate objectives and voice.</p>		
	<p>3.5 Work sustainably We will continue on our journey to being a more sustainable institution – achieving long term environmental targets; ensuring the House Service is a fully inclusive place to work; and embedding a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation.</p>	<p>For our staff: I am proud to work for a historic institution but I make sure it stays relevant and is fit for the future.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>
	<p>3.6 Ensure our long-term financial sustainability We will ensure our financial processes and systems are fit for purpose, easy to use and report on; and provide financial advice and information that enables the organisation to make good decisions.</p> <p>To free up resources to deliver priorities and to prepare for the possibility of a tighter remit in future, we will deliver an efficiency target of 10% of controllable expenditure between 2015-16 and 2019-20.</p>	<p>For our staff: I comply with financial processes and system requirements. I understand the cost implications of my actions and I make efficient use of resources.</p> <p>For the public: As a taxpayer, I get value for money from the House Service.</p>	<p><i>To be agreed as part of the DGR implementation phase</i></p>

HOW WE WILL DO IT

A. Put the customer at the heart of everything we do	We will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	How it will support our objectives
	<p>We will identify our customer groups, map them across the services they use, and prioritise actions in each area to improve engagement with them and services for them.</p> <p>We will introduce a continuous evaluation framework to measure customer satisfaction; pro-actively seeking and sharing feedback in a joined up and regular fashion, and gathering reactive feedback through a structured complaints process. This information will inform investment decisions, service provision and individual staff actions. It will help us to become a gender sensitive parliament.</p> <p>We will resource a first port of call, to make it easier for customers to navigate the Service; and central coordination of customer and staff engagement and intelligence-sharing.</p> <p>We will define behaviours, and promote a culture in which staff think about customers’ needs as a matter of routine. We will engage and empower staff through innovation schemes to seek suggestions, and recognition schemes to value their work. We will set meaningful KPIs, and adopt a no-blame culture.</p> <p>We will follow industry standards and best practice when developing our service.</p>	<p>For MPs: I find it easy to access the services I need and they meet my changing needs. House staff never tell me I have a wrong number when I call them, and they understand the work I do.</p> <p>For our staff: I am clear on who my different customers are, including my colleagues across the House Service. I can ‘stand in the shoes of customers’ because I understand their viewpoint; I regularly receive feedback from them. I get to meet my customers, and have an adult, engaging relationship with them, which leads to a more fulfilling job.</p> <p>I am part of one House service. If I take a request, I sort it out.</p> <p>I feel valued and supported by colleagues, and able to make changes and suggestions to improve services and processes.</p>	<p>An explicit and embedded customer focus will ensure we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and act on the needs and priorities of MPs, to support them to carry out the business of the House; • Understand public experience and perceptions of the House of Commons, to inform how and where we seek to engage; and • Identify changing demands quickly, so we can continuously adapt our services.

B. Maximise the potential of digital	We will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	How it will support our objectives
	<p>We will make technological decisions based on strategic goals and priorities, focus on our core work and only build what we need.</p> <p>We will engage with users - MPs, their staff and our staff - to ensure we provide tools and equipment that are easy to use, and design products that meet their requirements.</p> <p>We will mainstream digital skills across the organisation, but we won't duplicate each other's work.</p> <p>We will use digital to make information easily available to MPs, staff and the public.</p> <p>We will train and enable staff to effectively use digital content, channels and techniques to interact with the public.</p> <p>We will follow best practice and standards to enable effective working.</p> <p>We will design flexible tools and work in an agile, responsive way.</p>	<p>For MPs and their staff: I have access to the technology, training and support I need to work effectively. Technology is user-friendly.</p> <p>For our staff: Digital helps me to deliver my objectives. It is an enabler, rather than a barrier or an add-on. I am personally and digitally contributing to a Parliament that is fit for the 21st Century.</p> <p>For the public: Digital enables me to easily find out what is happening in the House of Commons, and to participate.</p>	<p>Digital will enable us to achieve our objectives by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting MPs to carry out the business of the House effectively; • Making it easier and more attractive for the public to engage with us; and • Delivering the technology needed to support our major projects, and facilitate agile ways of working.

C. Foster a skilled, united and diverse workforce	We will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	How it will support our objectives
	<p>We will retain and attract individuals with the skill we need to deliver our objectives. We will identify which jobs require specialisms and support professional development. We will value what newcomers can bring, while actively growing our own talent.</p> <p>We will break down silos, work effectively across departments and make it easier for staff to move between them. We will seek to work with colleagues in the Lords to encourage movement of staff between the two House Services.</p> <p>We will create a working environment in which everyone’s contribution is recognised, rewarded and valued. We will ensure there is equal opportunity for staff to progress, regardless of their background. We will be proud of our people.</p> <p>We will strengthen diversity and inclusion leadership and management; achieve ethnic diversity of staff at senior levels; support career progression opportunities for staff; and embed good practice across the House Service.</p>	<p>For MPs: I have confidence in the expertise of House staff. I am getting a service which is as good if not better than I would get elsewhere.</p> <p>For our staff: I am developed and stretched. I can aspire to apply for new roles and have a fair chance of getting them. I am comfortable in my working environment and don’t have to be someone I am not to work here.</p> <p>I am working towards the same goals as my colleagues, right across the House. I am recognised, rewarded and valued for what I do. I understand that my role is essential to delivering the core work of Parliament, regardless of where I work.</p> <p>For the public: The House Service looks like my community. I would consider working for the House.</p>	<p>By fostering a skilled, united and diverse workforce, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide expertise across the House Service to support MPs; • Be representative of the public we seek to engage; and • Be equipped to meet our current and future challenges.

D. Spend money wisely and avoiding waste	We will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	How this will support our strategic objectives
	<p>We will put in place an organisational structure which is clear and ensures we work efficiently.</p> <p>We will promote a culture which values and prioritises continuous improvement, focused on results; where staff are encouraged to simplify complex processes and prioritise what is important; and where we are not afraid to stop things if they don’t work.</p> <p>We will find innovative ways of enriching our commercial operations so that not only do visitors’ leave with a better understanding of Parliament, but the net contribution to the House’s budget increases through sharper commercial performance.</p>	<p>For MPs: I believe the House Service is well run and provides good value for money.</p> <p>For our staff: I am encouraged to innovate and can help to simplify complex processes in my area of work. I don’t duplicate colleagues’ work.</p> <p>I am thinking about my results and my personal output, in the context of the House of Commons and the wider environment in which we operate.</p> <p>I am prioritising what is important, so that we can do those things better.</p> <p>For the public: As a taxpayer, I get value for money from the House Service.</p>	<p>By increasing productivity, progressing towards our efficiency targets, and maintaining the financial health of the organisation, we will ensure that we maximise the resources available to us to deliver all our strategic objectives.</p>

E. Work impartially, inclusively and in partnership	We will:	Successful delivery “feels like”:	How this will support our strategic objectives
	<p><i>As individuals</i> We will be impartial in our dealings with MPs and the public.</p> <p><i>With each other</i> We will deliver our objectives as one team, working effectively across departments and valuing colleagues’ roles and contributions.</p> <p><i>With the House of Lords</i> To facilitate more formal joint working and to share best practice, we will encourage interaction between staff in the House of Commons and House of Lords at all levels.</p> <p><i>With industry and the wider public sector</i> We will develop and expand our contract management capability, so that the House is an intelligent client for industry. We will harness the expertise of industry and the public sector to deliver our objectives.</p> <p><i>With other Parliaments and assemblies</i> We will actively seek out and share best practice with Parliaments and assemblies in the UK and beyond, to support our common democratic purpose.</p>	<p>For MPs: I trust House staff to provide impartial information and advice. I experience a seamless service. I benefit from expertise garnered from other institutions and from industry.</p> <p>For our staff: I work impartially and do not allow my personal views to interfere with my work. I value and work effectively with colleagues across the Service and the House of Lords. I respect and value the House of Lords in its essential role as a revising and scrutiny chamber. I use good practice from other Parliaments, industry and the wider public sector to innovate and improve the service I deliver.</p> <p>For staff in the House of Lords: I am consulted as a matter of routine in decisions by the Commons that affect me. I feel my input is valued.</p>	<p>We cannot achieve our objectives in isolation. Many of our projects will be delivered jointly with the House of Lords, as well as with industry. We will only be fully effective in supporting the business of the House and engaging the public if we serve all our customers impartially, harness skills across the House, and learn from best practice elsewhere.</p>