HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION / MEC

Monday 17 May 2021 at 10.00 am
Meeting in the Speaker's Study
and via Microsoft Teams

Present:
The Speaker, in the Chair
Thangam Debbonaire
Jacob Rees-Mogg
Sir Charles Walker
Dame Rosie Winterton
Pete Wishart
Dr John Benger (Clerk of the House)
Dr Rima Makarem (External member)

DECISIONS

COMMISSION

1. NEW MEMBER – DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' FINANCIAL INTERESTS

Thangam Debbonaire confirmed there were no additional interests she wished to declare to those included in the Register of Members' Financial Interests.

2. REPORTS AND UPDATES

a) TUS and Members' staff representatives update
b) Written updates from the Administration, Finance and Audit Committees
c) House Service update

The Commission took note of the updates.

3. COVID ROADMAP: STEP 3

The Commission agreed the following measures as part of Step 3 of its roadmap out of lockdown:

- **That Members and grey passholders would be permitted one guest onto the Estate if there is a business need and the meeting or need cannot be met through a virtual meeting, and Covid-secure arrangements can be made for meeting on the Estate;**
- **Where there is a clear business need, Members and staff of the House may travel to countries on the Government's 'green list' for Parliamentary-related reasons, including official delegations, committees, and Inter-Parliamentary Groups supported by House funds;**
- **Following a review of social distancing measures, and in line with advice from Public Health England, a total of 64 Members would be able to attend the Chamber at any one time. Members would**

continue to be required to wear face coverings when seated in the Chamber. The Commission also agreed that Members would be encouraged to take part in lateral flow testing twice a week; and

- **That, subject to endorsement by the Administration Committee, catering venues would be operated in line with guidelines for the hospitality sector, allowing for the rule of 6 to be adopted.**

4. R&R PROGRAMME SCHEME OBJECTIVES AND PHASE 1 TIMELINE

The Commission endorsed the following principles as an appropriate framework for evaluating the R&R scheme options:

That the scheme options presented should:

(A) Adhere to Parliamentary strategies, agreed standards or policies that are relevant and set these as a minimum.

(B) Balance investment cost (capex) against long-term operational cost (opex).

(C) Deliver a building fit for purpose and future proofed to a specified time period and the programme should be explicit on the expected "warranty" period of deliverables, commencing at hand-back.

(D) Provide the environment which enables Parliament to carry out its range of desired Parliamentary business, visitor and heritage functions, and associated support functions.

(E) Align with the stated risk appetite of both Houses, to be met across all stated objectives (affects security, H&S corporate risk, fire, cyber security).

The Commission:

- **Endorsed the "essential" and "stretch" objectives presented by the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body, subject to Sponsor Body adoption of the above principles as a framework for evaluation of the scheme options;**
- **Noted that these objectives would be used as the basis for development of two schemes which will be assessed through the R&R detailed and costed plan;**
- **Noted the initial draft scope of the two schemes ("essential" and "intermediate") being worked up in more detail;**
- **Noted the current proposed timeline and key decision points until the R&R detailed and costed plan is debated on the floor of both Houses; and**
- **Noted the request by the Commons Executive Board and Lords Management Board to the Sponsor Body to have the opportunity to assess the scheme options in further detail, and to confirm the appropriate role of the Houses and their governance bodies during Phase 1 decision-making.**

3. REVIEW OF THE HOUSE SERVICE STRATEGY AND PROPOSED PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE NEXT STRATEGY

The Commission agreed:

- **The revised House Service Strategy;**
- **The proposed process for development of the next House Service strategy; and**
- **That the next House Service strategy will commence in April 2023.**

4. CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN 2021–22 AND Q4 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Commission:

- **Approved the corporate business plan for the House Service for 2021–22, as amended; and**
- **Noted performance against the corporate business plan for House Service for 2020–21.**

5. NOMINATION OF A LAY MEMBER TO THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS

The Commission:

- **Considered the report of the Selection Panel;**
- **Agreed the draft report to the House on the current recruitment round, based on the selection panel report; and**
- **Agreed to the tabling of a motion by a Commissioner, on behalf of the Commission, to give effect to the appointment.**

COMMISSION/MEC

6. PAPERS TO NOTE

The Commission took note of the following papers:

- ➢ **Instrument of Delegation from the House of Commons Commission to the Commons Executive Board**
- ➢ **Annual Report: Activities of the Commission in 2020–21**
- ➢ **R&R Q4 quarterly report**
- ➢ **Letter to Mr Speaker from the Chairs of the Administration Committee and Committee on Standards on the stationery rules**
- ➢ **Letter to the R&R Sponsor Body from Mr Speaker**
- ➢ **Forward look**
- ➢ **Deliberations from 19 April 2021**

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission/MEC will take place on Monday 14 June at 10.00 am in the Speaker's Study and via Microsoft Teams.