HOUSE OF LORDS

PC/21-22
1st meeting
MINUTES

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 26 May at 1pm

[Items highlighted will be redacted before publication of the Minutes]

Present:

Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Chair)	Lord Mancroft
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Lord McAvoy
Lord Bew	Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
Lord Eames	Lord Newby
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Baroness Quin
Lord Faulkner of Worcester	Baroness Smith of Basildon
Baroness Harris of Richmond	Lord Stoneham of Droxford
Lord Judge	Baroness Thomas of Winchester
Lord McFall of Alcluith	Viscount Ullswater

with the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Apologies were received from Lord Geddes

1. Discussion on the future procedural roadmap

The Chair introduced the paper (PC/21-22/01).

The Leader of the House informed the Committee that the Commission did not have a detailed discussion about decisions or options for the future of hybrid proceedings. Decisions will need to be made following the Prime Minister's statement on 14 June, after which the Commission and then the Committee should meet urgently.

The Leader of the Opposition said that while many are eager to return to working as normal, the Committee should consider a phased process, with legislation returning to physical-only first.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrats said that the debate in the House last week showed that there was no unanimity on any one thing, but that the majority of members agree on five key issues. The Lord Speaker will be meeting members of the Commission in the coming weeks to narrow down the options, after which the Committee's options should become clearer.

The Convenor of the Crossbench Peers said that the Committee needs to think carefully about these options before the Prime Minister's statement so that decisions can be implemented quickly afterwards.

Members also discussed the possibility of sending out a questionnaire to all members and the practical and financial implications of retaining some hybrid capability, even if parity between physical and remote members was abandoned.

The Clerk of the Parliaments made members aware that any changes to the operation of the remote voting application would need some lead time.

The Committee **agreed** that officials should carry on working alongside the staff of the Commission to continue to consult members and make preparations in the lead up to the Prime Minister's statement on 14 June. The Committee also **agreed** to meet in the week commencing 14 June, after the Commission meeting of that week.

2. Reasons committees

The Chair introduced the paper (PC/21-22/02).

The Committee **agreed** that once the pandemic is over, the House should continue with the current practice of not having reasons committees and providing a standard reason when the Lords disagree with a Commons proposition without proposing an alternative.

3. Oral question ballots

The Chair introduced the paper (PC/21-22/03).

Lord Faulkner of Worcester asked the Committee to consider changing the rules so that members can only table an oral question every six weeks, instead of every four weeks.

The Committee **agreed** that once the pandemic is over, the House should continue with the current practice of allocating oral questions through a ballot system.

4. Deadlines for tabling business and amendments

The Chair introduced the paper (PC/21-22/04).

The Committee **agreed** to change the deadline for tabling business in the Table Office to 5pm and the deadline for tabling amendments with the Public Bill Office to 4pm.

5. Any other Business

The Committee agreed that they should meet as soon as possible after the Prime Minister's statement on 14 June and the Commission meeting following that. They provisionally **agreed** to meet again on 16 June using MS Teams.

Duncan Sagar
Clerk to the Procedure Committee