



ADMINISTRATION AND WORKS COMMITTEE **MINUTES**

Monday 2 November 2015 at 12noon

Present:

L. Armstrong of Ilminster
E. Attlee
L. Bassam of Brighton
E. Cathcart
B. Gould of Potternewton
L. Hope of Craighead
L. Laming (Chairman)
L. Newby
L. Taylor of Holbeach

together with the Clerk of the Parliaments

Also present: David Leakey (Black Rod)
Fiona Smith (Head of Property and Office Services)
Carl Woodall (Director of Facilities)
Victor Akinbile (Head of Projects, Parliamentary Estates Directorate)
attended for item 2.
Benet Hiscock (Director of Public Information) attended for item 10.
Aileen Walker (Director of Public Engagement) and Matthew Morgan
(Commercial Business Visits Manager) attended for item 8.

Apologies were received from Lord Alderdice, the Bishop of Chester and Baroness Hollis of Heigham.

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting. He proposed taking items out of agenda order as a few Members were running late.

I. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The Committee agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

2. POST OFFICE COUNTERS – CHANGE OF SERVICE LEVEL [RESERVED]

The Chairman of Committees introduced the paper (A&W/15-16/12). He explained that usage level had been studied and that the House of Commons had agreed to use of their counters; he hoped that the Committee would agree to option 3: Members' lobby counter being open 8am-10pm sitting Mondays-Thursdays and Central Lobby continuing to shut at 7pm on sitting Mondays-Thursdays.

In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed that a notice was put up at the Central Lobby counter at 7pm. The Chairman had worked closely with the Chairman of the House of Commons Administration Committee on this matter, and was grateful for his support.

The Committee agreed with the recommendation of the House of Commons Administration Committee that option 3 was the preferred level of service.

3. PASS ALLOCATION REVIEW [RESERVED]

The Chairman of Committees introduced the paper (A&W/15-16/14). He strongly advocated this work being done jointly by the two Houses, as did Black Rod. Black Rod explained that the paper only set out the review's scope.

The Chairman clarified that the Lords would be represented on the working group, in response to a query. Black Rod would lead the work with the Serjeant at Arms. The process for issuing civil service passes should be reviewed.

The Committee agreed that a working group consider the allocation of passes across Parliament and report back to the Administration Committees in both Houses.

4. ELIZABETH TOWER REFURBISHMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW [RESERVED]

The Chairman of Committees introduced the paper (A&W/15-16/11). He thanked the Head of Projects for the helpful tour in September to see the condition of the Elizabeth Tower.

The Committee agreed to the refurbishment of the Elizabeth Tower in the terms expressed in option 5, including visitor enhancements.

5. MAJOR WORKS PROJECTS [RESERVED]

The Director of Facilities spoke to his paper (A&W/15-16/13). He highlighted the Fire Safety Improvement Works, including work on compartmentation of doors. The Director of Facilities then spoke about Old Palace Yard works. These had been behind schedule and they were being very carefully managed. The House of Lords would receive the buildings by the end of the year and Members would move in from January – discussions about moving decanted Members were taking place individually with Accommodation Whips.

The Director of Facilities explained that the strip-out works as part of the Millbank House Development had been successful. A draft tender was being considered; the design was close to sign-off. There was more work to be done. In response to a question, he confirmed that the initial purpose of the building would be for decant space relating to other major projects, such as fire safety works.

The Director of Facilities would return to the Committee with details of any decant resulting from stone conservation works in the New Year; egress and ingress would be

preserved. There would be some noise from stone cleaning, but noise tests had shown these would not be overly disruptive.

Works were about to begin on Black Rod's Gate lodge and wall. The "out" gate would be closed.

The Committee took note.

6. ENCAUSTIC TILE PROGRAMME UPDATE [RESERVED]

The Director of Facilities spoke to his paper (A&W/15-16/15).

One Member asked whether the bookshelves would be returned to the Kennedy Corridor; they would not - they had been moved to another location so that the hallway was restored to its original state. Another Member expressed support for the tent, which reduced noise.

The Committee agreed the proposed programme:

- a. to continue working in Royal Gallery making use of a larger tent which would enable the programme to finish in that area in mid-2016 as previously agreed;
- b. to return to the Kennedy Corridor during Summer Recess 2016 to complete the redecoration work in this area to the standard required;
- c. to continue work in Central Lobby, ensuring that circulation routes were available at all times; and
- d. the Director of Facilities would return to the Committee in 2016 with proposals for the completion of Peers' Lobby and the Peers' Corridor (between Peers' Lobby and Central Lobby).

7. CHOLMONDELEY ROOM AMENITIES PROJECT [RESERVED]

The Director of Facilities spoke to his paper (A&W/15-16/16). The toilets were frequently blocked and poorly ventilated. The refurbishment would deliver modern, bright and functional toilets that were appropriate for the location. The proposal had been robustly challenged to ensure there was no gold-plating. Other toilets would be available during the refurbishment and access to a disabled toilet would always be maintained. There were fewer functions in January so it was an opportune moment to begin the works.

The Committee endorsed the approach to be taken to the refurbishment of the Cholmondeley Room amenities, the proposed programme of works and the planned sequencing.

8. VISITOR SERVICES UPDATE 2015/16 AND TICKET PRICE PROPOSAL 2016/17 [RESERVED]

The Director of Public Engagement spoke to the paper (A&W/15-16/17), explaining that the proposals were based on benchmarking and market testing.

The Committee agreed the proposed price increase set out in paragraph 13 of the paper. It would receive an early presentation next year to ensure that it could provide steers on future price increases.

9. POLICY ON USE OF THE CHAMBER FOR OUTREACH EVENTS

The Chairman of Committees explained that these events helped people understand Parliament. The Director of Public Information spoke to his paper (A&W/15-16/18). One Member asked that adequate notice always be given for such events; this would be done and events had been moved in the past when Chamber business had been scheduled. Members were open to more than the current level of one event a year. The Information Committee, which oversaw the planning of specific events, would be informed of this. The Line of Route was closed for such events; a balance would always be struck between the different types of public access and engagement.

The Committee agreed that the House of Lords Chamber may continue to be used for outreach events. Proposals would be consulted upon in a timely manner to ensure that business of the House was not impeded.

10. INDICATIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

This paper (A&W/15-16/19) was circulated for information.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee *adjourned*. The next meeting would be on 17 December.