

## Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Friday 18 March 2016 at 9.15am

**Those present:** Ian Ailles (Director General) (Chair)  
Myfanwy Barrett (Director of Finance)  
John Benger (Clerk Assistant and DG, Chamber & Committee Services)  
John Borley CB (DG Facilities)  
Penny Young (Librarian and DG, Department of Information Services)  
Andrew Walker (DG HR & Change)

**Apologies:** David Natzler (Clerk of the House)  
Rob Greig (Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service)

**In attendance:** Marianne Cwynarski, Secretary  
Sarah Petit, Assistant Secretary  
Amanda Colledge, Head of Head of Financial Planning and Business Support (item 5)

### 1. Matters arising from previous meetings

- 1.1 The Committee reviewed and noted progress against actions from previous meetings.
- 1.2 In relation to action 2015-63 regarding the health and safety risk assessment, the Committee was informed that a bicameral workshop had been arranged in April to consider this further. **The Committee agreed to re-baseline this action to the end of April.**

### 2. Strategic Estates Portfolio (SEP)

- 2.1 **John Borley** introduced the paper, which proposed a detailed action plan to address the recommendations of the SEP health check.
- 2.2 The Committee reviewed the proposed action plan.

Recommendation 1 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for Brian Finnimore, Alix Langley and Tom Mohan to develop an SEP Business plan**, drawing on appropriate DG Review workstreams. The Committee noted that it would also be necessary to map this structure into the proposed R&R delivery structure (about which Ed Ollard was in discussion with John Borley), and that Andrew Walker was in the process of considering staffing requirements for Restoration and Renewal.
- **The Committee agreed that John Borley would review the SEP Steering Group membership and terms of reference in light of the health check, and bring it back to the Committee for approval. (Action: John Borley)**

Recommendation 2 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal that Ian Ailles and David Beamish should lead on high level governance, including accountability of the SEP SRO (should there be one) to the Executive Committee and the Lords Management Board; introducing an element of political oversight of the SEP; and endorsing the arrangements of oversight of the constituent Programme Boards.**

Recommendation 3 –

- **The Committee endorsed the present SEP assumptions, subject to the addition of the political environment as a further working assumption.**
- **The Committee authorised the SEP SRO to maintain the list under change control procedures.**

Recommendation 4 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for John Borley to develop an initial SEP Stakeholder Engagement Plan by integrating those already produced for Restoration and Renewal and the Northern Estate Programme.**

Recommendation 5 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for the PED Design Authority to produce a methodologies library, to be actioned by Charlotte Simmonds and Donald Grant.**

Recommendation 6 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for Brian Finnimore to engage professional scheduling expertise, with the cost to be shared between the Commons and the Lords (subject to HoL agreement).**

Recommendation 7 -

- **The Committee noted that a communications officer was due to join the Northern Estate Programme team in April 2016.**

Recommendation 8 -

- **The Committee endorsed the proposed formalisation of the sharing arrangements for decant planning between the Restoration and Renewal and Northern Estate Programme to become a Portfolio level resource, to be led by Emma Wharton.**

Recommendation 9 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal that John Borley and Ed Ollard review the Restoration and Renewal Sponsor Board/Delivery Authority planning**

**already undertaken, to ensure appropriate range and flexibility of scope; and that they include a draft outline transition plan in the SEP Business Plan.**

Recommendation 10 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal that Carl Woodall lead on the recruitment of external members of the Steering Group and noted the importance placed on external representation by the Clerk of the House.**

Recommendation 11 –

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for Brian Finnimore and Harun Mushod to include a realistic resource plan in the SEP Business Plan.**

Recommendation 12 -

- **The Committee endorsed the proposal for Charlotte Simmonds to review the anticipated SEP and supporting programme team membership, and identify appropriate learning and development opportunities.**

2.3 The Committee:

- **Agreed that the Chair should discuss the role of the SEP Steering Group with the Chair of the Lords Management Board. (*Action: The Chair*)**
- **Agreed to ensure that the Finance function was properly represented in these arrangements. (*Action: John Borley*)**
- **Agreed that these actions should be developed in a manner sensitive to the recommendations of the JIB Capability & Capacity Review.**
- **Recognised the central importance of the Strategic Estates Programme when considering how best to take forward the Capability & Capacity Review; and noted that Myfanwy Barrett has been tasked by the Joint Investment Board to develop an action plan for implementing that Review.**
- **Agreed that the sponsors of the various corporate initiatives presently in play, notably the House of Commons DG Review, the bicameral Efficiency Programme and the EPMO study, should require workstream leaders, where appropriate, to report the specific steps they intend to take in order to support the early establishment and success of the SEP.**
- **Noted that consideration may be given by both Houses, at an appropriate point in the future, to absorbing programmes and projects including NEP, Archives Accommodation, Relocation Contingency Planning and Restoration and Renewal decant preparation within the Restoration and Renewal brand.**

### **3. Fire Safety**

3.1 **John Borley** introduced a paper which outlined the phased series of works for the life safety works project. The revised schedule did not require any decant of Members' offices during sitting periods, but the Administration Committee would be consulted regarding the use of committee rooms as decant space over the summer recess.

3.2 The Committee discussed the regulatory requirements and safeguards to ensure that the compliance deadline of December 2018 would be met.

3.3 The Committee:

- **Noted the intended programme of Palace fire life safety works and the requirement for future decant of staff and Members, taking into consideration the lack of decant accommodation available within the secure perimeter of the House of Commons estate.**
- **Agreed that the Executive Committee would monitor progress to meet the compliance deadline of December 2018, taking mitigating action where necessary.**
- **Agreed that the Director of Accommodation and Logistics Services should seek Administration Committee agreement to the use of additional committee rooms in the Palace during recesses as decant space for the duration of the work. The proposed works for this summer would affect staff and Member offices around the Star Chamber court area. (Action: John Borley)**

3.4 The Committee further discussed a paper on lessons learned from the recent Palace evacuation exercise and **agreed to submit it to the Administration Committee.**

3.5 The Committee further discussed the fire safety online training module, which would be redesigned for next year (**Action: Andrew Walker**). In the meantime, managers should continue to encourage their staff to complete the module, to ensure full compliance. The Committee welcomed the progress that had already been made in this area, in advance of the 30 March compliance deadline. **The Committee agreed to communicate further with staff on this issue (Action: Committee Secretary).**

### **4. The Parliamentary Calendar: potential for financial efficiencies**

4.1 The Committee **noted** a paper from the Director General which considered the financial implications of various hypothetical changes to the structure of the Parliamentary calendar (without reducing the number of sitting days). Subject to some minor drafting amendments, the paper would be considered by the Administration Committee at its meeting of 18 April.

## **5. Financial Monitoring Report**

5.1 **Amanda Colledge** introduced the current 2015/16 forecast financial position for both the House of Commons Administration Estimate and the Members Estimate. She informed the Committee that capital forecasting had significantly improved this year, but that resource forecasting had slipped back. Her team would undertake a wider review of this, to come to the Committee in May 2016. The Efficiencies Review would also consider the potential for efficiencies in areas with a high underspend.

5.2 The Committee discussed monthly forecasting. **Amanda Colledge** advised that the Finance Department is trying to encourage ownership and active management of budgets. There was now a team of finance business partners in place to improve performance across the House Service, but it would also be necessary to look at organisational culture and consequences for departments.

5.3 Penny Young advised that an efficiency analysis of retail was being carried out, to consider opening hours and shift patterns and to review the range. **The Committee agreed to consider retail performance at a future meeting. (Action: Penny Young/Amanda Colledge)**

5.4 **The Committee agreed to commission a review of the basis for the valuation of PCH and the impact of valuations (Action: Myfanwy Barrett).**

5.5 The Committee discussed the Travel Office contract and noted that they would receive the relevant paper that would be prepared for the Administration Committee.

### **5.2 The Committee:**

- **noted the forecast outturn position on resource and capital;**
- **noted the position on contingency;**
- **noted the technical accounting adjustments that will impact the accounts;**
- **noted that the Director General and Director of Finance will review the current year underspends at the March challenge meetings to understand where there is capacity in 2016/17 budgets.**

## **6. Performance and Risk Update**

6.1 **The Committee noted the Performance and Risk report and agreed to request a written update on a number of issues.**

6.2 Penny Young informed the Committee that she would provide an updated figure for monthly visitor tours. **(Action: Penny Young)**