



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

Minutes

Tuesday 11 September 2018

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
- 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.

The Lord Speaker welcomed Dr Mark Bennister from Canterbury Christchurch University who was shadowing the Lord Speaker for two days following his time shadowing Mr Speaker and the House of Commons Commission.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Commission agreed the record of discussion of the previous meeting of the House of Lords Commission on 4 July 2018.

2. House of Lords Decant Venue: QEII

Paper from Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments
C/17-19/49 RESERVED

[More information – Restricted Access]

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

3. Restoration & Renewal: Draft Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Bill

Paper from Baroness Evans of Bowes Park, Leader of the House and Lord Privy Seal
C/17-19/50 RESERVED

The Leader of the House introduced the paper which summarised the draft Bill which will give a statutory footing to the Parliamentary Buildings Sponsor Board and Delivery Authority. The Leader explained that the Bill would be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny

by a joint committee of both Houses and that the Lords Liaison Committee have agreed to this and the Commons Liaison Committee will be asked to agree to the same course of action the day after. The Lord Speaker asked the Leader of the House about the timetable for the introduction of the Bill and she replied that she expected the draft Bill to be published in October and the joint committee to report by February. Members raised the following points:

- On page 3, point 4a should state that the Sponsor Body must have regard to Parliamentary Business when carrying out its duties and this should be reflected in the draft Bill;
- The draft Bill should place a greater emphasis on value for money; and
- The draft Bill should specify whether the Northern Estates Programme is included in the scope of the Programme.

On the point about the Northern Estate Programme the Clerk of the Parliaments reminded the Commission that they would be asked for their agreement prior to that Programme being integrated into the wider Restoration and Renewal Programme.

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

4. Restoration & Renewal: Shadow Sponsor Board Memorandum of Understanding

Paper from Tom Healey, Director, Restoration & Renewal Programme
C/17-19/51 RESERVED

The Lord Speaker began by thanking the members of the Commission for agreeing the R&R shadow sponsor board membership by correspondence in July. He also mentioned that Mathew Duncan did not participate in this decision as he was involved in the selection process for the proposed candidates.

Tom Healey, Director, Restoration & Renewal Programme, and David Livesley, Business Process Lead, Restoration & Renewal Programme, presented the paper. They explained that this paper was redrafted following comments from Commission members at the last meeting in July concerning lines of accountability and the sums of money involved. Questions were asked about the leadership of the programme in shadow phase and the leadership of Strategic Estates in the future. The Commission were in agreement that the recruitment of a new, permanent Director of Strategic Estates should happen as quickly as possible.

The Commission agreed a change to paragraph 18, deleting the third bullet point and replacing it with “Any major enlargement of scope or change of strategy or direction”.

The Commission **agreed** the revised Memorandum of Understanding with an amendment.

The Commission **took note** of the letter from Sir Paul Beresford MP, Chair of the House of Commons Administration Committee, to the House of Commons Commission and the letter from The Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, to the Lord Speaker which both concerned matters relating to the composition of the shadow sponsor board.

5. Annual Report and Resource Accounts and Audit Committee Update

Paper and presentation from Liz Hewitt, Chair, Audit Committee
C/17-19/54 RESERVED and C/17-19/55 RESERVED

Liz Hewitt, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the papers which summarised the activity of the Audit Committee over the last seven months and drew particular attention to the extra resourcing which may be required in a number of Offices because of the R&R Programme. She also said that the Lords Audit Committee terms of reference may have to be amended in due course. When asked about the size of the supplementary estimate and how much was necessary she highlighted the increased costs associated with pensions and the changes in overall property valuation.

The Commission **took note**.

6. Audit Committee: Appointment of New Members

Paper from the Lord Speaker
C/17-19/56 RESERVED

The Lord Speaker presented the paper which sought to replace Baroness Cohen of Pimlico and Lord Carter of Coles with Lord Haskel and Lord McPhearson of Earl's Court.

The Commission **agreed** the membership changes.

7. Cyber Security Update

Paper from Steven Mark, Director, and Alex Wilson, Programme Manager, Cyber Security Programme and presentation from Steven Mark, Director, Cyber Security Programme
C/17-19/57 RESERVED and C/17-19/58 RESERVED

Steven Mark, Director of the Cyber Security Programme presented the papers. He explained that progress in reducing Parliament's cyber vulnerability was good and that although the Programme was coming to an end, there was still more to do. He said that the key deliverables in next period would be (i) the redesign and development of Parliament's cyber security operations centre (CSOC), which is core to Parliament's ability to prepare for, identify and respond to cyber-attack, and (ii) understanding cyber security risks relating to networks within Parliament that are not managed by the Parliamentary Digital Service (such as the broadcast and physical security networks), and helping to plan work required to control these risks consistently and effectively.

He explained that recent member engagement had been positive and that further progress had been made on securing stronger passwords for users, greater engagement with MPs' constituency offices and that more comprehensive software controls had been established and threat-detection on mobile devices had been enhanced. The Commission thanked Mr Mark for his work and the work of his team.

The Commission **took note** of the ongoing need, from April 2019, for work to improve Parliament's and Members' cyber security, and the level of funding that this may require.

8. Amendments to the Guide to Financial Support for Members

Paper from Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance, Letter from Lord Balfe and Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale to the Lord Speaker and Letter from Lord Naseby to the Lord Speaker

C/17-19/59 RESERVED, C/17-19/60 RESERVED and C/17-19/61 RESERVED

Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance, explained that this paper was presented to the Commission because when the Commission delegations and authorities were agreed two years ago (following the review by Baroness Shepherd of Northwold) arrangements relating to financial support for members were explicitly reserved to this body. He added that the paper was the result of many conversations between Lord McFall of Alcuith and members.

Mr Smith presented the paper the Commission discussed the proposals. After discussion the Commission agreed:

- a) To endorse the current approach for claims relating to inclement weather, mindful of the principle the Administration will seek to apply is that a Member should not be financially disadvantaged provided that Members make reasonable efforts to mitigate the additional costs incurred and that evidence of the additional costs is provided.
- b) To only reimburse taxi costs due to travel disruption inside of and outside of London resulting from strike action following consultation with the Clerk of the Parliaments and Finance Director, treating each case on its merit and that the Commission should review this decision after 12 months
- c) To report to the House on changes to the provision for European Travel for parliamentary purposes, namely to extend eligibility under the scheme to travel for parliamentary purposes to and from other states in Europe, with the eligible states being member states of the EU, member states of the Council of Europe, member states of the European Free Trade Association, and the Holy See;
- d) That that the Interparliamentary Forum on Brexit ought to attract the reduced daily allowance and that certain limits should apply for such claims, namely that only two members from each of the four relevant committees mentioned in the paper be eligible to claim the reduced rate allowance, should they wish, and that their attendance be confirmed to the Finance Department by the clerk of their relevant committee as being activity on behalf of that committee; and
- e) To note that an updated version of the *Guide to Financial Support for Members* has been published.

The Commission rejected Lord Naseby's claim for reimbursement of the London Congestion Charge, noted that elements of Lord Balfe's and Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale's claims were covered by the agreements above and rejected Lord Balfe's and Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale's claim for reimbursement of costs incurred as a result of their travel to and from Helsinki.

9. Update on the House of Lords Administration

Paper from Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments

C/17-19/62 RESERVED

The Clerk of the Parliaments briefed the Commission on the progress of the Independent Complaints and Grievance Procedure's implementation in the Lords. He

also asked for the Commission's endorsement to allow the new inquiry which had been commissioned in the House of Commons to also cover Peers, Peers' staff and House of Lords staff, to which the Commission agreed.

He also spoke about the progress of fire safety improvement works, the completion of the Millbank House works project and the security incident outside Peers' carpark on 14 August.

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

10. Any Other Business

The Lord Speaker informed the Commission that the next meeting would take place on Monday 5 November at 4pm in his room and that there would not be a Commission meeting in October.

11 September 2018

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