



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

On 20 December 2016, the Speaker of the House of Lords, the Rt. Hon. Lord Fowler, announced that he was establishing a Lord Speaker's committee to "examine the possible methods by which the House could be reduced in size". This followed a [debate](#) on 5 December when the House unanimously agreed that its size should be reduced.

The committee is now seeking written submissions from both Members of the House and anybody outside the House who has an interest in its future.

The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Monday 20 February.

REMIT

The committee's remit is "to explore methods by which the size of the House can be reduced, commensurate with its current role and functions". Specifically, it is instructed to "examine practical and politically viable options that might lead to progress on this issue; analyse their implications; and set out any outstanding questions that may need to be answered in order for any proposals to command broad consensus across the House".

Following its deliberations, the committee will offer advice to the Lord Speaker on potential next steps. It is expected to conclude its work by the early summer.

SCOPE

We consider that our remit requires us to work within the following constraints:

1. No change to the House's role and powers, or to the primacy of the Commons.
2. Members continue to be appointed but with a ceiling on the total size of the House.
3. No increase in the cost of the House.
4. A guaranteed percentage or minimum number of Crossbench peers.
5. No single party to have a political majority.

The committee will not consider any submissions which go beyond considering the size of the House of Lords to focus on wider questions about future reform of the House.

QUESTIONS

The committee seeks suggestions about how to achieve two overarching aims.

- 1. To reduce the House from its current size to a target number or range.**
- 2. To keep the House at that target size or range afterwards.**

In considering different options, it may be helpful to factor in the following points.

- The need to look at the process of appointments to the House as well as departures.
- The desirability of refreshing the membership whilst ensuring a level of continuity.
- The advantages and disadvantages of involving the following factors:
 - age,
 - length of tenure,
 - attendance and participation levels, and
 - financial support.
- The need to acknowledge the important contribution of those who have given service to the House and organised their lives around their continued membership.
- The issue of whether and how the House should reflect over time the political balance of the country, including a measure of rebalancing when needed.
- The differing priorities of the political parties and Crossbench group.
- The position of existing members who belong to a small party or no party.
- The scope for appointing new ministers.
- The desirability of gender, ethnic and regional diversity.
- The role of the House of Lords Appointments Commission.
- Any consequential implications for the Lords Spiritual (the Bishops), the future of hereditary peers in the House, and automatic appointments of certain office-holders.
- The extent to which changes can be made without legislation.

The committee invites interested individuals and organisations to make submissions to this inquiry. Submissions do not need to address every question, and short submissions are preferred. A submission larger than six pages should include a one page summary.

Submissions which have been previously published will not be accepted as evidence. Submissions will not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

The deadline for written evidence is 5pm on Monday 20 February. The written submissions will guide the committee's deliberations and inform its final conclusions and recommendations.

Submissions should be made online using the written submission form available at www.parliament.uk/size-of-house-submission-form. This page also provides guidance on submitting evidence.

If you have difficulty submitting evidence online, please contact the committee clerk by email at hsize@parliament.uk or by telephoning 020 7219 6072.

You can follow the work of the committee at www.parliament.uk/size-of-house-committee.