

# House of Commons Service

## Corporate Business Plan

2016/17

### CONTENTS

Foreword .....	2
Background to our plan for 2016/17 .....	4
Strategy for the House Service .....	5
Part one: delivering on our strategic objectives .....	6
Facilitating effective scrutiny and debate.....	6
Involving and inspiring the public .....	8
Securing Parliament’s future .....	12
Part two: How we will do it.....	16
Put the customer at the heart of everything we do .....	16
Maximise the potential of digital .....	17
Foster a skilled, united and diverse workforce .....	18
Spend money wisely and avoid waste.....	20
Work impartially, inclusively and in partnership .....	21
Measuring success.....	22
Annex 1: the House of Commons Service.....	23
Annex 2: Finance .....	25

## Foreword

This Business Plan for 2016/17 not only outlines our aims and objectives for this period, but reflects on the wide range of changes that we are developing and implementing in support of our new House Service Strategy 2016-2021. Our strategy – Supporting a thriving parliamentary democracy – ensures we work together as one team, supporting our customers and securing Parliament’s future.

### **First, ensuring that we put our customers at the heart of what we do:**

- We have appointed a Customer Director to the Board, as part of our reshaped Governance. Our customer strategy will begin with a one-year drive to improve customer service. Teams across the House Service are examining customer feedback, satisfaction measures and improving processes from a customer point of view. Other projects in the pipeline include: improving our complaints system, introducing a staff ideas and innovation system and a staff recognition scheme, as well as examining how we can develop a customer database.
- We will open up the House of Commons further to the public and show how it is essential to democracy. Focusing particularly on the young and marginalised and create and promote opportunities to participate in the House’s work, making it relevant and accessible, and challenging misconceptions.
- We will continue to respond professionally and effectively to procedural reforms in the House, including recent and future changes relating to English Votes for English Laws, secondary legislation, Private Members’ Bill procedure, and Supply procedure.

### **Second, we will work as a team:**

- The [Director General's Review](#) was launched soon after his appointment in November 2015 and its report was approved by the House of Commons Commission on 25 April. We have developed a detailed plan, Stepping Up, that will enable the House to operate more effectively and efficiently across a number of areas.
- Balancing the need for security with that of openness, we will work with colleagues in the House of Lords to protect Parliament from cyber and physical threats; and ensure business resilience. We will create a unified Parliamentary Security Department and work hard with the Police and IPSA to provide the best possible advice and support to Members away from the Estate.
- The Parliamentary Digital Service has developed a Digital Strategy – Digital by Design - that aligns with the House Service strategy with the aim of transforming the way that both Houses work, and which will allow a modern Parliament to meet the needs of staff, Members and the public.

### **Third, we are securing Parliament's future:**

- Last year Parliament opened a new Education Centre, which will double the number of school children able to visit Parliament each year. We aim to get 100,000 students participating in Parliament's core education programme and will expand the outreach programme to significantly increase the number of students reached around the four nations of the United Kingdom.
- Parliament is taking key decisions about the work needed to restore and renew the Palace of Westminster. The Joint Select Committee on the Palace of Westminster was appointed in July 2015 to consider the Independent Options Appraisal, commissioned by Parliament, and make recommendations. Their report will be published shortly.
- We will seek to share more services with the House of Lords and explore how we might increase the value for money of our services, while respecting the constitutional position of each House, maintaining service levels to Members, and supporting each House's corporate objectives and voice.
- We will develop Centres of Excellence in communications and programme and project assurance across the House Service, by establishing minimum standards, sharing good practice and increasing the impact of their activities.

As the House Service goes through a number of changes to ensure we are able to meet the goals of the new Strategy, we have been continually impressed by the efficiency and enthusiasm of our colleagues. Both of us are confident that our team will successfully meet the objectives and challenges of the coming year.

**David Natzler**

**Clerk of the House and Head of the House Service**

**Ian Ailles**

**Director General of the House of Commons**

## Background to our plan for 2016/17

The House of Commons Governance Committee published its report in December 2014. That report set us some key challenges:

- Sustaining delivery of high levels of the full breadth of parliamentary expertise
- Enhancing public engagement and participation especially through digital means
- Focus on core functions (both to increase efficiencies and to prepare for Restoration and Renewal)
- Supporting and creating structures where there are clear lines of accountability and responsibility
- Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy
- Creating a unified parliamentary service

In November 2015 the Director General, House of Commons set up a review to address these challenges. The starting point for this work was to look in more detail at the broad strategic direction for the House Service for 2016-2021 that had already been agreed by the Commission. The purpose of the DG's Review was to give us the tools to be able to achieve our strategic objectives and to rise to the challenges of the future, including those set by the Governance Committee.

The Review was conducted through ten separate workstreams and reported in April 2016. The recommendations in the Report were endorsed by the Commission, and the first phase will be implemented by 30 September 2016. This will be branded as *Stepping Up* - not because we have not delivered in the past but because we are stepping up to the challenges of the Governance Committee; stepping up our performance and service; stepping up the pace at which we do things; stepping up for the future.

The recommendations relate to:

- Organisational design
- Customer service
- Performance measurement
- Boards and groups
- Process improvement

More details of each of these priorities is shown under the relevant section of the strategy.

# Strategy for the House Service

A new strategy for the House Service was agreed by the Commission in April 2016.



## Supporting a thriving parliamentary democracy

### Our objectives

Facilitating effective scrutiny and debate

We will work as a team to support the business of the House

Involving and inspiring the public

We will open up the House to the public and show how it is essential to democracy

Securing Parliament's future

We will steer the House through the challenges it faces, and prepare for the future

### To achieve

Satisfaction

of our internal and external customers

Reputation

of the House of Commons

Sustainability

and the value for money of our services

Impact

of MPs' work on Government and wider public debate

### Through our values

Maximising the potential of **digital**

Fostering our **skilled, united and diverse** workforce

Putting the **customer** at the centre

Working **impartially, inclusively and in partnership**

Spending money **wisely**

## Part one: delivering on our strategic objectives

### Facilitating effective scrutiny and debate

#### ***What we will do***

We will work as a team to support the business of the House. We will provide Members with outstanding professional expertise, advice, research, facilities and technology, based on a sound understanding of their needs and priorities. Whatever our role, we will be valued by Members for our expertise, empathy, innovation and customer service.

#### ***Our challenge***

We know that Members value highly the range of services we provide to support them, collectively and as individuals, to participate in the work of the House and its committees.

However, we have identified through their feedback a number of ways to tailor our services even more precisely to their needs, to provide the conditions for effective scrutiny and debate.

We need to collect such feedback more consistently, and use it alongside other sources of evidence to inform the services we provide.

#### ***In response, we will:***

##### ***1. Support effective committees***

We will routinely measure the impact of select committees, and base resourcing and advice on evidence of effective ways of working.

#### ***Actions for 2016/17:***

- We will commission research by independent outside bodies, including the Institute for Government, to assess impact.
- We will develop standardised ways of assessing other means of impact, based on, for example, media coverage and social media commentary.
- We will develop standardised means across select committees of obtaining feedback from major customer groups including committee members and witnesses to establish a baseline measure of customer satisfaction.
- We will also trial the live streaming of committee hearings that take place away from Westminster.

##### ***2. Deliver authoritative and engaging research and advice***

We will provide authoritative, user-friendly information and advice to Members about the business and procedures of the House and its committees, and the topics for

scrutiny and debate. We will support the international business of the House. We will extend the reach of our briefing and research output, to stimulate debate inside and outside the House.

***Actions for 2016/17:***

- The Chamber and Business Team (CBT) will respond professionally and effectively to procedural reforms in the House, including recent and future changes relating to English Votes for English Laws, secondary legislation, Private Members' Bill procedure, and Supply procedure. CBT will also act on the findings of interviews and focus groups with Members and their staff on how services can be improved.
- We will pilot a scheme for a Clerks' Professional Qualification to ensure high standards of knowledge in Clerks below SCS grade and offer objective evidence of procedural knowledge to allow those coming into the Chamber and Committees Team (CCT) to move to a wide range of posts.
- Pilot an approach to revamped written Library content – making sure it meets the needs of busy Members in an increasingly digital, mobile and agile world.
- Review Library legislation briefing products to ensure they meet Members' needs proportionately and efficiently and develop an implementation plan.

***3. Provide essential technology***

We will build digital capacity and capability, and provide Members and their staff with secure technology that works, a programme of training opportunities, and a more responsive service.

***Actions for 2016/17:***

- Delivery of Cloud platform for development and live environments.
- Redesign of Parliamentary computer network, including the federation of services.
- As well as participating in the customer 'stripe' (see page 17) the Digital Service will improve overall customer services, improving communication with customers and introducing new customer service training.
- Conduct review of Members' services (stage 1).
- Conduct review of Service Desk support contract following pilot.
- Review of support services which will deliver improvements in service to achieve re-baselined resolution targets of 95%.
- Implementation and embedding of new business partnership model.

***4. Provide a clear and consistent service to Members' staff***

Members also rely on the support of their own staff. We will clarify our transactional relationship with Members' staff, in Westminster and in constituencies, and apply it consistently across the Service, to agreed standards. We will ensure that our services for Members' staff are properly signposted, so that users know what is available and how to access them.

### ***Actions for 2016/17:***

- Launch a Library online constituency casework toolkit to provide resources to help caseworkers help themselves.
- Consider the needs of all customer groups through the customer service stripe, especially through the work of customer champions in those areas of the House service that interact with this group of staff most often.
- Act on the findings of the Members' interview work in CBT to provide clearer messages about which services Members' staff can access on their behalf in the Palace; in the Library and procedural offices, for example.
- Continue to work to engage with and identify the needs of Members' staff based at Westminster, and also those in the constituency, through the roadshows.

### ***5. Respond to feedback***

Through the customer champions, we will proactively seek and share feedback from Members, their staff and other customers including the public, in a joined up and consistent fashion. We will use this feedback to inform investment decisions, service provision and individual staff actions across the House Service. We will supplement this work with research on longer-term strategic outcomes, through a new evaluation team.

### ***Actions for 2016/17:***

- Extend successful initiatives within the House Service (such as the feedback leaflets in the Catering Service, and the customer user group in In-House Services), to make it easier for our customers to talk to us and provide feedback, across all House services.
- Through the customer champions, introduce further ways to make it easier for our customers to talk to us, learning from industry practice.
- In the Digital Service, implement and embed a new business partnership model.
- Create an evaluation team in Research and Information that can inspire and support work across the House on evaluation, impact and outcomes, and manage major projects to obtain customer views such as the staff survey, Members' interview work and constituency roadshows.

## **Involving and inspiring the public**

### ***What we will do***

We will continue to open up the House of Commons to the public and show how it is essential to democracy. Focusing particularly on the young and marginalised, we will create and promote opportunities to participate in the House's work, make it relevant and accessible, and challenge misconceptions. We will facilitate

representation and enhance the reputation of the House in the UK and internationally through our work.

### ***Our challenge***

39% of people surveyed by the Hansard Society in 2015 for its Audit of Political Engagement did not consider Parliament to be essential to democracy. Only 47% of those surveyed said they knew very much about its work. The evidence suggests that where people engage with the House of Commons, they are more likely to hold positive views about the institution and its work. The Petitions Committee and the Education Centre provide new opportunities for engagement - we need to build on these initiatives and show how the House of Commons is essential and relevant, and involve the public in its work.

### ***In response, we will:***

#### ***1. Communicate proactively***

We will explain and promote the work of the House to the public, and be robust in challenging misconceptions through the media. We will ensure our communications are relevant, by focusing on issues that matter to the public, rather than on process. We will ensure they are informed, by harnessing professional expertise in the development of education and outreach products.

### ***Actions for 2016/17:***

- Deliver and implement a unified communications plan to support the House's Strategy.
- Develop a communications Centre of Excellence to coordinate and integrate communications across the House Service, by establishing minimum standards, sharing good practice and increasing the impact of communications activity.
- Innovate to improve Member and Members' staff communications.
- Deliver regular briefings for Westminster press and launch a series of briefings for specialist and regional press.
- Deliver modernised promotional material for Visit Parliament to increase awareness that Parliament is open to visit.

#### ***2. Publish open and accessible content***

People learn and understand information in different ways. We will make use of video, infographics, data visualisation and rich media in our publications; while also catering for the digitally excluded. We will make it easy to find and use information about the House by ensuring the underlying data is of good quality, so it can be linked and easily re-used by others.

### ***Actions for 2016/17:***

- Hansard to make device-responsive content online.
- Hansard to further improve functionality of the Parliamentlive.tv site.
- Live streaming of select committees away from Westminster to be trialled.

- Embedding of post-TSO live running and support.
- Launch of the new Alpha website.
- Bring forward proposals for addressing visual identity and tone of voice, in collaboration with colleagues across Parliament.
- Carry out a discovery phase to establish high level user needs for the intranet.
- Continue to increase the volume and quality of the data we publish online via our open data platform, data.parliament. (Data.parliament enables us to share our data both within and outside of Parliament, and aims to ensure that our data is both accessible and useable.)

### *3. Go to where people are*

We will engage with people where they are, rather than expecting them to come to us. While continuing to provide first class visitor services in Westminster, we will engage people and communities across the nations and regions of the UK. We will build on our existing partnerships with universities, our constituency roadshows and other outreach provision. In addition to developing our own website, we will make information easily available on other platforms and social media, including through strategic partnerships and third party websites.

#### **Actions for 2016/17:**

- Deliver a re-focused programme of public engagement events, workshops and programmes, including the following new activity:
  - *Acts in Action* films (Your Parliament project)
  - *Your Parliament* hub
  - *Your Parliament on Your High Street*
  - Deliver *Impact Stories* project on how getting involved makes a difference
- Number of select committee-commissioned public engagement events, either with Outreach and Engagement or internally, to be 50% above 2015/16 levels.
- Deliver 75% of our community engagement activities off the Parliamentary Estate.

### *4. Focus on the young and marginalised*

Young people and people on lower incomes are less likely to be knowledgeable about Parliament and value its importance. We will therefore develop our understanding of how young people and marginalised groups engage, and tailor our services accordingly. We will expand our education provision so that every school aged child in the UK can engage with Parliament.

#### **Actions for 2016/17:**

To inform, engage and empower young people and the marginalised to get involved in Parliament, politics and democracy we will:

- Embed the programme of the new Education Centre, reaching 100,000 students participating in Parliament's core education programme, averaging a 9 out of 10 quality rating.

- Develop a business case for the expansion of the outreach programme to significantly increase the number of students reached around the four nations of the United Kingdom.
- Refocus the community engagement offer so that 70% of activities are delivered to young and marginalised groups.
- Update our community learning products for adults with learning disabilities.

#### *5. Create innovative ways to participate*

We will explore new and inclusive ways for the public, their representatives and their advocates, to participate in the work of the House and its committees.

#### **Actions for 2016/17:**

- Welcome and inspire all visitors to the Palace of Westminster, including 232,000 commercial visitors.
- Deliver the *Your Parliament* zone in Westminster Hall.
- Pilot Sunday opening.
- Launching new open online learning for adults interested in further developing their understanding of Parliament, scrutiny and public engagement opportunities.
- We will increase the support for the Petitions Committee in recognition of the growing popularity of the e-petitions website.

#### *6. Promote parliamentary democracy internationally*

The House, or both Houses jointly, engage in a range of international work, from inter-parliamentary organisations of which the UK Parliament is a member – such as the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and NATO, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Inter-Parliamentary Union – to professional advisory contacts at official level. The work is carried out both directly and – particularly in the case of parliamentary diplomacy work or overseas parliamentary strengthening work – in cooperation with others or via bodies grant-funded by the two Houses. Much of this work reflects the way in which the UK Parliament is seen around the world as a centre of democratic expertise. The House also supports the necessary engagement (above all, intelligence gathering on EU legislative activity) with the European Parliament and other EU institutions.

#### **Actions for 2016/17**

- We are working with the Department for International Development and Westminster Foundation for Democracy to deliver effective continuation of the support programme with the Parliament of Burma-Myanmar, including through secondment of House of Commons officials, and with the French *Assemblée nationale* and with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to support delivery of the first year of the 2-year EU-funded twinning programme agreed with the Morocco House of Representatives.

## Securing Parliament's future

### ***What we will do***

We will steer the House through the challenges it faces, balancing innovation with respect for prevailing practices. We will work with the Lords to protect and enhance the physical fabric of the estate, protect Parliament from threats and prepare for the future, while maintaining vibrant democratic processes. Whatever our role, we will respond flexibly to changing demands.

### ***Our challenge***

The Palace of Westminster is one of the most important and recognisable buildings in the world, forming part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Significant conservation work is required to prevent major, irreversible damage to the building, and to protect the heritage of the Palace for future generations. We need to prepare, with our Lords colleagues, to implement Parliament's decision on how this is to be achieved. More generally, we need to increase our resilience, capacity and capability to respond effectively to current and future challenges, be they threats to Parliament's security, the changing political and constitutional environment or financial pressures.

### ***In response, we will:***

#### *1. Carry out and prepare for major renovation of the Palace of Westminster*

We will prepare, with the House of Lords, for the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster during the 2020s. We will provide expert advice to Members to support the planning and decision-making processes and engender confidence in our ability to deliver.

We will plan well in advance for how parliamentary services may need to be revised to reflect new arrangements, focusing on opportunities as well as risks. We will refurbish the Northern Estate of the Palace of Westminster and the Elizabeth Tower, on time and on budget.

We will increase the accessibility of our buildings and the diversity of our workforce through the design and delivery of these projects.

### ***Actions for 2016/17***

- Implement decisions arising from the work of the Joint Committee on Restoration & Renewal promptly and efficiently.
- Continue to work closely with the Government Property Unit (GPU) on the potential availability of temporary accommodation for Restoration & Renewal.
- Prepare design proposals for the refurbishment and enhancement of the Elizabeth Tower.
- Advance fire safety improvement works (FSIW) in the Palace of Westminster.
- Negotiate a new lease for 7 Millbank and work with the landlord to bring forward refurbishment proposals.

- Prepare a design concept and obtain Outline Business Case (OBC) approval for Richmond House.
- Complete the procurement of Client Advisory Services for the Restoration & Renewal and Northern Estate programmes.
- Undertake a full 3D technical survey of the Palace of Westminster.
- Substantially complete the procurement of a works contractor for Northern Estate and Restoration & Renewal decant projects.
- Assist the Archives Accommodation and Relocation Contingency Planning programmes through Business Case support.

## *2. Develop our capability and capacity*

We will attract and retain the specialist skills required to deliver programmes and projects well, taking a strategic approach to resourcing and development. We will increase capacity and capability efficiently overall, and avoid draining resource from business-as-usual activities. We will determine the appropriate balance of internal and external resource, and develop a flexible, diverse workforce.

### **Actions for 2016/17**

The Programmes and Projects workstream of the DG Review looked at how programmes and projects are managed across Parliament, in order to ensure both that the right information support investment decision-making and that investment objectives are fully realised and coordinated in the most efficient way possible.

Work to establish the initial Enterprise Programme Management Office (EPMO) capacity will begin during the *Stepping Up* phase of implementation. The establishment of an EPMO will be an important example of one model for the 'Centre of Excellence' concept. The EPMO will work across the range of projects – from Strategic Estates, to projects run within day-to-day functions, to Digital. Our future will be defined by how well we deliver projects and our ability to deliver these better and more consistently.

From 1 April 2016 Process Improvement (one of the strands from the DG Review) will become part of the Efficiencies Programme, under which it will be one of the tools and techniques that the business can use to meet targets for efficiency improvement, whilst remaining an enabler for other areas such as Customer Service. In addition, cross-cutting reviews identified corporately will be undertaken and visible improvements achieved.

Within the Digital Service, actions include:

- Examining Digital Portfolio governance, agreeing the leadership and engagement model and establishing core elements.
- Ensuring recruitment and retention policies provide the Digital Service with the necessary staff levels in operational areas.
- Implementing an initial new 'pooled' staffing model across the Portfolio.

- Establishing leaner and more agile working practices within projects, programmes and the portfolio.
- Implementing agreed recommendations of the 2015/16 efficiency review.
- Using CI (continuous improvement) techniques to make the Digital Service efficient and effective as a team and in the services it provides to colleagues:
  - Reviewing Hardware Asset Management and processes.
  - Reviewing the major incident (MI) process to ensure lessons are captured, cascaded and MIs closed in a timely manner.
  - Other reviews identified throughout the year.
- Deliver the 2016/17 sub-portfolios.

### *3. Introduce new security and resilience capabilities*

Balancing the need for security with that of openness, we will work with colleagues in the House of Lords to protect Parliament from cyber and physical threats; and ensure business resilience.

#### **Actions for 2016/17**

- Completion of the final phase of the Security Restructuring Programme.
- Creation of a unified departmental service able to fulfil the PSD mission.
- Preparing and implementing a transition plan for the Director of Security post.
- Improvement of advice and support to Members away from the Estate.
- Review of business continuity and disaster recovery for security functions.
- PSD to become fully integrated into the business resilience process for both Houses of Parliament.
- Review of cyber security governance.
- Successful delivery of phase 1 of the cyber security programme.
- Continue to develop and improve physical and personnel security across the Parliamentary Estate.

### *4. Seek to share more services with the House of Lords*

The majority of the total resource spend of the House of Commons and the House of Lords is already managed through some form of shared services. The review of bicameral services identified a further 26% that might be candidates for further joint working. We will work with the House of Lords to explore how we might increase the value for money of our services, while respecting the constitutional position of each House, maintaining service levels to Members, and supporting each House's corporate objectives and voice.

#### **Actions for 2016/17**

The House of Commons Commission and the Lords House Committee have agreed to the first tranche of services (Catering, Hansard, Learning & Development, Cleaning, Internal Audit and Diversity & Inclusion) being examined to determine the benefits of closer working and asked for business cases to be prepared for each service. They have also asked for work to commence on closer alignment of staff

terms and conditions and HR and finance IT systems. Further tranches might commence later in the year once significant progress has been made on the first.

### 5. *Work sustainably*

We will continue on our journey to being a more sustainable institution – achieving long term environmental targets; ensuring the House Service is a fully inclusive place to work; implementing our sustainable procurement policy, and embedding a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation.

#### **Actions for 2016/17**

We intend to make further progress against our long-term environmental targets. In relation to the baseline year of 2008/09 the targets are as follows:

	2015/16	2016/17	2020/21
Reduction in carbon	20.5%	23.2%	34.0%
Reduction in water	31.0%	34.8%	50.0%
Reduction in waste (weight)	20.0%	22.0%	30.0%
Increase in recycling	67.5%	69.0%	75.0%

We will also:

- Trial the use of zero carbon paper throughout In House Services, in order to assess feasibility for other parts of the House Service.
- Achieve Carbon Trust Standard certification for both carbon and waste.
- Complete a feasibility study for additional electric car charging points across the Parliamentary Estate.

### 6. *Ensure our long-term financial sustainability*

We will ensure our financial processes and systems are fit for purpose, easy to use and report on; and provide financial advice and information that enables the organisation to make good decisions.

#### **Actions for 2016/17**

In November 2015 the House of Commons Commission agreed the Commons financial remit 2016/17 on condition that every effort would be made to deliver efficiencies. Similarly, in November, at the Lords House Committee, the view was expressed that savings should be made where possible.

The Efficiencies Programme (bicameral) was therefore established to lead this work. From April 2016 it will incorporate ongoing continuous improvement activities which will act as a tool for teams to achieve wider efficiencies – improvements in delivery of service, reduction in process times etc. – as well as cash savings.

For the Commons, the Director General has agreed an efficiency target of 10% over 5 years; in other words, a reduction of 10% of controllable expenditure in the

Administration Resource Estimate between 2015/16 and 2019/2020 at current prices which would equate to £15.5 million.

The Programme will identify:

- Opportunities to provide the same or better service for less.
- Instances where services are not well used or valued and seeking to reduce/stop them.
- Instances where the cost of a service is disproportionate to the outcome/value derived, and seeking to reposition the service to secure better value for money.
- Any spare capacity in budgets that can be removed.

The Efficiencies Programme is starting by considering how we can maximise our use of the Parliamentary Estate and storage. They are also looking at how we can maximise the benefits of mobile working and whether there are further income opportunities.

## **Part two: How we will do it**

### **Put the customer at the heart of everything we do**

#### ***What we will do***

A one-year customer 'stripe' will work through a series of project teams and customer champions in each major service area, involving as many staff as possible. It will provide Members and their staff, and other customers including our own staff, with a more consistent level and feel of service across the House service. New service-wide schemes such as an improved complaints procedure and a staff recognition scheme will be introduced. Customers will know where to go to access our services, with fewer but well known numbers and access points for each major service area.

We will introduce more, consistent, ways to help our customers talk to us, ; pro-actively seeking and sharing feedback in a joined up and consistent fashion, and gathering and valuing feedback through a more structured complaints process. This information will inform investment decisions, service provision and individual staff actions. It will help us to become a gender sensitive parliament.

Staff deliver, and can help define, great customer service. We will promote a culture in which staff think about customers' needs as a matter of routine. We will engage and empower staff through innovation schemes to seek suggestions, and recognition schemes to value their work. We will develop meaningful KPIs, and adopt a 'just try it' culture.

### ***Actions for 2016/17***

We need to become an organisation where all staff feel able to have conversations with customers, use that feedback to suggest improvements and expect to see their suggestions addressed. Staff should see themselves as one team supporting the work of Parliament, wherever they work.

As a first step we propose to map customers' experiences in real time. The customer groups could include Members, their staff, our own staff and the public. Customer journeys could include a day or week in the life of a Member or a member of their staff, public or contractor visits to Parliament, or setting up a new member of staff. By seeing customers' experiences in real time, staff will gain a better understanding of being in the customer's shoes.

As noted in the outline of the new structure in Annex 1, customer service will be one of the first 'stripes'. Work on it will therefore be done separately but alongside *Stepping Up*. By September 2016 the aim will be to:

- Establish a customer service implementation team supported by customer champions across the organisation
- Assess current feedback methods and access routes to services
- Develop proposals for a staff recognition scheme
- Start procurement for an interim customer database and develop the complaints process alongside this

## **Maximise the potential of digital**

### ***What we will do***

We will make technological decisions based on strategic goals and priorities, focus on our core work and only build what we need.

We will engage with users - Members, their staff and our staff - to ensure we provide tools and equipment that are easy to use, and design products that meet their requirements.

We will mainstream digital skills across the organisation, but we won't duplicate each other's work.

We will use digital to make information easily available to Members, staff and the public.

We will train and enable staff to effectively use digital content, channels and techniques to interact with the public.

We will follow best practice and standards to enable effective working.

We will design flexible tools and work in an agile, responsive way.

### ***Actions for 2016/17***

- Rollout of Office 365 to the whole organisation.

- Hosting of all new online services moves to the cloud.
- Upskilling Digital Service staff and users in ‘digital skills’ and understanding of the digital agenda; fostering understanding and beginning to expand people’s capabilities in digital.
- Investing in business partners to enable them to provide digital leadership.
- Using technology to increase accessibility.
- Implement fully digitised solutions for top five workflow requests via Digital Service Online.
- Scope a new Library enquiries database in order to support customer service developments.
- The Indexing and Data Management Section within Research & Information will work in partnership with the PDS Digital Parliament and Data & Search Teams on the development of the new Parliamentary Website and the provision of open linked data.
- Work on replacing the Library Management System, with the House of Lords Library, including joint continuous improvement workshops on all aspects of processing and managing resources.

## Foster a skilled, united and diverse workforce

### *What we will do*

We will retain and attract individuals with the skill we need to deliver our objectives. We will identify which jobs require specialisms and support professional development. We will value what newcomers can bring, while actively growing our own talent.

We will break down silos, work effectively across departments and make it easier for staff to move between them. We will seek to work with colleagues in the Lords to encourage movement of staff between the two House Services.

We will create a working environment in which everyone’s contribution is recognised, rewarded and valued. We will ensure there is equal opportunity for staff to progress, regardless of their background. We will be proud of our people.

We will strengthen diversity and inclusion leadership and management; achieve ethnic diversity of staff at senior levels; support career progression opportunities for staff; and embed good practice across the House Service.

### *Actions for 2016/17*

One of the key aims of the DG Review was to produce an organisational framework which will enable the House to operate more effectively and efficiently; to create an organisation which is:

- Unified but not uniform;
- Professional and respectful of the professional skills of others;

- Customer focused;
- Driven by performance measurement;
- Engaged with change;
- Willing to take risks and to learn from them;
- Open to positive internal challenge and process improvements;
- Permeable: low boundaries between units, which people regularly cross;
- Empowering: allowing and encouraging managers to manage, and giving them responsibility whilst ensuring they are accountable.

The first priority will be to implement the new organisational structure agreed as part of the DG Review (see Annex 1 for details). Throughout the implementation we will engage with the House of Lords to ensure that the quality of services delivered by the Commons to the Lords is not compromised and that constructive partnerships are maintained. It is important to emphasise that structural change is primarily an enabler of a different way of working rather than an end in itself.

As the DG Review report said, our people are our greatest asset. As we build the new structure we will begin the planning and preparation for a wide-ranging people development programme, which will be established as a 'stripe' (see page 24) in October 2016. Its objectives will start with developing the tools and capabilities to understand the skills, competencies and experiences our people have and how those match against our current and future requirements. It will then focus on the actions we need to take to foster a skilled, united and diverse workforce, with equality of opportunity for all.

Good people data will be a key enabler not just to the 'People stripe' but to all our work in this area. We will work with the Digital Service to improve it.

We will establish centres of excellence to set standards and best practice and to provide support and consistency to functions which by their nature are conducted in a number of different organisational places. The centres will sit with and usually be managed by the Head of Profession. Their use will enable staff across the organisation to feel that they have control over their own work while being supported, guided and set standards by a professional centre, whose role will be to encourage and enable innovation and, where necessary, enforce compliance.

The first two centres of excellence, communications (page 10) and the Enterprise Programme Management Office (page 14), will act as pilots; other candidates, for example research, will be brought forward later in the year in the light of their experience.

We will review spans of control and layers of management within each part of the organisational structure. It was not possible to do this in detail during the DG Review. However, it is clear that overall our spans are less wide and we have more layers than in many similar-sized organisations.

We will continue to work towards targets outlined in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which covers 2015-2018. In 2016/17 there will be a particular focus on a new pilot talent development programme, which will launch in the autumn. One of the key aims of the pilot (which will involve 10-15 people and will initially run for one year) is to help improve the representation of people in under-represented groups, particularly of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff. It will also help us to learn lessons about our approach to talent management, including how such a programme could be scaled up in the future. This will form part of our long-term plan to recruit, retain and develop BAME staff to tackle under-representation in senior posts.

We will continue to participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, with a target of reaching the top 100 employers and becoming a more inclusive employer and service provider.

## **Spend money wisely and avoid waste**

### ***What we will do***

We will put in place an organisational structure which is clear and ensures we work efficiently.

We will promote a culture which values and prioritises continuous improvement, focused on results; where staff are encouraged to simplify complex processes and prioritise what is important; and where we are not afraid to stop things if they don't work.

The Palace of Westminster is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the country's leading tourist attractions. We will find innovative ways of enriching our commercial operations so that not only do visitors' leave with a better understanding of Parliament, but the net contribution to the House's budget increases through sharper commercial performance. In doing so we need to recognise the fact that Parliament is first and foremost a working institution, and commercial operations must not impede Members in carrying out their duties. We also need to balance this with ensuring that citizens can engage with Members and parliamentary business without charge.

### ***Actions for 2016/17***

The Efficiencies Programme, already covered on page 14, will be a key enabler in promoting continuous improvement and identifying opportunities to prioritise expenditure. Other activities will include:

- Generating £3.6 million in income (£1.2 million net) from commercial tours and grow the contribution from 27% in 2015/16 to 33% in 2016/17.
- Deliver a combined contribution to overheads of 19% (including commercial tours and retail) based on current known assumptions.

- Developing a medium-term strategy for our commercial activities, taking into account the impact of Restoration and Renewal following the Joint Committee's recommendation in Summer 2016.

## **Work impartially, inclusively and in partnership**

### ***What we will do***

*As individuals* – We will be impartial in our dealings with MPs and the public.

*With each other* – We will deliver our objectives as one team, working effectively across the House Service and valuing colleagues' roles and contributions.

*With the House of Lords* – To facilitate more formal joint working and to share best practice, we will encourage interaction between staff in the House of Commons and House of Lords at all levels.

*With industry and the wider public sector* – We will develop and expand our contract management capability, so that the House is an intelligent client for industry. We will harness the expertise of industry and the public sector to deliver our objectives.

*With other Parliaments and assemblies* – We will actively seek out and share best practice with Parliaments and assemblies in the UK and beyond, to support our common democratic purpose.

### ***Actions for 2016/17***

Following an Internal Audit report on Boards and Groups, the DG Review commissioned them to draw up a set of criteria which any board or group should be expected to meet. We will assess the roles of all boards or groups during the *Stepping Up* phase, to be completed by 30 September 2016. Each will be expected to meet a set of criteria. Information relating to them will be held and maintained on behalf of the Board, which will have strategic oversight of, and responsibility for them. We will seek agreement from the House of Lords and from the Digital Service that those groups which are bicameral and/or involve the Digital Service should undertake a similar exercise.

## Measuring success

We will measure our success in delivering the strategy through:

- The **satisfaction** of our internal and external customers
- The **reputation** of the House of Commons
- Our **sustainability** and the **value for money** of our services
- The **impact** of Members' work on Government and wider public debate

Building on our existing performance measures, we will establish a new, coherent and overarching framework to measure our strategic objectives. This will be underpinned by a suite of performance measures, including a number of KPIs, both forward looking and retrospective, to enable senior managers, the Board and ExCo to monitor key functions and areas.

The aim will be to:

- Increase focus on the management of performance in line with the agreed strategy.
- Ensure ExCo has more meaningful performance data that allows it to:
  - focus on things that matter, in line with the agreed strategy
  - understand and agree on what the organisation needs to do to deliver its objectives
  - understand business performance
  - take well-informed decisions
- Agree a protocol for what is reported and managed at ExCo, the Board and within the business, and how issues can be escalated effectively.

This work will be undertaken in 2016/17 and will be in two parts: operational performance measures, and strategic measures and evaluation. By the end of September 2016 there will be a new suite of operational performance measures agreed, alongside strategic measures for customer satisfaction and reputation. It is anticipated that developing measures for sustainability / value for money and impact will take longer, but that some measures for the former should be available by September.

## Annex 1: the House of Commons Service

Our intention is to have a new structure established by 30 September 2016 with many of the principal changes made by 1 July 2016.

Under the new structure the organisation is formed into teams – rather than departments. As part of our drive to a collaborative culture, we will refer to our functional areas as teams, and we will encourage people to think across functional areas to achieve better outcomes:

- Supporting the House to do its job (**Chamber and Committees**).
- Supporting the House to be efficient, professional, fit for the future (**Corporate Services**).
- Promoting public engagement with Parliament (**Participation**).
- Providing high quality research and briefing on the issues that matter to Members, their staff and the public (**Research and Information**).
- Providing the essential services – catering, offices, access (**In House Services**).
- Keeping us safe (**Security**).
- Looking to the future (**Strategic Estates**).
- These will be supported by the **Communications Office** and the **Governance Office**.

The existing Executive Committee (ExCo) will be replaced with a smaller ExCo, which will provide strategic leadership of the House Service and support the Clerk in the exercise of his/her responsibilities as Head of the House of Commons Service. Its membership will be the Clerk, the Director General (chair) and the Head of Corporate Services in her/his role as Finance Director. ExCo is expected to meet in direct support of Commission meetings (to whom it will act as a sub-committee), as well as holding formal quarterly meetings.

The Board will support ExCo. It will meet weekly, and its members will be selected by ExCo. Board members are there to lead, not to represent teams.

Laid over the new structure will be a limited number of horizontal 'stripes' (STRategic Initiatives Promoting Excellence) across teams, through which progress on strategic objectives will be delivered with direct ExCo sponsorship. The stripes will be service-wide initiatives, time limited and tightly scoped.

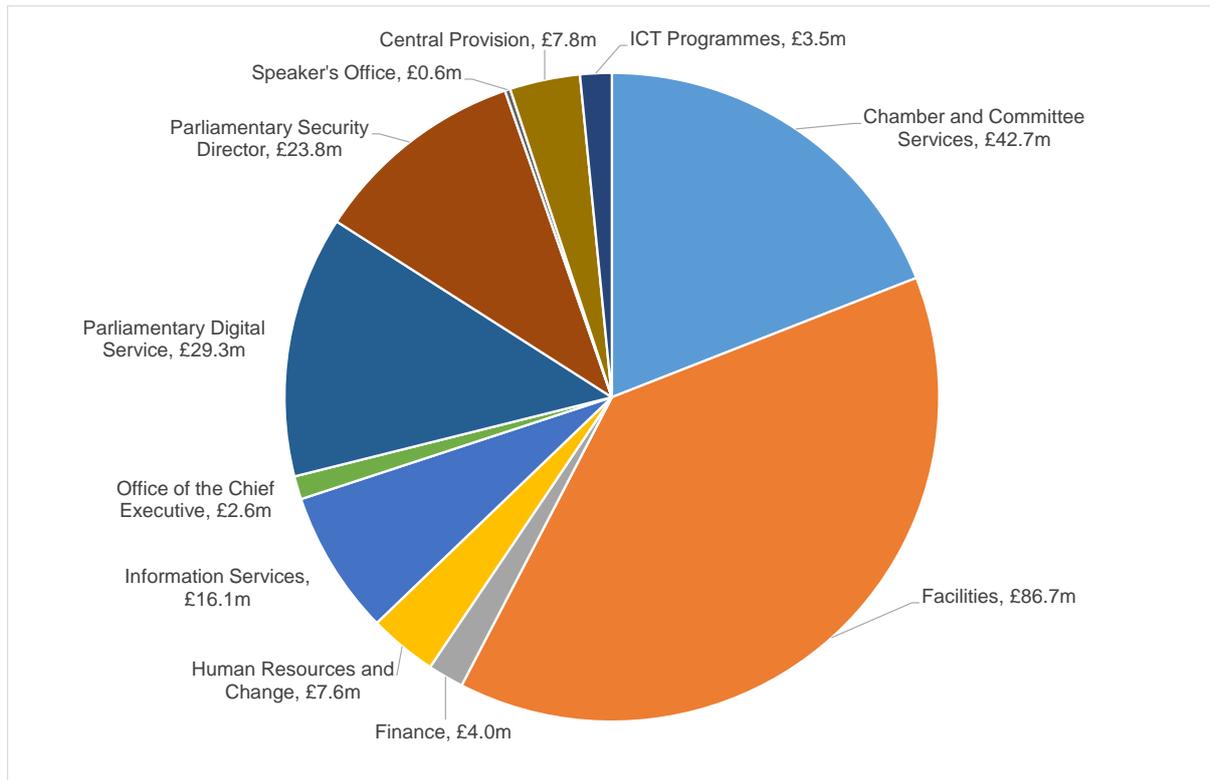
Centres of Excellence will be used alongside the concept of 'Head of Profession' to set standards and best practice and to provide support and consistency to functions which are conducted in a number of different places. Their use will enable staff to feel that they have control over their own work while being supported, guided and set standards by a professional centre, whose role will be to encourage and enable innovation and, where necessary, enforce compliance.

The first two stripes are on customer service and *Stepping Up*. People development and talent management are key priorities and we intend that we will drive progress in this area with a third stripe, which will begin in October 2016.

## Annex 2: Finance

### *Resource expenditure 2016/17*

This chart shows how the 2016/17 resource Estimate has been apportioned between departments and offices within the House Service. In cases of services shared with the House of Lords (including security and estates) the figures represent the House of Commons share only. These figures relate to departmental structures as they existed on 1 April 2016 and do not take account of the changes to organisational structure that are being implemented.



### Capital expenditure 2016/17

Property-related expenditure will continue to consume the majority of the capital investment provision of £88.5 million in 2016/17. Note that ICT investment is also funded from within the resource budget.

