



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

Minutes

Tuesday 15 December 2020

Attendance

- Lord Speaker (Chairman)
- Lord McFall of Alcluith (Deputy Chairman)
- Baroness Doocey
- Mathew Duncan (external member)
- Baroness Evans of Bowes Park
- Liz Hewitt (external member)
- Lord Judge
- Lord Laming
- Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
- Lord Newby
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord Wakeham

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments, was in attendance. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams.

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Commission agreed the record of discussion of the previous meeting of the House of Lords Commission of 30 November.

Lord McFall of Alcluith said that the work on the role of Senior Responsible Owners on major projects and programmes continued at that he, Baroness Doocey and Mathew Duncan would report to the Commission in due course.

2. Strategic Review of the Restoration and Renewal Programme: Draft Report and Annexes November 2020

Draft report of the Strategic Review of the Restoration and Renewal Programme, Cover Note on Outcome and Next Steps by Sarah Johnson, Chief Executive of the R&R Sponsor Body

C/19-21/79 HIGHLY RESTRICTED: COMMERCIAL

Items 2 and 3 were considered together.

Kate Meanwell, one of the House of Lords R&R Directors, presented the paper.
[Restricted Access – More Information].

The Commission **noted** the Draft Report.

3. Strategic Review of the Restoration and Renewal Programme: Draft Report, Outcome and Next Steps: Commentary from Lords R&R Directors

Kate Meanwell and Judith Brooke, House of Lords R&R Directors
C/19-21/80 HIGHLY RESTRICTED: COMMERCIAL

Items 2 and 3 were considered together. The Commission **noted** the paper.

4. External Management Review: Draft Report

Keith Leslie, External Reviewer and Liz Mohr, Deputy External Reviewer
C/19-21/81 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

Keith Leslie, the External Reviewer and Liz Mohr, the Deputy External Reviewer, presented the Draft Report. Mr Leslie explained how they had carried out the review and said that they had spoken to over 50 Members and many more members of staff. He also said that they had consulted widely on the contents of the report and tried to build broad support for the successful implementation of the recommendations for change. He summarised the main themes of the report and some of the 'headline' findings and proposals which included a statutory basis for the Commission, a new Oversight Panel, a new Chief Operating Officer and the future role of the Clerk of the Parliaments. On implementation, he advised against 'cherry picking', explaining that the recommendations should be viewed as a single package of proposals for change. He suggested that some of the proposals could be taken forward swiftly and he emphasised that the responsibility for implementation was a shared one for both Members and staff.

[Restricted Access – More Information].

The Commission **noted** the Draft Report and **agreed** to discuss the contents of the report further at an additional meeting in early January on a date and at a time to be determined.

5. Audit Committee Progress Report: May to November 2020

Liz Hewitt, Chair of the Audit Committee
C/19-21/82 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Lord Speaker explained that this was Ms Hewitt's final meeting. He thanked her for her service as Chair of the Audit Committee and as an external member of the Commission.

[Restricted Access – More Information].

Ms Hewitt said that internal controls and the quality of annual reporting had improved in the time she had spent as Chair of the Audit Committee thanks to the hard work of the internal audit function and the work of the Audit Committee members and staff. Mathew Duncan, Ms Hewitt's successor as Chair of the Committee, thanked her for her hard work and for the time she had taken to carry out a comprehensive hand-over.

The Commission **noted** the Report.

6. Update on the Administration

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments
C/19-21/83 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

Covid-19 Update and Tier Three Restrictions

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments
C/19-21/84 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Clerk of the Parliaments presented both papers and explained the impact of the tier three restrictions which would enter into force in London the following day. He also updated the Commission on the number of Members and staff present on the Estate over the preceding week and the number of suspected and confirmed cases of Coronavirus. After discussion, the Commission **agreed** that all Members' staff – save for those supporting Ministers, frontbenchers or members with disabilities who could not do so remotely – should be asked to work remotely and not to work on the Estate. The Commission also **agreed** that the sale of alcohol should cease in the House of Lords venues that remained open.

The Commission **noted** the Update.

7. Any Other Business

The Commission Secretary drew Commission members' attention to the video clip circulated earlier in the week showing staff successes and achievements since the start of the pandemic.

8. Next meeting

The Lord Speaker informed Commission members that the next meeting would take place via Microsoft Teams on Monday 18 January.

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