# Finance Committee

## Minutes

Wednesday 30 September 2020 at 4.15pm on Microsoft Teams

Present:

Lord Colgrain
Lord Collins of Highbury
Earl of Courtown
Lord Cromwell
Lord Cunningham of Felling
Baroness Doocey (Chair)
Baroness Goudie
Lord Kerslake
Baroness Noakes
Lord Stoneham of Droxford

together with the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Fehintola Akinlose (Finance and Procurement Director) and Carl Woodall (Director of Facilities) were in attendance. Jamie Williams (Head of Enterprise Portfolio Management Office (EPMO)) and Sam Jones (Head of Governance and Assurance, EPMO) attended for the Portfolio Performance Report (PPR); Isabel Coman (Managing Director, In-House Services and Estates (IHSE)) attended for the items on the PPR and IHSE Action plan; Paul McCarthy attended for the item on the Draft Property Asset Management Plan; and Claire Arlington (Head of Finance Business Partnering) attended for the quarterly financial update.

### Matters arising

The minutes of the Committee's July meeting had previously been agreed by correspondence.

The Chair updated the Committee on progress towards the Westminster Hall Independent Review; a reviewer had been identified and was expected to be appointed and begin work shortly.

### Portfolio Performance Report (F/19-21/31) [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

Since the Committee had last received the Portfolio Performance Report significant changes to the format had been made. The report was the first draft of a new, more visual format, and that it would likely iterate over a few cycles as EPMO responded to stakeholder feedback.  The Committee was invited to provide its views on the changes.

The Committee provided feedback on the new format; whilst the depth of information provided was appreciated, members found the volume of information provided difficult to follow and it was felt that the Committee would benefit from a more strategic overview.

Members had found the size of the document difficult in absorbing the level of detail. It was also felt that the graphic pages contained too much information per page and would have been clearer split between multiple pages. It was suggested that future versions of the paper should avoid combining A3 and A4 pages into one document, as this made it difficult to print.

It was recognised that one of the challenges was that the Report was produced for a range of audiences.

The Head of EPMO committed to working on a solution to meet the Committee's requirements, taking into account the need for a strategic focus, for the Committee to consider in the new Year.

The Committee expressed concern about the Elizabeth Tower project estimated budget increase *[REDACTED]* due to the impact of COVID-19 and requested further details. After discussion it was agreed that the Committee would receive a paper to the next meeting on the effect of COVID-19 on cost, time and productivity on all current projects.

The Committee took note of the update.

**Paper/ Action Plan from Managing Director of In House Services and Estates on performance of Category A Projects (F/19-21/32) [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]**

The Committee welcomed the action plan detailed in the paper. The Chair reported that the Commission had supported the recommendation in the Finance Committee's Report, for a panel of external experts to be appointed to support Senior Responsible Owners (SROs), conversations had taken place between the Chair, the Managing Director of In House Services and Estates, and an external member of the Commission to discuss how to implement the recommendation.

It was explained that in addition to an external panel of experts to support SROs, there was an urgent need for improved commercial expertise within In House Services and Estates and the Managing Director was taking action to improve this.

The Committee would be updated periodically on progress against the action plan.

The Committee took note of the paper.

**Draft In House Services and Estates Parliamentary Asset Management Plan 2020 (F/19-21/33) [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]**

The Committee was appreciative of the work that had gone into the draft Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP). The plan highlighted the number of decisions that were contingent on confirmation of the way forward for Restoration and Renewal (R&R). The PAMP would be reviewed every two years and as required; it was expected a review would be completed after the R&R Strategic Review published its findings.

Consideration of sustainability was included in the action plan of the document; further detail was contained in the IHSE Strategic Vision for the Built Environment.

The Committee took note of the paper.

**House of Lords Estimate: Financial Monitoring Report – Quarter 1 (F/19-21/34) [RESTRICTED]**

Underspends in Q1 were as a result of the stoppage of capital works in response to COVID-19 restrictions and the reduction in the level of allowances claimed.

The costs associated with virtual proceedings were expected to reduce as changes were made to the operating model.
The Committee took note of the financial monitoring report.

**Any other business**

The Committee would next meet on Wednesday 21 October at 4.15pm.

*Small sections of these minutes have been redacted, usually for reasons such as commercial confidentiality and sensitive management information.*

Gabrielle Longdin
Clerk
HLFinanceCommittee@parliament.uk