# MINUTES

R&R Programme Board

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| **Meeting date** | 21 May 2024 |
| **Meeting location** | Ministerial Conference Room, Palace of Westminster |
| **Meeting time** | 13:00-16:00 |

## Attendees

| Programme Board | Officials |
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| Nigel Evans MP | Dr Patsy Richards (Client Team) |
| Lord Vaux of Harrowden | Charlotte Simmonds (Client Team/Commons) |
| Mark Tami MP | James Young (Client Team) |
| Sir Edward Leigh MP | Andy Helliwell (Lords) |
| Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury | Michael Torrance (Lords) |
| Lord Collins of Highbury | David Goldstone (Delivery Authority) |
| Simon Burton | Mike Everett (Commons) |
| Tom Goldsmith | Meg Conway Wait (Client Team) |
| Dr Michele Dix | Chris Elliott (Commons) |
| Sir Jonathan Stephens | Mike Brown (Delivery Authority) |
| Steve Hails | Emma Downing (Client Team) |
| Wera Hobhouse MP | Matt White (Delivery Authority) |

## 1. Welcome and Standing Items

Nigel Evans MP chaired the meeting.

Apologies were received from Paul Duffree.

The Programme Board agreed to the publication of the minutes of the meeting on 23 April.

There were no matters arising.

## 2. Update from Managing Director of the Client Team and monthly highlight report

The Managing Director (MD) of the Client Team (CT) updated the Board. Following publication of the Strategic Case, CT had issued the Delivery Authority (DA) with a revised task brief. The DA had been asked to pause engagement on strategic partner procurement until after the General Election and given clarification for timescales and work on temporary accommodation, to allow the EMI option to clarify its requirement for this. The DA had also been tasked with looking at whether the decant and continued presence options could be phased. The DA said they were responding in line with the revised task brief. A revised schedule will be shared with the Board in July.

The Parliamentary Works Estimates Commission (PWEC) had laid the DA's Estimate and published a short report. This advised the Commissions to set a definite Phase 1 Expenditure Limit. Client Board would discuss PWEC's recommendation at their meeting on 10 June.

The Board discussed the monthly highlight report. The temporary accommodation milestone for EMI to clarify its temporary accommodation needs had been delayed. Delays to acquiring any locations needed for temporary accommodation may impact when main R&R works can start. Board Members noted that the impact of decisions on timescales needed to be better understood. It was requested that CT would make clearer the impact any decisions the Boards would be asked to take might have on timescales and schedule.

The R&R Programme Board **noted** the update from the MD of the Client Team and April highlight report.

## 3. Role and work of the Delivery Authority Board

Mike Brown, Chair of the DA Board, gave the Board a presentation on the role and responsibilities of the DA Board. The DA Chair discussed plans for the recruitment of a new Chief Executive, noting it was important to get the right person for the stage that the programme would be at. The Chair welcomed any input from Programme Board on the recruitment process. Board Members asked the DA Chair for his reflections on the last four years. He noted that lack of progress had been frustrating but said the new governance arrangements were working well, with progress being made over the last year.

The R&R Programme Board **noted** the role and responsibilities of the Delivery Authority Board.

## 4. Engaging the parliamentary staff community with R&R

CT officials briefed the Board on the engagement which has already taken place, and the further work planned, noting that staff included both parliamentary and Members' staff. During the discussion, the following points were made:

- Staff wanted to know how their feedback is being fed into decision making. Board Member attendance at staff events was highly appreciated.

- A Board Member discussed engagement on accessibility and suggested this should not be limited to staff already working here. Efforts should be made to engage with external organisations who represent those with disabilities to make the Palace as accessible as possible.
- The Accounting Officers noted that more was needed on the engagement front next year for costed proposals. CT confirmed it was working with the Communication Directors to coordinate engagement and internal communications around costed proposals.
- The Accounting Officers noted it was important to reach all members of staff, including cleaners, plumbers, and kitchen staff (the 'estate-based community'). These were staff often on site the most and it was important their voices and views were heard. CT confirmed that engagement activities took place at different times, e.g. early mornings, to ensure these staff were reached.
- Board Members noted it was important to ensure that staff views were fed directly into their decision making. CT agreed to consider metrics on engagement activities that could be included in programme highlight reports and inclusion of engagement feedback in Board papers.
- Board Members noted that future engagement should be clear on the progress made, and should make a clear distinction between ongoing maintenance works and R&R.

The R&R Programme Board **noted** the past and proposed parliamentary staff engagement activity and **agreed** that the Board would consider key messages for future engagement at their June meeting.

## 5. Amending the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019

CT and House of Lords officials briefed the Board on the implications of amending the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019. Officials noted that regardless of whether the Act was amended, the programme would still have an agreed funding envelope for the works. An amended funding approval process could be determined involving approvals by R&R governing bodies, which would be more in line with the funding approvals process for other major programmes.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- Board Members asked if anything in the current Act prevented progress or work being done this year. CT confirmed the Act did not present any barriers in this regard, although under the Act main R&R works could not commence until the Houses had agreed costed proposals. Client Team agreed to share a paper confirming the status of proposed enabling and early works .
- Doing works to the inside of Victoria Tower alongside external works would be possible under the Act as it met a set of criteria used to assess compliance of enabling and early works with the Act and a value for money case could made. However, this could not be delivered by the DA under the current terms of the Act and would need to be delivered by Strategic Estates.

- Board Members noted that it was important to
decide on a way forward first and only amend the Act if it was necessary for this.
- Board Members noted that the Houses would need full information on costs when they are asked to agree a way forward on R&R.
- A Board member suggested that advice be sought from external bodies like that IPA and HMT on the most appropriate process and form of funding approvals for a major programme like R&R and Client Team confirmed they were already engaging with these bodies.
- The Board discussed the form of the decision that the Houses would be asked to take in 2025. Board Members expressed a preference for one option being recommended to the Houses for approval.

The R&R Programme Board **noted** the implications of amending the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019 and **invited** the Client Board to agree high-level assumptions to inform further work if it considers amending the Act to be desirable.

## 6. R&R Annual Progress Report

CT officials briefed the Board on the annual progress report.

The R&R Programme Board **endorsed** the annual progress report for submission to the Client Board, covering the period April 2023 to March 2024.

## 7. Any other Business and date of next meeting

The Board noted the forward look. The date of the next meeting would be 25 June 2024.