UK Parliament

MINUTES

R&R Programme Board Sub Board

Meeting date	18 March 2025
Meeting location	Ministerial Conference Room, Palace of Westminster
Meeting time	14:00–16:00

Attendees

Programme Board Sub Board	Officials
Lord Vaux of Harrowden (Chair)	Richard Colleran (R&R Client Team) (for Item 2)
Marie Goldman MP	James Court-Martin (Lords)
Mark Tami MP	Chris Elliott (Commons)
Dr Michele Dix	Andy Helliwell (Lords)
Paul Duffree	Russ MacMillan (Delivery Authority)
Steve Hails	Catherine Murphy (Delivery Authority)
Sir Jonathan Stephens	Danielle Nash (R&R Client Team)
	Stuart Ramsay (R&R Client Team)
	Vicky Rock (Commons)
	Scott Simmons (Commons)
	Charlotte Simmonds (R&R Client Team)
	Jenni Singleton (R&R Client Team)
	Holly Titford (R&R Client Team) (for Item 5)
	Bev Weston (Commons)
	James Young (R&R Client Team)

1. Welcome and standing items

Lord Vaux welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Sub Board agreed to the publication of the minutes of the meeting on 11 February 2025.

2. R&R assurance—lines of defence

Officials from the Client Team briefed the Sub Board.

The Sub Board noted that both the DA and SE had second line assurance in place on the feasibility of the designs for each option. The DA had undertaken more assurance than SE given the time the delivery options had been being worked on.

Sub Board members discussed the scope of third line assurance for all options and noted that this was dependent on the stage of design development. More third line assurance would be expected as the designs progressed.

Sub Board members noted that broader assurance as to the feasibility of the design options would be provided by an Independent Advice and Assurance Panel (IAAP) review—which the two Accounting Officers would commission—and that this would be published alongside or before the report on the costed proposals.

Sub Board members noted that Grant Thornton had identified differences in assumptions used across the options but they did not comment on which assumptions should be used.

Sub Board members noted the ongoing work by the DA and SE to identify differences in their assumptions and to distinguish where these represented differences in approach to delivery and where alignment would be appropriate. The Sub Board requested to be kept updated on the results of this work, and requested that the Client Team consider how to involve the external Board members and the Chair of the Sub Board in the alignment work.

The R&R Sub Board noted the lines of assurance which have been conducted on the programme to date and the plans for further independent assurance.

3. Assessment of the delivery options—economy and cost

Officials from the Client Team briefed the Sub Board.

Sub Board members discussed different assumptions used by DA and SE, for example in relation to productivity, working time and preliminary costs, and risk and contingency and requested that work be undertaken either to align these assumptions or to provide reasons why they would necessarily differ between options.

Sub Board members discussed the different cost profiles for the options and the drivers of these, and discussed how opportunities were calculated and presented. Some Board members asked for costs to be shown as gross rather than net because of how opportunities were being calculated.

Sub Board members requested further information and assurance as to why additional tunnelling under EMI would not materially impact the cost profile.

Sub Board members discussed differences in how work as part of the Commons Building Infrastructure Portfolio (CBIP) was included in the costs for different options. The Sub Board requested that CBIP spend which was not R&R dependent (or was option agnostic) be presented consistently across the options.

Sub Board members requested to see updated schedules for each option which aligned with the cost profiles.

Sub Board members requested a more granular breakdown of the cost profile of each option, including risks and opportunities being clearly separated.

The R&R Sub Board noted the draft Programme Board paper.

4. Assessment of the delivery options—duration

Officials from the Client Team briefed the Sub Board.

Sub Board members discussed the reasons for the different start dates under each option, and noted that what made up main works varied between the options and noted the need for clear terminology.

Sub Board members requested further clarity on the different start dates under each option, when was the earliest possible start date and definitions of what was included within enabling/pre-construction works and main works under each option.

Sub Board members commented that further clarity was needed on the status of the Northern Estate buildings and discussed the drivers for the earliest planned start date for main works.

The Sub Board discussed the different options for working hour patterns during works.

The R&R Sub Board noted the draft Programme Board paper.

5. Cost of delay

Officials from the Client Team briefed the Sub Board.

The Sub Board noted that the definition of repair and maintenance was carefully drawn to distinguish it from work under the R&R Act; and was calculated from the aggregate resource spend of maintenance across the whole estate.

Sub Board members discussed obsolescence and the need for continuing maintenance over the duration of the Programme under any option.

The R&R Sub Board noted the draft Programme Board paper.

6. Weighting and prioritisation

Sub Board members discussed whether weighting against strategic objectives would help differentiate the options.

The Sub Board indicated that it would be helpful to task the R&R Client Team with developing scenarios for assessment, but this should also include factors from the evaluation criteria considered by the Programme Board in February.

The R&R Sub Board considered it would be helpful to task the R&R Client Team with developing a number of plausible scenarios against which the delivery options could be assessed for

comparison purposes to help frame the R&R Programme Board's advice on the three delivery options to the R&R Client Board.

7. Any other business and date of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on 23 April 2025.