



## HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

### Minutes

Wednesday 15 November 2017

#### ATTENDANCE

- Lord Speaker (Chairman)
- Baroness Doocey
- Mathew Duncan (external member)
- Baroness Evans of Bowes Park
- Liz Hewitt (external member)
- Lord Hope of Craighead
- Lord Laming
- Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
- Lord Newby
- Lord Wakeham

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments, was in attendance. Apologies were received from Lord McFall of Alcluth and Baroness Smith of Basildon.

#### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Lord Speaker welcomed the members of the Commission to the fifth meeting of this 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.

The Lord Speaker explained that a photographer would be present for the first few minutes of the meeting to take photographs of the Commission at work for *Red Benches* and other media purposes.

#### 2. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 6 NOVEMBER

The Commission amended and **agreed** the record of discussions from the meeting of Monday 6 November.

#### 3. WORKING GROUP ON HARASSMENT

The Leader of the House updated the Commission on the Working Group on Harassment in Parliament. The Leader explained that she and Lord Hope of Craighead were the members of the Group from the House of Lords and that it was being chaired by the Leader of the House of Commons.

She said that the Working Group was focusing on the grievance procedures in Parliament, that they were hearing from a range of parties and that she hoped their

work would be completed by Christmas. A discussion followed about appeals procedures, the importance of protecting the reputation of individuals and the steps that had already been taken in the House of Lords, specifically the work to bring the management of the Sports and Social Bar in-house. The Leader confirmed that any proposals would be brought to the relevant committees in the House for approval and, if necessary, the Commission.

#### **4. STRATEGIC ESTATES CATEGORY A PROJECTS UPDATE**

Paper from Brian Finnimore, Managing Director, Strategic Estates

Paper presented by David Hemming, Director of Strategic Estates Investment

C/17-19/12 RESERVED

David Hemming, Director of Strategic Estates Investment, explained that this paper has been circulated to give members more details on some of the major capital projects underway.

Commission members asked specific questions about the way in which estimates and timescales had been presented in the paper and the meaning of the coloured indicators. A discussion took place about where papers such as this should be presented in the future and Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall said that the Finance Committee should consider papers such as this in the first instance. Baroness Doocey agreed and the Clerk of the Parliaments explained that the Commission had requested this paper at a previous meeting.

In response to specific questions, David Hemming undertook to provide a number of pieces of information to the Commission:

- A governance organogram of Strategic Estates reflecting accountability lines with names and job titles;
- a ratings history for each Category A project mentioned in the paper from April 2017 (including the Elizabeth Tower Project);
- a list of which items in paragraph nine had been completed, which were outstanding and when the outstanding items would be completed; and
- an explanation of the different levels of expenditure sign-off within major projects.

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

#### **5. PARLIAMENTARY ASSURANCE REVIEW: STRATEGIC ESTATES IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

C/17-19/12 RESERVED

The Clerk of the Parliaments explained that this paper had been circulated in hard copy only because of the sensitive nature of the content. He explained that there had yet to be an agreed management response to the recommendations contained in the review. David Hemming confirmed that the management response would be completed and presented to the Commission at the next meeting on 6 December.

*[More information – Restricted Access]*

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

## **6. RESTORATION AND RENEWAL**

Oral update from Baroness Evans of Bowes Park, Leader of the House

The Leader of the House provided an update on the Government's position on the Restoration and Renewal Programme and explained that the purpose of the member drop-in sessions was to inform parliamentarians and provide them with an opportunity to ask questions of the Leaders of both Houses, the Clerks of both Houses and the Restoration and Renewal Programme Team.

She said she hoped debates would take place in both Houses before Christmas and clarified that the debate in the Commons would take place before the debate in the Lords. She also confirmed that the Government still favoured the model of a sponsor board made up of parliamentarians and externals which would oversee the work of an independent delivery authority.

The Commission **took note**.

## **7. UPDATE ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS ADMINISTRATION**

Oral Update from Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments

The Clerk of the Parliaments updated the Commission about current issues including changes in management board membership, digital rollouts and the Relocation Contingencies Programme exercise. He also said that the House of Lords Administration had been named in the Inclusive Top 50 Employers list and praised the efforts of Rachel Williams, the House of Lords Diversity and Inclusion Manager.

The Commission **took note**.

## **8. COMMISSION FORWARD PLAN**

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

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A question was asked about when an announcement would be made about a new Black Rod. The Lord Speaker said that an announcement would be made on Friday 17 November and that Commission members would be informed by email.

The Lord Speaker informed the Commission that the next meeting would take place on **Wednesday 6 December at 10.30 am in the Lord Speaker's Office.**

15 November 2017

**Patrick Milner**  
Secretary to the Commission