



## HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

### MINUTES

Monday 6 November 2017

#### ATTENDANCE

- Lord Speaker (Chairman)
- Baroness Doocey
- Baroness Evans of Bowes Park
- Liz Hewitt (external member)
- Lord Hope of Craighead
- Lord Laming
- Lord McFall of Alcluith
- Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
- Lord Newby
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord Wakeham

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments, was in attendance. Apologies were received from Mathew Duncan (external member).

#### I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Lord Speaker welcomed the members of the Commission to the fourth meeting of the Parliament. He reminded members of the Commission of the sensitive nature of the papers and reiterated that they had been circulated for the attention of members of the Commission only and should not be shared more widely unless explicitly stated.

The Lord Speaker explained that the agenda had changed since the papers has been circulated. He informed members that the first item of business would be a discussion of the House of Lords response to sexual misconduct, harassment and bullying and that the last item on the agenda (Strategic Estates Category A Projects: Update and State of Play) would be considered at the following meeting on Wednesday 15 November.

#### 2. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER

The Commission amended and **agreed** the record of discussions from the meeting of 13 September.

### 3. HOUSE OF LORDS RESPONSE TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

The Lord Speaker reiterated his commitment to ensuring that the House of Lords is a place where everyone is respected and allowed to carry out their work without fear of harassment or discrimination.

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park, the Leader of the House, explained the political process which was underway to agree a new process to deal with allegations of sexual misconduct, harassment and bullying in Parliament. She said that the extension of the telephone helpline for staff of members of the House of Lords was a positive development.

*[More information – Restricted Access]*

Baroness Smith of Basildon said that any new body or process should be bicameral. The Leader of the House gave an assurance that there would be Lords representation in any new structure. Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall said that the root of the problem should be addressed and that those making decisions should not simply focus on responding to the negative outcomes.

The Leader of the House left the meeting at 4.25pm to attend a meeting in the House of Commons with the Prime Minister and the leaders of the other main political parties.

*[More information – Restricted Access]*

A discussion took place about the reporting and appeal processes currently in place for individuals with a grievance. Members also discussed the importance of the House of Lords having a duty of care to those who work in Parliament in whatever capacity.

The Commission **took note** of the discussion.

### 4. ELIZABETH TOWER REFURBISHMENT PROJECT: UPDATE

Paper from Matthew Hamlyn, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), Elizabeth Tower Refurbishment Project. Presented by David Hemming, Director of Strategic Estates Investment.

C/17–19/10 RESERVED

David Hemming, Director of Strategic Estates Investment, presented the paper and addressed each of the Commission's questions from the previous meeting in turn. The discussion covered the assignment of risk, levels of optimism bias, the role of the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service, the arbitration procedure and the constituent parts of the overall budget.

Baroness Doocey highlighted the problems which arise from poor initial surveys and over optimistic initial budgets. Lord Hope of Craighead spoke of the balance to be struck between detailed surveys which could prove costly in the short term and visual inspection surveys which could prove more costly in the long term. Baroness McIntosh

of Hudnall and Lord McFall both spoke of investing money in the short term to save money in the long term.

The Lord Speaker explained the process underway in Ottawa and how the House could learn lessons from their approach.

The Lord Speaker asked about the cost of the lift component of the project and David Hemming agreed to provide the exact figure after the meeting. He also agreed to provide a short note on the project team roles and responsibilities, particularly with regard to ongoing cost management.

The Commission **took note**.

## **5. ELIZABETH TOWER REFURBISHMENT PROJECT: AUDIT PROGRESS**

Oral update from Liz Hewitt, Chairman of the Audit Committee

C/17-19/11 RESERVED

Liz Hewitt described the process of the ongoing audit of the Elizabeth Tower Refurbishment Project.

*[More information – Restricted Access]*

The Commission **took note**.

## **6. COMMISSION FORWARD PLAN**

The Commission **took note** of the forward plan.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A question was asked about the confidential annex regarding events in the Royal Gallery referenced in the Services Committee minutes from the meeting of Thursday 14 September. Lord Laming, Chairman of the Service Committee explained that it would be circulated to the Commission members in due course.

The Lord Speaker informed the Commission that the next meeting would take place on **Wednesday 15 November at 10.30 am in the Lord Speaker's Office.**

6 November 2017

**Patrick Milner**  
Secretary to the Commission  
020 7219 6644  
milnerp@parliament.uk