

**AMENDMENT (b) TO THE MOTION IN THE NAME OF THE PRIME MINISTER ON SECTION 13  
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (WITHDRAWAL) ACT 2018**

**FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES**

*Memorandum by the Accounting Officer*

1. Under Standing Order No 22C an amendment to a Motion which if agreed would have a direct consequence of additional expenditure under the House of Commons: Administration Estimate estimated to be £50,000 or more is to be accompanied by a memorandum by the Accounting Officer setting out its expected financial consequences.
2. This memorandum therefore seeks to set out the expected financial consequences of the amendment in the name of Stella Creasy and others to the motion in the name of the Prime Minister on Section 13 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.
3. The amendment proposes to direct me, as Corporate Officer of the House, to commission a Citizen's Assembly of 250 Members comprising a representative sample of the population to consider the process in connection with the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, to make recommendations and to report to the House, within ten weeks. It also orders the Liaison Committee to appoint an expert advisory group to assist the Assembly.
4. The amendment also requests the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union to 'provide such assistance to the Citizens' Assembly that it may request.' The Secretary of State is under no obligation to accede to such a request, and it is unclear how far the provision of financial assistance is envisaged, rather than e.g. information or loans of departmental staff. I have therefore assumed that the costs of creating the Assembly, its running costs, and the costs of the expert advisory group will all fall on the House of Commons: Administration Estimate.
5. I have produced a rough estimate of the cost by scaling up the recent experience within the Committee Office of running a smaller 'consultative democracy' exercise in connection with Social Care. The approximate costs of establishing and running an Assembly of 250 for up to ten weeks might be of the order of £500k. I would estimate the costs of an expert advisory group, based on per diem rates paid to specialist advisers, as roughly £50k/100k.
6. These costs would all arise during the current financial year and would have to be met, if possible, from the existing contingency for the current year. If that is not possible a late Supplementary Estimate would be required.

**Sir David Natzler**

Clerk of the House and Accounting Officer

24 January 2019