



HOUSE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Present:

L. Alderdice
L. Baker of Dorking
L. Brabazon of Tara
L. Craig of Radley
B. D'Souza
B. Hayman (Chairman)
B. Royall of Blaisdon
L. Strathclyde
L. Wakeham

Lord Shutt of Greetland

together with the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Apologies were received from Baroness Hollis of Heigham, Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall and Lord McNally.

Also present: Jonathan Smith (Head of Finance) and Rhodri Walters (Reading Clerk).

The Committee met at 9.15am on Thursday 27 January in Committee Room 3A.

I. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Committee *agreed* the minutes of the last meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Lord Speaker thanked members of the Committee for their flexibility in attending the re-arranged meeting at short notice and explained that the shortened meeting would focus on those items where there was a measure of urgency. Those items which were not on today's agenda, but which were on the original agenda, would now be considered at the Committee's next meeting in February.

The Lord Speaker drew attention to the recent announcement of the appointment of a new Clerk of the Parliaments.

The Lord Speaker noted that on Tuesday 8 February the new Black Rod would be introduced. Efforts were being made to find a date to invite the previous Black Rod to the House to thank him for his work.

The Committee *took note*.

3. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIRECTORATE

The Reading Clerk spoke to his memorandum (H/10-11/38) RESERVED.

The Committee *agreed* to the establishment of an International Relations Directorate.

4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS: DISABILITIES

The Clerk of the Parliaments spoke to his memorandum (H/10-11/36) RESERVED.

The Committee *agreed* that further work needed to be carried out in this area and that revised proposals should be brought to the Committee in due course. In the interim, the Clerk of the Parliaments should exercise discretion on a temporary basis until the issues were resolved.

5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS: EXTENDING FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) PUBLICATION

The Head of Finance spoke to the Director of Finance's memorandum in her absence ([H/10-11/37](#)).

The Committee discussed the publication of information relating to Members' financial support. It was felt that such information should in future be published as regularly and routinely as possible. The format for the publication of information was discussed, as was the issue of late claims. The Committee supported moving to routine monthly publication of information relating to Members' financial support. In order to facilitate this administratively, Members would no longer be written to in advance of publication. In light of this decision, a memorandum would be brought to the Committee's next meeting for formal approval.

The Committee *agreed* that the information relating to the second quarter of 2010/11 should be published in February at a date to be determined.

The Committee also raised some concerns about claims for allowances in respect to the sitting on 18 January, which followed the all night sitting. The Clerk of the Parliaments said that he would consider this issue.

6. CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS' BRIEFING

The Committee had the Clerk of the Parliaments' briefing before it ([H/10-11/41](#)).

The Committee noted the recent conviction of Lord Taylor of Warwick. The Clerk of the Parliaments told the Committee that Lord Taylor's case remained *sub judice* until sentencing. Concern was expressed that Lord Taylor was still able to participate in the work of the House in the period before sentencing and the Committee asked the Clerk of the Parliaments to write to Lord Taylor requesting him not to take part in parliamentary activity in the period prior to sentencing.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

February 2010

Chris Clarke
020 7219 6644
clarkechr@parliament.uk