



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

DECISIONS

Wednesday 23 July 2025, 10:00am–12:00 midday
in Committee Room 1 and via Teams

Attendance

- Lord Speaker (Chair)
- Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Deputy Chair)
- Earl of Kinnoull
- Lord McLoughlin
- Charlotte Moar (external member)
- Lord Morse
- Lord Newby
- Baroness Pitkeathley
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market
- Lord True

Other Members present:

- Baroness Wheeler (attending under standing order 64)

Also in attendance:

- Baroness Carberry of Muswell Hill

Also in attendance:

Fehintola Akinlose, Finance and Commercial Director; Sarah Brader, Director of Business Improvement and Culture; Judith Brooke, Lords PCD Member Governance Workstream Lead; Simon Burton, Clerk of the Parliaments; Mat Chandler, Director of Facilities; Edward Davis, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod; Alison Giles, Director of Security for Parliament; Andy Helliwell, Chief Operating Officer – *virtually*; Alix Langley, Human Resources Director; Chloe Mawson, Clerk Assistant; Stephen Penn, Head of Catering and Retail Services; Ed Potton, Commons PCD Member Governance Workstream Lead; and Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance.

Since the Commission's previous meeting on 11 June 2025, on 2 July 2025 the Commission considered by correspondence:

Receipt of China Daily bulk mailing
C/24–25/47 [RESTRICTED]

The paper proposed unsubscribing members of the House of Lords from the China Daily bulk mailing, with an option for members to individually 'opt in'.

The Commission:

- agreed to instruct the House of Lords Estates and Facilities team to arrange for members of the House of Lords to be unsubscribed from the China Daily bulk mailing but provide an option for members to individually 'opt-in'.

At the meeting on 23 July 2025, the Commission considered:

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Commission agreed the record of the discussion of the meeting of the House of Lords Commission on 11 June 2025 with redactions.

2. Update from the Clerk of the Parliaments

Clerk of the Parliaments' Update Paper [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

3. Effectiveness: People and Organisation review report

C/24–25/48 [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- endorsed the report.

4. Oversight arrangements for the Parliamentary Commercial Directorate as a joint department

C/24–25/50 [RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- provided feedback on the proposed PCD oversight arrangements, including on points made by the House of Commons Commission; and
- requested that officials return with more detailed proposals later in the year to reflect this feedback.

5. Steering Group for Change Annual Report
C/24–25/51 [RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- noted the work and impact of the Steering Group for Change, covering the period from July 2024 to July 2025;
- noted the conclusions of the Annual Report that culture changes in Parliament are still necessary to reduce longstanding harmful behaviour, that there are no ‘quick fixes’ and that experience suggests that new challenges are likely to arise in a complex organisation such as Parliament;
- noted the Steering Group for Change current term runs to July 2025, as per the decision made by the Commission in July 2022 to extend the life of the Steering Group by three years;
- agreed a three-year extension for the Steering Group to Change to July 2028, to be reviewed again by the Commission ahead of July 2028; and
- agreed to continue annual reporting to the Commission by the Steering Group for Change.

6. House of Commons – Serjeant at Arms Review
C/24–25/52 [RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- noted and endorsed the roles and responsibilities of Black Rod and Black Rod’s team in relation to access to the Lords and joint areas of the Estate; and
- noted that the new Black Rod and the wider House of Lords Administration will take into consideration recommendations from the newly created Commons Steering Group on Access policy and that any proposed changes or implementations which have bicameral impact, be they policy or physical projects, will have to be agreed through a separate process within the House of Lords before taking effect in this House or being implemented in bicameral spaces.

7. Proposed changes to catering services
C/24-25/53 [RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- agreed the Peers' Dining Room should be shut on sitting Fridays, subject to a supportive outcome from Member consultation;
- noted the trial change in services provided in the Long Room, that if made permanent will incur additional cost;
- noted the forecast increase in income expected from the revision of the facilities fees;
- noted the agreement of the Services Committee to the proposed 5% increase in catering tariffs; and
- noted that any decrease in the price of meals would constrain Catering and Retail Service's ability to generate the financial and efficiency targets sought under the financial remit recently agreed by the Commission.

8. Members' security related travel costs
C/24-25/55 [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- agreed a framework for the reimbursement of additional travel costs to Members in relation to their security.

Any other business

Security in semi-public House of Lords areas
C/24-25/56 [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- noted the security advice provided and the privacy controls in place; and
- agreed to immediately expand the use of CCTV along the visitor route during sitting and non-sitting times following security advice received, in parallel with the issuing of broader communications and engagement with the membership, and for this to be reviewed by the Services Committee in September 2025.

Strategic overview of planned works on the Parliamentary Estate
C/24-25/54 [RESTRICTED]

The Commission:

- noted the paper on the strategic overview of planned works on the Parliamentary Estate.

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