

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Note of discussion for the meeting held on 20 July 2020 at 4.30pm

[Meeting held over Microsoft Teams as a videoconference]

Members present:

Sir Charles Walker (in the Chair)	
Michael Fabricant	Mrs Maria Miller
Marion Fellows	Jessica Morden
Sir Greg Knight	Mark Tami
Mrs Pauline Latham	Giles Watling

1. Informal Note

The Committee **agreed** the informal notes of the meeting on 13 July 2020.

2. Access rules update

Ugbana Oyet, Serjeant at Arms, In-House Services and Estates, briefed the Committee.

The Chair thanked Mr Oyet for his paper. The Chair welcomed Mr Oyet's proposal to extend the Members-only area on the Terrace during peak hours. He said it was important to ensure there was enough space for Members and their guests. Members expressed their support for expanding the Members-only area according to demand.

In relation to access to the Strangers' Bar, the Chair said he endorsed Monday to Wednesday access being restricted to Members and their guests, and press passholders without guests since Moncrieff's Bar had closed. He said he was more relaxed about who could have access on Thursdays and Fridays.

A Member said that widening access to Strangers' Bar had resulted in it becoming very overcrowded on particular days. They supported restricting access, but also allowing press passholders access.

The Chair suggested that former Members should only have access to Strangers' Bar on Thursdays and Fridays. He also said that while he had no issue with lay members using facilities, he did not think they should be allowed to bring guests, as they only attended the House for meetings. Several Members supported these proposals.

The Chair noted that all other access rules would be kept under review.

Decision

The Committee:

- **Supported** extending the Members-only area on the Terrace during peak hours to meet demand;

- **Agreed** to amend the access rules for the Strangers' Bar and to review the new rules after 12 months;
- **Agreed** that lay members would retain their current access rights, but without the right to bring guests to the Strangers' Bar, Pugin Room and Terrace; and

3. Future accommodation and facilities

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

Ms Coman said her team was looking at how Richmond House might be used as a decant facility for Members to enable works to take place on the Northern Estate. The Chair noted the Commission's press release to this effect earlier in the day. Ms Coman said a design brief was being prepared and she was keen to engage with Members to ensure their needs were reflected. She asked the Committee how to best consult Members in this respect.

A Member said that it was important not to pre-empt the report that was likely to come out of the review of Restoration and Renewal later in the year, and to ensure a large amount of money was not spent before those decisions were made. Another Member agreed.

Several Members described facilities that were important to Members.

The Chair said he was happy to keep in touch with Ms Coman over the summer recess to ensure the design brief met the needs of Members. Ms Coman said she would circulate a copy of the design brief for comment from Members.

Decision

The Committee **noted** this update.

4. Draft forward programme

The Chair asked the Committee for comments on the draft forward programme.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the draft forward programme.

5. Any other business

Letter from Lord McFall

The Chair informed the Committee that a letter had been received from Lord McFall, requesting use of a room in the Upper Committee Corridor to facilitate Lords hybrid Grand Committee Proceedings. The room would be required from September until the end of the financial year.

The Committee **agreed** to derogate a room on Upper Committee Corridor from September to the end of the financial year for Lords hybrid Grand Committee Proceedings.

Banqueting

Richard Tapner-Evans, Director of Catering, In-House Services and Estates, told the Committee that COVID-19 guidance around hosting conferences and events would influence whether banqueting services could restart in September, but it was looking very unlikely. He indicated he would return to the Committee in early September to discuss banqueting provision from October onwards.

Travel Office Consumer Panel

A Member noted that the Travel Office 24-hour emergency helpline was being over-used. The Member asked if the Committee could consider this issue in September.

The Committee will next meet on 7 September 2020 at 4.30pm