



HOUSE OF LORDS COMMISSION

Decisions

Wednesday 12 February 2020

Attendance

- Lord Speaker (Chairman)
- Lord McFall of Alcluith (Deputy Chairman)
- Baroness Doocey
- Mathew Duncan (external member)
- Baroness Evans of Bowes Park
- Liz Hewitt (external member)
- Lord Judge
- Lord Laming
- Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
- Lord Newby
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord Wakeham

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments, was in attendance.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

As agreed at the Commission meeting on Wednesday 22 January, The Lord Speaker explained that he had written to Lord Maginnis of Drumglass about his non-compliance with security rules. The Commission discussed the response from Lord Maginnis **decided** that the Lord Speaker should respond emphasising the request for an apology and an assurance that he will comply with security rules in the future.

The Commission **agreed** that draft minutes are to be circulated within 2 weeks of meetings.

The Commission **agreed** the record of discussion of the previous meeting on Wednesday 22 January with amendments.

2. Update on Elizabeth Tower Refurbishment Project

Paper from Ian Ailles, Director General, House of Commons, presented by Matthew Hamlyn, Senior Responsible Owner and Chair of the Project Board for the Elizabeth Tower Refurbishment Project and Charlotte Cloughton, Senior Project Leader for the Elizabeth Tower Refurbishment Project
C/19-21/8 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Commission **noted** the request to the Accounting Officers for additional funding and the reasons for it and **endorsed** the communications approach outlined in the

paper. They also requested that the press release be circulated to all members of the House on publication.

3. R&R Quarterly Report (October-December 2019)

Paper from Sarah Johnson, CEO, R&R shadow Sponsor Body
C/19-21/6 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Commission **noted** the Quarterly Report.

4. House of Lords Decant Project: Proposed location of Chamber, Committees and Catering functions

Paper from Andy Piper, Design Director, R&R Programme Delivery Team
C/19-21/7 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Commission considered and **agreed** the preferred options, as outlined in the paper, for the location of the chamber, committee rooms and catering functions in the QEII Conference Centre during decant.

5. Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/2021-2022/2023

Paper from Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance, presented with Fehintola Akinlose, Finance Director
C/19-21/11 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

A discussion took place about the R&R-related portion of the budget and the Commission **agreed** to request a joint meeting with the House of Commons Commission to consider this further.

After discussion, the Commission:

- **agreed** that the financial remit should be suspended and reviewed in the 2020-21 financial year to inform the next financial planning round;
- **agreed** the Finance Committee recommendation that:
 - the grants to BGIPU and BIPA be increased by 1%;
 - the grant to BAPG be increased by 2% for its core activities (and a one-off addition relating to attending the US National Party Conventions in 2020-21);
 - the grant to CPA UK be increased by 2%; and
 - the grant to History of Parliament Trust be frozen for three years from 2020-21 and the 70/30 funding arrangement between the Commons and the Lords restored.
- **agreed** the House of Lords budget for 2020-21 of £208.1m, comprising of a resource budget of £141.0m and capital budget of £67.1m, but in the light of the decision of the House of Commons Commission, **deferred** approval of the R&R Sponsor Body budget for 2020-21 of £89.1m; and
- **deferred** approval of all the other elements of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

6. **Members Finance Scheme**

Paper from Jonathan Smith, Head of Finance
C/19-21/12 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

After discussion, the Commission:

- **noted** that some Members have utilised the revised scheme for European travel on Parliamentary business and that a full review will be done later in 2020;
- **agreed** that no further changes are made to the financial support in relation to travel on Parliamentary business;
- **agreed** that Members are able to claim the reduced daily allowance for work relating to the Education Service when the House is not sitting;
- **agreed** the current wording in the Guide on “swearing in days” at the start of a Parliament remain, that Members may not claim merely for watching other members take the Oath; and that an exception be made in respect of Deputy Speakers on the Woolsack and the Bishop reading prayers;
- **agreed** that current eligibility rules for the reduced daily allowance in relation to Parliamentary Delegations should remain unchanged;
- **noted** that the daily allowance and reduced daily allowance will increase in line with the increase in MPs’ pay from 1 April 2020; and
- **noted** that an updated version of the *Guide to Financial Support for Members* would be published shortly.

7. **Rules on Members’ Staff Passes: Revised Proposals**

Paper from the Lord McFall of Alcluith, Senior Deputy Speaker, and Tom Wilson, Registrar of Lords’ Interests
C/19-21/9 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

On Members’ staff passes, the Commission **agreed** to remove the words “on a regular and frequent basis” from the draft report, instead inserting words to the effect of “Members may only sponsor a pass for an individual if the absence of such a pass would make it impossible for the individual to support the member effectively”. On APPG staff passes, the Commission **agreed** to reaffirm the wording in the previous report that Members may not sponsor a pass for anybody whose primary role is to support an APPG, but that options for a review of the general policy should be explored.

The Commission **agreed** that Lord McFall of Alcluith would discuss the possibility of a bicameral review of APPGs with Mr Speaker. Following this, the Commission **requested** a revised draft report for agreement by correspondence.

8. **A New Communications and Engagement Strategy**

Paper from Michael Winders, Director of Communications
C/19-21/10 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Commission **deferred consideration** of this item to a future meeting.

9. Update on the Administration

Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments
C/19-21/13 HIGHLY RESTRICTED

The Commission **noted** the paper.

10. Any Other Business

The Lord Speaker explained that he had been approached by two Members about the possibility of financial and secretarial support for the growing number of non-affiliated Members. After discussion the Commission **decided** not to consider further the provision of such support.

11. Next meeting

The Lord Speaker thanked Commission members and informed them that the next meeting would take place on 25 March 2020 at 10.30am in his Room, pending the arrangements for the joint meeting with the House of Commons Commission.

Wednesday 12 February 2020

Patrick Milner
Secretary to the Commission
020 7219 6644
milnerp@parliament.uk