

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons

31 January 2024

Dear Dame Meg,

Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster – follow up to the evidence session on 19 October 2023

Thank you for your letter dated 17 November following our evidence provided to the Committee on the Restoration and Renewal Programme on 19 October. In this letter we set out our response to the various questions asked by the Committee.

The strategic case

Q. How you will test the delivery options against the requirements of the 2019 Act for health, safety and security, and the legal responsibilities of the Clerk and head of the Delivery Authority.

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

Under the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019, the Corporate Officers must “in exercising their functions have regard to [...] the need to ensure that the Parliamentary buildings works are carried out with a view to ensuring the safety and security of people who work in Parliament and members of the public”. In addition, the Corporate Officers have to act in accordance with their broader responsibilities in respect of health and safety, such as the responsibility for fire safety in the Palace.

As part of the costed proposals, all the recommended options (including the continued presence option and the option of enhanced maintenance and improvement, which are specifically cited in the Chair’s letter of 17 November) will be tested against the following health, safety and security evaluation criteria:

- i. Safety risks to Palace occupants;
- ii. Safety risks to construction personnel;
- iii. Health (including asbestos) risk to Palace occupants and construction personnel;
- iv. Security risks and impact; and
- v. Segregation of Palace occupants from R&R construction;

These health, safety, and security evaluation criteria will be important considerations in selecting a preferred way forward for the Programme. The Corporate Officers, who are members of both R&R Boards, will be directly involved in this process.

Response provided by David Goldstone

The Delivery Authority’s legal responsibilities in relation to health, safety and security are framed by reference to the duties of the Corporate Officers in that in the course of performing its duties under the Act it must have regard to such matters as referred to

above. Additionally, it is subject to general statutory responsibilities in respect of health and safety, and fire safety when designing and delivering the works.

Q. How would you inform Parliament should you not be willing to take a particular option forward, for example, if it contravened your legal responsibilities.

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

The costed proposals due to be presented to both Houses in 2025 will include detailed information on all recommended options, to support an evidence-based decision on the preferred way forward. This will include information on the risks, and mitigations of those risks, involved with delivering each option.

If, on the basis of this information, the Corporate Officers were not able to support one or more options set out in the costed proposals (because, for example, delivering that option contravened their legal responsibilities), there are means by which Parliament would be made aware of their position.

As set out in the response to the Committee's report (HC 1021) in July 2023, in the event of a significant disagreement on appropriate schemes for the R&R works, the Corporate Officers would record their disagreement in formal Board minutes and through correspondence (which could be laid in the Libraries of both Houses). The Corporate Officers (including the previous Clerk of the House of Commons) have already put on record at the R&R Programme Board on 5 June 2023 that they would be unable to support a construction scenario for the works if they felt that it presented an extraordinary level of unmitigated risk to anyone on the Estate, including staff, contractors and visitors.¹

Critical path to 2025

Q. How you have assessed the cost-benefit of continuing to keep progressing all of the options.

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith, Simon Burton and Patsy Richards

The R&R Boards considered it important that more than one option should be subject to further detailed design work and analysis to meet the spirit of the new mandate for R&R agreed by both Houses in 2022 and to reflect that members of both Houses have differing views about how the programme can best be delivered. As explained to the Committee in October, the recommended full decant and continued presence options would be delivered to the same level of scope, known as "outcome level 4". In addition to these two options, the R&R Client Board requested that an option of enhanced maintenance and improvement forms part of further detailed design work.

As stated in our letter of 1 November, the cost difference between developing both the full decant and continued presence options, compared to just one option, is estimated at approximately £1.2 million. Developing the two options rather than one is also estimated to

¹ [R&R Programme Board, Formal Minutes, 5 June 2023, Item 5](#)

add about three months to the programme timetable. The additional time to develop a second option is expected to be largely offset by the General Election period.

As mentioned at the session in October, the specific costs of progressing the enhanced maintenance and improvement option are not yet known. At this point we do not expect that progressing the enhanced maintenance and improvement option will add any additional time to the programme schedule because the work will be led by Parliament's in-house teams (Strategic Estates)—working closely with the Delivery Authority—in parallel to the Delivery Authority's work to develop the other two options. Developing this option as part of the costed proposals is important to provide Members with a better understanding of its deliverability, costs, benefits and risks (including mitigation of risks) including what can be delivered in terms of an "outcome level".

We consider the cost and time impacts of developing these three options to be value-for-money because they will provide Members with a proper choice of different approaches to the works, including robust information on the costs and benefits of each option, to help them take a final, informed decision on the preferred way forward for R&R. Not providing Members with a meaningful choice could increase the chance of delay at a later point in the decision-making process, with subsequent cost impacts.

Q. The critical path to presenting costed options and a business case in early 2025: including interim milestones; how you would allow for the impact of a General Election; and contingency plans if it is not possible to meet the timetable.

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith, Simon Burton, Patsy Richards, and David Goldstone

The R&R Programme is focused on providing fully costed proposals for the Houses to agree in 2025, underpinned by a detailed business case. The key milestones to achieve this are set out below and updates will continue to be published in regular quarterly progress reports by the R&R Programme Board.²

A number of activities are on, or contribute to, the "critical path" to present costed proposals to the Houses in 2025 and (subject to parliamentary approval) commence the R&R main works. These are:

- a) **Developing the design for the Palace** to a sufficient level for cost, schedule and risk to be estimated to a level of maturity required for a business case and to inform the costed proposals to be presented to both Houses. The costed proposals will also be informed by the design of enabling and early works covered in (e) below.
- b) **Developing proposals for temporary accommodation** for both Houses, including detailed estimates for time, cost and risk, noting that having temporary accommodation in place is required for Members and staff displaced from the Palace.
- c) Developing a plan for the **business change and physical moves** required from current buildings into temporary accommodation during R&R. This will need to cover Members and their staff, parliamentary staff and other users of the buildings.

² Available at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/652/restoration-and-renewal-programme-board/publications/>

- d) **Engagement with Members of both Houses, staff and other users of the Palace** on the proposals for temporary accommodation and the developing designs for the Palace to enable informed decisions by both Houses on the costed proposals.
- e) **Developing and delivering enabling works**, including a river jetty which itself needs to be integrated with other planned works on the Parliamentary estate. This will also include establishing temporary systems around the outside and inside of the Palace.
- f) Following approval of the costed proposal, the Delivery Authority's **procurement of its strategic partners will be finalised and contracts awarded** to progress designs for the enabling and main works, detailed construction planning, and procurement of specialist trades.
- g) **Public consultation** and engagement with planning authority and statutory consultees, based on the developing designs, in support of consents and agreements to start the works.
- h) **Preparing and transporting the heritage collections** from the Palace requires the completion of a full audit and assessment of the associated conservation needs. A new storage facility, with sufficient capacity for items from the Palace, is being planned by Parliament's in-house teams to consolidate existing storage facilities. While not directly on the critical path, there is a risk that delays to decisions or extended durations could delay the start of R&R main works.

The table below sets out the key programme milestones until the costed proposals are presented to the Houses.

Key Programme Milestones	Milestone Description
R&R Surveys <i>ONGOING</i>	Continue to plan and undertake intrusive and non-intrusive investigatory survey work on or around the Parliamentary Estate to better understand the Palace and inform future works.
Early and enabling works design <i>June 2024 ONGOING</i>	Developing initial plans and designs for early R&R works, and studies for enabling works integrated with ongoing works on the estate to inform the design and Programme Business Case.
Strategic Case endorsed by Client Board <i>October 2023 ONGOING</i>	The strategic case will make recommendations to both Houses on the way ahead for R&R. Milestone has been delayed by a request to revise the report with more information on temporary accommodation and the enhanced maintenance and improvement option.
Strategic Case presented to the Houses <i>Early 2024 (Changed from December 2023) NOT STARTED</i>	The Client Board will consider whether a motion should be put to both Houses regarding next steps. In any event, engagement with Members and others will continue throughout 2024.
2024/25 Delivery Authority Budget Approved <i>March 2024 ONGOING</i>	Agreement to the future Delivery Authority budget based on the next steps put to both Houses.
Develop House of Commons and House of Lords Decant Plans <i>TBC 2024 ONGOING</i>	Develop plans and confirm preferred locations for the decant of both Houses if needed.

R&R Options Palace Design <i>November 2024 ONGOING</i>	Work by the Delivery Authority and in-House teams to further develop the Palace designs and proposals for R&R options.
Invitation to tender for Delivery Authority strategic partners <i>January 2025 ONGOING</i>	The Delivery Authority is planning to re-tender for the strategic partners that will deliver the works in Phase 2 of R&R.
Costed proposals presented to the Houses <i>2025 (pre-summer recess) NOT STARTED</i>	A motion will be put to both Houses to agree the R&R option to take forward into Phase 2 (delivery). The proposals will include costs, timescales, deliverability, temporary accommodation proposals, and risk for all three options.

During a General Election period, the R&R Programme can continue to develop the designs and proposals for the works. The area of work most affected by the dissolution of Parliament will be engagement with Members of both Houses and the R&R Boards. The R&R Client Team will work with new incoming Members and any new board members to ensure they are fully supported to take informed decisions around R&R.

In respect of contingency plans, any delay to a decision on a preferred way forward and approval of fully costed proposals for the works in 2025 will not affect ongoing works to keep the estate safe, such as works on the exterior of Victoria Tower and on the flat roofs, stonework, mechanical and electrical systems, and fire safety works—all of which are due to start ahead of the main R&R works.

Q. In the interests of transparency, a more detailed explanation of the rationale for Mr Goldstone's performance bonus and how it was calculated.

Response provided by the Delivery Authority

All elements of the Delivery Authority's pay and remuneration are set by the Delivery Authority's Board, based on rigorous benchmarking against other organisations delivering large-scale projects. The Delivery Authority's pay framework is therefore designed to attract and retain the highly expert people needed to design and deliver a major programme of the magnitude, complexity and profile of R&R.

The organisation was established in 2020, with the pay and reward framework agreed by the newly established Board based on independent benchmarking commissioned prior to the establishment of the Delivery Authority. The Chief Executive of the organisation was appointed in January 2020 and took up the post in July 2020 at a salary of £300k per annum with the contractual entitlement to receive a discretionary performance related bonus of up to 60% of his salary.

Performance-related pay is determined by the Delivery Authority Board (specifically by non-executive board members of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee). The Committee determined that it was not appropriate to pay any discretionary bonuses for the year 2020/21, given both the wider environment within which the Delivery Authority was operating in the light of the pandemic, and that the organisation was in its infancy, but it agreed that any bonus awarded for the year 2021/22 would also take into account (for the limited number of individuals that were eligible for a bonus in that first year) performance during 2020/21.

Hence, the performance awards paid in 2022 covered (where appropriate) performance over the two years since the Delivery Authority was established.

Performance awards for all Executive Directors, including the Chief Executive, are based on the Delivery Authority's performance against the Organisational Performance Scorecard, which comprises a range of performance measures and targets agreed by the Delivery Authority Board at the start of each financial year. Individual performance awards are weighted between organisational performance (as defined by the agreed Organisational Performance Scorecard) and individual delivery; the level of weighting is determined by the Nomination and Remuneration Committee each year.

The agreed organisational performance score for 2021/22 was 73.6%. This was audited and agreed by the Delivery Authority's Internal Audit function and reviewed and confirmed by the Risk, Assurance and Audit Committee (again made up of non-executive board members). The score was further scrutinised and agreed by the Delivery Authority's Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

In determining the awards paid in 2022, the Committee was also cognisant of the Programme uncertainty that existed following the reset earlier that year and the risk that such actions created around staff retention.

It should also be noted that the Delivery Authority's reward framework does not have the same terms and conditions (such as an equivalent pension scheme) as public sector bodies against which it is often compared.

Regarding Mr Goldstone's performance award specifically, as mentioned above, his contractual entitlement for an annual performance award is up to 60% of his base salary which in 2021/22 was £300k meaning that the maximum annual performance award he could be eligible for that year was £180k.

Taking into account the organisational performance award score, and including a pro-rated adjustment to also cover performance for 2020/21, Mr Goldstone was paid a total of £168,120. Of this, £35,640 related to the period 2020/21 effectively giving Mr Goldstone a bonus of £132,480 for the year 2021/22.

The Committee may wish to note that performance awards paid for the 2022/23 financial year were capped, with the majority of colleagues receiving an amount up to 25% of their contractual entitlement (an entitlement which ranged from 10% to 60%). The disclosures in the Delivery Authority's 2022/23 Annual Report and Accounts reflected that the level of awards made amounted to half of the proportion of total pay costs of those made in 2021/22. Full details of the 2022/23 awards, which were paid in August 2023, will be disclosed in the 2023/24 Annual Report and Accounts.

A new requirement has now been included in the Accounting Officer's Delegation letter (most recently sent from the Corporate Officers to the Delivery Authority's Chief Executive as its Accounting Officer in September 2023), which requires the Delivery Authority to give reasonable notice to the Corporate Officers of any proposal to make bonus payments.

Response from Tom Goldsmith and Patsy Richards

The Speaker of the House of Commons, writing on behalf of the House of Commons Commission, wrote to the Chair of the Delivery Authority Board in December 2023 to request,

in light of the current economic climate, that the Delivery Authority's Nomination and Remuneration Committee not make any performance awards for 2023/24. The Committee has confirmed it will consider the letter and respond in due course.

Concerns for safety

Q. How you will communicate with staff and members about the works on the Estate

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

Both Houses have a statutory duty to consult and communicate with employees and trade union-appointed staff representatives on matters that could affect health and safety.³ A variety of consultative and collaborative groups (for example, the Parliamentary Safety Assurance Board (PSAB), the Fire Safety Committee and the Lords and Commons Health and Safety Committees) exist across Parliament which focus on health and safety and enable open communication and dialogue between the management teams and the wider parliamentary community. The Houses have a strong relationship with the trades unions and actively seek to collaborate on health and safety matters to ensure that Trade Union members are provided with clear information relating to anything which could affect health and safety. A network of health and safety coordinators are also in place throughout Parliament, who provide a key communication link between the health, safety and management teams and parliamentary staff and members. The health and safety intranet site on Parlinet provides key information and is accessible to parliamentary staff and Members and their staff.

Significant issues or areas of concern which could have an impact on the safety of staff and Members would be raised by direct communication in a timely manner, for example by emails and direct briefings and also via the relevant parliamentary health and safety committees and executive boards. Further to Member feedback, the Houses are also undertaking more proactive targeted communications to Members affected by maintenance issues, for example in-person visits, posters and/or letters, engaging with Members' staff and whips' offices, and targeted Member emails.

An independent review in 2022 into Parliament's safety culture and related organisational and governance structures, recommended bringing together and actively managing all safety improvement initiatives within the discipline of a single, overarching transformation programme to ensure that safety is prioritised across all areas of Parliament. This recommendation has been accepted and methods for communication will be reviewed to enhance the way that information is delivered regarding the works on the Estate.

The letter from the Committee Chair specifically refers to communications with those who work on the Estate about Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). Information has been communicated in the following ways:

- Members affected by RAAC in Committee Corridor North and South were emailed directly on 4 October 2023 by the Accommodation Team;
- A general message was posted about RAAC on the intranet outlining the RAAC issue and approach on 18 October;

³ Under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

- FAQs on RAAC were developed to support managers in the House to share information on RAAC;
- Offices affected by RAAC surveys continued to be contacted directly by the Accommodation Team either in person or via email;
- Those based in offices subjected to propping (whereby a type of adjustable post or brackets is secured into the wall to take the structural load) were invited to view the spaces to ensure they were comfortable with the arrangement of the room once the work had been completed.

Communication about RAAC will continue in 2024 as longer-term solutions are progressed. A more general update on RAAC is provided below.

Q. What mechanisms are currently in place to ensure people's safety on the Estate

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

There are numerous established mechanisms in place across Parliament to ensure the health and safety of staff, Members, visitors, third parties and contractors while on the Estate. Parliament has implemented a proactive safety management system (SMS) which is based on the Health and Safety Executive's "Plan, Do, Check, Act" model. This model requires a continual improvement-based approach towards health and safety management, and places emphasis on the proactive ownership and management of health and safety risk throughout all areas of the organisation. This includes proactive monitoring, inspections and auditing of parliamentary buildings and facilities.

A new strategic post—the Director of Parliamentary Safety—was created following the independent 2022 review of safety management at Parliament. Katherine Pickard was appointed to the role in October 2023, following an open recruitment process. The 2022 review identified that this director role was necessary to provide strategic leadership and direction for health and safety across both Houses. The review also highlighted several areas requiring improvement, notably safety culture and governance arrangements, and the Director of Parliamentary Safety will now take ownership for the development and implementation of a safety transformation programme across Parliament, as well as working closely with the Restoration & Renewal Programme to develop a long-term strategy for health and safety management.

The Parliamentary Safety Team reviews accident and incident data monthly to identify trends and areas for improvement wherever possible and provides mid-year and end of year assurance reports to the executive teams of both Houses. The Parliamentary Safety Team also actively works with other parliamentary teams, including R&R, risk and maintenance, to identify potential areas for concern or possible innovations within safety that could be of interest to the parliamentary community.

A team of specialist health and safety professionals are employed across Parliament, including in the House of Commons central Governance Office (who provide assurance to both Houses that safety is being managed in line with policy) as well as Strategic Estates and Parliamentary Maintenance (PMST) departments. Individuals employed within roles that are responsible for health and safety are provided further training and development opportunities to ensure their knowledge remains competent and up to date.

Additional safety mechanisms implemented across Parliament include:

- A safety risk management framework has been established which underpins the approach to safety and critical business risks, in line with the industry standard “three lines of defence” risk management protocol—first line defence is provided by Parliament’s operational teams delivering and managing works; second line of defence support is provided via the Parliamentary Safety Team who provide strategic direction to Parliament in relation to current and emerging risks; and third line defence is provided through independent scrutiny and assurance for health and safety via the internal Audit Team.
- Annual assurance and monitoring plans are in place with annual audit schedules agreed and monitored for effectiveness by the PSAB.
- Accident, incident and near miss rates are captured and analysed for trends and key risks; significant incidents or those with the potential to cause harm are investigated and remedial action is undertaken as a priority where necessary.
- Proactive monitoring of safety conditions is undertaken throughout the year across the Estate, including safety inspections, safety tours, spot checks and formal audits and deep-dive reviews.
- A suite of policies, procedures and guidance documents is produced, implemented and cascaded to all relevant teams by the Parliamentary Safety Team.
- Staff safety coordinators are in place across Parliament who are responsible for the development and implementation of safety actions within their defined areas, as well as for supporting and encouraging staff to take ownership of safety while on the Estate.
- A pre-planned maintenance (PPM) system is in place which follows the SFG 20 maintenance standard and protocol. Records of maintenance (both pre-planned and reactive) are held on an asset management system (Planon).
- Life-cycle maintenance and upgrade works for critical safety related systems are in place and are monitored for compliance against regulatory requirements by the Parliamentary Safety Team and subject specialist compliance managers, for example asbestos compliance and fire compliance.
- A 24/7 fire safety team undertakes proactive inspections and monitoring across the Estate. All contractor works which have the potential for fire risk are managed under a permit-to-work process and hot works (any activity or process that generates a source of ignition) are strictly controlled—fire watch protocols are in place for all hot works to minimise the risk of fires during construction.
- Masonry safety inspections and proactive maintenance works are undertaken to monitor and manage the condition of masonry across the Estate.
- Health and safety induction training is provided to all staff of both Houses as part of mandatory essentials e-learning training package which must be undertaken annually. Specialist training courses are provided for staff required to undertake safety related works, for example working at height, manual handling etc.
- All staff, Members, contractors and visitors are actively encouraged to report any concerns or defects while on the Estate.
- A contractor management system is in place across Parliament, with high-risk works managed under the permit-to-work process. Formal monitoring and evaluation of works is a critical component of this process.
- A team of construction design management advisors are employed by Parliament who provide guidance and oversight of construction works.
- Various health and safety committee and governance functions have been established to monitor safety performance across Parliament and to provide scrutiny to verify that Parliament is meeting its obligations and that it is consulting and

engaging with the workforce. These include the PSAB, the Fire Safety Committee and the Lords and Commons Health and Safety Committees.

Q. An update on asbestos and RAAC on the Estate

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

Update on asbestos

Since we wrote to you on 5 October 2023, there has been one incident in Parliament in which Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) was found to have been partially exposed in an isolated area of the Palace basement. An investigation into the incident is currently being undertaken by the Parliamentary Safety Team. Control protocols were implemented immediately following the discovery of the incident, including restricting any unauthorised persons from entering the area while tests were undertaken. A full air sampling test was carried out by a UKAS-accredited contractor, which confirmed that no asbestos fibres had been released and that the ACM was intact and remained in good condition. Following confirmation from the air test, it was determined by the Parliamentary Safety Team that the incident did not meet the threshold for reporting to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2015. Remedial works have since been undertaken to seal the material and visible warning signs have been installed on the ACM to prevent accidental exposure reoccurring.

Monitoring of asbestos on the Parliamentary Estate

Known ACMs across the Estate continue to be regularly monitored and condition checked, and a live asbestos register is held and maintained which details the location, type, and condition of ACMs. Parliament has set out its measures for the control of asbestos in its Policy Supplement 10 (Asbestos Management), with the absolute intent to ensure ACMs are well controlled across the Estate. This is achieved through implementation of controls consisting of training, management surveys, asbestos management plans, restricting access and, where relevant, ACM remediation carried out by a licenced asbestos removal contractor. Parliament actively monitors the condition of ACMs and has a retained asbestos analytical consultant on site, as well as a designated Asbestos Compliance Manager, to facilitate discharge of duties.

In respect of longer-term strategies to remove asbestos, Policy Supplement 10 makes a commitment to consider asbestos removal when carrying out projects. This has, for example, led to the removal of ACMs in Norman Shaw North as part of the works in that building. We will continue to monitor the opportunities to remove ACMs where appropriate.

Update on RAAC

Since our last letter to the Committee, the assessment of RAAC in the Palace and across the wider Estate has progressed well.

Surveys and propping

All the remaining RAAC surveys in the Palace have now been completed. There are a handful of spaces remaining to be checked in other buildings on the Estate which will be carried out soon.

To date, RAAC has only been identified in the two previously reported locations: the 'T Block' area next to the Commons Court and the Upper Committee Corridor North/Upper Committee Corridor South area.

The surveys of 'T Block' area are complete and no immediate works are required in the offices. A lobby area and toilets in 'T Block' will require some mitigation measures (mostly propping)—these spaces have been locked off and will be addressed as part of the long-term solution.

As raised in our letter dated 18 October, mitigation measures were required to some rooms along Upper Committee Corridor North and South. In total, 16 spaces were identified as needing temporary propping. 14 spaces have been completed, with two toilet spaces on Upper Committee Corridor South still to be propped (which are currently locked off). In addition, there will need to be a readjustment of the propping already installed in one office. This is because while the room is now safe, it is not practical to use as office space and requires some adjustment to the design of the propping. For the remaining spaces, propping will be installed as soon as possible once the design is completed and approved.

Propping is an interim measure recommended by the Institution of Structural Engineers. Areas that have been propped will be inspected weekly by a specialist inspector and areas with RAAC will be inspected at regular intervals (the frequency is determined by its condition and guidance from the structural engineers).

Longer term solutions for RAAC

Planning and design is underway to develop the long-term solution for the areas affected by RAAC in both the Upper Committee Corridor North and South and in 'T Block'. The initial designs are expected to be produced in February 2024 and will then be reviewed and costed to identify the best solution. Following this, a project will be started to carry out the work.

Q. A commitment to update us annually on progress with identifying and dealing with asbestos and RAAC on the Estate

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith and Simon Burton

We would be happy to provide the Committee with an annual update on identifying and dealing with asbestos and RAAC on the Estate for the duration of the Committee's inquiry into Restoration and Renewal.

Support from the public, staff, supply chain and Members

Q. How the needs of staff and Members will be incorporated into the design of the future Palace

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith, Simon Burton and Patsy Richards

The Corporate Officers have a statutory duty to consult Members of both Houses, under the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019. The Act also specifies that the Corporate Officers must make arrangements to seek the views of members of the wider parliamentary community and the public. There is also a duty under the Act for the Corporate Officers to "promote public understanding of the purposes of the Restoration and Renewal

Programme.” In keeping with these statutory requirements, there is a commitment to engage with Members, the parliamentary community and the public throughout the Programme.

In 2023 the R&R Client Team engaged extensively with Members and the wider parliamentary community to support the shortlisting process. This included:

- Holding prominent engagement stands in both Houses (Portcullis House, the Royal Gallery and the River Restaurant) to engage with Members and passholders across the parliamentary community in the spring and summer;
- More than 60 1:1 engagement interviews with Members of both Houses in the spring (with over 150 Members invited);
- Continuing the R&R Palace Tours for Members, showing the basement and the medieval Cloister Court (over 140 Members or Members’ staff attended a tour);
- Members of the R&R Client Team presented to and sought views from 11 parliamentary committees in the spring and eight in the autumn, as well as to a range of political party groups in both Houses and the Whips’ offices; and
- Approximately 350 engagement sessions with parliamentary staff subject matter experts (SMEs), in working groups, workshops and meetings, with many more 1:1 meetings to brief individuals on, and seek input to, option and design development.

As set out in our letter dated 1 November, the engagement conducted with Members to date has fed into the work of the R&R Programme Board and many of the concerns raised by Members about the condition of the Palace, as well as the differing views expressed about how the works should be delivered, are reflected in the Board’s recommended shortlist of options for the R&R works. In addition, the technical engagement carried out with parliamentary staff SMEs has fed into the Delivery Authority’s developing designs for the Palace.

In 2024 there will be a range of Member and passholder engagement activities delivered to support the development of options for the Palace and temporary accommodation. The programme’s Member consultation strategy and plans will be refreshed early in 2024. In advance of the strategy refresh, engagement is also being planned to inform the development of options for temporary accommodation to ensure that any temporary facilities meet the needs of Members.

The R&R Client Team will continue to engage regularly and provide updates to relevant parliamentary committees, party groups and trades unions. Planning is underway to engage new members of both Houses on R&R, particularly following a General Election, to provide a thorough induction to the programme ahead of future decisions to be taken by the Houses on a costed proposal.

The R&R Client Team will also continue in 2024 to deliver a broad programme of technical engagement, with the Delivery Authority, through working groups and workshops with SMEs from a wide range of parliamentary teams. Technical engagement work planned in 2024 includes the conclusion of engagement on significant design choices and finalising requirements in areas that still require development or review. Other specific examples include:

- engagement related to the R&R enabling works will begin with specific parliamentary teams;

- the R&R Client Team and House of Lords officials will start the revalidation of the design work for the QEII Conference Centre, which remains the preferred decant location for the House of Lords; and
- the R&R Client Team will work with Strategic Estates to develop clear proposals for how the northern estate can be refurbished and to produce and assure the enhanced maintenance improvement option for the works.

Q. How the programme plans to engage with the public

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith, Simon Burton and Patsy Richards

In May 2022 the Sponsor Body published its "Understanding the Public's Views" report, summarising the findings from engaging with over 20,000 people across the UK.⁴ This was the first stage of public view-seeking and the engagement activities ranged from in-depth discussion groups, online forums, surveys, school debates, workshops and quantitative research.

To date, there have been six waves of public polling conducted between November 2020 and most recently in November 2023. The R&R Client Team will continue to procure further waves of public polling with relevant and updated questions according to Programme milestones.

The R&R Client Team will deliver public engagement activities across the UK, seeking the views of the public. This will be in addition to more specific public engagement activities in Member constituencies hosted through our existing engagement with local government in regions and nations.

R&R and maintenance scope

Q. Please set out a worked example of the 'R&R test' so we can see how it works in practice

Response provided by Tom Goldsmith, Simon Burton, Patsy Richards, and David Goldstone

As set out in our letter to the Committee of 1 November 2023, the R&R test is applied to all projects at initiation and at each business case stage to identify the work that is required now which cannot wait for R&R to begin. We listed in that letter the various factors that are considered as part of the R&R test.

Two recent examples where the R&R test has been carried out include parliamentary projects related to emergency services network and wifi (July 2022) and the external fabric of the Victoria Tower (August 2023). The R&R tests in both these instances were carried out at the full business case stage (and, in the case of the Victoria Tower, also at the earlier outline business case stage). The outcome of both tests confirmed that Parliament should retain the scope of the project. Worked examples of these tests are provided separately to the Committee and are requested not to be published for security and commercial considerations.

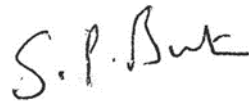
We hope the information provided is helpful. Please let us know if you require anything further.

⁴ Available at www.restorationandrenewal.uk/news/understanding-the-publics-view-report-published

Yours sincerely,




Tom Goldsmith
Clerk of the House



Simon Burton, Clerk of the
Parliaments, House of Lords



Patsy Richards, Interim Managing Director,
Restoration and Renewal Client Team and SRO



David Goldstone, CEO,
Restoration and Renewal
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