



Women and Equalities Committee

Oral evidence: Gender-sensitive Parliament, HC 131

Wednesday 15 September 2021

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Members present: Caroline Nokes (Chair); Alex Davies-Jones; Kate Osborne; Bell Ribeiro-Addy; Nicola Richards.

Questions 124 - 151

Witnesses

I: Amanda Colledge, Business Case Director, Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body; Ian Todd, Chief Executive Officer, Parliamentary Standards Authority.

II: Dr John Benger, Clerk of the House of Commons; Marianne Cwynarski OBE, Director General, House of Commons; Sarah Davies, Clerk Assistant and Managing Director, Chamber and Participation Team, House of Commons; Sarah Petit, Cultural Transformation Director, House of Commons.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Amanda Colledge and Ian Todd.

Chair: Good afternoon and welcome to this afternoon's meeting of the Women and Equalities Select Committee. It is an in-person meeting, for the first time in a long time. This is the final evidence session in our inquiry into a gender-sensitive Parliament. Can I thank our two witnesses on our first panel for coming along this afternoon? We have Ian Todd from IPSA and Amanda Colledge from the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body. Thank you very much for coming.

Q124 **Alex Davies-Jones:** Thank you to the witnesses for joining us today. Ian, my questions are for you primarily. Members of Parliament have told the Committee that there has been a tension between the two functions of IPSA: the functions of regulating MPs and supporting MPs to perform their everyday roles. How do you reconcile these different functions?

Ian Todd: They are very easy to reconcile. The easiest way perhaps to describe it is to think about the what and the how. It is clear in the legislation that we have a regulatory function in terms of the setting and administration of MPs' staffing business costs, but how we choose to deliver that function is entirely within our gift, although the legislation does also state that we are required to have due regard to the principles of supporting MPs as part of that process.

It is important that we differentiate our independence and that can, in some organisations, be taken as quite an isolationist stance. Our independence relates to specific decisions that we make and how we go about making them, but the engagement with the wider parliamentary landscape is important to inform those decisions and enable us to make the right choices.

That regulatory function that we have to discharge is best done through delivering good, high-quality support and customer service. We want a simple scheme with easy-to-understand rules and a minimum of administrative requirements sitting behind it, and to help MPs to get things right first time. That is the most effective and efficient way of delivering a regulatory function.

Q125 **Alex Davies-Jones:** How do you measure that success in terms of both the different functions?

Ian Todd: There are a variety of key performance indicators across the organisation as a whole: things like compliance with the scheme, the speed with which we process and the accuracy with which we process. There are a number of corporate measures that look both at the regulatory and customer service output, including an annual survey of MPs and MPs' staff, around how they feel we are performing and their interactions with us.

Q126 **Alex Davies-Jones:** What are the specific ways that IPSA supports a



gender-sensitive House of Commons?

Ian Todd: We made a submission to this Committee back in 2019 and we are broadly in a similar place to where we were then. The most recent substantive review of the scheme took place back in 2016-17, so there are arrangements in place, for example, at that point in time for extension to the accommodation allowances for those who have dependants. Around about April 2017 that increased from £2,500 a year roughly. It is now £5,500 a year per dependant, up to three dependants.

We changed the travel requirements so that spouses and partners can travel without the limitations that had previously been in place. We make specific arrangements for travel, for example, by taxi rather than by other means of public transport when there has been a late sitting in the House and people need to get back to their accommodation safely and securely. There is a wide range of elements within that.

Q127 **Alex Davies-Jones:** Those measures are to be applauded and I have benefited from some of those myself, but as a result, that means that my expenses that appear in the public realm are significantly higher than other MPs. Do you think that is fair: that, because I am a mother and I have children, I should be penalised as a result of that in the public and what my constituents see?

Ian Todd: In the way that you phrased the question, no, but all MPs, regardless of gender and other characteristics, have higher or lower costs for various reasons.

Q128 **Alex Davies-Jones:** If I could just come in there, for example, my security budget and all MPs' security budget is kept confidential for security reasons. That means that, for certain MPs who have a high security budget because of their profile or because of threats made against them, that is not made public. Do you think those budgets that are in place to accommodate MPs who have commitments because of their gender should not be made public for the same reasons?

Ian Todd: You are absolutely right: there are elements, like security, where we only publish either no costs or aggregate costs. We have recently extended that to the welfare and wellbeing budget, because we understand that people were reticent to take up some of the provisions of that budget because of the itemised publication of what that was being used for. The position on transparency is one where our default position is to publish down to individual level, but, as you say, we have made exceptions to that in the past where there are particular reasons for doing so.

We have a three-year corporate plan at the moment, which is around optimising what we currently have, but our board meets next week to discuss our future strategy and review the scheme, including a review of the publication policy and transparency. That is certainly something that we can consider. The difficulty on some occasions would be how you factor out what is specifically a cost that is attributable, for example, to



being a new mother as opposed to a generic cost, but it is certainly something that we would consider.

Q129 Alex Davies-Jones: I am glad to hear that. We have also heard that the current scheme of funding for additional staff during maternity and parental leave for MPs is not enough and this is not comparable to the arrangements now in place for Ministers. Can you set out the constitutional and legal barriers to funding a locum MP role or something more substantial than the current scheme that is in place?

Ian Todd: It is important that people understand what the current scheme is first, so I will start there. We have changed this position over the course of recent years in relation to maternity leave. The current offer is that MPs, as officer-holders, will continue to receive their full salary throughout any period of absence, regardless of how long that absence is, and, while you are not employees, if you were to compare that to statutory maternity pay or indeed to some of the best occupational schemes that are out there, full salary throughout the period of absence is a very positive position to be in.

On the issue of cover, we have extended the offer recently. We are now offering £60,000 a year pro rata in salary costs, plus the on-costs—national insurance and pension contributions—that sit alongside that to MPs who need to take extended absence. That started off as being in relation to maternity and that is its primary use, but we recognise, in terms of protected characteristics, that there will be other people—those who are undergoing long-term health treatment, for example—who may be absent from their role and who would also benefit from a similar provision.

We consulted on those arrangements. The key issue that was raised with us, particularly by MPs, was the need for flexibility, so that pot of money is available as a maximum for MPs to choose to spend how they so wish. Some choose to spend that on additional casework resource or additional overtime. More recently, we have had suggestion that we should allow the employment of a more senior person, which has often been termed the locum MP.

The difficulty we have with that is that, without wishing to play semantics, a locum, according to the dictionary, is somebody who stands in for the absence of another from the same profession, and the difficulty that we have is that you are all elected office-holders as individuals in your own right. While somebody representing you could fulfil a senior role in your office and undertake the constituency duties that exist, they cannot be a locum MP in the sense that they can be a full replacement for you in the way, for example, that a locum GP might, because they have not taken the oath of office and they cannot attend the Chamber and speak. Proxy voting arrangements are already in place through the Whips. The person appointed would not be able to do that.



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We have prepared a new and different job description specifically for that more senior role to ensure there is consistency between offices, in the way that we do with the job description for other members of MPs' staff. As I say, if an MP chooses to go down that route, funding of up to £60,000 a year in salary costs pro rata is available to cover that position.

Q130 Alex Davies-Jones: Have you taken advice from employment lawyers, so that you can ensure that you are offering the support that is comparable to other workplaces?

Ian Todd: We are absolutely confident that we are in that position and, yes, we have taken legal advice. We have taken soundings, formal and informal, from a variety of Members and others. It is important to recognise that, accepting that you are not employees but office-holders, the only real comparator is the employed sector.

In any organisation that I have worked in, when somebody is absent on maternity leave, there simply is no legal requirement that that individual is backfilled in whole or in part, so the idea that we are required to provide like-for-like replacement, which is the assertion that has been made to us most recently—essentially, the person acting on behalf of the MP during their absence would be paid the same amount as the MP, so in the region of £82,000 a year rather than £60,000 a year—is one that is fundamentally flawed.

We developed that new job description. We put it through an international benchmarking process and evaluated it at the £60,000 sum that I have already referenced. It is different to the ministerial situation and to the legislation that was passed last year. Importantly, that allows for a Minister to take maternity leave at all, which was not previously the case. It allows for somebody else to act into that position while they are absent. It gives the Prime Minister the discretion to appoint someone to backfill that Minister while they are absent. It does not require them to do so and, importantly, that is almost the closest we have within the constitution to an employer—i.e. the Prime Minister, choosing his Cabinet Ministers.

The difficulty with a locum MP, to use that term, is that it would effectively be an elected official choosing their own replacement in the constituency. The differentiation is important as well, because where that legislation has been used—it has only been on one occasion so far—an Attorney-General was appointed while the prior postholder had been designated Minister on leave. That individual is also a constituency MP and the provision that was available to her as a constituency MP was the same as any other constituency MP.

If you are covering for a Minister, you can undertake the full requirements, duties and functions of that ministerial role. We simply do not believe that if you are covering for an MP you can undertake all of the functions of their role, such that it is value for money for the taxpayer that they would be paid the same amount of money.



Q131 **Chair:** You used the term “pro rata” and you have benchmarked this senior role position internationally. Does that mean that you have looked at the £82,000 salary and determined that the value of being able to participate in the Chamber, table questions and take part in Select Committees like this is roughly £20,000?

Ian Todd: No. It is difficult. There is no job description for MPs as such. House Committees in the past have broadly aligned that, but it does go back several years. It is not a decision about how much of the role necessarily can be undertaken. What we did was start with first principles. We worked with a particular MP who was facing this issue imminently to develop a job description or person specification for the person who would need to backfill their role. We then used an international process of job evaluation, which looks at the skills, what that person needs to do, how much autonomy they have to act, how many people they would be managing and their size of budgets, and attributed a value to it. That is the process that came up with the £60,000 a year figure.

We have had a suggestion informally, from more than one person, that the House element of an MP’s role, which could not be covered by a locum—I do not like using that term, so I will try to refer to it as an MP’s representative going forward—is broadly in the line of about 25% of somebody’s time, but that is incredibly variable by MP, to be honest, and I would not say that was the basis for the decision-making.

Q132 **Alex Davies-Jones:** I am glad you have said that, because the figure I have on evidence is it is actually 7% of an MP’s time; it is not 25% in the Chamber. You mentioned the £60,000 extra that MPs are able to claim, if they choose to, to cover while they are on maternity leave or on special leave, but again, that figure would be classed as their expenses and that gets publicised, so it gets shown to the media and to constituents that these MPs who choose to take provision, because, for instance, they have gone on maternity leave, would be significantly higher. This staffing cost is classed as an expense and that gets reported in the media and to constituents that this is money in our pockets, which absolutely it is not.

Ian Todd: No, and I completely agree with you. While the change has gone unnoticed by many, we no longer refer to expenses. They are staffing and business costs, and it is entirely legitimate that somebody has additional resource to cover for them while they are absent, whether they are the MP or whether that is another member of your staff who is absent for that period.

There is a wider issue that goes beyond gender around MPs’ staffing costs. We know some MPs are very keen to demonstrate how low their costs are. Providing their costs are low and they are delivering a high-quality service for their constituents, then I applaud them for that efficiency, but I am not sure that that would necessarily always be the case and, ultimately, both IPSA and yourselves are working towards the same aim, which is to ensure there is a high-quality service available for



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constituents. If that means you need to spend your entire staffing budget to be able to do that, then I applaud you for it. That is not something that should be portrayed as being a negative.

Alex Davies-Jones: Unfortunately, it is.

Q133 **Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** You made a point about legal advice or running it through a legal framework. As there is a lot of debate around this at the moment, would you be willing to publish that legal advice?

Ian Todd: Given there is at least an indication that an individual has reserved their rights with regard to future legal action if we do not agree a position that is amenable to her, then it would not be viable for us to publish privileged legal advice at this stage, no.

Q134 **Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** How do you intend to cover for the parts that can only be done now? Other than being in the Chamber, there are certain meetings that people have to attend, and I know people on maternity leave in MPs-only meetings have asked to send their staff in their place and have been told, "No".

Ian Todd: That is one of the challenges. If an MP was absent for any reason and they had a representative, what would the position with this Committee be? Would that representative be able to sit as a member of this Committee instead of the MP? I believe the answer to that is no. That is something that is way beyond the jurisdiction of IPSA to have any say over. It is for the House authorities and Parliament itself to make decisions on what an MP's representative or locum MP role might look like and how far that representative can go in pursuing the interests of the MP in their absence. Unfortunately, that is not something that I have influence over.

Q135 **Nicola Richards:** Alex already mentioned that there are some budgets that are not published, like security budgets, and you admitted that there are some expenses that MPs are reticent to claim because of the additional costs that will be in the public sphere. Given that there is an extra uplift for parents to claim on top of their accommodation allowance if they have dependants, do you think that that being published encourages more women to stand for Parliament or not?

Ian Todd: The honest answer is I do not know the answer to that question, but it is something that I would want to know. I have been in post for a relatively short period of time. I am meeting with a large number of MPs now on a regular basis. I met six last week. I have met another two today. They are conversations that we would want to continue to have, and one of the things we have said in relation to the extended absence provisions we have put in place is that they are not the finished article yet. This is something that is new to us and Parliament. There is still further work that we need to do on it and we have already indicated that we want to set up a working group. I have spoken to senior Members of both parties, so that we can take that forward in the



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coming months. In that working group I would welcome the views of people.

If the answer to your question is in fact, “No”, from those people who have gone through the process, then, absolutely, it is something that we would want to look at and take into account, balanced, as always, against our legislative requirement to provide transparency. I do not want that transparency to inadvertently discriminate against any individuals from any angle or characteristic, and if that is what it is doing, then we would need to reconsider that. As I have already said, we are looking at a more strategic review of the scheme itself, including the publication and transparency elements of that going forward, so we will consider it then.

Q136 **Kate Osborne:** Just on that subject, I am putting you on the spot here, but I just wondered if you know how many women MPs against male MPs claim the additional allowance.

Ian Todd: I do not off the top of my head, I am afraid, no. I can easily find out and send that through to the Committee after the meeting if it would assist.

Q137 **Chair:** That would be helpful. Can I also suggest that when you are talking to senior representatives of the parties you also perhaps think about talking to junior, newer MPs, because they are more likely to be younger and much more likely to be female nowadays?

Ian Todd: Yes, that is absolutely right. The 2019 intake, in particular, come from a different demographic to those that we are used to and have also gone through possibly a more challenging introduction to Parliament, with Covid and not being able to always meet up with their peers and engage, so absolutely it is important that we get a representative sample of MPs. As I say, because we have extended it to cover extended absence, that also includes men who may be subject to health considerations in a way. “Representative” needs to be the right balance of all the characteristics that may be impacted by this policy, so I agree entirely.

Q138 **Alex Davies-Jones:** Thank you for the contributions, because they build into the next question I was going to ask. Just to get it on the record, I have the figures from the *Good Parliament* report that show that 45% of women MPs currently do not have children compared to only 28% of male MPs, so there is definitely a significant barrier that is preventing women MPs, if they choose to, from having children. Whatever you could do in your gift to assist that would be great. Do you believe that the two-week support that IPSA currently provide to fathers, partners and second adopters enables Parliament to be an equal workplace supporting modern parent MPs?

Ian Todd: My personal opinion is I would like to see that expanded and extended. As we move towards shared parental leave, for example, we would want to change the policy to reflect that. At the moment, we concentrate predominantly on maternity leave and primary adopter leave



as being the most significant elements because they affect most people. The assumption that paternal leave and some of the other elements are limited to two weeks is something that will necessarily change over time and should change over time.

Q139 Alex Davies-Jones: Is the new provision of up to £60,000 made available to mothers who choose to adopt, have a child by surrogacy or whose partners give birth?

Ian Todd: At the moment, it relates specifically to maternity and primary adoption, but, as I say, as we develop the policy further through the working group, we would want to look at which other circumstances it should be extended to. Indeed, our board specifically made that comment when adopting the policy as it currently is; it reflected that there were other areas where we still needed to do more work. You are right: that should be extended.

Q140 Alex Davies-Jones: The Equality and Human Rights Commission has said that public bodies most provide evidence to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty. What evidence do you have to demonstrate compliance at the beginning and throughout the process of developing the current scheme as it stands?

Ian Todd: The scheme as a whole has been subject to detailed equality impact assessments at various points during its life. The scheme, which is currently in its 13th iteration, changes on a year-by-year basis. Depending on the nature of those changes and the scale of them, then the extent to which formal equality impact assessments have been undertaken has varied from one year to another. It is important to reflect that the equality impact assessment is not a legal mandatory duty in and of itself. The duty is to comply with the public sector equality duties and that that should be evidenced by the substance of what you do, rather than the ticking of boxes and the filling of forms.

As part of the correspondence we have had with MPs around the maternity and parental leave provision in recent weeks, we have set out our belief that we have complied with those duties throughout the process, through the papers that have gone to the board, the decision-making, the views that they have expressed, the consultation that we went through, which had in excess of 2,500 responses including from MPs and MPs' staff, the fact that we have reflected that back in and that we continue to revisit that policy with a view to adapting it, modernising it and driving it forward in a way that is as supportive as we can do. I believe that we have that evidence.

Q141 Alex Davies-Jones: On the consultation that you carried out for the scheme and on the new maternity allowance that is in place, did you consult with pregnant women and new mothers, or did you choose not to?

Ian Todd: The formal consultation was a public consultation, so those who replied came from a variety of different backgrounds: predominantly



female, some men, those of childbearing age, those who have children and those who do not. MPs and their staff were included among those respondents—again, those who have children, those who have had them while they are in Parliament and those who were at the time pregnant—so we did have those responses within the public consultation.

Q142 **Chair:** Can I take you back to a comment you made earlier? Apologies if I have in any way misunderstood it. You were talking about staffing costs and said that, provided Members of Parliament were delivering a good service to their constituents, you were not much interested in what they were paying their staff. Maybe I have misinterpreted it. Is it IPSA's role to determine whether MPs are delivering a good service to their constituents or is that for the electorate to decide?

Ian Todd: Apologies if I was not clear. That was a personal view in relation to the question about the publication of staff costs and with respect to some people who try to keep their costs very low. Clearly, there is a maximum budget that is available to MPs for their staffing. My personal opinion is that if you use all of that budget to ensure that you are delivering a good service for your constituents, then that is entirely appropriate.

Efficiency is important, but keeping the costs artificially low, if that impacts on the quality of the service to your constituents, is not something that IPSA would be advocating. I am simply suggesting that ultimately we are all here to ensure a quality of service to constituents; if that involves spending your entire staffing budget to deliver a good service, my personal opinion is that that is a good thing, not a bad thing, and the media portrayal of "expensive MPs" is something I would hope to be able to influence and to stop seeing happening, because it is unhelpful.

Q143 **Kate Osborne:** I want to take you back as well. Earlier on, you mentioned your KPIs in terms of how you monitor your performance. Can you tell me where these figures are shared or published, and who scrutinises them? It is all very well getting the figures together, but who actually is looking at those?

Ian Todd: As the chief executive, we prepare those KPIs on a regular basis for our board. Our board is entirely non-executive, so they set our strategic direction and they hold me to account for delivering that strategic direction. They are my first port of call in terms of the people holding me to account. Then we have the Speaker's Committee for IPSA, which we attend usually twice a year and through which our funding estimate goes. It is part of its role to scrutinise our performance and ensure that we are delivering against the objectives as well.

Q144 **Kate Osborne:** Are your performance figures published?

Ian Todd: They are available, yes.

Q145 **Kate Osborne:** Whereabouts?



Ian Todd: They are on our website.

Q146 **Nicola Richards:** My questions are to Amanda. Can you explain to us how and when the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body is held to account on equality issues, including gender equality?

Amanda Colledge: Yes, absolutely. Ultimately, we will be held to account by Parliament, because it is ultimately for the two Houses to agree the plans and, indeed, the budget for the restoration and renewal of the Palace. In addition to that, on a regular basis it is part of our internal audit plans in terms of how we are progressing against our equality and diversity strategy that we have recently agreed.

We yesterday published how we are performing with regards to our duties under the public sector equality duty. We will do an annual audit and, as I say, our first annual report was published yesterday. It is also part of our external audit. We are part of a process where we are audited and VFM studies are undertaken by the National Audit Office.

In terms of the way we are set up, it is our delivery authority that progresses the designs for the Palace and we in the sponsor body have an assurance function in order to assure that they are developing those designs in line with our expectations.

Q147 **Nicola Richards:** Dr Alexandra Meakin told us that there has historically been a lack of gender-sensitive focus in the restoration and renewal programme, suggesting that gender equality should have been embedded from the start. Do you see the benefits of an external advisory group with experts on gender equality and other equality issues advising the R&R programme?

Amanda Colledge: I will take that as potentially two questions. First of all, I would like to say to the Committee that inclusivity is absolutely embedded within the planning of the sponsor body and has always been so. We have a statutory duty under the 2019 Act to improve accessibility in the round to the Palace of Westminster. It is embedded within our objectives and within our inclusive design guidance. There are a number of issues within our guidance that build on best practice that are applicable to gender-sensitive issues. I can absolutely say it is embedded in our planning, both at a corporate level and also within our designs as they go forward for the Palace.

In terms of an expert panel, I am pleased to say that this is something that we are actively pursuing and, yes, we agree that that would be helpful. We are looking to bring on a panel of technical experts who can help us in the designs. Designing inclusivity and accessibility into a historic environment brings some unique challenges, so we are absolutely looking to get expert advice to make sure we overcome some of those challenges.

Q148 **Nicola Richards:** How will parliamentarians and members of the public be able to engage with you on these gender-sensitive issues, such as



family rooms and toilet facilities? Are these questions included in your consultations?

Amanda Colledge: Yes, absolutely. We have recently undertaken over the summer some engagement with the parliamentary community. We heard from over 370 people, of whom 120 were members of both Houses. We explicitly asked about their experience of inclusion on the parliamentary estate and what could be improved. Some of the issues that came up are issues that will be familiar to the Committee and have been raised by other witnesses, such as insufficient lighting on the estate and feeling unsafe at times, especially for those leaving late at night who are working late into the evening, and, again, looking for the estate to be more accommodating to families and those with childcare requirements. This evidence has all been gathered and we are working with our design team, feeding into what the requirements are for a restored and renewed Parliament, in order that they can look to see how they can overcome some of the challenges that we currently have within the design.

We have, equally, recently engaged with the public. It is part of our public engagement strategy that we reach out to members of the public who do not necessarily normally engage with Parliament or the political process and, equally, ask them what they feel the barriers are to participation with Parliament. Again, there is a clear sense from those groups that they find the building potentially intimidating and were looking for, again, family-orientated spaces and sufficient lighting, as well as things like, as a workplace, making sure that there is local temperature control, particularly in regard to women experiencing menopausal symptoms.

As I say, there is clear evidence that improvements are needed and that is what we are working with the design team to implement, but the consultation with members will be ongoing. We have another round of consultation in the autumn.

Q149 **Chair:** You mentioned improving lighting around the estate. You do not get any argument from me that in parts of the estate the lighting is particularly poor, but do you think that is ambitious enough as a mechanism for making particularly perhaps women on the estate feel safer? Should we not be more visionary than just improving lighting?

Amanda Colledge: I was merely offering that as an example of some of the feedback we have had in terms of both our member engagement and our public engagement. We are absolutely more ambitious in terms of particularly accessibility within the parliamentary estate, and also looking at security improvements that make people feel safer.

In terms of where we are currently in the design process, we are looking at some of those more major interventions, especially around accessibility, changing lift cars, etc. In terms of how space is allocated and some of those issues that are raised as being particularly gender-sensitive in terms of family rooms, toilet allocations and other facilities,



that will come in at a later design stage and will be subject to ongoing consultation.

Q150 Chair: Can I make a plea on behalf of parents? This is something that I did raise with the Leader of the House. We have had evidence from female members who are the parents of toddlers, trying to negotiate the stairs down to the car park late at night with wriggling toddlers. There is no lift down there; you have to go down a very steep flight of stairs. Parking allocations for parents might seem really trivial and it is nothing to do with structure and design of the building. It is just a really easy change that could be done to make life easier for parents working on the estate late at night who have children in the nursery who need to be got down to the car park somehow.

Amanda Colledge: We can definitely feed that into our considerations. One of our key issues that we are considering at the moment is how we improve step-free access, both into the building and around the building, which is a key problem for a lot of users of the building. You have given a perfect example there.

Q151 Chair: I am conscious that this is an inquiry into a gender-sensitive Parliament, but the same holds true for disabled members. While they have allocated parking spaces, trying to work out how to get a disabled guest from Westminster Hall to somewhere like Dining Room A, you have to be quite creative.

Amanda Colledge: Yes, we are aware of that. As I say, we are looking at both zoning strategies and also changing the lift cars, which we are finding is easier. That also makes people feel safer within a building, if they know how to enter and where to exit from, but we will also improve accessibility and step-free access around the building.

Chair: Thank you very much. We do not have any further questions for either of you, so we will move on to the second panel. Thank you for your contributions this afternoon.