



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

MINUTES

Wednesday 3 June 2026 10:00am–12:30pm
in Committee Room 1 and online

Attendance

- Lord Speaker (Chair)
- Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede (Deputy Chair)
- Earl of Kinnoull
- Lord McLoughlin
- Alice Maynard (external member)
- Charlotte Moar (external member)
- Lord Morse
- Baroness Pitkeathley
- Lord Purvis of Tweed
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord True

Officials also in attendance:

Mathew Chandler, Director of Estates and Facilities; Marianne Cwynarski, Director General House of Commons; Jonathan Dewsbury, Interim Managing Director, Strategic Estates; Andy Helliwell, Chief Operating Officer; Alix Langley, HR Director; Paul Martin, Interim Director of Parliamentary Security; Chloe Mawson, Clerk of the Parliaments; Jessie Peramal, Interim Finance Director; Andy Piper, Technical Director, Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority; Duncan Sagar, Clerk Assistant; Charlotte Simmonds, Managing Director Restoration and Renewal Client Team; Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance; and James Whittle, Chief of Staff, Clerk of the Parliaments' Office (*virtual*).

At the meeting on 3 June 2026, the Commission considered the following:

The Commission welcomed Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede, congratulated him on his appointment as Senior Deputy Speaker, and thanked Lord Gardiner of Kimble for his work and dedication as Senior Deputy Speaker. The Commission also welcomed Jessie Peramal, the new interim Finance Director.

The Lord Speaker outlined the purpose behind the Commission awayday on 3 July, intended to enable the Commission to discuss corporate governance. In discussion the following points were noted:

- *[Restricted Access – More Information]*
- The ratio of House of Commons to House of Lords spend on joint departments and bicameral services should be considered.
- The papers for the awayday would provide specific questions for the Commission to consider.
- The awayday would provide an opportunity to discuss how the Commission operated, including its role in financial control.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Commission agreed the record of the discussion of the meeting of the House of Lords Commission on 15 April 2026, with redactions.

2. Report from the Clerk of the Parliaments

Clerk of the Parliaments' Update Paper [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

Chloe Mawson, Clerk of the Parliaments, reported to the Commission.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- *[Restricted Access – More Information]*
- The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee would report to the Commission following its meeting on 7 July 2026. *[Restricted Access – More Information]*
- Delays to debates in the Houses on the R&R Costed Proposals report would increase programme risk.

3. Report from the Interim Security Director

Interim Security Director's report [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

Paul Martin, Security Director of Parliamentary Security, reported to the Commission.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- *[Restricted Access – More Information]*
- Proposals on changing security governance would be brought to the Commission.

- The Commission would be engaged on the review of security projects that was underway.

4. Corporate Priorities and Medium-Term Financial Plan

C/26–27/1 [RESTRICTED]

Andy Helliwell, Chief Operating Officer, introduced the paper. The paper presented the joint approach of corporate and financial business planning in 2026 to inform the Medium-Term Financial Plan (2027-28 to 2029-30) and Corporate Business Plan (2027/2028).

In discussion the following points were noted:

- There was a need to measure success against the priorities.
- The vast majority of last year's priorities had been achieved. Progression against the previous year's priorities should be made explicit.
- There was concern that cuts to shared services due to the Commons' Savings and Improvement Programme would negatively impact the services received by the Lords.

The Commission:

- noted the approach to the 2027/2028 Corporate Business Plan priorities and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2026; and
- agreed to further discuss these draft documents at the awayday on 3 July 2026.

5. Financial Support for Members of the House of Lords

C/26–27/2 [HIGHLY RESTRICTED]

Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance, introduced the paper. The paper provided a review of the Members Finance Scheme.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- There was a desire that allowances for Members should be as simple as possible.
- The Commission did not agree to extend the supplementary allowance for unsalaried domestic committee chairs to investigative committee chairs.
- The decision to increase the amount Members may recover as a maximum contribution in relation to claiming for necessary parking or cost of taxis to £30 would be backdated to 1 June 2026.
- The ability to claim the full day allowance for travel on Parliamentary business would be backdated to 1 June 2026.
- Responsibility for not claiming a full day allowance if claiming subsistence when travelling for an interparliamentary assembly would be the responsibility of the individual Member.

The Commission:

- decided that Members claiming the London accommodation cost allowance should also provide a council tax or rates bill in their name in relation to their provided registered residential address to claim travel costs;
- decided that Members should have the option of being able to claim the full or reduced rate of the daily allowance in all circumstances where the daily allowance can be claimed, except in cases of Members joining virtually for Learn with the Lords which would remain restricted to the reduced daily allowance;
- agreed that, using their own discretion, Members should not claim the full daily allowance if claiming subsistence for attendance of an interparliamentary assembly; and
- agreed the amount Members may recover as a maximum contribution in relation to claiming for necessary parking or cost of taxis increases to up to £30 for each day of attendance.

6. Repair of the House of Lords Chamber Roofs Project
C/26–27/3 [RESTRICTED - COMMERCIAL]

Mathew Chandler, Director of Estates and Facilities, Jon Dewsbury, Managing Director, Strategic Estates, and Marianne Cwynarski, Director General House of Commons, introduced the paper. This paper provided the Commission with an update on the progress of the House of Lords Chamber Roof repair project.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- The Commission requested much earlier consultation on large estates projects.
- Ways of bringing more services in-house to Strategic Estates were being explored.
- It was important that the amount budgeted for risk was used for that purpose, rather than as general contingency.
- The ability to work later in the morning before the House starts sitting would be discussed with the Parliamentary Security Department.
- The sum put aside for managing the peregrines was an allowance rather than an agreed sum.
- The Lord Speaker would host a meeting with Natural England on managing the peregrines.
- If possible, work would start earlier than the given date of October 2027.

The Commission:

- endorsed the timetable for the main works;
- endorsed the procurement outcome for these works and current schedule and cost estimates, including the key changes from the Outline Business Case to current Full Business Case, subject to further work to minimise costs;
- endorsed the measures taken to ensure the business of the House and stakeholders are not impacted during works;
- endorsed the engagement programme to ensure that stakeholders are apprised of issues and progress of the project; and

- requested that further discussion should be held with Natural England regarding managing the protected peregrines during their breeding season over the duration of the construction works.

7. Education Centre during the Restoration and Renewal Programme
C/26–27/4 [RESTRICTED]

Charlotte Simmonds, Managing Director, R&R Client Team, Andy Piper, Technical Director, Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority, and Marek Kubala, Head of Committee Engagement and Activity, introduced the paper. This paper provided information on the current assumptions relating to temporary site of the Education Centre during the R&R Programme and sought the Commission's agreement that the Education Centre be based in the Lords' preferred decant venue.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- The Commission requested further information on what the proposed Education Centre would provide.
- Some Members raised concern about the amount being spent on planning for the centre before debates on the Costed Proposals had taken place.
- Some Members queried the location of the centre, suggesting it should be kept in the existing location [*Restricted Access – More Information*]. Others felt that there was a strong case for hosting the centre in the preferred decant venue.

The Commission:

- agreed that further work should be undertaken to understand future Education Centre provision; and
- agreed that officials should continue work on the possible location of the Education Centre in the Lords' preferred decant venue during Restoration and Renewal.

8. Services Committee Update
C/26–27/5 [RESTRICTED]

Lord McLoughlin, Chair, Services Committee, updated the Commission. This paper provided the Commission with an overview of the work of the Services Committee in the last six months.

In discussion the following point was noted:

- Lord McLoughlin would write to party backbench chairs and the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers to encourage uptake of fire safety training. The Commission commended the approach of the Liberal Democrat Whips in obtaining a high uptake.
- Following concerns about cost, location on the Estate, and the appropriateness of the venue, the Services Committee did not endorse planned work to convert The Woolsack Bar into a daytime café.

The Commission noted the update.

Any Other Business

Parliamentary Works Estimates Commission: Change in Lords Membership

The Commission agreed that Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede should replace Lord Gardiner of Kimble as one of the two Lords members of the Estimates Commission.

Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security: Change in Lords Membership

The Commission agreed that the following Members of the House of Lords be appointed to the Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security:

- Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede, as Senior Deputy Speaker, in place of Lord Gardiner of Kimble;
- Lord Kinnoull in place of Lord Laming; and
- Lord Goddard of Stockport in place of Lord Stoneham of Droxford.

Alasdair Love
Secretary to the Commission

Raquel Fernández Vidal
Executive Officer to the Commission