

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Note of discussion for the meeting held on 13 July 2020 at 4.30pm

[Meeting held over Microsoft Teams as a videoconference]

Members present:

Sir Charles Walker (in the Chair)

Michael Fabricant
Marion Fellows
Sir Greg Knight
Mrs Maria Miller

Jessica Morden
Mark Tami
Giles Watling

Apologies: Colleen Fletcher and Mrs Pauline Latham

1. Informal Note

The Committee **agreed** the amended informal note of the meeting on 6 July 2020.

2. Customer service and Member engagement

Kate Emms, Director of Member Engagement, and David Newsome, Customer Director, Governance and Central Services, briefed the Committee.

Ms Emms and Mr Newsome provided an overview of the new roles to which they had been appointed. Ms Emms was working with colleagues across the House Service to engage better with Members and to make efforts in this area more joined up and efficient. Mr Newsome said that the focus of his work was on developing a single customer service strategy for the House Service and to review its services to ensure that they met the needs of customers.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

3. Update to rules on broadcasting and filming

Alasdair Rendall, Head of Broadcaster and Press Gallery Relations, Commons Communications Office, briefed the Committee.

Mr Rendall put forward a series of proposals on broadcasting and filming on the Estate, which included expanding the number of filming points to meet demand from other passholding news outlets, to allow commercial broadcasters the use of radio broadcasting points in Central Lobby, as well as to allow in-House digital teams access to the filming points and the Press to film in their own offices.

A Member sought assurances that passholders would not be inadvertently filmed while going about their parliamentary duties, particularly in the more private areas of the Palace that were not generally accessible to the public. Mr Rendall said that the filming points were well-policed by House staff and had not impacted on the work of passholders on previous occasions, such as during the key votes on the Brexit negotiations.

Decision

The Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to allow the additional filming points to be made available in the same way as the existing filming points, subject to the usual filming rules;
- (2) to allow the filming points – with the exception of Central Lobby – to be made available to all passholding news outlets, subject to the usual filming rules;
- (3) to allow in-House digital content teams to use the filming points when not in use, for the production of material to explain the work and business of the House, its Members and its staff;
- (4) to allow commercial radio broadcasters parity of access to the radio points in Central Lobby, subject to the usual broadcasting rules; and
- (5) to allow, on a trial basis, passholding journalists to film in their offices using mobile phones or small-scale camera equipment, and subject to the usual filming rules.

4. Press Gallery and Lobby facilities

Alasdair Rendall, Head of Broadcaster and Press Gallery Relations, Commons Communications Office, briefed the Committee.

At the request of the Chair, Mr Rendall presented a paper summarising the key issues raised by the Press Gallery and Lobby during their informal discussion with the Committee on 29 June.

Decision

The Committee:

- **noted** the list and the work already underway;
- **agreed** that the Chair would write to the Managing Director of In-House Services and Strategic Estates to remind her of the list of actions and priorities for the summer recess; and
- **agreed** to revisit the list in the autumn with further updates on progress.

5. Charging points for electric vehicles

The Committee held a discussion on the provision of charging points for electric vehicles in the Estate.

6. Change to VAT

Isabel Coman, Managing Director, In-House Services and Strategic Estates, briefed the Committee.

Ms Coman provided an update following the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce VAT and the impact that would have on the prices of products sold at House catering venues.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

7. Any other business

Health and Wellbeing Service

A Member asked if the Committee could look at the House's provision of health and wellbeing services in the autumn, given the pressures of recent months on the wellbeing of Members and staff. Mandy Eddolls, Managing Director of Human Resources and Diversity (in attendance), said that she would be happy to brief the Committee in the autumn.

The Committee will next meet on 20 July at 4.30pm.