

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 June at 1:00pm

Present:

Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Chair)	Lord Newby
Baroness Bull	Baroness Sanderson
Lord Faulkner of Worcester	Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury
Baroness Gohir	Baroness Smith of Basildon
Baroness Humphreys	Lord Stoneham of Droxford
Lord Kennedy of Southwark	Lord Strathclyde
Earl of Kinnoull	Baroness Taylor of Bolton
Lord McFall of Alcluith	Lord True
Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall	Baroness Williams of Trafford
Lord McNally	

with the Clerk of the Parliaments.

The Chair welcomed the Earl of Kinnoull and Baroness Bull to the Committee. Baroness Gohir attended in place of Baroness Butler-Sloss

1. Apologies for absence

An apology was received from Baroness Butler-Sloss

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were *agreed*.

3. Leave of Absence

The Chair introduced the memorandum (PPC/22-23/09).

The Committee *agreed* the changes proposed in the memorandum, that members applying for leave of absence should in future either give the date by which they expect to return or, if they are unable to specify a date, explain the circumstances which will allow their return.

The Committee also *considered* the wider workings of the Leave of Absence system. Committee members expressed concern about peers who were on extended or repeated Leaves of Absence and who may have no realistic expectation or intention of returning to active membership of the House. The Committee discussed:

- the pastoral role of the parties and groups in the House alongside the Leave of Absence process;
- the rule that peers on Leave of Absence are not required to register their interests;
- access to facilities for those on leave of absence;
- the duration of LoA, including whether an extended LoA should result in a retirement from the House by default;
- whether the entitlement to seek LoA should be subject to agreed criteria; and
- the role of the Leave of Absence sub-committee.

The Committee *agreed* that the letters sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to members on Leave of Absence should place greater emphasis on Leave of Absence being for a *temporary* set of circumstances and that the member should have a clear intention to return to contribute to the work of the House.

The Committee asked the clerks to prepare a paper for consideration at a future meeting to explore the options for reviewing the Leave of Absence system.

4. SLSC sifting and REUL

The Chair introduced the letter from the Leader (PPC/22-23/10) and the memorandum (PPC/22-23/11).

The Chair recorded the Committee's thanks to the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee (SLSC) for its willingness to take on the task of scrutinising instruments under the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023.

The Committee *agreed* the proposed amendments to the terms of reference of the SLSC and to Standing Order 71 as set out in the memorandum.

5. Any other Business

The Chair informed the Committee that he had written to William Wragg MP, chair of the Public Administration and Constitution Affairs Committee, about that committee's inquiry into the membership of the House of Lords and respecting exclusive cognisance.

Anna Murphy
Clerk of the Procedure and Privileges Committee