

Management Board

Key points from the Parliamentary Estate Board meeting on 14 January 2008

A take note paper from the Director General of Facilities

1. Parliamentary Director of Estate's Report

The PEB agreed that this would be a monthly report summarising progress on the nine workstreams handed over by [s.40] on completion of his project. The Board agreed that this would allow it to adopt a more strategic approach to its work, allowing the Director to manage those areas fully within his responsibility.

The Director's initial observations were:

- Need for urgent development of a 25-year strategy has been noted
- An accommodation strategy is also needed and would require to be linked to the 25-year Estates strategy
- Paper about the asset register will go to the PEB for its February meeting
- The 5-year programme has a measure of rigour already but he would be seeking over the next months to further enhance it to ensure a fully credible and viable annual programme of works is proposed
- Laurie Goulding has been appointed as HR Specialist to assist the re-unification project. Four workshops were scheduled to be held with senior PED staff to clarify and agree the scope of responsibilities of the 4 senior managers in the new structure (Directors of project, programme, maintenance, standards and heritage). Action completed.

2. 25 year Estates Strategy

The PEB noted the shortcomings of the present 25-year Estates Strategy document, which was described as 'maintenance strategy with an attached wish-list'. There is a need for more robust information about the Estate, but it would take a year to review the long-term maintenance strategy for both Houses and both this and a new accommodation strategy would have a major impact on the 25-year programme. The Management Boards would need to consider the business needs/priorities of the Houses over the next 25 years to provide the context for the development of the Estate strategy.

3. Works plan 2009-10

A credible works plan for 2009-10 has been commissioned from the Parliamentary Director of Estates for completion by June to allow time for proper scrutiny before it goes forward to the Commission in the autumn.

4. Business cases

External consultants have assumed a proportion of the outstanding business case load. The Board discussed the relationship between feasibility studies, outline and full business cases, and their place in the project management process. There will be a further report to the PEB at its meeting on 22 February.

5. [s.44]

6. Mechanical and Electrical Services Modernisation

The Board noted concerns about the very substantially increased scope and cost of the M&E modernisation (£40m to £250m) since BDP were appointed as consultants. A project director is to be recruited and BDP's advice is to be reviewed as part of the development of the project brief. Consequently, it is unlikely that work will start before 2009. It was suggested that the Management Boards of both Houses could have a helpful role in prioritising and maintaining momentum in the programme. A progress report will be considered by the PEB at its meeting on 22 February.

7. VRB

The VRB was handed over by the contractors before Christmas. Limited water leakage and minor works were being addressed. Full use by the public was scheduled for the end of the February recess.

8. Third Quarter Financial Report

No major issues to report – outturns were broadly in line with forecasts (overall variance 1.4% for the Commons).

9. Accommodation and decant

Design work continues for the conversion of 14 Tothill Street to meet the requirements of the House of Lords. It was noted that the freehold was still on the market, but that there was considerable interest in it. It was unlikely that the HOC would acquire the freehold.

A study is being undertaken to move members from the windowless offices on the Upper Committee Corridor. The need to have a comprehensive Parliamentary accommodation strategy was noted and work would be undertaken by the PED to achieve this in the immediate future.

Note: Minutes for the PEB meeting that took place on 14 January 2008 are available in the shared area.