

Terms of reference: House of Commons Administration Estimate Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Committee has the following terms of reference, which are approved by the House of Commons Commission.

TYPE OF GROUP

Consultative

PURPOSE OF GROUP

The Committee supports the Accounting Officer in discharging his responsibilities under the Administration Estimate, particularly with regard to the maintenance of an effective system of internal control. The Committee also provides assurance to the Accounting Officer and the Commission that risk is being managed effectively by the organisation. As part of that function the Audit Committee provides oversight of policies that address anti-fraud and corruption, and whistleblowing. The Committee's objective is to give assurance to the Accounting Officer on:

- The effectiveness of the system of governance, risk management and internal control (referred to collectively as the "system of internal control")
- The integrity of the Annual Accounts
- The work of the internal audit service
- The external audit by the external auditor
- Other matters as may be referred to it by either the Accounting Officer or the Commission

In January 2023 the Committee agreed that it would consider the Restoration and Renewal programme (and other bicameral topics as needed) when meeting jointly with their counterparts in the House of Lords.

GROUP OWNER (*FORMERLY CALLED "REPORTING AUTHORITY"*)

This group was established by a decision of the House of Commons Commission on 15 May 2000.

REMIT OF GROUP

The Administration Estimate Audit and Risk Assurance Committee pursues its purpose and fulfils its responsibilities on behalf of the Commission and, as it deems appropriate, shall draw any matters arising within these terms of reference to the attention of the Commission.

STRATEGIC LINK

In supporting activities across the House Service the group contributes towards the delivery of all the strategic goals in the House Service Strategy 2019-2025.

MEMBERSHIP (INCLUDING CHAIR)

The membership of the Committee shall be:

- Up to 4 MP members, including:
 - A Member of the House of Commons Commission
 - A Member of the Finance Committee
- Up to 3 external Members, appointed by the Commission

In January 2020 the House of Commons Commission agreed to increase the number of MP members on the Administration Estimate Audit and Risk Assurance Committee from 3 to 4.

PROCESS FOR SELECTING CHAIR

The Chair shall be appointed by the Commission from amongst the external members of the Committee.

RULES FOR DECISION MAKING/QUORUM

The quorum of the Committee shall be 3.

SECRETARY

The Private Secretary to the Clerk of the House acts as Secretary to this Committee.

FREQUENCY AND LENGTH OF MEETINGS

The Administration Estimate Audit and Risk Assurance Committee normally meets four times a year with each meeting lasting up to two hours. The Committee also meets with its counterparts in the House of Lords three times a year.

Meetings are scheduled by the Chair. Supplementary meetings may be convened with the agreement of the Chair.

REPORTING

- Minutes will be taken at each meeting by the secretary and stored on the group's Sharepoint site.
 - The Chair reports its findings to the House of Commons Commission following each meeting. The Audit Committee will annually review its own effectiveness and report the results to the Board.
- The secretary can be contacted for information about records of the group.

CULTURE STATEMENT

This group commits to upholding the values and the Behaviour Code.

DATE THE GROUP OWNER LAST AGREED THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

27/2/2023

DATE GROUP LAST AGREED THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Updated in January 2023

NEXT REVIEW DUE BY

Next review date: Date the group owner last reviewed the terms of reference + 1 year