MINUTES

R&R Client Board

Meeting date	9 December 2024
Meeting location	Committee Room 4A
Meeting time	17:00–18:30

Attendees

Client Board	**Programme Board (in attendance)**
Rachel Blake MP	Judith Cummins
Simon Burton	Lord Vaux of Harrowden
Marianne Cwynarski	
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	**Other Members (in attendance)**
Marie Goldman MP	
Tom Goldsmith	**Officials**
Andy Helliwell	Ed Beale (Commons)
Mr Shrinivas Honap	Katya Cassidy (Client Team)
Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP (Chair)	Meg Conway Wait (Client Team)
The Earl of Kinnoull	Tanya Coff (Delivery Authority)
Lord McFall of Alcluith (Chair)	Chris Elliott (Commons)
Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall	Marek Kubala (Client Team)
Charlotte Moar	Kate Long (Lords)
Lord Newby	Alasdair Love (Lords)
Lucy Powell MP	Ed Potton (Commons)
Baroness Scott of Needham Market	Charlotte Simmonds (Client Team)
Nora Senior	Jenni Singleton (Client Team)
Baroness Smith of Basildon	Matt White (Delivery Authority)
Nick Smith MP	Bev Weston (Commons)
Lord True	Helen Wood (Commons)
Catherine Ward	James Young (Client Team)

1. Welcome and standing items

The Commons Speaker chaired the meeting.

Apologies were received from Lord McLoughlin, Lord Morse, Steve Barclay and Jesse Norman.

New Members of the Client Board were welcomed to the meeting, along with the new Chair and Deputy Chair of the Programme Board. The Client Board recorded its thanks to previous Members, and the work of Nigel Evans, chair of the Programme Board in the last Parliament.

The Client Board agreed the minutes of its last meeting.

The R&R Client Board agreed the minutes of its meeting on 26 February 2024, and that they be published.

2. Update from the Chair of the Programme Board

Judith Cummins was delighted to take on the role and noted that Programme Board membership was nearly complete. The Board met for the first time on 26 November and had a productive discussion. The Board was getting up to speed with the issues and had a series of meetings planned to support the Client Board. The Programme Board was thinking carefully about communications to ensure Members understood the decisions being made, and an all-Member email would be sent from the Chair and Deputy Chair in the new year.

The R&R Client Board <u>noted</u> the update from the Chair of the Programme Board.

3. Report on the costed proposals and 2025 programme plan

The Client Team introduced the paper noting the continued work to develop all options for a decision in 2025 that would bring this stage of the programme to a close.

The Client Board:

- noted the need for all three options to be pursued equally so that they could be compared like-for-like as far as possible, and endorsed the continuation of design and development work on the EMI option to bring it to a similar level of maturity as the full decant and continued presence options;
- discussed the need to confirm the approach on decant space, and the QEII Conference Centre. Being the Lords preferred decant location, the Board noted the ongoing discussions with MHCLG to facilitate access to QEII for surveys and noted that the information produced by the surveys would be important for understanding wider risks to the programme;
- discussed the assumption that the House of Commons would seek to use the House of Lords Chamber under the EMI BAU+ and continued presence options, and noted that the House of Lords would need to provide a view on any use of the Lords Chamber by the House of Commons once the options had been presented, noting that QEII was the preferred decant for the House of Lords Chamber;
- queried the expenditure required on the EMI option in 2025/26; Strategic Estates explained that it was required to bring the proposal to a similar level of maturity as the other options, and gave assurance it was cooperating with the DA to use surveys and work to date;
- requested information on the costs of developing each option and the costs to date [ACTION];
- noted that any legislative change required would be unlikely to take place before a decision on a preferred way forward due to the legislative programme;
- discussed the risk appetite of short-term disruptions to business of the House, particularly the Commons, under the options presented. It was noted that information about the business resilience risk as well as the potential disruption experienced under the options would form part of the information the Boards considered on the three options. [ACTION: information on level of risk appetite for short notice decant to be developed].

The R&R Client Board agreed:
a) to endorse the continuation of the design and development work on the enhanced maintenance and improvement option;
b) to note the assessment that the full decant option cannot be delivered as standalone phases of work;
c) to endorse the continuation of work to deliver the continued presence and enhanced maintenance and improvement options through standalone phases;
d) to note that staging of funding would be possible under any option;

e) the continuation of design work on a temporary House of Commons Chamber in Richmond House, and provision of a contingency Chamber, to facilitate the schedule for the full decant option;
f) the continuation of design work for House of Lords temporary accommodation; and
g) that it will consider the recommendation in the Estimate Commission's report when it considers the phase 1 expenditure limit in Spring 2025.

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4. R&R early works

The Client Team (CT) provided an overview of the opportunities for early works and the next steps.

The Client Board:

- asked about the timeframe for construction of the river jetty and expressed a desire for works to start sooner. DA officials clarified that 2030 was the need by date on the current schedule of work, but work underway meant it could be brought forward if needed. The CT confirmed that the jetty was being designed for R&R and long-term use, while opportunities to share logistics with the Holocaust Memorial project were being discussed;
- discussed the need for early understanding about the future use of spaces in the Palace, citing Cloister Court and Victoria Tower, and noting the need for expenditure to be appropriate for the space provided, and alongside appropriate consultation, the Commons should take the lead on the future use of Cloister Court and the Lords should do likewise for Victoria Tower; and
- noted the potential for Victoria Tower to provide decant/swing space in a continued presence or EMI scenario, and that some Members supported ongoing limited usage by Parliamentary Archives. The Client Board supported early progress being made.

The R&R Client Board:
a) noted the update on the river jetty and agreed that survey works in the river, required to support other Parliamentary Estate projects and which are not currently included in the Delivery Authority's river jetty scope, should be designated as 'Parliamentary building works' by the Commissions of both Houses;
b) noted the R&R Programme Board's consideration of Victoria Tower and the feasibility of internal works while the external project is underway;
c) agreed the proposed governance route for proposals to design and fit out the internal Victoria Tower spaces.

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5. Membership of the R&R Programme Board: House of Commons Trade Union Side request

The Client Team outlined the request of the House of Commons TUS President to be a member of the Programme Board. A draft reply had been proposed, with the support of the Programme Board, to enhance engagement, but decline the request.

The Client Board expressed support for increased engagement with the trade unions and stressed the importance of transparency and openness of R&R governance. It discussed how to ensure all unions were appropriately represented and how to manage commercially confidential discussions. It was agreed the Chair of Programme Board would offer to meet with the Commons TUS President to discuss increased engagement with him and other trade union representatives. Further information on the communications plan for staff was requested [ACTION].

The R&R Client Board agreed the Chair of the Programme Board would meet with the Trade Union Side President to discuss an appropriate way forward for increased engagement with the trade union

6. Independent review of the effectiveness of R&R governance

The Client Team outlined the main outcomes of the review which included consideration of a Client Board sub-group to help to manage and drive the Client Board and the Programme Board over the short term.

In discussion, the Client Board noted the risks of an additional group in the governance structure and noted the frequency of meetings, the potential for a smaller group to work through issues, meet more frequently and reduce gaps in understanding.

The R&R Client Board took note of the update.

7. Any other business and date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be Monday 10 March, 16:30–18:00.

8. R&R forward look

The R&R Client Board took note of the forward look.