



SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday 24 November at 1pm in Committee Room G and on Microsoft Teams

Present:

Lord Touhig (Chair)
Lord Clark of Windermere
Lord Haselhurst
Lord Judge
Baroness Wheeler
Baroness Williams of Trafford

Together with the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Andy Helliwell (Chief Operating Officer), Fehintola Akinlose (Finance and Procurement Director) and Carl Woodall (Director of Facilities) were also in attendance. Josie Lazenby (Head of Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Services) attended for item 4; Fiona Channon (Deputy Yeoman Usher) attended for item 5; and Emma Burke (Governance Support Officer) attended for item 6.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Lord Clement Jones, Lord Howard of Rising, Lord Stoneham of Droxford and Baroness Deech.

2. Minutes of the 5th meeting, and matters arising

The Committee agreed the amended minutes of the previous meeting.

The Committee passed on its congratulations to its former clerk on the birth of her child.

3. Notices From the Chair S/22-23/31 RESTRICTED

The paper included updates on Members Survey actions, Electric Vehicle Chargers, the Millbank House catering consultation, works outside Black Rod's Garden Entrance and the letter on Restoration and Renewal from the Clerks of both Houses.

The Committee noted its support for plans to create individual private spaces for members in shared offices to take virtual meetings.

A members raised a question on the allocation of offices and the need to take into account the individual circumstances of members. The thoughts would be passed on to the Accommodation Whips.

4. Annual update from Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Services S/22-23/32
RESTRICTED

The new Head of Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing, introduced herself to the Committee. The Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service (PHWS) was made up of 11 staff and served the whole organisation. PHWS provided a treatment service in the Lower Waiting Hall alongside wellbeing and Occupational Health services. All services were now fully back up and running after the pandemic but usage levels had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The last year had seen a successful extension of the on-site GP pilot service to include the Lords. It was expected that the recommendation when the pilot came to an end would be for the service to continue. PHWS also worked closely with Westminster gym and Guy's and St Thomas'. The Employee and Individual Assistance Programme was also available to support all members and staff on lifestyle, legal and financial matters amongst others. A successful flu vaccination campaign had taken place and a further clinic date was expected on 30 November.

In 2023 PHWS would be reviewing the current services to ensure they were fit for purpose and look at opportunities to add to or do things differently. PHWS also had plans to increase communications on and publicisation of its services. The Committee requested further information on planned communications. There were also plans to improve the data dashboard PHWS used in order to be able to better target services.

Most referrals to PHWS were in relation to mental health and muscular-skeletal concerns. There was work to do on identifying what made up the rising group of 'other' cases and target services accordingly. The Committee requested details of the top five reasons for members using the service.

Health screenings offered to members could take up to an hour depending on the needs of the member. The Committee would receive an example of the letter sent to members. Those who missed appointments were contacted to rearrange where possible. There was an opportunity to improve the appointment management system to send out reminder messages shortly before appointments, although this was not currently in place.

There were plans for a self-service health kiosk to be located in Richmond House on a trial basis to allow members and staff to measure their own blood pressure, height or weight. Subject to this being successful other locations would be considered.

The Committee took note of the update.

5. Line of Route and Access in the Palace of Westminster S/22-23/33 **RESTRICTED**

The Deputy Yeoman Usher introduced the paper. As more members and their guests returned to the estate numbers of groups taking tours of the Palace were beginning to reach pre-pandemic levels. Given the time since guests were allowed on the estate and

the number of new members it appeared that not all members were aware of the rules around member led tours and the opportunity to make use of tour guides provided by Visitors Services. The paper proposed that communications were sent to members to remind them of the rules and the option to use tour guides.

Members would be able to accompany groups on tours led by tour guides. The guides would be able to ensure larger groups kept together and abided by rules on photography. Guides could also ensure in the event of an emergency groups were able to evacuate the Palace quickly and safely.

A similar paper would also be going to the House of Commons Administration Committee. Members who weren't following the rules were challenged.

The Committee took note of the paper and agreed the further communication on members' guests and tour provision.

6. Lords catering venues access note S/22-23/34 UNRESTRICTED

The Committee took note of the catering access rules and confirmed the rules as listed in the paper. The Committee agreed to empower the Committee Chair, in conjunction with the Usual Channels, to agree minor or temporary changes to access rules.

7. Forward Work Programme S/22-23/35 UNRESTRICTED

The Forward Work Programme was circulated for the Committee's information.

8. AOB

The Committee agreed to change its meeting time to start at 12.15pm.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 15 December at 12.15pm.

The Chair informed the Committee of his intention to step down as Chair of the Committee at the end of the year. He noted his thanks to the Committee for its support. The Committee thanked the Chair for his leadership.

Jen Mills
Clerk
HLServicesCommittee@parliament.uk