



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

MINUTES

Wednesday 13 September 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
- Lord McFall of Alcluith
- Lord Newby
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord Wakeham

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments, was in attendance. Apologies were received from Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

2. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 12 JULY

The Commission **agreed** the record of discussions from the meeting of 12 July.

3. ELIZABETH TOWER REFURBISHMENT

Paper from the Director General of the House of Commons
C/17-19/07 RESERVED

Ian Ailles, the Director General of the House of Commons, presented his paper on the refurbishment of the Elizabeth Tower (C/17-19/07 RESERVED).

The Lord Speaker began by saying that the internal and external communications surrounding the recent decisions to silence the chimes and seek an increased budget for the project had been poor. Members of the Commission expressed disappointment and frustration about how the matter had been handled. The discussion focussed on the increased costs rather than the decision taken to silence the chimes.

Ed Ollard, the Clerk of the Parliaments, highlighted his role and responsibility as Accounting Officer for the House.

The Lord Speaker invited the Finance, Services and Audit Committees to consider the matter, the latter possibly in conjunction with their Commons counterpart. The Commission **agreed** that they should examine the matter again at a point after the Conference Recess.

The Commission **agreed** to endorse the planned works surrounding the chimes, quarter bells and clock faces. This included the decision to cease Big Ben's chimes sounding during the essential works except for national events such as Remembrance Sunday and New Year's Eve.

The Commission **noted** that the pre-tender estimate of £29.3m had risen on a like-for-like basis to £45.2m.

The Commission **noted** that the like-for-like cost of the programme was now estimated to be £56.6m.

The Commission **agreed** that the Clerk of the Parliaments as Corporate Officer should award the future works contract to the value of £27.2m subject to an assurance being secured that the contractor would supply information to the Commission on request for the duration of the project.

4. FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Paper from Carl Woodall, Chairman of the Parliamentary Fire Safety Committee and Director of Facilities, House of Lords; Carlos Bamford, the Managing Director of In-House Services, House of Commons; and John Bradbury, the Competent Person for Fire Safety

C/17–19/08 RESERVED

Carl Woodall, Chairman of the Parliamentary Fire Safety Committee and Director of Facilities, House of Lords, presented the paper (C/17–19/08 RESERVED). He was joined by John Bradbury, the Competent Person for Fire Safety.

Carl asked the Commission to consider whether there should be fire drills twice a year when the Chamber was sitting.

The Commission **agreed** that the matter should be re-presented to the Commission at a subsequent meeting with firm options which included timings, the length of drills and options for days of the week.

5. RESTORATION & RENEWAL UPDATE

The Lord Speaker

The Lord Speaker described some of the recent incidents, such as leaks and floods, which demonstrated the need to move forward with the Restoration and Renewal Programme.

The Commission **took note**.

6. PERIMETER SECURITY REVIEW

Paper from Eric Hepburn, Director of Security for Parliament, and The Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Chair of the Consultative Panel of Parliamentary Security (CPPS)
C/17-19/09 RESERVED

Eric Hepburn, the Director of Security for Parliament, presented the paper (C/17-19/09 RESERVED) and was joined by The Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Chair of the Consultative Panel of Parliamentary Security (CPPS). Eric Hepburn explained that the review had reported to both Speakers and that the paper before the Commission set out the proposed way forward. He also explained that it contained specific recommendations for both Houses and for each House individually, and that the paper focused on the more contentious issues from the recommendations of the review. The Lord Speaker, on behalf of the Commission, thanked Eric and his team for their work to date.

The Commission **noted** the receipt of the report and recommendations.

The Commission **agreed** to endorse continuing to fund costs for 2017-18 for those recommendations which had already been implemented, and to fund them for future years subject to the financial planning process and a review of total security-related costs.

The Commission **agreed** to further planning and analysis of specific recommendations.

The Commission **discussed** the House of Lords specific recommendations.

The Commission **noted** recommendations which related to the House of Commons.

The Commission **noted** that the implementation of the remaining recommendations was in progress and that this would be taken forward by the Parliamentary Security Department, with the support of Strategic Estates, In House Services, the Metropolitan Police Service, and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure.

7. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REVIEW

Oral update from the Clerk of the Parliaments

Ed Ollard gave an update on how the recommendations were being taken forward.

The Commission **took note** of the oral update.

8. JOINT WORKING PROGRAMME

Oral update from the Clerk of the Parliaments

The Commission **took note** of the oral update.

9. COMMISSION FORWARD PLAN

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

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The Lord Speaker informed the Commission that the date of the extra meeting to discuss the Elizabeth Tower project **had yet to be decided** and would be confirmed via email by the Secretary to the Commission. He added that the meeting planned for **Wednesday 15 November at 10.30 am in Committee Room G** would still take place as planned.

13 September 2017

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